

Southside Baptist Church
Sunday Morning – 1-8-23
A New Year Challenge
Equipping Believers to be Ready for...

1. Introduction:

a. Taking a look back:

- 1) Being Equipped with the truth of God's Word –
 - a) Why? –
- 2) Are you equipped with the truth to defend the faith?
 - a) Ephesians 4:12 –
- 3) Equipping is a two-way street.
- 4) Ephesians 4:11-12 – “perfecting” – to equip, to train

b. Here is my concern, my burden:

- 1) Think about this –
- 2) Can you see my concern for the church? For believers being ready?
- 3) Another illustration to consider –

c. We are the Church, the Body of Christ:

- 1) We do not call ourselves a team, we are the Body of Christ.
 - a) We are not playing a game once or twice a week, no we are engaged in spiritual warfare for the souls of men and women each day and YES, TRUTH matters therefore EQUIPPING is critical to being ready.
 - b) The designer of our game plan is God, so let's make sure we understand the plan.

2. God's game plan: Ephesians 4:11-16

a. BUT, this isn't a game, this is real life with a real eternity at stake.

- 1) Jesus died, that was real! He died for sin, that was necessary! On the third day He arose – that is the victory!
- 2) When Jesus rose from the grave, He gave gifts!
- 3) Guard what binds us together and Grow by using what makes us different.
- 4) Doctrine – set of truths that define what we believe.
- 5) Diversity – From the truths, the Body grows, multiplies and matures through various gifts given to each believer by the Holy Spirit. Through surrender each believer will discover the gift they have been given which has been purposefully, intentionally and specifically given for the growth of the believer and the Body of Christ.

3. To the Church God gave men these gifts: Ephesians 4:11-12

a. These are spiritual gifts

- 1) Spiritual gift – a work which His presence within accomplishes.
- 2) These gifts are specific and have a specific purpose.

b. “some apostles”

- 1) “apostle” – means a sent one or one who is sent with a commission.
- 2) In the strictest sense of the word “apostle” there are none today –
- 3) Today – the word “apostle” can refer to a missionary –
- 4) There is something that goes with this gift –

c. “some prophets”

- 1) Remember Ephesians 2:20 –
- 2) “prophet” – means to speak forth or declare the divine will, to interpret the purposes of God, or to make known in any way the truth of God which is designed to influence people.
- 3) How was this used?
- 4) Are there prophets today?
- 5) There is something that goes with this gift -

d. "some evangelist"

- 1) "evangelist" – proclaiming the good news, a preacher of the Gospel.
- 2) Example – Phillip was called an evangelist, Acts 21:8
- 3) Purpose – carefully but simply help unbelievers become aware of their sinfulness and lostness and through the proclamation of the Gospel, proclaim Jesus as the only Savior and Lord.
- 4) There is a connection between the evangelist and the Pastor.
- 5) There is something that goes with the gift -

e. "some pastors and teachers"

- 1) Some see these connected as one while others see them as separate.
 - a) Are all Pastors, Teachers?
 - b) Are all Teachers, Pastors?
- 2) "pastor" – shepherd – feed care for and protect the flock which is the Church.
- 3) "teacher" – instructor, special teacher.
- 4) There is something that goes with this gift –

4. Today's Take Away:

- a. Understand God's plan for equipping the saints.
- b. Pastors – Shepherds –
- c. Teachers – God has given you a gift -
- d. Church – Believers -