

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

"Stable Christians"

Ephesians 4:14-16

Introduction

1. God has given gifts to the Church (v. 11). It is part of "walking worthy" (v. 1) to give heed to this gift giving by our Lord.

2. These gifts are a key to the development of the Church. They also mediate between the head and the body. Those who minister must acknowledge their divine position. Those who receive ministry should accept the gifts (Jn 13:20).

3. Long range, the gifts perfect the body, bring unity and conformity to Christ (vv. 12, 13). Immediately the gifts provide ministry and edification (v. 12). This immediate concern of the gifts is to bring doctrinal stability. There is to be constant progress in the body. This is done by:

1. NEGATIVE CONCERNS v. 14

a. No longer babes

This is a final clause (Ἰνα hina). It is spoken of Christians generally. They are to cut their eye-teeth and grow (cf. Heb. 5:11-14). Baby Christianity is abnormal.

b. No longer unsettled

The verb "tossed" (κλυδωνίζόμενοι kludonizomenoi) suggests a ship without a rudder. As waves billow the unstable believer is constantly (περιφερόμενοι periferomenoi present tense) moved. Every blow of doctrine unnerves this kind of believer (cf. Heb. 13:9; James 1:6). What a contrast with the mature man (v. 13).

c. No longer deceived

The term "sleight" (κυβεία kubeia) means cube or dice, hence "dice playing." It involves an artifice or deception. So the word "craftiness" notes what is characteristic of error. It is all designed to mislead. Paul uses a word here which is only used elsewhere once (6:11). The craftiness is towards a "deliberate system" of deceit (πρός τὴν μεθοδεΐαν pros ten methodeian). Surely, this work is Satanic (cf. 6:11).

2. POSITIVE CONCERNS vv. 15,16

a. Holding

The verb "speaking truth" (ἀληθεύοντες aletheuontes) is better rendered "holding truth." Here is true Christian devotion and commitment to

truth. The Scriptures never diminish truth. It must be done "in love," not bitterness nor prejudice.

b. Growing

He is the Head; we are His body. There is to be growth (εἰς eis) "unto" (not "into") Him who is the Head. It is a special way to convey conformity to Christ (cf. v. 13). The "in all things" speaks of all parts or elements of our growth. The more one grows "unto Him," there comes an ever closer cohesion of faith with one another.

c. Adjusting

All is centered in the Head. The body members adjust together from Him. This is a process as the present tense notes. It speaks of harmony.

d. Compacting

This verb notes inter-adaptation, a bringing together (συναρμολογούμενον sunarmologoumenon). Solidity is also a key word as the verb "compact" affirms (συμβιβάζομενον sumbibazomenon). Members get "put together" firmly and appropriately.

Note: The adjusting and compacting is accomplished: 1) by the spiritual supply of every joint (believer), 2) by the proportion (κατ' ἐνέργειαν) of vital power which each part provides. Here is a divine regulatory agency! Thus every part is absolutely essential.

e. Increasing

The fact that the body increases (τὴν αὐξήσιν ten auxesin] is evidence that the body is a living organism. Its growth is due to vital forces within.

f. Edifying

Love is the element in which edification takes place. The body is expected to be built up (οἰκοδομήν oikodomen).

Conclusion What is your responsibility in the body? Is the body anemic because of you? Are you growing up unto the Head? Is the body receiving the proper spiritual inflow from your life? Happy are they who positively assist in love the body unto the Head, our lovely Lord. Amen.