

Introduction:

This is the second of three sermons in which we examine our mission statement here at First Central. This week we look at Ephesians 4:11-16. You can find the sermon notes [here](#)¹ or listen to the sermon by clicking [here](#).²



Scripture:

Please turn to [Ephesians 4:11-16](#) or [click here](#).

So What?

Some people have the idea that pastors only work one day a week and play golf the rest of the time. Others think the pastor should do all the ministry since he is the professional and we pay him to be the minister. In the average church, the pastor burns out while the people rust out. The sad truth is they are both “out.” However, Paul explains in verse 12 that the leaders—evangelists, pastors and teachers—are NOT to do all the work. Instead, their task is to equip others to carry out the work of ministry. Paul goes on to explain that when equipping takes place, maturity is possible (12-16). Equipping the Church enables the Church to build itself up. Paul lists seven evidences of a mature body: **Unity** within the Body of Christ (13); **Knowledge**, both intellectual and experiential knowledge that God is good and can be trusted (13); **Spiritual maturity** that conforms us to the image of Christ (13); **Stability** in holding to true doctrine, not being drawn in by false teaching (14); **Speaking the truth in love**; Each one using their gift (7) in **Service** for others, and (16); **Growth** for the whole body as it builds itself up in love (16). Based this passage, leaders must focus training the congregation, and measure the success of the church based on what people do with what they learn. It also means that if people are not serving then they are not growing. “No ministry = no maturity.” If equipping doesn’t take place, if people aren’t using their gifts in service, the body of Christ is doomed to perpetual adolescence.³

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What Now?

1. Have you felt like you are not qualified or capable to help serve the Church? God has given each of us gifts that we can use to help build up the Church (7, 12). Certainly there is a role that you can play in serving the body of Christ; God says so. Don’t let your gift go to waste.
2. Service to the Lord and to the Church is part of how we grow spiritually (13). If we want to be like Christ we must be a servant, as Christ was. This not only helps mature us as individuals, but the Church as a whole.
3. Part of the equipping that leaders provide is good teaching so that we may have discernment, knowing the truth (14). Are you involved in a Sunday school class or Bible study? If not, then you are missing out. Consider joining a class this week: [Click here](#).⁴

¹ <https://wheelsms.wordpress.com/2016/01/24/the-church-is-an-equipping-community/>

² <http://firstcentralbaptist.com/sermons/thechurch.html>

³ This is adapted from Pastor Mark’s sermon notes.

⁴ <http://firstcentralbaptist.com/ministries/sundayschool.html>

EQUIPPING
the Saints