

Receiving & Responding

Series on the Body of Christ:

Week One – Intake and Output – James 1:22-25

- Can Become Obese Christians – hearing not doing
- Easily deceived into believing we are fine
- What you claim to know must be evidenced

Last Week – Healthy Reflections – Rev. 3:14-22

- Viewing Ourselves By God's measurement
- Half Hearted or Wholly Committed
- Adopting the Road Back to Health before God

Receiving & Responding

“But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, “When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men.” (Now this expression, “He ascended,” what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.”

Receiving & Responding

“As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.” Ephesians 4:7-16

1. God Grants Resources vs. 7-11

- Simple Truth to be embraced – God has given gifts!
 - Can get caught up in the discovery, what is it!
 - Miss who it is from, why it is given to you.
- to 'prepare or equip'
 - to 'fix what is broken' (Matt. 4:21)
 - to supply what is lacking (1 Thess. 3:10)
- “gifts are meant to be tools not toys that are played with or shown off.” Weirsbe
- note – God is telling us there is a need, (deficiency) and the resources granted to fill the need!

2. Resources Meant to Be Used!

- can line up things like trophies on a shelf
- can have many tools – w/o products they are useless
- Clear Expectation – given resource for a purpose

a) Build Up The Body of Christ vs.12

- note aim is not one individual part but the whole
- mature, healthy, functioning body of believers
- what picture is painted of a healthy body?

b) Picture of Health

- Reflecting Christ In Our Midst
 - unity in faith & knowledge of Jesus
 - accurately reflecting Christ in our actions
- Stability
 - not tossed by circumstances and culture
 - grounded in truth – able to spot the lie
- Truth Joined With Love
 - 1Cor.8:1 – “knowledge puffs up, but love builds up”
 - Phil 1:9 – “..that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight.”

- Truth Joined With Love
 - what we do reflects a love motivation
 - what we say and how reflects truth & love
- Cooperation With One Another
 - belong to, affect and need each other
 - interdependent not independent

3. Directed By The Head

- central control where all messages are sent
- place where the function of the whole coordinated
- spiritual spinal chord injury leaves us unable to respond

3. Directed By The Head

- from Him, whole body joined & held together
 - implication – blow apart without the head
 - without receiving and responding to signals – nothing will be accomplished – no growth
- builds itself up in love as each part does its work
 - strength, ability, maturity – all happens in connection to the head and each other

So What

1. We Have Been Resourced By God

- redeemed, forgiven, gifted, empowered & sent out
- what is needed to 'fix' or 'supply' is ours

2. Resources are Meant to Be Used

- build up the body – not for self gain or interest
- Picture of health clear – plumb line for evaluation

3. We Must Accept Direction from the Head to Function

- Will mean setting aside what is known
- Will mean embracing what I am asked to be and do