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**INTERNATIONAL TRAINING AND EQUIPPING MINISTRIES**  
**ITEM Conference on Ministry and Preaching**  
Dr. Steve Van Horn

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**PRINCIPLES OF NEW TESTAMENT EDIFICATION**

Ministry Lecture #3

**Introduction:** EDIFICATION means “building up” and refers to the “building up the believers spiritually and helping them become mature.”

**I. THE LOCAL CHURCH IS THE MAIN PLACE THAT SPIRITUAL GROWTH IS HAPPENING AND BORN AGAIN BELIEVERS ARE BECOMING MATURE IN CHRIST. (Eph 4:11-13).**

- A. Followers of Christ are to meet so they can be taught from the Word of God.
- B. Followers of Christ are to meet so they can pray together.
- C. Followers of Christ are to meet so they can baptize new followers of Christ.
- D. Followers of Christ are to meet so they can share in the Lord’s Supper.

**II. BORN AGAIN FOLLOWERS OF CHRIST MUST BE TAUGHT A BASIC KNOWLEDGE OF GOD’S WORD IN ORDER TO BE MATURE**

- A. This is why Paul spent an entire year in Antioch (Acts 11:26), one year and six months in Corinth (Acts 18:11), and three years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31).
- B. Paul sent Timothy to Thessalonica to strengthen and encourage them (1 Thes 3:2).
- C. Paul sent Timothy back to Corinth to teach them what Paul was teaching in all of the churches (1 Cor 4:17).
- D. Titus was left in Crete to teach accurate doctrine (Titus 2:1).

**III. BELIEVERS MUST ALSO BE GIVEN AN IN-DEPT KNOWLEDGE OF THE WORD AS WELL.**

- A. After Paul taught new believers and after he sent others to instruct them he sent letters to the Thessalonians, Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, and the Philippians.
- B. The letters were supposed to provide the followers of Christ with an even deeper knowledge of God’s truth.

- C. God inspired Paul to write what he wrote and then God protected it so we have the writings of Paul to study also.

**IV. BELIEVERS MUST BE GIVEN OPPORTUNITIES TO GROW IN THE ABILITY TO APPLY PRINCIPLES FROM THE BIBLE TO THEIR LIVES. THIS IS CALLED WISDOM.**

- A. Paul prayed that they would gain a spirit of wisdom, and understand their hope of eternal life, and the greatness of His power (Eph 1:16-19; 3:14-19).
- B. Paul prayed that they would know the love of Christ which goes beyond knowledge (Eph 3:19).

**V. BELIEVERS MUST BE PROVIDED WITH THE OTHER EXPERIENCES THAT WILL HELP THEM GROW SPIRITUALLY.**

- A. Maturity requires learning what the Bible says and applying it in their lives.
- B. Maturity also requires that all followers of Christ are actively involved in evangelism.
- C. Maturity also requires having fellowship with other Christians who are growing spiritually so they all can talk about their joys and struggles.

- NOTE: All three are needed for a follower of Christ to become mature: Teaching, evangelism, and fellowship.

**VI. BELIEVERS MUST BE EQUIPPED FOR CHRISTIAN SERVICE (EPH 4:11-12, 15-16) AND THE CHURCH BECOMES MATURE WHEN EVERY MEMBER IS MINISTERING SOMEWHERE IN THE CHURCH.**

**VII. BELIEVERS MUST BE HELPED TO DEVELOP AN EXCELLENT FAMILY LIFE.**

- A. Husbands and wives should have a relationship that resembles Christ's relationship with the church (Eph 5:22-23).
- B. Mothers and fathers must learn how to raise their children in the discipline and instructions of the Lord (Eph 6:1-4).
- C. The home is to be a place where God's Word is discussed and obeyed (Deut 6:6-7).