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EQUIPPING THE SAINTS

I grew up in a denominational church in West Central Michigan. The Church service started out with congregational music then the Pastor gave a very short “Jr. Sermon”, which was more or less an object lesson. Then the children were sent to Sunday School. As a child I heard many Bible stories. Never once in Sunday School or in the Pulpit was there ever given an invitation to receive Jesus as my Savior.

After getting married, I stopped going to church and did what a lot of young people did – lived my life my own way. When I was in my early twenties and had two small children, I decided they needed to have some spiritual upbringing in their lives, so I went back to church. I sang in the choir and was “religious.” Although I had received salvation at a summer Bible camp put on by another denomination, I had no real training in the things of God. The incorruptible seed inside me had never been watered.

One day a new minister came to that church and when he preached, I felt like I was walking with Jesus. There was something different about him, and I told my mother this fact. I enjoyed hearing his messages and even though his messages had an anointing on them, I still received no instruction in things of the Spirit.

It would be years later after I received the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and rededicated my life to Christ that I had a hunger for the things of God. I started reading my bible and listening to many preachers. I “wanted more.” I could not get enough. I wanted to be equipped and trained in the things of God.

Many churches are like the church I grew up in. They are what many would call “social gospel churches.” God gave gifts to the Church in Ephesians 4 – the Apostle, the Prophet, the Evangelist, the Pastor, and the Teacher for the sole purpose of “equipping the saints” so they could do the work of the ministry. It is the saints, the believers themselves, not the five-fold ministry that are to be equipped to do this work. I truly believe the Church, as a whole, has missed it. The leadership has not equipped the believers for their walk with God, resulting in many Christians living carnal lives.

It is time for the “fivefold” ministry to do what they are called to do. It isn’t about having a title; it is about using the gift God has given to bring the body of Christ into maturity and unity. Please pray with me that those in leadership will have the fire of God come upon them and they will become what God has called them to be – equippers. Then perhaps the body of Christ will come into unity!

Are you in a church that is equipping you to do the work of the ministry? If not, I suggest you find one that does and become all that Jesus would want you to be!