

## SERMON

*Grace Street Fellowship, Dr. Jim Burgin, pastor*

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Sunday, September 30th, 2018

Sermon Series: "Heartbeat"

Sermon # 5 – **The Fruitful Life**– Ephesians 4:11-16 / John 15: 8 - 17

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11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

### I LOVE THE CHURCH

#### WHO DIRECTS THE CHURCH?

1. Verse 11 – Christ himself gave . . .
2. Verse 12 – the body of Christ . . .
3. Verse 13 – the whole measure of the fullness of Christ
4. Verse 15 – Christ is the head
5. Verse 16 – We are the body of Christ.

#### HOW HAS THE LORD ORGANIZED THE CHURCH? (offices/blueprints)

1. Apostles –
  - a. Means "messenger," or one who is sent. The verb form means – to send someone with a message.
  - b. The New Testament uses this word in two ways:
    - i. technical, narrow sense referring to an office of the church – the twelve apostles and the apostle Paul; James, the Lord's brother, was an apostle; These early followers of Christ laid the structural foundation of the church;
    - ii. The second use of apostle refers to people with the marvelous gift of being able to go into areas where the word of Christ is not known. There are people today who can enter a heathen community, a pagan and idolatrous community, and in the power of the Holy Spirit gather a band of converts and organize a church, which flourishes under God.

2. Prophets – We commonly associate a prophet with predictions of future events, but this is not his primary function. A New Testament Prophet is someone who proclaims the Word of God in a way that helps other understand it. Perhaps today, seminary professors would qualify in this role.
3. Evangelists – Bearers of good news. People especially gifted to share God’s love in a way that leads people to Christ. Think Billy Graham, for example. All of us are commissioned as witnesses, but the Lord has gifted some with the supernatural gift of evangelism;
4. Pastor/Teachers – The pastor/Teacher is one office and not two. It is one office with two ministries. Pastor means shepherd, indicating that the Local church is a flock of sheep, and that it is his responsibility to lead, feed, and protect the sheep. This happens through the Word of God. God’s Word is both 1) the food, which feeds the sheep, and 2) the staff, which guides the sheep. No amount of entertainment can replace God’s Word in the life of a church.

#### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH LEADERS?

1. To do all the work of the church? – NO. Pastors and teachers – perfect the work of the saints, do the work of the ministry, and build up the body of Christ. Are you growing spiritually? Is the work of the ministry happening – hospital visits, shut-ins, prayer ministry, and so on; Is the church growing?
2. To equip the church for the work of the ministry – YES! Equipping has the idea of “to put right.” This ancient Greek word was used to describe setting broken bones or mending nets. The image here is of a pastor driving a bus, where everyone else in the bus just follows passively behind.
3. The Pastor/Teachers of the church are player coaches, designed to equip the saints (yes, that is you) to do the carry the work of the ministry.

#### WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THE CHURCH?

1. To build up the body of Christ
  - a. We are a hospital for sinners, not a hotel for saints. We do not shoot our wounded. There is a balm in Gilead.
  - b. We are spiritual doctors, mentors, coaches – giving spiritual B12 shots, getting people off the sidelines of faith and into the game.
  - c. So that all of us will know our commission and be able to live it out – We are to make disciples. So that all people can here and come to a saving knowledge of Christ – Not to build up the body of Grace Street, though that’s good, but to affect the Kingdom.
  - d. We are an inside-out church.
2. To help each one of more and us to grow more like him – the mature body of Him who is our head. Our head and our heart and our head hears his voice and follows his leadership. If I want my arm to move, all I have to do is think it. If your body does not do what the head tells it to, you’re sick.

#### A LIVING CHURCH PRODUCES FRUIT (John 15:8-16)

1. FRUIT OF LOVE – LOVE AS I HAVE LOVED YOU. LOVE LAYS DOWN ITS LIFE;
2. FRUIT OF JOY – NOT HAPPINESS, BUT JOY IN ALL CIRCUMSTANCES;
3. FRUIT OF WISDOM – NO LONGER SERVANTS, BUT FRIENDS

#### STAY CONNECTED TO THE VINE