

Message Three
Being Perfected to Perfect Others

I. The ascended Christ led captive those taken captive and gave gifts to men (Eph. 4:8):

- A. The redeemed saints were once taken captive by Satan but have been saved by Christ's death and resurrection.
- B. The victorious ascended Christ conquered and overcame Satan and released us from sin and death.
- C. The gifts are the apostles, prophets, evangelists, and shepherds and teachers who by the resurrection life have been made gifts and given to Christ's Body for its building up (v. 11).

II. The gifts were given to perfect the saints unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ (vv. 11-12; Col. 1:28):

- A. Perfecting includes equipping and supplying the functions.
- B. Perfecting is for the purpose that all the perfected ones will be able to do the work of the ministry, to build up the Body of Christ.
- C. The building up of the church is not accomplished directly by the gifted ones but by the saints who have been perfected by the gifted ones:
 - 1. We all must learn to go forth to others, like the apostles, for the sake of spreading the gospel of the kingdom in the local churches.
 - 2. We all need to be perfected to speak for the Lord and to speak Him forth as the prophets did.
 - 3. We all need to be perfected to have the spirit of the gospel and to learn to speak the words of this life to others (Acts 5:20).
 - 4. We all can learn and be perfected to shepherd others in the way of teaching and to teach in a way of shepherding.

III. As we are being perfected in life, we can begin to perfect others in life also as we gather in small vital groups (Heb. 10:24-25):

- A. In the small groups we can pay attention to teaching and nurturing (Acts 2:42; 5:42; 20:20).
- B. As we daily pray, read the Word, learn the truth, and experience and labor on Christ, we will be furnished with a rich supply to share with others; then when we come together, we will be able to join with others to share our experiences in mutuality.
- C. The purpose of the vital groups is the increase, perfecting, and building up of the Body of Christ (2:46-47; Eph. 4:12).
- D. In the small groups we can exercise to care for and shepherd one another in love (John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:19-20).
- E. Through the mutual asking and answering of questions, all can be perfected (1 Tim. 4:15-16).
- F. Through the small vital groups we can live the normal church life, overcome the degradation of the church, and build up the Body of Christ.