

The Edification of the Church

Introduction

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 4:7-16

1. What does the term "edify" mean?
 - A. It is an archaic term meaning, "to build; to construct; to organize, establish. To instruct and improve, especially by good example."
2. There are three aspects of the work of the church:
 - A. The salvation of the lost; Jesus set the example.

Luke 19:10 for the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost.

- 1) The church that is not diligently striving to do this through preaching the gospel is failing to follow the Lord's example and divine instruction.
Matthew 28:18-20
- B. The edification itself.
Ephesians 4:15-16
- C. Caring for the needy saints.

1 Corinthians 16:1-3 Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given orders to the churches of Galatia, so you must do also: On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come. And when I come, whomever you approve by your letters I will send to bear your gift to Jerusalem.

3. Our text reveals:
 - A. That edification is a part of growing up into Christ.
 - B. That every joint (member) has a part in this edification.
 - C. That edification is to be done in love.
4. In view of the importance of edification, let us consider:

Some Realms in Which We Are to Grow

1. In grace and knowledge of the truth.

2 Peter 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

2. In the likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 4:15

3. In Christian characteristics and the divine nature.

2 Peter 1:4-11

4. In our ability to serve and to sacrifice.

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

5. In our ability to resist the evil one.

James 4:7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

6. In love, knowledge, and judgment.

Philippians 1:9-10

What this Growth Requires

1. A desire for the truth.

1 Peter 2:2 as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

2. Spiritual exercise.

Hebrews 5:12-14

3. Action instead of neglect.

Hebrews 2:1-3 Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him,

4. Study, meditation, faithfulness.

2 Timothy 2:15

5. Purity of mind.

Titus 2:11-14

Philippians 4:8 Finally, brethren, whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

6. Prayer and communion with God.

1 Thessalonians 5:17-18 pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Things That Hinder this Growth

1. Wickedness, hypocrisy, etc.

1 Peter 2:1-2 Therefore, laying aside all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all evil speaking, as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby,

2. A lack of hearing.

Romans 10:17

3. A love of the world.

1 John 2:15-17 Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever.

4. Foolish disputes.

2 Timothy 2:23 But avoid foolish and ignorant disputes, knowing that they generate strife.

5. The love of money.

1 Timothy 6:10 For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.

1 Timothy 6:17 Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.

Some Avenues Through Which We Can Edify

1. **Developing a greater concern for others.**

Philippians 2:1-4

2. **Personally exhorting those who need it.**

Hebrews 10:23-29

3. **Through encouraging the weak.**

1 Thessalonians 5:14 Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, **comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak**, be patient with all.

4. **Through worship to God.**

Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, **teaching and admonishing one another** in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.

Ephesians 5:19 **speaking to one another** in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

5. **Through the teaching and example we provide for others.**

Titus 2:1-8

2 Timothy 2:2 And the things that you have heard from me among many witnesses, **commit these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also**.

Conclusion

1. **There is a crying need for wholesome edification in the church!**
2. **Souls who once knew God are starving in the midst of plenty. When we fail to aid them we are failing in the work God has given us to do.**

Date

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Richard Thetford, June 1993 – Reworked January 2026