

## Ephesians 4:14-16

### *The Result of Church Service*

**Main idea:** As we do church together, we ought to grow in maturity, so that we look more and more like Jesus.

Toward the end of last year, the Atlantic coast was hit by a series of destructive hurricanes. [picture]

- As bad as hurricanes are, something beautiful often follows them. [picture1] [picture3] [picture3]
- Life rarely goes our way, but we always have the opportunity to love God and serve each other.<sup>1</sup>

Read Ephesians 4:14-16

In one of the Harry Potter books, the wise wizard Dumbledore said this to Harry: [quote]<sup>2</sup>

- I have no idea what the context of that quote is, but it's true in the church as well.<sup>3</sup>
- God calls us to be united together in faith and service. [Acts 2:42-47]
- Last week, we looked at several offices of the church, and talked primarily about pastors and teachers.<sup>4</sup>
  - We talked about how our goal is to see everyone mature in Christ.
  - Our passage today continues this thought.

As we become mature in Christ, we will no longer be like children. (v. 14)

- In some ways, we are always to be like children. [picture]
- We should always have a childlike faith. [Matthew 18:3]
- And yet, we should not be gullible, able to be easily swayed by falsehood. [graph]
- As Christians, we ought to be people of the truth. [Acts 17:11]
- Paul then described wrong teaching in three ways:
  1. First, he called it "every wind of teaching."
    - a. We saw the Jews do this in the Old Testament as well. [Judges 2:11-13]
    - b. How often have we chased what's culturally appropriate rather than what's firmly biblical?
  2. Second, he called it "human cunning with cleverness."
    - a. You know, a house built on sand might have some perks. [picture1] [picture2] [picture3]
    - b. We should always be sure our teaching is based on God's wisdom rather than human wisdom.<sup>5</sup>
  3. Finally, he called it "the techniques of deceit."
    - a. Communism is a good example of an entire system built on techniques of deceit.<sup>6</sup>
    - b. No good parent would only give their kids candy for every meal.<sup>7</sup>
    - c. We need to pursue what's true rather than what's easy or pleasing to our ears.<sup>8</sup>

So Paul encourages us to believe and teach the opposite of these things, which is true teaching. (v. 15)

- There's only one way to stay on the right path while avoiding false teaching: speak the truth in love.
- There are two parts to this:
  - We need to believe and speak truth. [quote]<sup>9</sup>
  - But when we speak the truth, we must always do so in love. [John 13:12-15]
- As we speak the truth in love, we grow into Christ.<sup>10</sup>
  - He is the head of our body.<sup>11</sup>
  - And it says we grow into Him in every way.<sup>12</sup>

It's from Christ, the head of our body, that we're built up. (v. 16)

- Our bodies are beautiful, amazing things.
  - The adult human body contains approximately 37.2 trillion cells.

- Each cell performs thousands of complex processes every second to keep you alive.
- Each cell is like a tiny factory—producing energy, building proteins, and managing waste with incredible precision, all while communicating with other factories nearby. [Psalm 139:14]
- When we believe in and follow Jesus, it's a beautiful and amazing thing how God grows us.<sup>13</sup>
- You know, sometimes our bodies get sick, and don't work properly.
- But when our bodies are working properly, we feel good and we can accomplish a lot.
- In the same way, when we serve God and one another, each one of us doing what God has called us to, we're working the way that we ought to do, and we build ourselves up in love.<sup>14</sup>
  - As we do church together, we ought to grow in maturity, so that we look more and more like Jesus.<sup>15</sup>
  - You see, the result of church service is that we grow, and God is glorified.<sup>16</sup>
- This begins when each one of us turns to Jesus, recognizing that we need Him as our Savior and Lord.<sup>17</sup>

## Endnotes

1. Colossians 3:23-24
2. "We are only as strong as we are united, as weak as we are divided." -Albus Dumbledore in *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*
3. Mark 3:24-25, 1 Corinthians 1:10
4. Ephesians 4:11-13
5. 1 Corinthians 2:4-5, James 3:17
6. Communism promised economic and social equality, but the reality concentrated wealth and power for a few.
7. Matthew 7:9-11
8. 2 Timothy 4:3-4
9. "A truth that's told with bad intent beats all the lies you can invent." -William Blake, *poet*
10. Colossians 1:28
11. Colossians 1:18
12. Ephesians 1:22-23
13. 2 Corinthians 3:18
14. 1 Corinthians 12:4-7
15. Romans 8:29
16. 1 Peter 4:11
17. Philippians 2:11