

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his 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 people in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of 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.

Ephesians 4:11-16

According to Ephesians 4:11-16, who is called into the ministry?

The Greek word for equip is *Katartizo*. This is a compound word, composed of kata (down) and artos (a joint), and has a variety meaning: to repair, restore to a former good condition, to prepare, to fit out, to equip. It is used for reconciling factions, putting a dislocated limb into place, mending nets, manning a fleet, supplying an army with provisions. The basic idea is "adjustment; the putting of all the parts into right relation and connection."

Looking back over your life, who is the one person who has done the most to equip, mend, prepare, and shape you for ministry?

Define the following four gifts that are meant to equip God's people:

- apostles

- prophets

- evangelists

- pastors and teachers

What might it look like to "equip his people for works of service"?

What is the ultimate purpose of equipping?

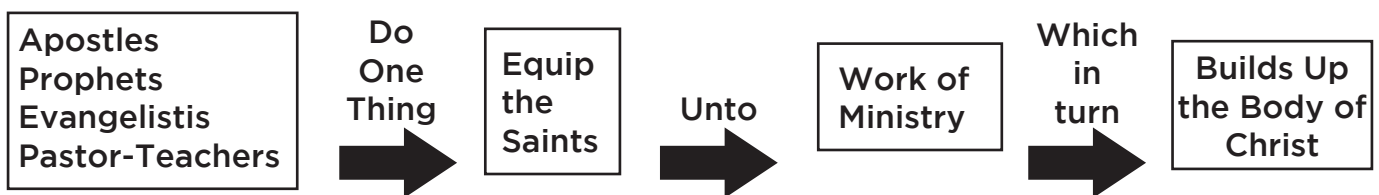
Describe what a church would look like that had reached “unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”

It appears that part of being equipped is not being “tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.” What is necessary for this kind of equipping to take place?

Notice those words at the end of the passage: “...as each part does its work.” What might happen when each member of the body is NOT engaged in the work of the ministry?

Look at the following chart and locate yourself and your role on that chart (see p. 132 of Unfinished Business).

**The Goal of Equipping:
The Priesthood of All Believers
Ephesians 4:11-12**



When you consider “the work of the ministry” that God has called you to, do you feel:

Fearful?

Eager?

Confused?

Confident?

Inadequate?

Ashamed?

None of the above?

Explain your answer.

Is there an area of ministry that you have never tried that would be a good use of your gifts? What prevents you from getting involved in that ministry? What steps can you take to move ahead?

“The work of the ministry belongs to the entire body of believers, who should be equipped, guided, and encouraged by those who are gifted by God to expound and apply His Word with wisdom and power. The entire body has received gifts from the Spirit, and it is the task of those in the pastoral ministry to encourage the entire body to discover and exercise those gifts. When we rediscover the pattern and strategy of Ephesians 4, when we have given all Christians in the body their God-given role as ministers of God’s eternal plan, then the entire body comes alive with resurrection power. Lives are changed. Ministries explode. Communities are touched and healed. The church becomes healthy and vital and exciting again.” Ray Stedman, Body Life