

The Role of an Outreach Pastor

Last week we discussed how we need to be a church that is “on mission” here in our own culture just as much as the missionaries we send to other cultures. In this study we are going to consider the role that an Outreach Pastor might play here at Faith in helping us do this. Ephesians 4 is a passage that helps us understand how God designed the church to function. One thing it communicates is the role that gifted pastor/teachers should play in the lives of others in the church. This passage gives us a great grid for thinking about the role an Outreach Pastor might serve here at Faith.

Read Ephesians 4:1-16

1. How would you summarize 4:1-6?
2. In verse 7, Paul begins to make a contrast (“but”). What is the contrast that he goes on to make?
3. What is Paul talking about when he says that to each one of us “grace was given” (v. 7-8)?
4. In verse 11, Paul talks about some of the gifted people that Jesus gives to the church. What function are these people to serve in the church?
5. How would you summarize how a healthy, biblical church is to function according to this passage (vv. 11-16)?

Steve said:

In verse 12 Paul explains the function of the gifts mentioned in verse 11: “for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.” . . . Jesus has given gifts to others so that they can help equip you for “the work of service.” The implication here is that you shouldn’t have to figure out how to serve God (“the work of service”) all on your own. If you are a believer, Jesus has gifted people who can help equip you for the work that God wants you to do. You have been gifted with spiritual gifts and graced in many other ways; you have abilities and burdens that Jesus has given you. But like an elite athlete you need to be equipped and you need to train if you are going to be effective in ministry. To extend the athletic imagery. . . pastor/teachers serve the role of a coach so that the team performs up to its potential.

6. Have you ever thought about this idea that God has gifted certain people to help equip others for the things God wants them to do? How should this concept affect how each of us engages church?

Steve said:

As we’ve envisioned the role of an Outreach Pastor, equipping others for outreach would be a core responsibility. We wouldn’t hire an outreach pastor to do outreach so we don’t have to. We would certainly want an Outreach Pastor to “do outreach” as a way of life, sharing Christ in word and deed; but we would also want an Outreach Pastor to be gifted as a pastor/teacher and able to equip the rest of us for outreach. This could happen through teaching on Sunday morning, courses on various aspects of ministry, helping individuals find a good fit in outreach, encourage and equip others to lead in outreach (here and in other places), as well as provide spiritual administration for outreach efforts.

7. In what ways do you sense a need to be equipped for outreach?
8. In what ways do you sense Faith as a whole needs to be equipped for outreach?
9. What questions do you have for the leadership of Faith as we consider this possibility of hiring an Outreach Pastor?