

“The Equipping of The Saints for Works of Service”

...to equip His people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...
(Ephesians 4:12)

When we compare present-day churches to the original blueprint, we see that many local churches insert deviations that are detrimental to their life and vitality. The church has come to depend on what the world system can provide to produce its growth and development. Many have turned away from the simple provisions Christ gave the Church and those gifts from Him for the Church. The early churches were far from perfect, but they were simple—and powerful. They were confident alone in what Christ commissioned and the gifts He gave to them. They were a powerful force in those early years.

In the beginning, working in the church meant to exercise a gift the indwelling Spirit had given and was empowering through daily fellowship with God through Christ. Simple people performed ministry everywhere within the body of Christ—in a home, out on a mission field, or in day-to-day compassion ministries.

Gradually, however, working in the church has now come to mean performing some religious activity within a specific building, which we now call the church. The congregation is the church, but to most of us, it is symbolized by the building we use.

At the same time, there was a gradual transfer of ministry from the whole local church to hired people whose function is to represent and serve in love the congregation. The scriptural concept that every believer is a priest before God with gifts for service that bless the whole body has been lost. A special class of super-Christians has emerged who are looked to for everything ministerial in the local church. Somehow, sometime, the church lost sight of the concept that all Christians are in the ministry and that ministry is outside the church building most of the time.

Because the ministry is now left to “professionals,” there is little left for the people to do other than come to church and listen for a little over an hour. We now have a generation of spectators and performers. We have come to believe that it is best to bring the world into the church building to hear the pastor preach the Gospel because we don’t know how to do it as well as he can. Christianity has become little more than another spectator sport, this one on Sunday morning.

This unbiblical distortion has resulted in an impoverished and anemic church that has made less and less impact on the world. For many decades the American church has been pushed into irrelevance and isolation. We desperately need to return to the dynamics of the early simple church. This dynamic is the Holy Spirit. This Dynamic must operate in the life of local churches. The power of the Spirit is effective in its vitality and as well in the martyrdom of its saints.

NOTES OF ENCOURAGEMENT
PASTOR ZORDEL

The work of the ministry belongs to the entire body of believers, we know. The body should be equipped by those who are gifted by God. The Word of God ought to be expounded and applied by the congregation. The entire body, each believer, has received gifts from the Spirit, and it is the task of those in the pastoral ministry team to encourage and train the entire body to use those gifts. When we have given all Christians in the body their God-given role as ministers of God's eternal plan, then lives are changed. Then the church will begin to recapture the original, power-packed strategy that will make a difference in the world again.