



Sunday, January 28, 2018
Pastor Don Denyes

Introduction to Ephesians 4:11-16

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones was a long-time pastor of the Westminster Chapel in London. In reflecting on this passage, he once said, “what matters in the church... is not what our peculiar calling or office is, or the particular grace which has been given to us according to the measure of the gift of Christ; what matters is that every one of us should be perfect in that position. Each one of us is meant to be filled with His life. Each member does not contain the same amount, but each is full.”

It seems in the life of the church, that we can too often place special emphasis on one calling or office over another, in which case some are left unengaged because their calling is not valued. Like a muscle group that is left unexercised for months on end, these people find themselves to be an atrophy in the church. The body is not growing into maturity, because some are not using their Christ-filled gifts to serve others or to build up the body. In this passage, Paul reminds us that each member is valuable to the body and in fact, the body cannot grow into maturity without each person functioning as they ought.

Context

In the first section of Ephesians 4, Paul describes what unity in the church ought to look like and the reason for its existence. Here in this section, Paul is unpacking that further by describing the diversity of gifts which Christ has given, but reminds them that the diversity of gifts is designed to build up the unified body of Christ toward maturity. All of this talk about unity and diversity will be further unpacked as Paul, in chapters 4-6, begins to describe behaviors consistent with our profession of faith in Christ and our identity as the unified body of Christ here on earth.

Read and Reflect *(Use this section to write down any thoughts you had on the sermon. Make sure to note any questions you had about something in the passage or in the sermon.)*

“Road to Maturity”

Read Ephesians 4:11-16

God deposits His fullness into us. We develop it, allowing it to grow out of us.

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| 11 | Preparation | initial step |
| 12 | Edification | immediate result |
| | - Build someone up | |
| | - Next step in spiritual walk | |
| 13 | Maturation | ultimate objective |
| | - Difficulties don't make us but reveal us. | |
| | - Are we changing/growing? | |
| | - God is committed to doing this. | |
| | - God is more concerned with holiness than happiness | |
| | - Unfortunately, we are prone to wander | |
| | - Danger 1: lead away from the gospel | |
| | - Danger 2: deceitful teachers | |
| 15 | We will speak the truth in love and we will grow more like Christ | |
| 16 | The whole body will fit together perfectly. | |
| | We must all play our roles | |

Jesus fills the universe! (4:10)

Does He fill you?

Time to grow up!

Discuss

- 1) What are the signs of a spiritually immature person or church?

- 2) If the purpose of equipping is so that all Christians participate in the work of ministry and building up the body, then all Christians should have an area of ministry in which they work or someone that they are building up. What areas of ministry are you working in (or are currently being equipped to work in)?

- 3) Who is someone who has built into your life as a Christian—helping you grow in faith and knowledge? Who are you building into?

- 4) Have you ever known someone who is “tossed...and blown here and there by every wind of teaching”? What does that look like? And how can you speak the truth in love to someone like that?

- 5) How can our small group contribute to building up the whole body of Christ at South Church? In what ways are we already doing that? In what areas do we need to grow?