

# WHOLE DISCIPLE?

SERVING Christ's Body (Eph. 4:12-16)

Whole Disciple: Marks of Maturity for **Christlikeness**: WHOLE/Mature/complete/perfected

-Romans 8:29 "For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters;"

-Col 1:28 We proclaim Jesus, warning every person and teaching every person with all wisdom, so that we may present every person complete [perfect] in Christ.

**Disciple**: One who is following Jesus, being changed by Jesus, and who continues the mission

**\*\*Our heart's desire for every believer:**

1. A Whole disciple is **Grounded** and **Growing** in Christ: (praying; learning Scr.; applying faith)

-Growing spiritually (connected to Holy Spirit: sensitive to His voice & leadership/conviction)

-Growing biblically (pressing in to reading, studying, meditating, applying, & sharing Word)

2. A Whole disciple is **Known** & **Connected** within biblical community (**who really knows you?**)

-Known by the Lord; Member/Part of the Body of Christ-CHURCH; Connected to a local church

**\*The Church** is the gathering of baptized believers for Worship and Work

**\*\*Living in authentic relationships within the Church Body in smaller contexts ...where????**

-**Events**: church-wide events to help you fellowship and meet other members of the Body

-**Groups**: Community Groups; Freedom Groups; Re-engage; Financial Peace; Grief share; divorce

-**Ministries**: Family min.; Men's min.; Women's min.; Devo; Marriage min.; Chosen; Legacy;

-**Discipleship**: 1-1/1-3 **The PATH** – go to the HUB or website: Top right TAB "The PATH"

Are you **growing** in Christ? Are you ready to be discipled? Disciple?? Where are you **connected** to this local church, *known*?

3. A Whole disciple is **Serving** the Body of Christ using their **spiritual gifts**, passions, & blessings

-Gifts: Spirit-endowed gifts that uniquely help build up/edify/grow/enc. Christ's Body

-Passions: Unique spiritual, emotional, & strategic discernment and desire to serve Body w/joy

-Blessings: Our unique advantages/disadvantages leveraged for God's glory: health; physicality; education; material possessions; our home; land; wealth; experiences; pain; hardships; & loss

-In God's Hands, ALL of these are powerful tools to build up, encourage, serve, & bless others

-1 Cor. 4:7 "What do you have that you did not receive?"

-1 Peter 4:10 "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace"

**MAIN POINT: God's Strategic plan is that He endows different parts of the Church Body with different skills & functions so that when all parts work together in unity there are eternal results (=God's Glory, new souls, spiritual growth, Christ's exaltation) -this is worth our best eff.**

-Rom. 12:6 "Each Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them"

**READ Ephesians 4:11-16:**

"<sup>11</sup> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds [pastors] and teachers [shepherd-teachers]<sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry [teach/train], for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son

of God, to mature manhood,<sup>[e]</sup> to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.”

### Here, in Ephesians, PAUL Addresses the *Leadership* of the Local Church:

**VS. 11:** And He gave some (GIFTS) as apostles, (Original Disciples & First Church Planters) and some as prophets, (Those who are in-tune to God’s Voice/Word to Challenge/Call-out Church) and some as evangelists, (Those who are called to bring the Gospel to all Communities - Missionaries/Tongues) and some as pastors and teachers (Those Elders in the Local Church charged with Pastoral shepherding, Care & Instruction)

### What Are the Leaders in the Local Church Tasked with? -What is my Charge as your pastor?

**VS. 12:** “for the equipping of the saints (Church Body) – Equipping = Leading, Showing, modeling, & resourcing every Believer with the **TOOLS** necessary for spiritual Success (God’s Word, Prayer, Discipleship, Ministry, Evangelism, Service) If we are hiking Everest – you want a GUIDE (Sherpa) to make sure you have the right equipment to climb, so as to not freeze, to show the way, where to step, where to camp, how to summit & rejoice with you when you reach the top; & weep IF u fall

#### -Equipped for What?

“for the equipping of the saints . . . for the **work of service**,” – God gives us all Grace & these spiritual tools for WORK/**ministry** (our work is spiritual, physical, emotional, social WORK).

Whatever will serve & benefit others for the gospel, **THIS IS OUR WORK!!** = *People business*

**Pastors are called to be Shepherd-Equippers.** We cannot accomplish building God’s Kingdom by ourselves. We **MUST** Equip the Church to be resourced, ready, and excited to *DO* the Work of ministry. Evangelism; discipling; teaching; serving; kids; AV; coffee; pking; weeds; painting; co grp

#### -Knowing/discovering & using your Spiritual Gifts: [www.spiritualgiftstest.com](http://www.spiritualgiftstest.com)

\***Ministry Gifts:** =spiritually endowed ability and capacity to be uniquely helpful to the Local Church in ministry:

12 Church Gifts: **Rom. 12** (Prophecy, Service, Teaching, Mercy, Faith, Hospitality, Administration, Leadership, Helps, Giving, Encouragement, Prayer) = Given DAILY for Edification/growth/blessing of the **Church**

\***Miraculous Gifts:** =supernatural & spiritually powerful move/anointing of God to display God’s glory/power among the lost/those who have never heard the gospel: **a clear/unmistakable presentation of divine power/lost** **1 Cor. 12** (Miracles, Healing, other Tongues, Interpretation, Word of Wisdom, Knowledge,)

\***Authority** (Messenger) & **Authenticity** (of the Message) = Gospel. Extraordinary Signs to Unbelievers = gospel

*Healing* – Go to Hospitals, to those who have no access to medicine (Not revivals or TV ministry)

*Tongues* (Unlearned language miraculously given so that hearers can understand Gospel in their language)

-Acts 2:3, 8 “Tongues of fire rested upon each of them, they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues. . . Vs. 8: 13 countries represented in the crowd “How is it that we each hear them in our own language?”

Ministry Gifts are given to Believers in the Local Church to be used & grown for the sake of the whole church body: “Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching. **Do not neglect your spiritual gift**, which was given you through prophecy when the body of elders laid their hands on you. Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, **so that everyone may see your progress**. [Spiritual growth] Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.” 1 Timothy 4:13-16

Equipped for What? “for the equipping of the saints . . . for the **work of service**,” -To what end?  
to the building up of the body of Christ; - In Christ, through the Spirit’s Power, & for the Father’s glory- We will all be **edified, encouraged, changed**/grown in our faith *as* we all work together (**unified**) toward the same PURPOSE, with the same HEART, empowered by same Holy Spirit.  
-We are changed when God moves through us to bless, serve, & grow others spiritually.

-To what extent?

**VS 13: until we all attain to the unity of the faith**, - UNITY is a big deal to God. WE are to grow in our **FAITH** (how we LOVE, TRUST, and LEAN on GOD for ALL Things in our Life w/**JOY no matter what**) = **EXPERIENTIAL FAITH** = living it out (**we cannot grow our faith unless it is worked/stretched/ tested = faith is a spiritual muscle**) = **our ministry in the Lord is to grow our faith!**

**and of the knowledge of the Son of God**, - = **our ministry in the Lord is also to grow our love for & knowledge of Jesus = produces a life of WORSHIP!** Our ministry is done in worship & produces a heart of worship. Worshipping Jesus!!! Thanking Him that He counts us worthy to be used.

**to become a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ**

**\*\*YOUR Spiritual Growth = Ministry and Worship = Why you were created on this earth (our GOAL is to be conformed into the same type of person as is JESUS.**

**-“For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren” Romans 8:29**

**= THIS IS GOD’S PLAN FOR YOU!!! To become more like Jesus every day!!!**

**= God’s Strategic plan is that He endows different parts of the Body with different skills & functions so that when all parts work together in unity there are eternal results.**

**Eternal Results?**

**Remember: WE ARE STILL IN THE PEOPLE BUSINESS!!** Why?? Because GOD is still in the people

**A. We grow into spiritual maturity and Christlikeness (**WHOLE** Disciple):**

**Result? Spiritual Maturity. How recognized?**

**1. Christ is the Center, Not Self**

- Galatians 2:20 – “**I have been crucified with Christ... Christ lives in me.**”
- Mature believers increasingly **define life, purpose, and identity through Jesus**, not ambition, comfort, or comparison.
- **Do I filter decisions and desires through what brings glory to Jesus?**

**2. Obedience Is a Joy, Not a duty nor a Burden**

- Hebrews 5:14 “**...those who have their powers of discernment trained by constant practice.**”
- Maturity shows up in **consistent obedience** to God's Word—even when it’s hard—and a

**3. Spiritual Reproduction Is Happening** -you are leading people to Jesus/disc. them

- 2 Timothy 2:2 – “**...entrust to faithful men who will be able to teach others also.**”
- Maturity isn't just knowing more, but **investing in others**—discipling, mentoring, serving.
- **-Who is growing in their walk with God because of my influence?**

**4. Love Leads Your Life**

- Ephesians 4:15 – “**Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way... into Christ.**”
- A mature believer grows in **compassion, forgiveness, and humility**, reflecting Christ’s love more than *reacting* in pride and their rights
- **-Do people feel the love and grace of Jesus when they encounter me?**

## 5. Suffering Deepens rather Destroys Your Faith

- James 1:2-4 – “...that you may be mature and complete, lacking nothing.”
- Maturity is tested in trials. A mature believer **clings to God** in suffering and becomes **more like Christ** through it.
- Do hardships make me bitter or deeper in Christ?

## 6. You Want God More Than His Gifts and blessings

- Philippians 3:8 – “I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Chr
- Maturity sees Christ as the **greatest treasure**, not a means to a better life.
- Would I still pursue God if He withheld what I wanted?

## 7. You don't stop Growing; you become a life learner -your knowledge =greater/deeper worship of the Lord!

- Colossians 2:6-7 – “...continue to live your lives in Him, rooted and built up in Him.”
- Maturity is **not arrival**—it's a posture of continual growth, repentance, and hunger for more of God.
- Am I more like Jesus than I was a year ago?

Maturity is not measured by **knowledge** alone, but by **transformation**.

It's proven **over time**.

It's less about how loud your faith sounds and more about how **deep it runs**.

**Result? Spiritual Maturity. How recognized?** Eph. 4:14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the **truth in love**, we are [all] to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow **so that it builds itself up in love** we never look more like Jesus than when we love & sacrifice for others; putting their needs above ours & pursue them in **TRUTH w/ LOVE!**

## Eternal Results of building up the Body of Christ?

= A. We grow into spiritual maturity and Christlikeness (**WHOLE** Disciple): AND

### B. We help others grow into spiritual maturity and Christlikeness:

- 1) **Life Change:** peoples' lives are radically transformed by grace! God measures success by spiritual *change* (repentance/growth/worship:JOY) in individuals =(Discipleship)
- 2) **Kingdom Grows:**
  - Local Church Grows -everyone is growing; connected; serving; & On Mission
  - The Gospel is advanced in this community = people are being saved and discipled
  - New Churches are started/planted =Locally, regionally, State, Nation, World
  - The Global Church is Strengthened

### 3) God is Glorified:

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(=God's **Glory**, new **souls**, spiritual **growth**, Christ's **exaltation**)

- Gifts: Spirit-endowed gifts that uniquely help build up/edify/grow/enc. Christ's Body
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- In God's Hands, ALL of these are powerful tools to build up, encourage, serve, & bless others

#### **APPLICATION:**

- Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? [www.spiritualgiftstest.com](http://www.spiritualgiftstest.com)
- Where are you serving? Willing to serve? How can you bless your Ch.?)

#### **NEEDS:**

Children's Min.

A/V team

Parking Team