

Maintaining a Healthy Body

Ephesians 4:11-16

Two Concepts of Focus

The first concept is “the equipping of the saints for the work of service” and the second concept is “the proper working of each individual part.” The result of these working together is a loving church body containing mature believers. It is a body that will be able to easily accommodate and assimilate new growth in the form of new believers, new members and new ministries without being thrown off balance, but will be able to stay on course.

Nutrients for Maintaining Health

What the church or body of Christ is.

Eph 1:22-23 It takes the entire church to be His body in its fullness.

We see Jesus displaying the power of God by ministering to others and submitting to the will of His Father. He brought men and women out from the domain of darkness and into the kingdom of light; the kingdom of God. He made us witnesses to everyone of the transforming, life-changing power of Almighty God through the indwelling Spirit of Jesus. John 14:12 He said that “... greater works than these will he [we] do;...”

The first essential nutrient He gives to the church for this purpose is gifted leaders.

He gives the church men, known as evangelists, who can powerfully preach the gospel and see local churches birthed and growing. They may stay for a few months or years. Paul in Acts 18 and 19 acting as an evangelist to see churches started and stayed with them until they were mature enough to carry on with leaders of their own.

He also gives pastor-teachers who can shepherd the church to full maturity by effectively teaching the word of God. These are men whom God has gifted and called to be able to understand the truths and doctrines in the Scriptures, as well as be able to teach them so that the church can understand them and apply them so that you can face life’s challenges with confidence that Jesus is guiding you through it.

2 Co 13:9 “**that you be made complete.**” Eph 4:12; “equipping the saints for the work of service.” Being perfectly ready to handle any situation that you encounter. 1 Ti 3:16-17. Eph 2:10 “we are His workmanship, created... for good works.” Ro 8:29.

A healthy church is not tricked into following every new church fad. A healthy church won’t be changing its mission statement every few years, but will stick to the time tested pattern seen in the New Testament. The challenge is in living it week in and week out. That is what we as elders want to help you to be able to do; day after day until you meet your Savior face-to-face.

Exercise for Maintaining Health

A healthy body needs a good diet and exercise. The members of the body need to convert that food into energy for good works.

1 Corinthians 12 It takes every part to be a complete body. Two key aspects

The 1st one: God doesn't make mistakes in giving specific gifts and assignments. The concept is straight forward: without each part, you don't have a complete body.

The 2nd aspect: no one part is more important than another. Don't get jealous of someone who has a role in the church that is more visible.

1 Co 12:27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. Whatever your spiritual gift is, God gave it to you to help complete this local body. The only way that we can have a fully functioning body is if every person performs their function.

We are not a programmatic church. We don't have lots of structured ministries. We provide opportunities for you to use your spiritual gifts by supplying you with times for fellowship We participate in global evangelism by supporting missionaries

Our ministries grow out of needs that you as members express. This is how our church exercises its body parts to get them in good working condition.

A Healthy Body

Eph 4:11-16 is "**the building up of itself in love.**" If we as leaders are properly equipping you with the truth and providing you with the opportunities and proper environment to exercise your gifts, then we should have what we need to become a healthy body of Christ that displays the characteristics of Christ to one another and the world beyond us. But if we are to be a truly complete and fully equipped body, then every member needs to do its part or perform its role.

If you see a need for an individual or the church as a whole, then assume that God has allowed you to see it. The goal is that we will be Christ's voice, hands and feet to everyone whom we are with.

Jesus met physical needs. We can meet them too. Jesus met emotional and spiritual needs. We can meet them by applying the Biblical knowledge and wisdom we have gained from the weekly sermons, Bible studies or personal devotions to their need.

1 Thess 4:9-10 "Now as to the love of the brethren, you have no need for *anyone* to write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; for indeed you do practice it toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, to excel still more."

"By this **all men will know** that you are My disciples,
if you have love for one another." - John 13:35