



PLAN FOR GROWTH

Plan for Growth:

- We cannot mature in isolation. Immaturity is often revealed in community & conflict (e.g., marriage). The measure of maturity is love, and love cannot be lived out alone. Living in community tests the measure of our love. God didn't just call us to Himself, He adopted us into a family. We are called to live out our faith in family, and it is in family that we grow up.

Plan for Growth:

- Preview: the next section of Ephesians Paul lays out Jesus plan for growth for His people, and that plan involves community. We need each other to fully mature. Three sections to the plan: God has given everyone special abilities to minister to others. Leaders equip the community to minister to each other. The result is that we all know & become like Jesus.

Plan for Growth:

- Ephesians 4:7-16, “But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: ‘When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train & gave gifts to people.’ (What does ‘he ascended’ mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?)

Plan for Growth:

- Ephesians 4:7-16, “He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)”
- Ps 68:18, which Paul quotes here, refers to God as the Divine Warrior who achieves a great victory over his enemy, ascends to his holy mountain & hands out gifts. Paul applies it to Jesus. (Eph 1)

Plan for Growth:

- **Christ gives gifts to every member to contribute to the growth of the body** (Christ apportions Grace-gifts: Ministry gifts & manifestation gifts – OT Priests & prophets vs NT) (not consumers) (Emotionally weary; Monique – treadmill)

Plan for Growth:

- Ephesians 4:11-16, "It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

Plan for Growth:

- **Christ gives gifted leaders to equip the body for ministry.** Jesus gifted all members of the body, but he especially gifted certain individuals to minister in the Word & Spirit, and equip others for ministry so everyone can mature. (5 Fold ministry: Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors, Teachers)

Plan for Growth:

- **Christ gives gifted leaders to equip the body for ministry**
- Goal: Maturity in Christ, that we would know & be like Jesus. (Evangelism – MC; living on mission together) (Kingdom service – Village; MC's) (Make Disciples – connect groups; Huddles; teaching, Soul Care, conferences, HS weekends, retreats)

Plan for Growth:

- Ephesians 4:13-16, “So that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching

Plan for Growth:

- Ephesians 4:13-16, “and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.”

Plan for Growth:

- We are not to be passive spectators in the growth & maturity of our community. But, the entire body actively participates in facilitating its own growth. Jesus' vision for the church is that each member, empowered by the Spirit, equipped by leaders, will actively contribute to the growth of the body & facilitate its growth to maturity

Plan for Growth:

- **Christ wants each member, empowered by the Spirit, to help others mature & grow in their faith.** How are you actively engaged in helping others grow?
- Three goals of the ministry toward maturity:
(1) Doctrinal maturity ("unity in the faith"; "no longer infants" tossed by the waves) (more openeness, less discernment, Biblical maturity)

Plan for Growth:

- **Christ wants each member, empowered by the Spirit, to help others mature & grow in their faith.**
- (1) Doctrinal maturity; (2) Growth in intimacy with Jesus & the fullness of the Spirit. (“built up ... in the knowledge of the Son of God & become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ”) (afraid of the Holy Spirit; fear is not of God; Access)

Plan for Growth:

- **Christ wants each member, empowered by the Spirit, to help others mature & grow in their faith.**
- (1) Doctrinal maturity; (2) Growth in intimacy with Jesus & the fullness of the Spirit. (3) Speaking the truth in love we will help each other in maturity in Christ ('build's itself up in love as each part does its work.') (risk)

Plan for Growth:

- **Christ wants each member, empowered by the Spirit, to help others mature & grow in their faith.**
- (1) Doctrinal maturity; (2) Growth in intimacy with Jesus & the fullness of the Spirit. (3) Speaking the truth in love we will help each other in maturity in Christ (measure of maturity is love; the closer you get to Jesus, more loving) (call to involvement; family, not consumers; high sugar)

