

# What a Congregation Owes Itself

Eph. 4:15,16

## Introduction:

- A. Good to think of what congregation owes others.
  - 1. Gospel to all.
  - 2. Relief of needy.
- B. Good to think of *obligations* of congregation to itself.

## Discussion:

### I. Self-Examination. (cf. 2 Cor. 13:5).

- A. Notice the verse in context.
- B. Standard of examination – "the faith" or gospel. (Rom. 1:16; Gal. 1:23).
- C. To see if we are within "the faith".
  - 1. Congregationally.
  - 2. Individually. (cf. 1 Tim. 5:8).

### II. Self-Edification (Eph. 4:16).

- A. Through Scriptural Education.
  - 1. Teaching and preaching. (2 Tim. 4:1-5).
  - 2. Study and searching. (2 Tim. 2:15; Acts 17:11)
  - 3. Privately and publicly. (Acts 20:20).
- B. Through Scriptural Participation.
  - 1. In the worship of the church. (1 Cor. 14:15-17,30-31,40).
  - 2. In the work of the church. (Eph. 4:16).
  - 3. In all spiritual exercise - learn by doing. (Heb. 5:12-14).
- C. Through Scriptural Multiplication. (Acts 6:1,7; 9:31; 12:24).
  - 1. By converting the alien. (Acts 3:19).
  - 2. By converting the erring. (Jas. 5:19,20 KJV)
- D. Through Scriptural Organization. (Tit. 1:5; Acts 14:23)
  - 1. Holy Spirit made elders and deacons .(cf. Acts 20:28)
    - a. H. S. makes them like it makes Christians through the word.
    - b. H. S. gave instruction through Paul as to qualifications, selection and appointment of each.
  - 2. Scripturally organized congregations are more efficient.
    - a. Distribution of the work load (Acts 6:2-4).
    - b. Places someone in charge - "Everybody's business is nobody's business."
      - (1) Elders with supervising experience over whole congregation (1 Tim. 3:4, 5)
      - (2) Deacons with supervising experience over certain works (1 Tim 3:12)
    - c. Avoids a vacuum often filled by unscriptural and unqualified make-shift leadership.

### III. Self-Purification

- A. Individually (cf. 1 Tim. 5:22; 2 Cor. 6:17).
- B. Congregationally
  - 1. By uncompromising teaching. (cf. Gal. 2:14; 1 Tim. 5:20).
  - 2. By care in whom receive into fellowship. (Acts 9:26-28; Rom. 14:1).
  - 3. By putting away certain ones. (1 Cor. 5:6-7,13; Tit. 3:10).

## Conclusion:

- A. Are we really examining ourselves?
- B. Are we really edifying ourselves?
- C. Are we really purifying ourselves?