

**Title:** The Work of a Church Leader

**Text:** Ephesians 4:1-16

## **Sermon Notes**

What is the “work” of a church leader?

When there is so much “good work” to be done in our church, our community, our nation and our world, why should a church leader prioritise the “word work” we heard about last week?

Today God will show us that “Christians grow under the shepherding of Christ’s ministers”, and we see them grow in two ways:

- They “grow up”
- They “grow in unity”

### **1. Christians “grow up” under the shepherding of Christ’s ministers**

- We recognise that children are less mature than adults, and that there are degrees of maturity among children of different ages
- The child’s level of maturity dictates what you expect of them

Look at verses 11 to 13:

- V.11 The ascended Jesus gave the gift of “word ministers” to His church
- V.12 Their work is to equip His people for works of service
- V.13 They equip them through teaching about Jesus (i.e. “knowledge of the son of God”
  - This makes a believer mature and helps them attain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ
- We should make the faithful teaching of God’s word a key factor in deciding what church we attend

What happens to new believers who do not attend churches or do not take the faithful preaching of God’s word seriously?

- V.14 They are like infants and can remain so

Does this mean someone who has been in a bible teaching church for many years has “attained the whole measure of the fullness of Christ”?

- No, this is our future hope
- We can never reach full maturity on this side of glory, however Jesus did

- When we trust in Jesus, His maturity is counted in place of our immature decisions and mistakes

## **2. Christians “grow in unity” under the shepherding of Christ’s ministers**

- This section of Ephesians opens and closes with language about unity
  - V.2 “bearing with one another in love”
  - V.3 “Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace”
  - V.4 “one body, one spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all”
  - V.16, A whole body, joined and held together, each part doing its work
- These ends are joined by v.11-13
  - V.11 The ascended Jesus gave the gift of “word ministers” to His church
  - V.12 Their work is to equip His people for works of service, building the body
  - V.13 until we all reach unity in our faith
- When the body (including word ministers) pay attention to word ministry, we will grow in a deep and godly unity towards each other

### What unity does not mean

- It does not mean we agree on everything
- It does not mean we do not challenge one another
  - Paul expects challenge to be a mark of our unity (I highly counter cultural view)
  - V.15 we need to speak the truth in love

### Faithful, gospel-centred, Christ-focussed word ministry equips the body making us all word ministers by His Spirit

- When we see a brother or sister falling into error, we speak the truth in love to them
- When we see a brother or sister chasing after sin, we speak the truth in love to them
- When we read a less than godly tweet or Facebook post from a brother or sister, we speak the truth in love to them
- When fellow employees or students act in an ungodly way, we speak the truth in love to them

This is what we saw Jesus do

- He confronts the woman at the well directly about her sinful relationship
- He confronts the rich young ruler about his heart's desires for wealth out of love
- Because Jesus loved them, he called them out of their sin
- Allowing a brother or sister to continue in their sin is not loving
- V.15 when we speak the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of Christ
  - This is a promise of God

### **Conclusion**

So, when there is so much “good work” to be done in our church, our community, our nation and our world, why should a church leader prioritise the “word work”?

- Because when church leaders give their time to equipping the church, the church becomes mature, and the church lives out her calling in our community, our nation and our world

So, Church Leaders must Minister the Word and Pray

- Above all, it's prayer and word ministry
- And when we give our time to this important work, God says that: Christians will grow under the shepherding of Christ's ministers
  - We will grow up, and we will grow in unity