

060 - Supply from the Head to the Parts - Ephesians 4:11-12, 16 - 2015-09-20

Call to Worship: 1 Chronicles 16:8-10

Scripture Reading: Exodus 35:29 - 36:1

Sermon: "Supply from the Head to the Parts" Ephesians 4:11-12, 16

Benediction: James 1:4

INTRODUCTION

The Lord Jesus is engaged in the work of building up His church, from a state of immaturity and weakness to a state of maturity and strength. How He is going about this is put to us in Ephesians 4:11-16.

Structure of Ephesians 4:11-16 is A-B-C-B-A

We look today into A, found first in 4:11-12, then again in 4:16

TEXT

Ephesians 4:11-12 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; (12) For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

BODY

First statement, verses 11-12

- work beginning

- statement literal

Second statement, verse 16

- work going, in full swing

- statement figurative

How better to help us understand!

FIRST THE FIGURATIVE STATEMENT

- I. The Head Provides the Necessary Nourishment to the Parts of the Body
 - A. Namely, nourishment from food
 - B. (Air, yes; water, yes; but the metaphor seems to be about food)
- II. The Parts of the Body Are Joined Together
 - A. they fit
 - B. they are actually connected
- III. The Joining Together Is By the Joints OR At the Joints
- IV. The Joints Also Carry Nourishment to Every Part
 - A. In this sense
 1. nourishment passing to the forearm goes through the elbow
 2. nourishment passing to the hand goes through the wrist
- V. When Every Part Is Nourished the Body Is Edified (Caused to Grow)

SECOND THE LITERAL STATEMENT

- I. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Gives The Word of God to His Individual Saints
- II. The Individual Saints Are Joined into the One Church
 - A. Made to fit
 - B. Actually joined
- III. This Joining of the Saints Into the One Church Is Done Through the Ministers Christ Gives
- IV. The Ministers Christ Gives Work to Serve Every Saint the Word of God from Christ
- V. When Every Saint Receives from Christ the Word of God, the Whole Church Is Edified (Built Up)

THIRD THE TWO STATEMENTS COMBINED

I. The Head Provides the Necessary Nourishment to the Parts of the Body
Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Gives The Word of God to His Individual Saints

II. The Parts of the Body Are Joined Together
The Individual Saints Are Joined into the One Church

III. The Joining Together Is By the Joints OR At the Joints
This Joining of the Saints Into the One Church Is Done Through the Ministers Christ Gives

IV. The Joints Also Carry Nourishment to Every Part
The Ministers Christ Gives Work to Serve Every Saint the Word of God from Christ

V. When Every Part Is Nourished the Body Is Edified (Caused to Grow)
When Every Saint Receives from Christ the Word of God, the Whole Church Is Edified (Built Up)

FOURTH THE TWO STATEMENTS COMBINED WITH THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE AND EXPOUNDED

- I. FIG. The Head Provides the Necessary Nourishment to the Parts of the Body
4:15b-16 “Christ, from whom”
LIT. Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Gives The Word of God to His Individual Saints
4:11 “He gave”
 - A. The Lord Jesus Christ is above all things for the church, as the head is above all things for the body
 - B. He is able to supply what we need, and He is willing to supply what we need, and He is faithful to supply what we need
 - C. What we need is the word of God, the bread of life
 - D. We need to hear the law of God, the commands of Christ, that we may be made aware of our sinfulness and need for salvation
 - E. We need to hear the gospel, that we may be brought to repentance from sin and faith in Christ, and that we may be kept in the faith to the end, with a sure hope in the return of Christ and our resurrection from the dead to be with Him forever
 - F. We need to the law of God, the commands of Christ again, that we may know what it is to love God and to love people, to be taught to obey everything that the Lord Jesus has commanded

- II. FIG. The Parts of the Body Are Joined Together
4:16 joined and knit together OR joined and held together
LIT. The Individual Saints Are Joined into the One Church
4:12 for the perfecting of the saints
 - A. You may have this word in your translation as “to equip” or “to prepare.” Please see that this is not necessarily the right translation of that word.
 1. “To equip” or “to prepare” is not an old, well-established translation, but is a 20th-century innovation
 - a) 1568 Bishop’s Bible - To the gathering together of the saintes
 - b) 1587 Geneva Bible - For the repairing of the Saintes
 - c) 1611 King James Version - For the perfecting of the saints
 - (1) This translation prevailed for a long time, and is still in some of the translations today
 - (2) Listen to someone from the 1600s explain what he understands the KJV to mean by “to perfect the saints” (James Ferguson 1621-1667)
 - (a) to perfect them, that is, to bring them out of that disorderly, disjointed, and confused . . . condition wherein they are, and to fix them in a well-ordered, compact, spiritual frame and state, which is

attained when they are joined to Christ by faith, and one to another by love

- d) 1885 Revised Version - for the perfecting of the saints
- e) 1901 American Standard Version - for the perfecting of the saints
- f) The translation did not become “to equip the saints” until the 1946 Revised Standard Version of the NT
- g) The ESV says “to equip the saints.” The ESV is a revision of the RSV!
- h) The 1971 NASB picked up “equip” but put in the noun form “the equipping of the saints”
- i) The 1974 NIV used “to prepare God’s people”

B. See what a right translation would be

1. Directly from the scriptures

- a) 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 [ESV united NIV perfectly united]** in the same mind and in the same judgment.
- b) Ephesians 4:16 joined and knit together ESV, NIV joined and held together NIV

2. From an earlier generation: 1600s

- a) John Trapp (1601-1699): for the jointing of them whom the devil hath dislocated
- b) Matthew Poole (1624-1679): the knitting together and compacting them more and more, both in nearer union to Christ their Head by faith, and to their fellow members by love

C. The right concept being, then, that the body is “joined and held together”

- 1. fitted and joined
- 2. knit or held

D. I urge you, then, whether your translation says “prepare” or “equip” or “perfect,” that you understand the meaning to be “joining and holding together”

- III. FIG. The Joining Together Is By the Joints OR At the Joints
 4:16 joined and knit together through every joint
 LIT. The Joining of the Saints Into the One Church is Done Through the Ministers Christ Gives
 4:11 apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers for the perfecting of the saints
- A. we are joined to
 - 1. Christ through faith in Him: How did we come to know of Him and believe on Him?
 - 2. we are joined to one another through love
 - a) how did we come to love one another?
 - b) how do we grow in love for one another?
 - B. we are made to fit; and we are actually connected
 - C. of course it is not ONLY these certain kinds of ministers that do any of this work of joining the saints together
 - 1. they do it publicly and officially and primarily
 - 2. any Christian may do it privately and unofficially and secondarily
 - a) let a wife ask her husband at home
 - b) let the grandmother and mother teach Timothy the scriptures from his earliest childhood
 - c) yet consider that what they are teaching came through the apostles and prophets in the first place!
- IV. FIG. The Joints Also Carry Nourishment to Every Part
 4:16 through every joint of supply, according to the effective working in the measure of every part
 LIT. The Ministers Christ Gives Work to Serve Every Saint the Word of God from Christ
 4:12 for the work of the ministry
- A. how did the nourishing word of God come to us?
 - 1. not directly, but through the ministers Christ gives
 - B. Do you object that you do not need pastors and teachers; you can get your nourishment directly from the Bible
 - 1. okay, the bible came through the apostles and prophets
 - 2. did you really come to where you are with no influence of a pastor?
 - C. do you object to this doctrine of the Word of God being served to you by mere men rather than receiving it directly from Christ?
 - 1. do you object to receiving your food that way?
 - 2. do you object to receiving your clothing that way?
 - 3. do not object to receiving your nourishment in the Word of God that way
- V. FIG. When Every Part Is Nourished, the Body Is Edified (Caused to Grow)
 4:16 causes growth of the body, the edifying of itself in love

LIT. When Every Saint Receives from Christ the Word of God, the Whole Church Is Edified (Built Up)

4:12 for the edifying of the body of Christ

CONCLUSION

The Head Provides the Necessary Nourishment to the Parts of the Body
Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ Gives The Word of God to His Individual Saints

The Parts of the Body Are Joined Together
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The Joining Together Is By the Joints OR At the Joints
This Joining of the Saints Into the One Church Is Done Through the Ministers Christ Gives

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The Ministers Christ Gives Work to Serve Every Saint the Word of God from Christ

When Every Part Is Nourished the Body Is Edified (Caused to Grow)
When Every Saint Receives from Christ the Word of God, the Whole Church Is Edified (Built Up)

Ephesians 4:11-12	Ephesians 4:16
He gave	Christ, from whom
for the perfecting of the saints	fitly joined together and compacted
apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers	by that which every joint supplieth
for the work of the ministry	according to the effectual working in the measure of every part
for the edifying of the body of Christ	maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love

Ephesians 4:12	Ephesians 4:16
G2677 <i>katartismon</i>	G4883 <i>sunarmologoumenon</i> Hodge: to bind together the several parts of any thing
	G4822 <i>sumbibazo</i>
G40 <i>hagios</i> saints	
	through every joint of the supply
G2041 <i>ergon</i>	G1753 <i>energeia</i>
G1248 <i>diakonia</i>	
G1519 G3619 <i>eis oikodome</i> unto edifying	G1519 G3619 <i>eis oikodome</i> unto edifying
G4983 <i>soma</i> body	G4983 <i>soma</i> body
G5547 <i>Christos</i>	G5547 <i>Christos</i>

joined

JRY

illus. working with wood joints

illus. joint replacement surgery

Hodge:

to bind together the several parts of any thing

It is used of a building (Eph 2:21)

and of the human body

In both cases there is a union of parts fitted to each other.

knit together ESV, NIV held together KJV compacted

Hodge:

to bring together, to convene, to join

It is properly used of bringing persons together, so as to reconcile them, or to unite them in friendship. It therefore serves to explain the preceding term. The church is figuratively a body composed of many joints or members; and literally, it is a company of believers intimately united with each other. Hence the apostle uses both terms in reference to it.

by what every joint supplies

RWP: literally “through every joint of the supply”

Hodge:

through every joint of supply, which then means, through every joint or band which is the means of supply; through every joint for supply, that is, which is the means or channel of the divine influence.

There is an obvious distinction between “the bands” and “the aid” here spoken of.

-The latter is the divine life or Holy Spirit communicated to all parts of the church;

-the former are the various spiritual gifts and offices which are made the channels or means of this divine communication

see Colossians 2:19 the body receiving nourishment supplies through the joints or bands.

Gill:

the author of the union of the members of Christ's body to one another is the Spirit of God, by him they are baptized into one body; the cement or bond of this union is the grace of love wrought in their souls by him; and the means are the word and ordinances, and these convey a supply from Christ the head to every member, suitable to the part it bears in the body, according to the energy of the Spirit, who makes all effectual:

Ferguson:

spiritual joints and sinews, whereby we are to understand every thing that joineth believers with Christ, and among themselves; and they are either joints and bonds of inward union and communion, to wit, the Spirit, on Christ's part and faith and love on ours; or of external union, to wit, the word, sacraments, and those functions and offices which Christ hath appointed in his house; yea, and also all natural and civil relations, when they are sanctified; and they are all called, "joints of subministration, or supply" (for the words read better so than as they are rendered, "by that which every joint supplieth,") to show, that those do serve, not only to conjoin us with Christ, and among ourselves, but also for channels and instruments of communication, by which spiritual nourishment and matter of growth is conveyed both unto ourselves and others.

it is communicated unto the members "in the measure of every part" or member, that is, such a measure as Christ judgeth sufficient, and more convenient to every member

Bayne:

How this can be a duty belonging to private Christians, seeing they are the building, the ministers of the word are the builders.

Every private Christian is an instrument, privately doing that which the minister doth in public, by virtue of the bond of brotherhood, or some more near relation, as the husband, father, master, build those that are subject to them, because these bonds do tie them hereunto.

Ferguson:

The word "edifying" is borrowed from masons, whose great work is, having prepared the stones apart, to join them most firmly, both to the foundation and among themselves.

There are three main concepts taught by considering the church as the body of Christ

1. the vital connection of every member with Christ the head

- a. Colossians 2:18-19 Let no one cheat you of your reward, taking delight in false humility and worship of angels, intruding into those things which he has not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind, (19) and not holding fast to the Head, from whom all the body, nourished and knit together by joints and ligaments, grows with the increase that is from God.
2. the function of every member individually as the Spirit works in each one
 - a. 1 Corinthians 12:11-12 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills. (12) For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.
3. the role of the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers in the maturing of the whole body

As we understand lessons from our Lord on His church, we don't want to make a mistake in either direction

1. to ignore some aspect of this truth
2. to import something where it doesn't belong