

How to Be Active in a Local Church

Ephesians 4:11-16

Introduction:

- A. Last message we learned w_____ every believer should be active in the local church
 - 1. Because of what we have in c_____ (its more important and powerful than any differences)
 - 2. Because of what we have been g_____ (a spiritual gift to be used in the body of Christ, the church)
- B. Today's message we will learn h_____ to be active in the local church.
 - 1. Four offices are named in Eph 4:11 that Jesus established to e_____ those with the spiritual gifts He distributed.
 - a. Apostles - this office is no longer existent because Jesus limited the number to _____ (see Rev 21:14)
 - b. Prophets – no one fills this office presently but Rev 11:3 states that _____ prophets will arise in the time of the beastly government. (The purpose of these two offices was to lay the f_____ of the church – Eph 2:20).
 - c. Evangelists – this is the office of the missionary, church planter, where the focus is on proclaiming the g_____ to the lost, planting churches, and/or making sure new believers get connected with a local church.
 - d. Pastor-teachers – this office functions by one caring for a church group like a s_____ caring for his flock and teaching them God's word.
 - 2. There are three steps given in this passage that show how to be active in the local church.

Be teachable but not gullible (12a, 14)

- A. My duty as your pastor-teacher (12a)
 - 1. There are not three duties listed as the KJV seems to state
 - a. The prepositions are different in the Greek text and are literally translated as: *He gave some to be pastor-teachers **FOR** the equipping of the saints **INTO** a work of service, **INTO** a building up of the body of Christ.*
 - b. There is only one duty listed for the pastor-teacher which is to e_____ believers in a way that builds up the church.
 - 2. The act of equipping (KJV – perfecting; NIV – preparing)
 - a. The Greek word translated as equipping, perfecting, preparing

- 1) Only used here in the N.T.
- 2) Common in other Greek literature and originally meant to f_____ a house.
- 3) This word pictures the pastor-teacher as furnishing believers with what they need to serve God and one another.

b. Closely connected with grounding you in God's word (v. 14)

B. Your response to my teaching

1. You are not to be gullible like little children who b_____ everything they hear.
 - a. Do not depend on the pastor to be the i_____ of God's word.
 - b. Check out what the pastor is teaching to make sure it a_____ reflects what God's word is saying (see Acts 17:11).
2. But you are to be teachable – receive teachings with eagerness, with an o_____ mind (Acts 17:11)
3. Use the tools given you
 1. The B_____ (2Tim 3:16,17)
 2. Sermon notes
 3. Past messages (online)
 4. Discuss with others

Serve God where your gift is needed (12b, 16)

- A. The word ministry and service (12b) - KJV reads, *ministry*, where other version read, *service*.
 1. The English language often uses the term ministry to refer to what a pastor or missionary does (*He is going into the ministry*)
 2. The Biblical language sees every believer as a m_____ and everything that they do in serving God as m_____
- B. The ministry or service of every believer is pictured in the local church as the individual p_____ of a body working properly (16)
 1. This shows that each one of you have something u_____ to offer to God's work that will make the local church effective.
 2. Your place in the body corresponds with the spiritual g_____(s) and abilities and your God-given desires (Prov 3:5,6)
- C. The broadest categories of spiritual gifts as given in Rom 12 (see handout with the above name)
- D. Do not mix up spiritual gifts with spiritual responses
 1. Some might use their spiritual gift as an excuse not to respond (e.g. *since I do not have the gift of giving, then I don't have to give to this person in need* – but see Jms 2:15,16).

2. Every believer is required to respond, demonstrating characteristics of _____ the stewardship gifts. (see handout entitled Characteristics Every Christian Must Develop)

Connect meaningfully with one another (12c, 13, 15)

- A. The goal of using our spiritual gift is to b_____ up the body of Christ, the church (12c)
 1. The ongoing effort of building up one another pictures a body that is m_____ spiritually (13) - KJV uses the term perfect, where others use the term mature and either is a possible translation.
 - a. The most basic meaning of the word is to reach a g_____
 - b. Perfection is not a viable goal (no perfect church body), but maturity is (we always have room to g_____)
 2. The goal of building up the body is:
 - a. Unity of the f_____ - our relationship with one another
 - b. Unity of the k_____ of the Son of God (the term refers to a personal relationship) – our relationship with Jesus.
- B. Two specific actions that we all are to do (15)
 1. Speak the truth to one another in l_____
 - a. This requires us to get to know one another so we have meaningful c_____
 - b. Connect with one another before and after services, in small groups (like Bible Study)
 2. G_____ up in every way in our relationship to Christ.
 - a. If we speak the truth in love, we need to r_____ the truth that is spoken to us in love.
 - b. By speaking and receiving this way we will grow in our r_____ to Jesus, affecting every area of our lives.

Conclusion – Will you be active in the local church and stay active?

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