
EQUIP

**What part do we play? – Small Group Session Three
Week beginning 26th February**



My Part in Church Building?

Over the last few weeks, we have been thinking about the church. We have seen that the church is a gathering of God's people, gathered by and around Jesus, as Jesus speaks His word of the gospel to us.

We have also seen how this church is built. Jesus is the one who builds His church through the power of the Spirit. Jesus does this through the prayers and proclamation of His people. As we pray to Him and speak His words to one another and to others, Jesus is building His church. We also saw that this is not easy and requires us to 'go for it' with great perseverance. This prayerful proclamation by God's people requires perseverance because it often places people in the face of great opposition.

Well, so far so good... but now we come to today's question which asks what part we are each called to play in this great church building work. And, in this session, I am going to suggest something that might seem radical. The suggestion is that all of us are called to be people who proclaim the word of the gospel to others!

Now let's be clear. We all have different gifts and characters and I am certainly not suggesting that everyone needs to become a preacher - that would not help us next Sunday! But, what I want to suggest is that in our different ways, in different places, with different people, with our different gifts and characters, in great diversity - we are all called to be those who prayerfully proclaim God's word.

Now I know that may raise questions for you (equally it might not) and we can come to those. But first I want to show you how this is the pattern through the whole of the scriptures. So why not pray now for your small group session - that you would be open to seeing the part you are being asked to play in building the church. Then sit back with your Bible open and watch this week's video...

"Instead, speaking the truth in love,
we will grow to become in every respect the mature body
of him who is the head, that is, Christ."

Ephesians 4:15

Speaking in Love

1 What does it look like in practice

Having watched the video, I hope you start to see how the Spirit enables the whole people of God to proclaim 'the wonders of God' to one another. Let's zone in on some of those examples and see what this looks like in practice. Look at some of the following passages and ask:

1. What do you learn about the nature of speaking the word and the different forms it takes?
2. What various reasons or motivations are given for all disciples to be speaking the word to others?

- 1 Thessalonians 5:11-14
- Titus 1:7-9, 2:1-10
- Hebrew 13:7-15
- Ephesians 4:11-29
- Colossians 3:12-17
- 1 Peter 2:9-12, 4:7-11

2 Unpacking your discoveries

What we are contemplating here is a culture change in the life of our church. Think about some of the different areas of life listed below. What would be different if we started to live this way?

Home / Work / Small Group / Sunday Church / Relationships with Christian Friends who Live Locally / Relationships with Non-Christian Friends / Christians not in Cornwall / Other...

What are some of the main reasons (do you think) that many people in our churches (including ourselves) are not engaged in speaking the word in this way?

What would your small group need to do if it decided to lead the rest of our church in a culture change revolution like this? How might you go about instigating the revolution?

3 Prayer

Change will only come with the power of the Spirit transforming our lives through the word we have just heard. Share some things you might pray for yourself, your small group and our church (given your discussion) then turn to pray together.

