

LESSONS THIS QUARTER

- 1) 01 Sept 2019 Ephesians 1:1-14..... Rejoice
- 2) 08 Sept Ephesians 1:15-23..... Remembered
- 3) 15 Sept Ephesians 2:1-10..... Resurrected
- 4) 22 Sept Ephesians 2:11-22..... Reconciled
- 5) 29 Sept Ephesians 3:1-13..... Revealed
- 6) 06 Oct Ephesians 3:14-21..... Residence
- 7) 13 Oct Ephesians 4:1-10..... Walking Together
- 8) 20 Oct Ephesians 4:11-16..... Walking Forward**
- 9) 27 Oct Ephesians 4:17-32..... Walking Differently
- 10) 03 Nov Ephesians 5:1-14..... Walking in Love
- 11) 10 Nov Ephesians 5:15-21..... Walking Wisely
- 12) 17 Nov Ephesians 5:22-6:4..... Walking as Family
- 13) 24 Nov Ephesians 6:5-20..... Walking to Battle

INTRODUCTION

- Apostles and prophets, evangelists and pastors/teachers are key to training us to reach the lost, and maturing us into the spitting image of God's Son, Jesus
- Ed Stetzer, former head of LifeWay Research and now chair of Wheaton Graduate School's evangelism and leadership program, said, "The fact is, we seem to have lost our passion for evangelism. Baptists love evangelism as long as somebody else is doing it."
- Al Mohler: "...looking specifically at the baptism numbers, the decline is both remarkable and lamentable. The most obvious insight is that we do not care as much about reaching lost people as we once did."
- ...and statistics reflect since at least 2012, the SBC Annual Church Profile has revealed a consistent picture: more churches added, fewer baptisms, and decreasing worship attendance.
- So, do we have a problem with our shepherds not training us effectively? Or is the problem with us sheep not showing up or heeding the training? Or is it a sign of the times? Are there other factors to consider, such as demographics & a materialistic culture? Or, is it a combination of all the above?
- CAN we turn things around? And HOW do we turn things around?

Passage	Comments
4:11-13	<p>Gifted People for the Church</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some believe Apostles and Prophets still exist today (Apostolic churches, Catholics, Mormons, and some Pentecostal churches) • Evangelistic type churches (such as Baptists, Methodists & others) acknowledge that men like Apostle Paul and prophet Agabus were used only during the 1st century to establish the Church • Since the establishment of the church we now have evangelists and pastors/teachers (aka elders or shepherds) to continue "equipping" the church • All 4 types of "gifts" continue until we attain to full maturity (or the coming of Christ) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Apostles and Prophets continue "equipping" us through the established word of God – The Bible ♦ Evangelists and Pastors/Teachers equip us through their continued presence and leading by example • Are there other "gifted" positions such as Sunday School teachers, nursery workers, youth leaders? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Yes, but the core leadership for churches today revolve around those doing evangelism & discipling • For the sake of argument, the teachings & revelations of Apostles & Prophets are encapsulated in the Bible <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ If we still had Apostles and Prophets today, then it is conceivable the Word of God would still be growing ♦ So, let's focus on Evangelists and Pastors/Teachers • What would a church look like if it solely focused on evangelism, but was weak on discipling? • What would a church look like if it was more focused on discipling and less on evangelism?

Passage	Comments
4:14	<p>End Result → We have the Foundation to GROW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • False teachings stunt one's spiritual growth • If we know sound doctrine, we can avoid many of Satan's traps, and we can reach our full potential • Sound doctrine both saves and matures the hearer • Besides sound doctrine, we also need good delivery
4:15	<p>Speak the Truth in Love (Balancing Principle)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To speak the truth without love is tyranny • To have love without truth is licentiousness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Example: Envision a prodigal child. We can badger them relentlessly that they are going to Hell; Or we can enable them to stay in their addictions by giving them money and a place to stay; Or we can give them tough love, "When you come to your senses, we will welcome you back home"..... Luke 15 • Remember the Bare BONES of Biblical Counseling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ Balancing (Love & Truth)..... Eph 4:15 ♦ Overriding (Obey man vs God)..... 1Pet 2:13 vs Act 4:19 ♦ Negating (Feed vs No work, No eat)..... Mt19:21vs 1Th3:10 ♦ Explanatory (Sabbath made for man)..... Mark 2:27 ♦ Sequential (confess, repent, restitution, restore)..... 1 Jn 1:9
4:16	<p>The Church is Designed as a Body</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As our bodies work best when every part is present and functioning – so does the church • Is the Church a Bank, a Building, a Business, or a Family? Answering that question will guide all of our other behaviors.

CONCLUSION / APPLICATIONS

- HOW can we turn negative church growth around? To fulfill the Great Commission, churches (shepherds & sheep) must both Evangelize and Disciple. Consider the following:
 - ♦ If all we hear each Sunday is a salvation message, then we will always have baby Christians sitting in the pews
 - ♦ If we have great Sunday School and Bible classes, but the sheep are not evangelizing their co-workers, neighbors, family, & strangers, then we become a dying church (Pastors can't do it all)
 - ♦ If we do not groom leaders from within our churches, then we will always be hiring from the outside (i.e., taking shepherds away from other churches). This creates a cycle of new shepherds herding unfamiliar sheep, which often causes internal challenges – making the church to have more of an inward focus till things settle down
- When shepherds and sheep begin doing what God expects us to do (planting & watering – i.e, evangelizing & discipling), we can watch with amazement how God grows His Church, whether we live in a time of peace & prosperity or under persecution..... **1Cor 3:7**

NEXT WEEK: Eph 4:17-32. This passage conveys the following:

- How do we sway those heading for Hell to consider living for Jesus?
- How can we tell when we grieve the Holy Spirit?
- How do we renew the spirit of our mind?
- When can we be angry?
- How do we live exemplary, holy, separated lives when surrounded by hedonism, where people are more concerned about pleasure?

