

What Every Joint Supplies

Eph. 4:16

Introduction:

- A. Jesus established the church and set it up as it pleased him in the first century.
 - 1. He gave it the varied personnel needed to fulfill its mission in the world.
 - a. Eph. 4:8, 11-16
 - b. Rom. 12:4-8
 - c. 1 Cor. 12:18, 17-30
 - 2. Some personnel were miraculously endowed for revelation and confirmation.
 - 3. Others did not need miraculous endowment.
 - 4. All Christians need to be aware of what the “joints” are along with their functions.
 - 5. Since God set “joints” in as it pleased Him, we dare not add or remove any from the body.
- B. Let us consider what each joint listed in our text supplies to the body – with deacons mentioned elsewhere.

Discussion:

I. Apostles and Prophets

- A. They had miraculous power to confirm their claim to revelation (Mark 16:20)
 - 1. The apostles could impart miraculous power to others (Acts 8:18; Rom. 1:11)
 - 2. The gift of prophecy was one of several such imparted gifts (1 Cor 13:2)
- B. They supplied the revelation by which the whole body is guided (Eph. 3:3-5)
 - 1. Their work began with the spoken word and continues through the written word.
 - 2. Their work was needed only until revelation was complete (1 Cor. 13:8-10; Jude 3)

II. Evangelists

- A. They are simply “preacher(s) of the gospel” (Strong)
 - 1. “Euaggelion” = the gospel (good news)
 - 2. “Euaggelizo” = to preach the gospel (proclaim good news)
 - 3. “Euaggelistes” = a preacher of the gospel (proclaimer of good news)
- B. Their work is preaching the gospel to the world and the church.
 - 1. The world needs their work (Mark 16:15)
 - 2. The church needs their work (2 Tim. 4:1-5; our text)

III. Pastors

- A. They are the same as Elders and Bishops.
 - 1. Acts 20:17, 28
 - 2. 1 Pet. 5:1-4
 - 3. Tit. 1:5, 7 with 1 Tim. 3:1,2
- B. They supply care, experienced leadership and oversight.
 - 1. Pastors/shepherds emphasizes their care and protection of the flock (cf. Heb. 13:17)
 - 2. Elders/presbyters emphasizes their experience and maturity of leadership.
 - 3. Bishops/overseers emphasize their authority or rule in the church.

IV. Teachers

- A. While teaching is common to all the above, they are a separate class of teachers.
 - 1. They are mentioned as distinct from the others (cf. Acts 13:1; 1 Cor. 12:28; Heb. 5:12)
 - 2. They are cautioned about the seriousness of their work (Jas. 3:1ff)
- B. They supply teaching in various situations where especially qualified teachers are need.

V. Deacons

- A. These are not listed in Ephesians 4, but are mentioned elsewhere with bishops (Phil. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3)
- B. These are special servants whose work is determined by the meaning their title:
 - 1. They are attendants, errand runners, table waiters (Strong)
 - 2. They are “one(s) who execute the commands of another” (Thayer)
 - 3. Their mention in connection with bishops indicates special servants to the elders.

Conclusion:

- A. These along with all the saints are the joints that make up and edify the body of Christ.
 - 1. No joint edifies unless it supplies its part of the work.
 - 2. No joint is qualified nor expected to supply every part of the work.
- B. All are needed for the body to function as God intended and to edify itself in love – no appendixes.