



John's Schedule

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Grace Energized Men are Mended by the Truth



Part 14 (080210AM)

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As we open to I Timothy 3, turn your minds towards one of the most amazing parts of our faith—the new relationships God gives to us.

- First, all of us in Christ this morning are brothers and sisters ([I Tim. 5:1-2](#)); and that even includes our children, our parents, and our marriage partners, if they are believers. And that list of relatives extends up and down the streets of Tulsa, across the country, and around the world. We have blood relatives in every part of this world. The key is, if they are born-again believers—they are our siblings.
- Second, God is our Father ([Mat. 6:6-15](#)). We have a perfect, always-there Dad who loves us without any conditions, who will never change, pull back, leave home, or divorce our mother. He knows what's best, gives us everything we need, stays in touch constantly, and goes with us everywhere we are.
- Thirdly, Jesus Christ has become our brother as well as God and Savior ([Hebrews 2:11-12](#)). That means He knows all of our struggles, pains, weaknesses, and temptations—and is right there with us as we go through them.
- Finally, we live in God's house ([I Timothy 3:15](#)), His Church, and as family members the Bible, God's Word is the plan He has for us how we are to behave, all of our family duties, and so on.

We are the house of God. Each of us are a spiritual piece of that building. We are built upon the foundation of truth that is in Christ Jesus. Listen again to what Paul said in [I Timothy 3:15](#):

"...but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." NKJV

We are in the midst of a study of [Titus 2:2](#), where Paul explains the "house rules". All believers are called saints. And those saints who believe right and behave right are "sound in faith". A believer, who has healthy faith, believes truth and lives truth.

As we will see, grace-energized men and women are to be mended (equipping) and built up (edification) by the truth, to function properly in God's Family.

Only spiritually healthy people can men and build up others. Are you functioning as a healthy member of Christ's church this morning?

For just a moment remember that there are no less than twelve metaphors in God's Word for the Church [\[1\]](#). Each metaphor is a powerful way for us to see how God looks upon us who are Christ's church. Let me just list them off for you.

We are—**A family** ([I Tim. 5:1-2](#)); **The Bride of Christ** ([II Cor. 11:2](#)); **Branches on a vine** ([John 15:5](#)); **An olive tree** ([Rom. 11:17-24](#)); **A field of crops** ([1 Cor. 3:6-9](#)); **A new temple** ([1 Peter 2:5](#)) built with "living stones"; **A new group of priests** ([1 Pet. 2:5](#)), that can offer "spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God"; **A building** ([1 Cor. 3:9](#)); and **God's house**: ([Heb. 3:3](#)), with Jesus Christ himself viewed as the "builder" of the house; **The pillar and bulwark of the truth** ([1 Tim. 3:15](#)); **A harvest** ([Matt. 13:1-30](#); [John 4:35](#)); and **The body of Christ** ([1 Cor. 12:12-27](#)).

Our Responsibilities to Christ's Church

We are responsible as believers, to apply each of the metaphors used for the church into our daily lives. As we do so we begin to appreciate more of the richness of privilege that God gave us by placing us into His church. Stir up your mind by thinking about these truths.

1. Knowing that God looks on Christ's church as **a family**—should increase our love and fellowship with one another.
2. Knowing that God looks on Christ's church as **the bride of Christ**—should stimulate us to personally strive for greater purity, deeper love for Christ, and swifter fuller obedience to Him.
3. Knowing that God looks on Christ's church as **branches of a vine**—should cause us to rest in Him more fully.

4. Knowing that God looks on Christ's church as **an agricultural crop**—should encourage us to continue growing in the Christian life and obtaining for ourselves and others the proper spiritual nutrients to grow.
5. Knowing that God looks on Christ's church as **God's new temple**—should increase our awareness of God's very presence dwelling in our midst as we meet.
6. Knowing that God looks on Christ's church as **a priesthood**—should help us to see more clearly the delight God has in the sacrifices of praise and good deeds that we offer to Him (see [Heb. 13:15-16](#)).
7. Knowing that God looks on Christ's church as **the body of Christ**—should increase our interdependence on one another and our appreciation of the diversity of gifts within the body.
8. Knowing that God looks on Christ's church as **a house that is being built**—should stir each of us to be a part of the process of building up, edifying, and discipling one another.

If I could ask each of you to remember just one concept from this entire message it would be this:

Are you doing what God made you to do?

God looks to each one of us to do our part in His Church that He is building; and each of us is a unique tools in His Hands; and each of us can do something God designed only for us to do. In other words...

Are You a Part of His Team?

All of us have a responsibility to be a part of God's building process. It was 13 years ago that we began constructing our home here in Tulsa. Like many of you we followed the same process.

We had to choose a builder, buy a lot, then watch as the land got cleared and ready, the slab or foundation was prepared and poured, then the framers came, the windows were put in, the electricians showed up and strung wires, plumbers, sheet rockers, cabinet makers, trim carpenters, painters, flooring specialists, and on and on it went.

The whole process took months, and all the various workers came and went from our house and each did something whether large or small that was a part of the construction process.

We all know this is true about our houses, but do you understand the same is true about Christ's church? Just as it took an army of different craftsmen and workers to construct that house—God has the same planned for His Church.

Each of us has a different giftedness for use in building and maintaining Christ's House. To construct and maintain a house we can't all be electricians, or where would we get the plumbing done. We can't all be painters or how would we get the roofing done?

In house construction, each one does a different part, **and all must work together.**

In Christ's church each of us has a different giftedness God wants to use in His construction of the Church. If you come to the building site and do not do what He made you to do—the entire process of building up the Church suffers. And that brings us to the essence of our study this morning. All of us are to be a part of God's two part construction plan. Open with me to [Ephesians 4:11-13](#).

Ephesians 4:11-13 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. NKJV

Mended and Built By The Truth

Did you notice the two words Paul emphasizes in v. 12? Equipping and edifying. That verse contain God's goal for all of us in Christ's church this morning—bringing believers to spiritual health and spiritual growth through truth in Christ. Do you really understand why you are here?

Let's get a hold on these twin truths of [Ephesians 4:12](#). First look at the words God chose to use to describe our purpose:

Ephesians 4:12 "...for the equipping (Gk. # 2677, n. from v. #2675 lit. "mending"; KJV "perfecting") of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying (Gk. #3619 lit. "building up") of the body of Christ..." NKJV

How is this done within a local church? Paul introduces us to the twin concepts of the "equipping church" and the "edifying church". Both ministries are vital. We all need to grasp our responsibility, so that we come to church and operate as a church in the way that God designed us to serve Him.

What exactly is equipping? Earlier in our Titus 2 study we bumped into this concept, but today we want to dwell on it and soak in this life changing truth.

Because we know God's Word teaches us that every word of God was inspired, we first study that word. The word "equipping" is **kartartismos** and is a noun used only here in the New Testament. But the verb form [2] of this noun is very descriptive; and its meaning is most clearly seen in the way this word is used in our Bibles.

2675 katartizo { kat-ar-tid'-zo}: v; AV - perfect 2, make perfect 2, mend 2, be perfect 2, fit 1, frame 1, prepare 1, restore 1, perfectly joined together 1; 13x in N.T.

Definition: to render, i.e. to fit, sound, complete; to mend (what has been broken or rent), to repair; to complete; to fit out, equip, put in order, arrange, adjust; to fit or frame for one's self, prepare; ethically: to strengthen, perfect, complete, make one what he ought to be. [3]

Turn there with me to the first use of this word in the New Testament, [Matthew 4:21](#).

Matthew 4:21 Going on from there, He saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, **mending** their nets. He called them, NKJV

Did you see equipping? It is right there; only in this verse the word for “equipping” is translated “mending”. Turn on the [Mark 1:19](#).

- *Mark 1:19* When He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, who also were in the boat **mending** their nets. NKJV

If you haven't yet done this, you may want to circle the word “mending” in your Bible, and write nearby the word “equipping”. When you do that, you have just made a powerful connection. The Holy Spirit led Paul to use this very same word in [Ephesians 4:12](#). The verb **kartartidzo** is here translated “mending”, and the noun form is translated “equipping” in [Ephesians 4:12](#).

Mending Lives is God's Plan for All of Us

Now let this picture God's Word gives to us, sink into your heart and mind.

Jesus found his first disciples sitting and doing what fishermen do, looking through each part of their nets and stitching back up any tears, mending any holes, and fixing anywhere the nets had started to unravel. Mending is what this word portrays.

To even broaden our mental picture, if we trace this word outside the Bible and into the culture of Paul's day, this word is used for setting broken bones.

So mending nets and setting bones both speak of taking injured, damaged, or weakened things and getting them back the way they are supposed to be. Can you see the connection? An equipping church is all about helping people from where they are to where God wants them to be. We all need help, and we all are to help each other. Now plug those images into the purpose of Christ's church as we meet.

And think about the band of men Jesus called to start His church—mostly fishermen weren't they? And another man was in the sewing business that was heavily involved, a leather worker/tent sewing man named Paul. This picture of sewing, patching, mending, and repairing was so much a part of their lives. No wonder they had such powerful fellowship back then. They knew and felt in their hands what their task was to be.

Mending lives so that those lives can be engaged as tools in Christ's hands building up, helping, exhorting, and discipling others.

Believers are out in life getting frayed, torn, and ripped by all the troubles and struggles we go through each day.

We each sustain some degree of damage through struggles at work, conflicts at home, and temptations nagging us when we are alone.

We also are often just like a net as it gets dragged along in daily use—we have sustained wear and tear to our lives just with the daily pressures and stresses of living.

But now comes the wonderful part. This truth is what has strengthened Christ's church through all these centuries since Pentecost—when we gather obediently as Christ's church, He is present; and when Christ is present He uses us to do his work of repairing one another from the injuries of life's struggles.

- We gather to have the torn places in our lives mended with God's Word.
- We come together to see God fixing parts of life that have started to unravel like relationships, hope, confidence and assurance—by His Spirit, and through His Word, and using other believers.

Mending Means the Application of God's Truth

Mending means the application of thread to the torn place, or the application of calk to the leaking place, or the application of glue or a nail to the loosened place. Note the reoccurring use of the word “application”?

Can you imagine the disciples in Christ's day going to classes on mending nets where they watched great fishermen mending their nets, and they were able to hold and admire nets that were expertly mended; and there were spools of strong thread passed around; and there were shiny, sharp needles displayed—and never actually mended a net? That would be ludicrous. They would have laughed. No, they learned to mend sitting next to an old fisherman, most likely their dad. And they held a net and a needle and mended right along with him until they knew the art of mending.

For a moment ask yourself, “Do I learn about things God wants me to do, that I never do?” Is an equipping church only a classroom with no accountability for actual participation? Can we have any class without half of the class being the actual doing?

Are we an equipping/mending church if we only STUDY well-mended nets, strong threads, sharp needles, and admire the great menders of the past and present—but never actually require individuals to actually mend another person's life?

For decades in America we have equated a healthy church with hearing and optional doing. But that was never the model in Christ's Church from the start. James said those who merely heard and were never required to do were deceiving themselves.

James 1:22 But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. NKJV

James 1:22 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it

Mended Lives Get Repaired by God's Word

The church that offers these needed repairs is the church that is truly an “equipping” church, and that is what we see as we follow this word through the rest of the New Testament. Continue with me to:

- **We need our unity constantly mended.** *1 Corinthians 1:10* Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be **perfectly joined together** in the same mind and in the same judgment. NKJV
- **We need our peacefulness constantly mended.** *2 Corinthians 13:11* Finally, brethren, farewell. **Become complete**. Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. NKJV
- **We need our triumph in Christ constantly mended.** *Galatians 6:1* Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual **restore** such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. NKJV
- **We need our faith constantly mended.** *1 Thessalonians 3:10* night and day praying exceedingly that we may see your face and **perfect** what is lacking in your faith? NKJV
- **We need our ministry focus constantly mended.** *Hebrews 13:21* **make you complete** in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen. NKJV
- **We need our endurance through affliction constantly mended.** *1 Peter 5:10* But may the God of all grace, who called us to His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after you have suffered a while, **perfect**, establish, strengthen, and settle you. NKJV

Through suffering God restores us. This is our same word **katarizein**, the word commonly used for setting a fracture, the word used in Matthew and Mark for mending nets. It means “to supply that which is missing”, and “to mend that which is broken”. So suffering, if accepted in humility and trust and love, can repair some weaknesses of our character and add the greatness God wants us to have that before the suffering wasn’t there.

How is your life? Is it in need of a little mending? God’s Word is available and in action today. Why not pause now and then while we study through the Bible and ask God to sew your soul, mend your heart, heal your emotions that are frayed, quiet your mind that is spinning or darkened or saddened, and get you back on track with the Lord. That is what God wants to do here in and through His Church.

What is the result of being mended? You get tied to God’s Word. You see that His Word is the lamp that guides, the food that feeds, the comfort that cheers our souls—as it points us to Christ.

Being mended means finding that Jesus comes to us by His Spirit, through His Word and gives us the power to do what He asks. This power to do what He has told us to do in the Bible is grace. And God’s process of changing us on the inside I love to call “energized by grace”.

And all that was to happen within the context of grace-energized, truth-filled lives of those called to be menders.

We all are to allow God’s Word to mend us and share that Word into the lives of others who are frayed by the trials and struggles of life.

[1] Adapted from Wayne Grudem: *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994, p. 858.

[2] Katartidzo is used 13x in the New Testament. Mending is also used in [Mark 1:19](#).

[3] *Enhanced Strong’s Lexicon*, (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.) 1995.

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