



Growing the Church

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 and gave gifts to men." (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

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.

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men 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.

HOW DOES A CHURCH GROW?

1. **THE CATALYST OF GROWTH: GIFTED** _____ (vs. 7-11)
(Ephesians 3:7-17, Psalm 68:18, John 3:13, 2 Corinthians 5:21, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 12:28-30; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Peter 4:11, Acts 11:27; 13:1; 21:4, 9; 1 Corinthians 14:1, 1 Peter 5:2, Acts 20:28, John 21:15-17)
2. **THE MEANS OF GROWTH:** _____ (v. 12a)
3. **THE GOAL OF GROWTH:** _____ (vv.12b-14)
4. **THE MEDIUM OF GROWTH:** _____ (vv. 15, 16)
 - a. **Discard The Old** _____ (vv. 17-19)
 1. _____
(Mark 3:5-6, Romans 1:18-22)
 2. _____
(Romans 1:21-22)



3. _____.
(Isaiah 5:20)

4. _____.

b. Put On The _____ Wardrobe (vv. 20-24)

1. Jesus is the _____ of our instruction

2. Jesus is the _____ of our instruction

3. Jesus is the _____ of our instruction
(Galatians 5:22, Philippians 2:12-13, 1 Timothy 4:7)

Group Discussion:

- **Start It Out**

Have you ever tried to grow something? What was your experience? To what did you pay attention? How would you describe the experience?

- **Talk It Out**

Why are there apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers? How are their roles important for the growth of the church? Do we still have these persons in the church today? Why or why not?

What would “unity in the faith” and “full maturity” look like? What are the signs that we are moving in that direction? Sometimes people refer to new Christians and mature Christians. What do you think these terms mean? Do you think we will ever be completely mature? Why or why not? Why is it important to move towards maturity in our faith? What happens if we aren’t?

What have you learned from someone with different beliefs than you? Have you ever had anyone to “speak the truth in love” to you? How did you handle it? What was the result?

- **Cross the Bridge: Your Next 7 Day Assignment**

Explore the gifts God has given you. How are you currently using them to build up the church? How can you use them in new ways to build up others in the faith?