

# Equipping the Saints

## Ephesians 4.11-14

### Positions

- God builds the church *on* the apostles and prophets
  - Ephesians 2.20-21
  - God has preserved for us their teaching in the Bible
    - The foundation is absolutely sure – no matter the issue (trust it!)
- God builds the church *with* the evangelists and pastor-teachers
  - Process – bringing them in and then caring for their souls by feeding them the Scriptures
  - You don't remember what you ate for lunch last Thursday, but you remember that you ate – not every sermon is filet mignon
  - The key is the application – obedience is the primary organ of knowledge
  - Be sure – God is the one who builds the church! (Matthew 16)

### People

- The saints are the saved
  - Only one way a person becomes a saint – a miracle wrought by God Himself in our lives
  - Ephesians 2.8-9
- The saints are sent to serve
  - Ephesians 2.10 – prepared for good works
  - Common misconception: pastors do the work of ministry
    - Leadership within the church is called to equip people to do ministry
    - You know people the leaders do not
    - You see sights the leaders do not
    - You do things the leaders do not
    - You live places the leaders do not

### Purpose

- Transformation of life is the **ONLY** goal (v.13)
  - Not bigger churches, not bigger buildings, but bigger Christians
  - What does this look like?
    - A person who believes, thinks, feels, acts, speaks, and lives like Jesus
    - Allegiance – Affection – Action
    - Happens because those people **KNOW** (*epignosko*) Jesus
    - Can't stop there – a “full-grown person” can reproduce his / her life into others
- Opposition will arise (v.14)
  - Clarity without losing compassion – compassion without losing clarity

Questions for Discussion:

1. Who is the person with the most spiritual influence in your life? Why did you choose that person? What is it about his / her life that you want to imitate?
2. In the sermon, we pointed out that God builds the church on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (Ephesians 2.19-21). Why do you think God chooses to build the church on the Bible? Read Psalm 19.7-14. What does David say about the Scripture that pushes us to build our lives on the Scripture as well?
3. Reread Ephesians 2.8-10. In the passage, we see an important order of salvation first with good works that follow. Why do you think people get this backwards sometimes (trying to earn salvation on the basis of works)? Why do you think God chose language like “saints” (“holy ones”) to describe people who are saved by Christ? Looking at your own life, what kind of good works has God uniquely equipped and sent you to do because you have experienced the salvation that comes through Jesus?
4. Reread Ephesians 4.13. Paul strings together several phrases to talk about transformation. Which one immediately sticks out in your mind? Why? If someone asked you what it looked like to be a “full-grown Christian,” what kinds of descriptions would you use? What role do you have in becoming a “full-grown Christian” as you described it? What role does the church have? What role do you have in helping others become a “full-grown Christian?”
5. What kind of cultural winds are blowing these days against the church (v.14)? In what areas have you seen the church (whether our church specifically or another church, or the church in general) lack clarity or compassion? What would it look like in that area to hold on to both biblical clarity and biblical compassion? How do you need to represent that this week to someone?