

Vision for the Church (Outline)

Building the Kingdom of God

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“It was he who gave some ...to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith ...whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” Eph. 4:11-13

Introduction

Last Sunday, I shared with you from the Scripture, the vision for our personal lives! It is so important for each of us to have a personal vision for our own benefit; and for the benefit of the Kingdom of God. As I shared with you last Sunday, the specific vision for our life is in the hand of the Lord. God himself declares that in Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I’ve for you”, declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” See God has the plan for your life – the perfect plan to prosper you and bless you in all areas of your life! However, to receive this plan – not only receive the plan, but to make this plan realized – accomplished, we need to take a serious step – a turn around in your way of thinking!

Normally, even good Christians keep their material life – work, business, finances, family, physical and other priorities of life as one thing, and the spiritual life as another! Normally, take care of the personal and family needs first, and then spiritual matters! That is the natural way of thinking. But Jesus instructed his disciples in Matthew 6:33 to reverse their thinking – “seek the kingdom of God first, then everything else will be given to you.” This “everything else” is your life in this world – your education, your profession, your finances, your health, your family and anything else pertaining to your life in this world.’ This “everything else” that God is holding in his hand to give to you. Through Christ, it is no longer just the plan to prosper you, but it is the realization of that plan – your prosperity, your victory and all that you can be in this world!

Vision for the Church

Now, the big question is, ‘how do we seek the Kingdom of God as the sole concern;’ or, that ‘he will find us as individuals whose heart is fully committed to him’? In fact, our blessings, breakthroughs and victories in life we would experience from God is in direct proportion to the level of commitment we’ve toward the Kingdom of God! I’m not saying that you’ll not get rich, or won’t be healthy or happy if you do not have any concerns for the Kingdom of God. What I’m talking about is the true blessings, true prosperity, the true victory, true joy, true peace that come from God and that the enemy cannot touch or take it away from you at his discretion!

So, how do you make the Kingdom of God your ‘sole concern’? I know, we all are busy with our personal, professional and family life, or busy doing nothing at all. The design Jesus left us is not hard for any of us. He himself said, ‘my yoke is easy and my burden is light.’ Holy Spirit has presented this whole idea of the kingdom building through the church in Eph. 4:11-13, “It was he who gave some ...to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith ...whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” All these gifts could be exercised by five different people, fewer people or even by one

person! The focus is not on the individuals who exercise these gifts. It is about the purpose of these ministries. We find the purpose in verse 12, 'to prepare God's people for works of service – ministry ... so that 'the body of Christ may be built up' until ... we all reach unity in the faith...of the fullness of Christ.' This is done through exercising various gifts Holy Spirit has given each of you. What are these gifts? They are many. Each person has different gift in addition to what we read in Eph. 4:11, let's read Rom. 12: 6-8; 1 Cor. 12:7-11. This process of building the body of Christ continues, as the new converts come in as the apostles, prophets and evangelists in the church do their job, and pastors, teachers and ministers with various gifts do their job; and the saints of God are going to be built up as ministers, and they in turn become mature to be like Jesus! Not a single person is to be left out; every believer is to be part of this process and become mature and maturing others! This is the vision of our church. Our vision is not a church that make people feel good on Sunday and let you go, but to be part of your life to build you and mature you to be the disciples of our Lord and help you seek the kingdom of God and receive 'everything' he has for you.

As you know, we've a few ministries in our church. We've Wednesday night Bible study, Discipleship Level I; Discipleship Level II; Sunday School and Youth Ministry; Out Reach ministry; Intercessory Prayer Ministry; Hospitality Ministry; Men's Fellowship; and Women's Fellowship. These are only very few ministries. Larger churches have larger number of ministries. And I believe, we'll have larger number of ministries in the future depending on the gifts of the people who want to exercise their gifts. I'm always willing to help you to start a ministry in the church, if you've a gift and you've vision for your ministry. Meanwhile, I encourage every individual to be a part of these ministries based on your gifts. I encourage every man to be a part of our Men's ministry and every woman to be part of our Women's ministry. This is where, you may be able to encourage and build another brother or sister. Or, you, yourself will be helped and built. Remember, this God's design – not ours! I want to encourage every person to be part of either a small group, or a discipleship group besides being part of any other ministries. This is how your spiritual maturity and growth is attained.

Conclusion

To grow – to mature or to be like the Master – that is the ultimate goal! How does this goal attained? All of you will agree with the goal – to be like Jesus! But how? What are we doing for that? Is it going to happen by just going to church on Sunday? Or, is it going to happen as the time goes – one day like getting old! No, the Bible gives us specific instruction as far as how to become part of the Kingdom; how to seek the kingdom of God! What we see in Ephesians 4:11-13 is the design Holy Spirit has provided for every Christian.

I want to bring you back to the original point, your seeking of the kingdom of God is going to be directly reflected in what God is going to do for you. Your 'everything in this world that comes from God' is dependent on your seeking of the kingdom of God. Participating or leading ministry opportunities you've in this church is not only going to help the church accomplish its purpose of building the Kingdom of God, but your favor, benefits and blessings from God is also dependent on that!

Questions for Discussion:

1. How does our natural way of thinking regarding our involvement in the Kingdom of God differs from the Scriptural way, according to Mt. 6:33?

2. How does the Ep. 4:11-13 describe the building of the Kingdom of God? Take time and allow each participant to describe the design in his or her own words including both qualitative and quantitative aspects of this process.
3. Does every person who comes into the body of Christ possess a gift? What is the purpose of spiritual gifts given?
