

## INTRODUCTION: PERSONAL TESTIMONY – GOD EQUIPS THROUGH PEOPLE AND PRAYER

- I want to start by introducing myself to those who may not know me well.
- I graduated from EGCA, and I'm deeply thankful for the foundation this school and church gave me.
  - Pastor, Bernice, and Charlene were very patient with me- Detention All the time!
- My parents introduced me to MBM, which eventually led me to attend EGCA. They paid for my Christian education, and I'm grateful for that investment.
  - Charlie Baldwin would encourage me to keep going, not to give up!
- While at EGCA, I served in ushering and other ways—but once I graduated, I drifted. Work took over, and I began to hang out with the wrong crowd.
- I got caught up in binge drinking on the weekends, mismanaged my life, and battled addiction to adult material online. I was not a good steward of what God gave me.
  - Became Angry
  - Staff and clients would call me the Hulk.
- I stopped coming to church regularly. I'd pop in occasionally, but I was spiritually distant.
- As I reached my 30s, I knew there had to be more to life than what I was living.
- I decided to go to college, even though I was petrified—at EGCA I had to do summer school and barely graduated.
- I also told myself I would return to church—because this was my home. I'll never forget seeing Bernice one Sunday morning, and she said, "You're home." That stuck with me. I don't know if she remembers that.
- Before Joy Cawley passed, I wrote her a letter. Sadly, she didn't get to read it. In it, I mentioned her mom, Helen, who constantly prayed for me—she didn't see the answer in her lifetime, but her prayers were not wasted.
- I thanked Joy for holding me accountable in school, even when I didn't like it. I wrote in that letter: "Soon enough, I'll be up here speaking." And here I am today.
- **God is real. Prayer is powerful.** It has been over 25 years, and by His grace I now have multiple master's degrees and working on my doctoral program @ MBCIU

- My heart was hardened for many years, but I'm standing here today because of the seeds sown by faithful people—my parents, pastors, teachers like Helen, Joy, and Charlene.
- I also met my wife and now have a daughter—through the church. None of this would have happened if those before me didn't pour into me.
- I want to acknowledge Pastor Andrew and Andrea. They went to EGCA too—we were classmates. We are now living evidence of the fruit of Christian education and equipping.
- Many former students have gone on to do the work of ministry: leading worship, preaching, teaching.
- Why share all this? Because this is what it looks like to equip the saints for the work of ministry. You are seeing the fruit in action—generation after generation equipped to build.

**Equipped to Build: The Work of Every Believer-** I've been spending a lot of time in the book of Ephesians. It aligns with what has spoken about by Pastor Ron and Andrew. Apostolic Anointing/a pioneering work- great commission, Pastor Andrew spoke about being in Position-becoming obsessed with Alterations.

**Text: Ephesians 4:11–13** And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

**Theme: CHRIST EQUIPS EVERY BELIEVER TO GROW, SERVE, AND BUILD THE CHURCH THROUGH DISCIPLESHIP, SERVICE, AND SPIRITUAL MATURITY.**

**Purpose: To call both leaders and members to embrace their role in God's design for the Church.**

**Reason for the letter:** 1) What God Has Done, 2) Our response to what God has done for us.

Paul wrote Ephesians to reveal God's eternal plan to unify all things in heaven and on earth under Christ (Ephesians 1:10). Central to this plan is the reconciliation of Jews and Gentiles, breaking down the dividing wall of hostility and creating one new humanity in Christ (Ephesians 2:14). Paul sought to strengthen the Church by calling believers to live worthy of their calling, marked by humility, gentleness, patience, and unity (Ephesians 4:1–3). He emphasized the Church's identity as God's masterpiece, created in Christ to do good works and display His wisdom to the spiritual realm (Ephesians 2:10, 3:10). The letter also serves to prepare believers for spiritual warfare, urging them to stand firm by putting on the full armor of God (Ephesians 6:11). Unlike

other epistles that correct errors, Ephesians is primarily formational — a call to maturity, unity, and purpose in the body of Christ.

## **Outline of Ephesians**

### **I. Doctrine — Our Position in Christ (Chapters 1–3)**

- **Chapter 1:** Spiritual blessings in Christ — we are chosen by the Father, redeemed by the Son, and sealed by the Holy Spirit. Paul prays for believers to receive spiritual wisdom and understanding of Christ's power and authority.
- **Chapter 2:** Once dead in sin, we are now made alive by grace through faith. Christ has reconciled Jews and Gentiles, making peace and forming one body — the Church, God's dwelling place.
- **Chapter 3:** Paul reveals the mystery of Christ: that Gentiles are co-heirs in God's promises. He prays for the Church to be strengthened through the Spirit, rooted in love, and filled with the fullness of God.

### **II. Duty — Our Practice in Christ (Chapters 4–6)**

- **Chapter 4:** Believers are urged to live in a way that reflects their calling. Christ gave spiritual leaders to equip the Church, promoting unity and maturity. The old self must be put off as we walk in holiness and love.
- **Chapter 5:** We are to imitate God by walking in love, living as children of light, and making wise use of our time. Paul gives specific instructions for marriage, portraying it as a reflection of Christ's relationship with the Church.
- **Chapter 6:** Paul provides guidance for relationships between children and parents, and servants and masters. He concludes with the call to spiritual warfare, urging believers to put on the full armor of God and remain steadfast in prayer. The letter closes with final greetings and a blessing of peace, love, and grace.

## **EQUIPPING THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF MINISTRY:**

**20 yr. anniversary by Dr. Paul Jehle: Revelation 3:7-13:** <sup>8</sup>“I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.

- **God is doing a work in this Church because of Pastor and Bernice Faithfulness and steadfastness, and the work of the body.**

**Dedication of the church by Dr. Paul Jehle: dedication, sanctification, consecration.**

**“For the earth yields crops by itself: first the blade, then the head, after that the full grain in the head.”**

**— Mark 4:28 (NKJV)**

1. **Seed Planted** – A divine word or vision is sown. This represents the hidden beginning of God’s work, where transformation starts beneath the surface through prayer, obedience, and the planting of truth.
2. **Blade Emerges** – A new thing begins to break through. The first visible signs of revival or spiritual renewal appear. Though small, they indicate life, movement, and divine initiation.
3. **Sprouting Stage** – A season of awakening. Hearts are stirred, spiritual hunger increases, and the community becomes more receptive. Momentum builds as God prepares a people for deeper change.
4. **Full Bloom** – Reformation begins. The move of God bears lasting fruit. What started as a seed has matured into visible transformation. Ministries are mobilized, structures realigned, and a forward-moving work of the Spirit becomes established.

## **I. Christ Gives Gifts to the Church**

**(Ephesians 4:11 “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,”)**

Christ is the source of leadership roles—apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

- These are not status positions, but functions to build the Body.
- Each individual Christian is gifted by Christ... this is grace uniquely given to each member.
- When Christ gives gifts to the Church, it is not to centralize power but to distribute responsibility.
- In other words, our pastors are not to do everything but equip us to do the work.

## **II. The Purpose: Equipping the Saints**

**(Ephesians 4:12a “for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry”)**

**God’s calling works both ways - He invites you into relationship with him, but that also means becoming someone who helps carry out his work of making things right.**

**It’s not just about relationships, it’s also about responsibility.**

**This is not just for personal spiritual benefit -although true- but to serve the greater mission of God which to to redeem and restore all of creation.**

- “Equip” (katartismos) means to mend, prepare, restore.
- Leaders are trainers and builders—fixing what is broken and preparing believers for ministry.
- Too many churches build buildings but fail to build builders.
- Equipping happens through:
  - Sound biblical teaching (2 Tim 2:2)
  - Personal discipleship

- Practical ministry preparation
- Every believer has a part: “Saints” includes all Christians, not just leaders.

### III. The Result: The Work of Ministry

#### (Ephesians 4:12b “for the edifying of the body of Christ,”

Ministry is not for pastors alone—it’s for the whole body.

- Ministry isn’t about filling roles on a calendar; it’s also about releasing people with a calling.
- Mutual ministry includes
  - **Romans 15:14** (NKJV): “Now I myself am confident concerning you, my brethren, that you also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another.”
  - **NLT**: I am fully convinced, my dear brothers and sisters, that you are full of goodness. You know these things so well you can teach each other all about them.”
  - **ESV**: I myself am satisfied about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge and able to instruct one another.”
  - Other words: counsel, instruct, to guide, to give advice.
  - 1 Thessalonians 5:11 speaks of encouragement and building each other up
  - 1 Thessalonians: And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all.
- **Teaching**
  - Moses – Deuteronomy 6:6–7 – Taught Israel God’s commands and instructed parents to teach their children.
  - Ezra – Ezra 7:10 – Studied, obeyed, and taught the Law to Israel.
  - Levites – Nehemiah 8:7–8 – Explained the Law to the people with clarity.
  - Jesus – Matthew 5:2 – Delivered foundational teaching in the Sermon on the Mount.
  - Apollos – Acts 18:24–26 – Accurately taught Scripture with passion and humility.
  - Paul – Acts 20:20 – Taught publicly and privately with consistency.
  - Timothy – 1 Timothy 4:11 – Commanded to teach and reinforce sound doctrine.
- **Encouragement**
  - Jonathan – 1 Samuel 23:16–17 – Strengthened David’s hand in God during trial.
  - Hezekiah’s Officials – 2 Chronicles 30:22 – Encouraged the Levites during temple worship.
  - Barnabas – Acts 4:36; 11:23 – Uplifted new believers and affirmed church leaders.
  - Judas and Silas – Acts 15:32 – Strengthened and encouraged the church with prophetic words.
  - Phoebe – Romans 16:1–2 – Supported and encouraged many in the early church.
  - Paul – 1 Thessalonians 5:11 – Taught believers to encourage one another and build each other up.
- **Counseling**

- Jethro – Exodus 18:17–24 – Gave wise leadership counsel to Moses.
- Nathan – 2 Samuel 12:1–13 – Rebuked David with a parable and called him to repentance.
- Job’s Friends (initially) – Job 2:11–13 – Sat silently with Job in his grief.
- Priscilla and Aquila – Acts 18:26 – Gently corrected Apollos in doctrinal understanding.
- Paul – 1 Corinthians 5 and 6 – Provided firm counsel on church discipline and morality.
- James – James 5:19–20 – Encouraged restoring those who wander from the truth.
- **Prayer**
  - Abraham – Genesis 18:22–33 – Interceded for Sodom and pled for mercy.
  - Moses – Exodus 32:11–14 – Prayed for God’s mercy after Israel’s sin.
  - Hannah – 1 Samuel 1:10–18 – Prayed fervently for a child and poured out her soul.
  - Daniel – Daniel 6:10 – Prayed regularly despite threats of persecution.
  - Jesus – Luke 6:12 – Spent all night in prayer before selecting apostles.
  - Epaphras – Colossians 4:12–13 – Labored in prayer for the spiritual growth of others.
  - The Church – Acts 12:5 – Prayed earnestly for Peter during his imprisonment.
- **Serving**
  - Joseph – Genesis 39:4 – Served faithfully in Potiphar’s house despite being enslaved.
  - Ruth – Ruth 2:11–12 – Served Naomi sacrificially through labor and loyalty.
  - Tabitha (Dorcas) – Acts 9:36–39 – Known for good works and charitable deeds for widows.
  - Martha – Luke 10:38–40 – Provided hospitality and served Jesus in her home.
  - Phoebe – Romans 16:1–2 – Recognized as a servant and helper to many.
  - The Seven (Deacons) – Acts 6:1–6 – Appointed to meet practical needs in the church.
- **Evangelism**
  - Isaiah – Isaiah 55:1–3 – Invited people to receive life and truth from the Lord.
  - Jonah – Jonah 3:1–10 – Preached repentance to Nineveh leading to citywide revival.
  - Jesus – Luke 4:43; John 3 – Preached the kingdom and engaged in personal evangelism.
  - Philip – Acts 8:5–12, 26–40 – Evangelized Samaritans and the Ethiopian eunuch.
  - Peter – Acts 2:14–41 – Preached at Pentecost resulting in thousands being saved.
  - Paul – Acts 17:22–31 – Shared the Gospel to Gentiles in culturally relevant ways.

#### **IV. How Do We Minister? A Biblical Model: Love, Know, Speak, Do by Paul David Tripp: instruments in the redeemer’s hands.**

- **Core Premise:** “God uses people, who are themselves in need of change, to be instruments of change in the lives of others.”
- In other words, Tripp’s emphasis is that every believer is a tool in God’s hand, not just pastors, leaders, or elders. Ministry is not reserved for professionals; it is the calling of every Christian.

## **1. LOVE – Build Relationships That Open the Door for Ministry**

Verse: John 13:34–35

“A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

Supporting Verse: 1 Thessalonians 2:8

“We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well, because you had become so dear to us.”

Key Point:

Ministry begins with Christlike love and relational trust. Before we correct, counsel, or teach, people must feel that we care. Love is not sentimental—it is sacrificial, patient, and consistent. People are more open to truth when they feel genuinely valued.

Biblical Examples:

Jesus with the disciples – He washed their feet before preaching to their pride (John 13).

Jonathan with David – Loyal, covenantal love that sustained David through hardship (1 Samuel 18:1–4).

Paul with the Philippians – Repeatedly calls them “beloved” and “partners” (Philippians 1:3–8).

## **2. KNOW – Enter Their World and Understand Their Story**

Verse: Proverbs 20:5

“The purposes of a person’s heart are deep waters, but one who has insight draws them out.”

Supporting Verse: James 1:19

“Let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger...”

Key Point:

Effective ministry requires listening and genuine curiosity. Knowing someone means stepping into their world with empathy. People carry complex stories, and rushing to solutions without understanding dishonors them and misguides us.

Biblical Examples:

- Jesus with the Samaritan woman – He asked questions and drew out her story before offering living water (John 4).
- Nehemiah – Asked questions and listened to the people’s grief before leading change (Nehemiah 1:2–4).
- Job’s friends (initially) – Sat with him for seven days in silence before offering words (Job 2:11–13).

### **3. SPEAK – Bring God’s Truth in Love**

Verse: Ephesians 4:15

“Speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ...”

Supporting Verse: Colossians 3:16

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom...”

Key Point:

We are called to speak truth not with pride or aggression, but with grace, clarity, and conviction. Truth must be saturated with Scripture, led by the Spirit, and seasoned with love. It builds up rather than tears down.

Biblical Examples:

- Nathan with David – Spoke truth through a story that led to repentance (2 Samuel 12:1–13).
- Peter at Pentecost – Boldly proclaimed the truth, leading to conviction and conversion (Acts 2:14–41).
- Aquila and Priscilla with Apollos – Gently corrected his theology in private (Acts 18:26).

### **4. DO – Help Them Act on Truth with Grace and Support**

Verse: James 1:22

“But be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves.”

Supporting Verse: Hebrews 10:24



“And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works...”

Key Point:

Ministry does not stop with conversation—it must lead to transformation. We walk with people as they apply truth to life, offering support, accountability, and encouragement. Obedience becomes sustainable when it happens in community.

Biblical Examples:

- Jesus and Peter – After restoring Peter, Jesus said, “Feed my sheep,” giving him purpose and mission (John 21:15–19).
- The Good Samaritan – Not only saw the need but acted on it with compassion and personal cost (Luke 10:33–35).
- Paul with Titus and Timothy – Trained them, assigned tasks, and sent them into ministry (Titus 1:5, 2 Timothy 2:2).

**V. The Goal: Maturity and Unity in Christ (Ephesians 4:13 “till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;”)**

Ephesians 4:13 teaches that the purpose of equipping the saints is that we would all arrive at unity in the faith, a deeper knowledge of the Son of God, spiritual maturity, and ultimately the fullness of Christ. This is not a private journey but a shared goal—a collective spiritual formation into Christlikeness.

Equipping leads to unity of the faith. Unity in the body of Christ is grounded in sound doctrine, shared devotion, and mutual love. It is not mere tolerance or outward harmony, but an internal and spiritual oneness produced by truth and maintained by humility. As believers mature, they begin to prioritize what truly unites them—faith in Christ, submission to Scripture, and dependence on the Spirit. Acts 4:32 shows that “all the believers were one in heart and mind,” a powerful testimony to the unity that equipping produces.

Equipping leads to knowledge of Christ. This is not simply intellectual understanding, but relational intimacy and personal experience. Paul’s cry in Philippians 3:10 was “that I may know Him,” indicating that growth includes deeper fellowship with Jesus—His heart, His mind, His ways. The mature believer does not merely recite facts about Jesus but walks with Him in reverent love and daily obedience.

Equipping leads to spiritual maturity. Maturity is more than time spent in church or participation in programs. It is marked by discernment, endurance, love, and holiness. Hebrews 5:14 says, “Solid food is for the mature,” meaning maturity is shown by consistent application of truth. Mature believers know how to respond biblically to challenges, serve sacrificially, forgive readily, and persevere faithfully.

Equipping leads to the fullness of Christ. This refers to Christ's character, grace, wisdom, courage, truth, and holiness being fully formed in us. John 1:14 describes Jesus as "full of grace and truth." That fullness becomes visible in us when our presence reflects His, when our actions mirror His heart, and when our words carry His weight. The church is called to display the fullness of Christ to a watching world.

Maturity can be defined as when others see the fullness of Christ in our lives. When people interact with us, they should see humility like His, mercy like His, love like His, and truth like His. Maturity is not about appearances, but transformation. It is the internal work of the Spirit becoming externally evident.

Growth is corporate—we rise together. Ephesians 4:16 reminds us that "from Him the whole body... builds itself up in love as each part does its work." The church grows when each member contributes. There is no such thing as an independent disciple. Growth is sustained and accelerated in community. As one part grows, it strengthens the others.

Maturity is proven not by attendance but by weight-bearing faith—the ability to hold others up when the pressure hits. Galatians 6:2 calls us to "bear one another's burdens," and 1 Thessalonians 5:14 tells us to help the weak and be patient with all. Spiritual maturity is not measured by how loudly we worship or how long we've attended, but by our ability to carry spiritual weight—encouraging the weary, restoring the broken, and supporting the body during trials.

## **APPLICATION: EQUIPPING IN EVERY SPHERE OF OUR LIVES AND THE LIFE OF THE CHURCH**

1. In the Home – Parents are called to disciple their children, not outsource spiritual formation. Spouses are called to sharpen one another in grace and truth. Deuteronomy 6:6–7 instructs parents to talk about God's commandments in the home, on the road, and at all times. The home is the first ministry field.
2. In the Workplace – Believers should work with excellence and integrity as unto the Lord. Colossians 3:23 urges workers to serve not for eye-service, but for God. 1 Peter 3:15 challenges us to always be ready to give a reason for our hope. Work becomes worship when done with a kingdom mindset.
3. In the Community – We are called to shine our light and serve the vulnerable. James 1:27 defines pure religion as caring for orphans and widows in their distress. Matthew 5:16 tells us to let our light shine before others so they may see our good works and glorify God. Communities are transformed when equipped believers serve with love.
4. In the Church – Every believer has a spiritual gift and a role to play. Romans 12:6–8 reminds us that we each have different gifts according to grace, and we are to use them diligently. Whether teaching, encouraging, giving, or leading, all are needed for the body to be built up.
5. To the Nations – God's mission is global. Equipped believers are called to carry the gospel to all peoples. Matthew 28:19 commissions us to "make disciples of all nations," and Acts 1:8 calls us to be witnesses to the ends of the earth. Whether by going, sending, supporting, or praying, mature Christians carry a burden for the unreached and the

marginalized worldwide. Psalm 67:2 declares, “that Your way may be known on earth, Your saving power among all nations.”

To Members: We are not an audience—we are anointed. Church is not a show; it is a shared mission. We are filled with the Spirit and gifted for service. Ask ourself regularly: “What am I doing to build up the Body?” The equipping process is not complete until it flows through you into someone else. The church is strongest when every believer is active, mature, and mobilized.

## **CONCLUSION: THIS IS OUR CALLING**

When we reflect on our own stories, we often see that we did not grow in isolation. Somewhere along the way, someone equipped us. A parent who prayed. A pastor who preached truth in love. A mentor who asked hard questions. A friend who modeled grace. Our maturity is evidence of someone else’s faithfulness. And now, it is our turn to multiply that same investment into others.

God uses everyday people—parents, teachers, mentors, coworkers, small group leaders—to raise up disciples. The beauty of Ephesians 4 is that it removes the artificial line between clergy and laity. Equipping is not reserved for the pulpit. It belongs to the kitchen table, the classroom, the coffee shop, and the lunch break. Ministry happens wherever Christ is present and people are available. We must stop asking who is qualified and start asking who is willing.

Let’s continue equipping one another until we all reflect the fullness of Christ. This is not a short-term goal but a lifelong mission. Christ is not returning for a divided, distracted, or immature church. He is returning for a bride without spot or wrinkle—built up in truth, rooted in love, and equipped for every good work. Our charge is clear: speak truth, walk together, carry burdens, and train others. We must not settle for spiritual infancy in ourselves or in those around us.

Ephesians 4:16 reminds us, “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.” That verse is not wishful thinking. It is a blueprint for how the church thrives. The body builds itself up when every part does its work—not just the visible parts, but every ligament, every joint, every member faithfully serving in love.

So, this is our calling. To grow. To build. To equip. To reflect the fullness of Christ together. Let us not be spectators but participants. Let us not consume but contribute. Let us be the kind of church that heaven recognizes—a people prepared, matured, and unified, living out the purpose for which Christ died and rose again.