

The Work of the Church

Eph. 4:11-16

Introduction:

- A. The Lord's church is special.
 - 1. Here by a special plan (Eph. 3:10, 11)
 - 2. Here by a special purchase (Eph. 5:25; Acts 20:28).
 - 3. Here by special design (Eph. 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 12:18)
- B. The Lord's church has a specialized and restricted work to do in the world.

Discussion:

I. Its Work Is Restricted by Scriptural Authority.

- A. All divine authority is found in the Scriptures.
 - 1. Scriptures complete (John 16:13; 2 Tim. 3:16,17; Jude 3).
 - 2. Scriptures restrictive (1 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 1:8,9; 2 John 9-11).
- B. All divine authority is expressed in either general or specific terms.
 - 1. OT - Gopher wood (Gen. 6); Sacrifice of Isaac (Gen. 22).
 - 2. NT - Singing (Eph. 5:19); Go (Mark 16:15).
- C. All divine authority is recorded in three forms.
 - 1. Direct Statement (Mt. 4:4, 7, 10; 1 Cor. 11:25; Mk. 16:16).
 - 2. Examples (Phil. 4:9; Acts 20:7).
 - 3. Necessary Inference (Mt. 22:31-33).

II. Its Work Is Restricted to the Interest of Saints.

- A. Making saints (Matt. 28:18-20; Phil. 4:15-17).
- B. Edifying saints (Eph. 4:16; 1 Cor. 14:26)
- C. Relieving saints (1 Cor. 16:2; Acts 11:29; 2 Cor. 8, 9).

III. Its Work Is Restricted from Purely Secular Activities.

- A. Differences in what we do as church and as individuals.
 - 1. Difference in one's own things and the Lord's (Ax 3:6; 4:4; 1 Cor. 11:19,20).
 - 2. Difference in funding own work and Lord's (cf. Eph. 4:28; 1 Cor. 16:1-2).
- B. Other arrangements for good works rather than church in world (cf. 1 Tim. 5:16).
 - 1. Home, State, Business, Social, Health, Recreational – not combined into church.
 - 2. These can do their work better – but church can do what no secular institution can do.
- C. Church is a spiritual institution with a spiritual mission (1 Tim. 3:15).

Conclusion:

- A. Ill: Wife's China and Silverware – not for everyday use – special.
- B. The church is special – let keep it so by restricting its work to scriptural authority.