

## In a Word: Edification – Romans 15:2

### Introduction

- The word edification and edify combined appear some 20 times in the New Testament of the NKJV
- Edification Defined: A building up, in a moral and religious sense; instruction; improvement and progress of the mind, in knowledge, in morals, or in faith and holiness.
  - Edification is used to promote spiritual growth, it moves us forward in the knowledge and obedience to God.

### I. Edification of the Individual

- a. The Christian life is one of moving forward, it is not static
  - i. Paul said, “I press toward the goal...” (Phil. 3:14)
  - ii. Edification is motivation, and helps us to move forward in our spiritual growth.
  - iii. Edification is encouragement

Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify (build up) another. (Romans 14:19)

- iv. The word “pursue” indicates that I should be looking for ways to encourage you.
  1. You are not lacking in your encouragement to me
- v. Edification is to be personal, directed toward the individual.
- vi. Through edification and encouragement, we help each other to grow in faith & hope

(1) We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. (2) Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. (Romans 15:1–2)

- b. It is commonly believed that for every negative comment we make, we need to share 5 positive ones as well. We are not in the tearing down business.
  - i. Especially when an individual is struggling with sin and life’s difficulties
  - ii. A cruel word is like a bullet from a gun, toothpaste outta the tube

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. (Ephesians 4:29)

- c. We read about Barnabas in Acts, his name is translated “son of encouragement”,
  - i. An important worker in the church, he presented the converted Saul to the church
  - ii. He was an evangelistic worker, spreading the Good News, encouraging Christians
  - iii. He was in the Lord’s business of edification, we need to be like Barnabas

## II. Edification of the Church

- a. Edification can also be applied to the church as a whole, to the congregation
  - i. After Barnabas brought Saul to the church at Jerusalem, he began to preach boldly

Then the churches throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria had peace and were edified. And walking in the fear of the Lord and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, they were multiplied. (Acts 9:31)

- ii. We should take note that as a result of edification, the church grew.
- iii. This is a formula outlined in the following passage...

(11) And He Himself (Christ) gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, (12) for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, (13) till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; (14) that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, (15) but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—(16) from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. (Ephesians 4:11–16)

- iv. Equipping of the saints (2 Timothy 3:16-17 – thoroughly equipped for every good work)
- v. Paul encouraged the Ephesian elders to be built up by the word (Acts 20:32)
- vi. Am I doing my part to edify the church? Is it based on love?
- vii. One way is through participating in corporate worship

- b. Corporate (group) worship of the church edifies

(5) Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded (unity) toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, (6) that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify (worship) the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. (Romans 15:5–6)

- i. We come together to offer worship to God, He is seeking worshipers who worship in spirit and truth (John 4:24)
- ii. As we pray, sing, teach, give, and observe communion there is an opportunity for edification.

(24) And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, (25) not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching. (Hebrews 10:24–25)

- iii. “stir up love and good works” = edification

- iv. “exhorting one another” = edification
- v. When I am not with the church, I cannot edify nor be edified.
- vi. If I leave a service of the church not edified then we’re doing something wrong
- vii. True, the Holy Spirit will convict, convince us of our sin, make us sorrowful
- c. So we conclude that edification, exhortation, and encouragement are necessary for a successful and growing congregation.

### III. Things That Don’t Edify

- a. The misuse of liberty does not edify

All things are lawful for me, but not all things are helpful; all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. (1 Corinthians 10:23)

- i. One aspect of the perfect law of Liberty (James 1:25) is the law of conscience

I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. (Romans 14:14)

- ii. The eating of certain foods offended some, while others thought it was OK
- iii. When we don’t consider one another’s feelings, “Im gonna do what I’m gonna do.”
- iv. Our liberty cannot be a source of conflict within the church!

(13) For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not use liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. (14) For all the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” (15) But if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another! (Galatians 5:13–15)

- v. James writes concerning earthly wisdom...

But if you have bitter envy and self-seeking in your hearts, do not boast and lie against the truth. (James 3:14)

- vi. It is important that we are honest with each other...

Do not lie to one another, since you have put off the old man with his deeds... (Colossians 3:9)

- vii. When I misuse my liberty for selfishness, greed, pride, and to have my way about things, I am sinning and not edifying.
- viii. Bad relations do not, cannot edify.

- b. Instruction for the sake of instruction does not edify

- i. Chapter 14 deals with the misuse of the miraculous gift of tongues (foreign language)

- ii. Some in the church had believed it was the most important gift

(15) What is the conclusion then? I will pray with the spirit, and I will also pray with the understanding. I will sing with the spirit, and I will also sing with the understanding. (16) Otherwise, if you bless with the spirit, how will he who occupies the place of the uninformed say “Amen” at your giving of thanks, since he does not understand what you say? (1 Corinthians 14:15–16)

(17) For you indeed give thanks well, but the other is not edified.

(18) I thank my God I speak with tongues more than you all; (19) yet in the church I would rather speak five words with my understanding, that I may teach others also, than ten thousand words in a tongue.

(1 Corinthians 14:18–19)

- iii. Teaching that is confusing and untrue does not edify.

- c. Sometimes the method (delivery) of teaching truth does not edify.

- i. There are certain truths that are difficult to teach. Too many times they are taught with harshness, self-righteousness, meanness, spitefulness and without regard.

“But, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head, Christ.”

(Ephesians 4:15)

(11) A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold In settings of silver. (12) Like an earring of gold and an ornament of fine gold Is a wise rebuker to an obedient ear. (Proverbs 25:11–12)

- ii. We must share the truth with the boldness of Paul and the gentleness of Jesus and always include edification.

#### IV. Conclusion

- a. Perhaps if we spent more time edifying, folks would stop running from the church and run to it.
- b. Would there be any better way to conclude our discussion on edification than for us to commit to make edification our goal.
  - i. When we see and meet each other, let us edify
  - ii. When strangers come to visit, let us edify
- c. As 1 Corinthians 14:26 concludes...
  - i. “Let all things be done for edification.”