

WHAT THE CHURCH NEEDS TODAY
Ephesians 3:8-11

Introduction:

1. The church of the Lord's is perfect on the Divine side.
 - a. It was purchased by the perfect sacrifice - the blood of Christ.
 - b. It has a perfect pattern, purpose and plea.
2. The human side of the church is imperfect because the members are imperfect in their knowledge, understanding, and obedience.
3. The needs of the church change with the times.
4. What are the greatest needs of the church today?

Discussion:

- I. THE CHURCH NEEDS SINCERE PRAYER!
 - A. God wants us to be a praying people (1 Thess. 5:17).
 - B. The church was born out of a prayer meeting (Acts 1:14).
 - C. The church continued to pray (Acts 2:42; 4:31; 12:5).
 - D. Christians rely too much on our own skills, planning, and wisdom and not enough on God's (Prov. 3:5,6).
- II. THE CHURCH NEEDS A CLEAR BIBLICAL CONCEPT OF WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE ARE ABOUT AS A CHURCH!
 - A. We are God's own special people (Tit. 3:11-14; 1 Pet. 2:9,10).
 1. Christians are a unique people in a sin darkened world (Phil. 2:15).
 2. We must not let the attitudes of others keep us from being what we are.
 - a. The sectarian world tries to put us in a denominational mold.
 - b. The secular world tries to write us off as fanatics, impractical, and deluded.
 - B. Do we understand we are the one true church revealed in the New Testament?
 1. If we are not, there is no reason for our existence!
 2. Let us let it be known who we are by word and deed!
 3. There is a movement to go away from non-denominational, New Testament Christianity in the Lord's church today.

- a. They want us to be the “Church of Christ.”
 - b. We are “the churches of Christ” (Rom. 16:16).
 - 4. We are pre-denominational; the Lord’s church began before denominations were thought of (Acts 2).
 - 5. If we plant the same seed today, we will grow the same crop that was grown in the first century (Luke 8:11).
- C. We must press the plea for restoring first century Christianity.
 - a. Some brethren are rejecting it.
 - b. Many in the religious world are seeking it.

III. THE CHURCH TODAY NEEDS A FERVENT ZEAL FOR THE LOST!

- A. The New Testament church was intensely evangelistic (Mark 16:15; Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:14; 5:42; 6:7; 8:4).
- B. We have turned inward.
 - 1. Some have lost their evangelistic zeal because they think we are just another denomination.
 - 2. Some think “if we build it, they will come.”
 - 3. We have traded Gospel meetings for lectureships where we preach to decreasing numbers of ourselves.
 - 4. Whatever happened to “cottage meetings,” “Jule Miller Filmstrips,” etc?
- C. We must never forget the primary purpose of the church is that of our Lord - “to seek and save the lost!” (Luke 19:10).
 - 1. We have “Search,” “Gospel Broadcasting,” “House to House,” “Fishers of Men” and “Truth for the World” available - are we really using them?
 - 2. We must indoctrinate our members in “the faith” (Jude 3).
 - 3. Each member must become a missionary (Acts 8:4)!

IV. THE CHURCH NEEDS BROTHERLY LOVE AND UNITY!

- A. The Lord made love pre-eminent (John 13:34,35; 15:12,13).
- B. The early church enjoyed beautiful unity of heart and soul (Acts 4:32).
- C. We must strive for “the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace” (Eph. 4:1-3).
- D. We must learn to be tolerant of one another in areas of opinion.

Conclusion:

- 1. We must remember the church belongs to Jesus, not to us.
- 2. We must always keep our eyes on Jesus (Heb. 12:1,2).

