

# Equipped on Purpose

When a building is under construction or undergoing maintenance, scaffolding goes up. It's temporary, but it's not optional. And when you see scaffolding, you know work is happening on purpose. All of the teaching we've done thus far in the 2026 Vision plan is like scaffolding. It is all designed to help us to grow and serve in ways that do not happen by accident. God equips His people through teaching. Every Christian is saved with purpose. And if we believe God equips His people, then service is not optional. And, passivity is not faithfulness.

## I. Equipping Begins with Christ - Not the Church

- A. Ephesians 4:11: *And he himself gave* some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. Think of how this is describing the **ongoing care of a living Lord**.
- B. And so when we emphasize equipping, growth, service, and maturity, it's biblical.

## II. Teaching Has a Clear Purpose: Equipping the Saints

- A. Why Christ gave these gifts:
  1. Ephesians 4:12: *to equip the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ,*
  2. "Equip" carries the idea of "preparing," "mending," or "putting something in working order."
  3. Teaching is meant to prepare God's people to function ... to make us useful servants.
- B. Equipping always has the body in view.
  1. Ephesians 4:12: *to equip the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ,*
  2. See the two purposes here that cannot be separated. (Equipping and Building Up)
  3. God equips individuals so that the whole body becomes stronger.

## III. Equipping is Aimed at Maturity, Not Comfort

- A. Ephesians 4:13: *Until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son,*
  1. "Until" tells us the equipping is not a short-term thing. It is the ongoing work of the church.
- B. And note the second part of v. 13: *growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ's fullness.* Maturity is the measure of faithfulness.
- C. Immaturity leaves us spiritually vulnerable.
  1. Ephesians 4:14: *Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit.*
  2. Maturity gives us spiritual steadiness.
- D. What is maturity?
  1. Ephesians 4:13: *growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ's fullness.*
  2. Maturity is becoming more like Jesus.

## IV. Growth Happens When Every Part Engages

- A. Ephesians 4:15: *But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him* who is the head—Christ.
  1. Growth is directed toward Christ. We grow **into Him**.
- B. How God designed the church to grow together:
  1. Ephesians 4:16: *From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building itself up in love by the proper working of each individual part.*
  2. This is God's design. Every part matters - even if it feels small.

## V. As We Close...

- A. Our goal with Vision 2026: becoming who Christ intends us to be.
- B. Teaching equips us so we can engage. Equipping prepares us to contribute.
- C. And when we contribute, the body grows. You have not been saved to become a spectator - you have been saved to become a participant in His work. Are you in Him? How can we help you get started?