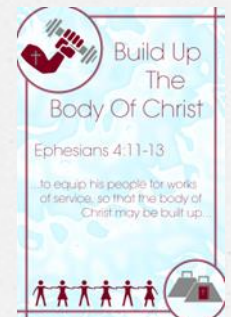


Scripture Reading:

Ephesians 3:1-3

“For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

2 Surely you have heard about the administration of God’s grace that was given to me for you, 3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly.



Church Theme 2016



Build Up The Body Of Christ


Ephesians 4:11-13

...to equip his people for works
of service, so that the body of
Christ may be built up...



Intro: Video



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ujBnBXAH48>



Build Up
The
Body Of Christ

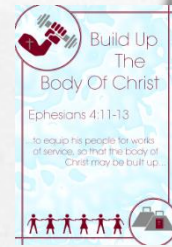
Ephesians 4:11-13

to equip his people for works
of service, so that the body of
Christ may be built up.



Intro: Training

- o Why is training important?
- o **Training is essential to the achievements of an organization. Perhaps its most positive benefit is better co-workers. An organization develops the potential of its workers, and part of the way a company encourages improvement is through training.**



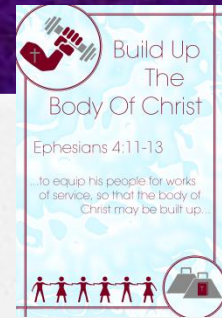
Church Theme and Goal for 2016:

Theme:

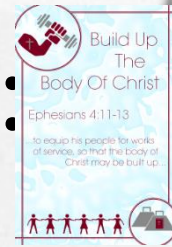
**'Build Up the Body
of Christ'**

Goal:

**'Equip the Believers to Walk with Christ
and to Do the work of ministry in order to
build up the Church for future generations'**

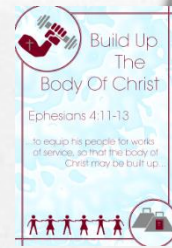


The cost of NOT training:



- o 1. Untrained Co-workers = Unhappy Co-workers.
- o 2. Untrained Workers Are Inefficient.
- o 3. Lost Time/Resources Due to Mistakes.
- o 4. Unattractive to Potential Members.

Training for 2016:



- o 1. Worship Training
(Audio/Video/Music/Voice).
- o 2. Sunday School /Children's Church
teacher training.
- o 3. Hospitality/Usher Training
- o 4. Lay counselor training.

Outline:

I. I, Paul the prisoner of Jesus Christ...For you Gentiles (v.1):

- o Training in Prisons and thru trials & hardships.
- o Paul spent a total of 6 years in prison during his ministry years.
- o 'Safe in His Plan'.

What conditions did Paul have to endure in a Roman prison?

- o Hygiene:
- o Bedding:
- o Food:
- o Chains:

What does it mean to be a 'prisoner'?

- o Rights

- o Relinquishment

- o Representation



I'M NOT A PRISONER OF...

Circumstance

Conditions

Campaign

Cares

Chance

Consequences

Condemnation

‘As a prisoner of Christ, what are the benefits?’

Like the cross, slavery is both paradigm and paradox. The cross, the most excruciating and pervasive symbol of suffering and death in the first century has come to represent for the followers of Jesus the only way to peace and life. In the same sense slavery, which represents the total denial of freedom, becomes for the follower of Christ, the Servant Saviour, the only means to the realization of the true freedom... [Jesus] came in the form of a slave, not to offer us freedom from slavery but a new kind of slavery that is freedom.

Michael Card. A Better Freedom (Downers grove, IL: Inter Varsity Press, 2009. 23-24.

Conclusion: What is this 'freedom in Christ'?



- o First, freedom in Christ is seen in contrast to the bondage of sin. (Rom. 6:20-23)
- o Second, freedom in Christ is seen as the only true form of freedom, because it provides lasting freedom beyond this life. (John 8:32).
- o Third, a person who has experienced true freedom in Christ is called to live as His servant (John 1:12).
v
- o Fourth, those who find freedom in Christ also become His children (Gal. 4:7).

Conclusion:



BEFORE CHRIST

- Skybalon. Phil 3:8

AFTER CHRIST

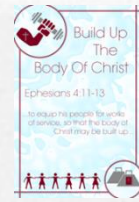
- Apostle to the gentiles
- Three Missionary journeys
- 12-13 Epistles
- 4 Prison Epistles
- Established numerous Churches
- Trained Leaders

I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

2 Tim 4:7-8

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT?

Reflection Questions:



- 1.** As a prisoner of Christ, how are you using your freedom?
- 2.** As a result of having your freedom in Christ, what would you say is your ‘greatest accomplishment’?
- 3.** Do you feel ‘Safe in His Plan’ for your life?
- 4.** What training are you planning to attend this year?