



GROWING UP IN HIM

8Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9(Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15but speaking the truth in love, MAY GROW UP INTO HIM IN ALL THINGS, which is the head, even Christ.

Ephesians 4:8-15 (emphasis added)

In the scriptures above, we find that God has given the fivefold ministry for three-fold purpose:

- 1) The perfecting of the saints
- 2) The work of the ministry
- 3) The edifying of the Body of Christ.

The job of the ministry is described in 2 Timothy 4:2: *Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine.*

It is the preaching of God's Word that will bring perfection to the saints and cause them to grow up in Him in all things. We find in 2 Timothy 3:16-17: *16All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.*

From this it should be very clear as to what method God uses to perfect the saints – THE WORD! The Apostle Paul described this in 2 Timothy 4:3-4. *3For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; 4and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*

It is time for the Body of Christ to grow up and become so rooted and grounded in the Gospel that nothing can shake us. Hebrews 5:12-14 perfectly expresses the point concerning growing up in Him: *12For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. 13For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. 14But strong*



meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.

One of the most dangerous weapons which Satan uses to keep a believer from growing up is false teaching. It is a very sad thing to see fellow believers fall and become trapped by the bondage of false teaching. For this reason, the Spirit of God has impressed upon me the importance of urging believers to learn how to discern the differences between the Gospel and false teaching. You will notice in Galatians 5:1 that the Apostle Paul had to remind the believers to *stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage.*

His primary purpose in saying this was because false teachers were attempting to destroy the very basic foundation principles of Christian living which Paul had established.

You see, the Gospel which Jesus had personally revealed to Paul brought liberty to the Body of Christ. Nowhere in the New Testament will you find bondage for the believer. In Romans 8:1-2, Paul wrote, *1There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

Jesus said in John 8:36, *If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.*

THE GOSPEL ALWAYS BRINGS LIBERTY! False teaching will always put you back into bondage. Read Galatians 5:13. *For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*

You have a calling on your life. You have been *called unto liberty*. This means that you have been divinely appointed by God to live in freedom and liberty from all bondage.

If you are living in bondage, it is (in most cases) because you have lost sight of your calling. The Apostle Paul prayed in Ephesians 1:17-18, *17That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his CALLING, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints* (emphasis added).

In Hebrews 3:1 we find, *Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus.*

And in 2 Peter 1:10 it tells us to *GIVE DILIGENCE TO MAKE YOUR CALLING AND ELECTION SURE: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall* (emphasis added).

You must have a revelation of your calling from God. Jesus paid a precious price for it; be diligent to



protect it. When the Gospel is perverted, then the revelation of your calling and the image of Jesus in your heart become perverted or distorted. This is the reason Paul later said in Galatians 4:19, *My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you.* He was not praying for them to receive salvation again but for the image of Jesus, which was produced by the Gospel, to once again be formed and perfected within them.

In the first chapter of Galatians, you will see what the Holy Spirit thinks about false doctrine. It was and still is so displeasing to God that He instructed Paul to attack it immediately by saying in verses 6-8, *6I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: 7which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. 8But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.*

This is a very serious matter in the eyes of God and should be to you also.

Jesus said many times during His earthly ministry, *Take heed that no man deceive you and take heed what you hear.* I believe it is to our advantage to do as the Master instructed. Many times people become susceptible to false teaching as a result of being under pressure; they are looking for an easier way out. Others are deceived because they have never disciplined themselves in the Word. You see, many times it would be a lot easier to compromise and go the easy route rather than stand firm in faith and refuse to relent. God's desire is for all of us to become as the man described in Psalm 112:5-8: *5A good man sheweth favour, and lendeth: he will guide his affairs with discretion. 6Surely he shall not be moved for ever: the righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance. 7He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the LORD. His heart is established, he shall not be afraid, until he see his desire upon his enemies.*



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Review Questions – Keys – 3 pts/blank

1. The fivefold ministry God gave for a three-fold purpose:
 - a. the _____ of the saints
 - b. the _____ of the ministry
 - c. the _____ of the Body of Christ
2. In 2 Timothy 4:2 we see the job of the ministry is to _____ the Word.
3. The preaching of God's Word will _____ the saints and cause them to _____ in Him.
4. From 2 Timothy 3:16-17 we see God's _____ He uses to perfect the saints and that is the _____.
5. There is coming a time that the apostle Paul talks about in 2 Timothy 4: 3 when people will not endure sound _____.
6. To not become one of those people we must become _____ and _____ in the Gospel so that nothing can _____ us.
7. _____ is one of the most dangerous weapons Satan uses to keep a believer from growing up.
8. We must _____ the differences between the Gospel and false teaching.
9. During Paul's ministry, false teaching was attempting to _____ the very basic foundation principles of Christian living that he had established which was putting those believers back into _____.
10. The Gospel will _____ bring _____ to the believer.
11. According to Galatians 5:13 we are called into liberty, but it is not an occasion for us to get in the _____, but to love and _____ one another.
12. You have been divinely appointed by God to live in freedom and liberty from all bondages – this is your _____ from God.



13. When the Gospel is perverted, then the revelation of your calling and the image of Jesus in your heart becomes perverted or _____ so 2 Peter 1:10 tells us to give _____ to make your calling and election sure then you will never fall.

14. The Holy Spirit is so _____ with false doctrine that He tells Paul to attack it and record it like this in Galatians 4:6-8 that if it be a man on earth or an angel from heaven preaching another gospel let him be _____.

15. Jesus told his disciples and us to take heed that no man _____ you and take heed to what you _____.

16. People can become susceptible to false teaching because they may be:

- a. under _____ and wanting the easy way out
- b. never _____ themselves in the Word to be able to stand firm and refuse to relent



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Review Questions – Keys – 3 pts/blank

1.
 - a. (perfecting)
 - b. (work)
 - c. (edifying)
2. (preach)
3. (perfect, grow)
4. (method, Word)
5. (doctrine or teaching)
6. (rooted, grounded, shake)
7. (False teaching)
8. (discern)
9. (destroy, bondage)
10. (always, liberty)
11. (flesh, serve)
12. (calling)
13. (distorted, diligence)
14. (displeased, accursed)
15. (deceive, hear)
16.
 - a. (pressure)
 - b. (disciplined)