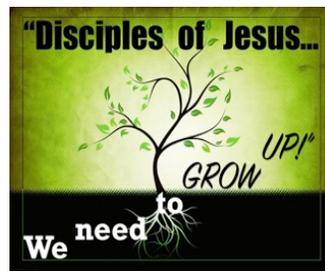


“Disciples of Jesus ... We need to GROW UP!”

Part 21: “Ministry Gifts ... the key to a healthy Body!”

Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:11-16; I Peter 4:10-11



Introduction: **“Isn’t she beautiful!!”**

It is affection and adoration that our Father in heaven desires to produce in disciples of Jesus ... toward HIM and toward His Body, the Church.

God is glorified when every disciple of Jesus uses the gifts entrusted to them by the Spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ.

Ephesians 3:21: “ ... to Him be glory in the Church and in Christ Jesus ... ”

The true Church stands as a beacon of light to a dark world.

I. God’s grace distributes spiritual gifts to every member of Christ’s Body.

I Peter 4:10: “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace ... ”

Romans 12:3-6: “Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them ... ” (vs. 6).

Ephesians 4:4-7: “But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (vs. 7).

I Corinthians 12:12-27: “But God has so composed the Body ... that there may be no division ... but that the members may have the same care for one another” (vss. 24-25).

“ Spiritual gifts” are “ ministry gifts”!!

Matthew 25:14-30 ... Every part of the Body is necessary and every part of the Body has a gift to offer in service to the Body.

We avoid pride and jealousy by remembering that every gift is received by GRACE from the Master.

False humility is a denial of the truth that God has given gifts to EVERY disciple of Christ.

II. God directs the use of His Spirit’s gifts within the Body.

Anyone can be a member of the visible church, but only those who are born again by the Spirit are members of the TRUE Church.

The FOCUS is on the Body and its Head, not on the individual.

Ephesians 4:11-16: “ ... to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the Body of Christ” (vs. 12).

Sound doctrine does not hinder fruitful ministry but produces it!

Each part does its work when we understand that we are all serving Christ, no matter what our particular gift may be.

Much of the visible church is floundering today because they have been taught to believe their focus is supposed to be on the world rather than on the Body of Christ.

It is only when the Bride is beautiful that her testimony about her Bridegroom is empowered by the testimony of our life together.

III. God derives glory from the exercise of His Spirit’s gifts through the Body of Christ.

I Peter 4:10-11: “ ... in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ ... ” (vs. 11).

The simple beauty of a gathering of disciples of Jesus Christ has the potential to bring glory to the God who gave His Son to redeem us!

Hebrews 10:19-25: “And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together ... ” (vss. 24-25).

Heidelberg Catechism #55: “ ... that each one must feel himself bound to use his gifts readily and cheerfully for the advantage and welfare of other members .”

As part of the Body of Christ it is our responsibility and calling to “ adorn the Gospel ,” to present the Church as the radiant Bride of Christ!