GROWING UP IN CHRIST

Spiritual Maturity Is Something We Do Together

KEY PASSAGE **Ephesians 4:7–16**

Purpose

To understand how Christ equips His church to grow toward maturity and to consider the part each Christian plays in helping the whole body become more like Christ.

KEY TRUTH We do not grow up in Christ by accident or alone. Christ gives gifts to His church so that every member can help the whole body grow toward maturity.

Sermon Outline as Preached

1. The Call to Maturity

Believers are called to walk worthy of their calling by maintaining unity and pursuing spiritual maturity.

2. Christ as the Source of Gifts

The descended and ascended Christ gives what His people need for growth, including apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers.

3. The Purpose of Leadership

Church leaders equip the saints for ministry so the body moves toward unity, maturity, and the fullness of Christ.

4. Growth Through Community

The body grows as every part works properly. Christians remain connected to God's Word and the life of the church so they are not carried away by every wind of doctrine.

Small Group Discussion

1. Opening • Growing Up

Stacy described being "physically a runt" and needing circumstances and food to grow. Spiritual growth takes grace gifts from Christ, feeding, and working.

- **Where have you seen yourself "grow up" spiritually since you first became a Christian?**
- **Where do you still need to mature?**

2. Scripture Engagement • Equipped to Serve

Read Ephesians 4:11–13.

- **Why does Paul describe these leadership roles as Christ's gifts to the body?**
- **How does the distinction between leaders doing the ministry and equipping the saints to do ministry change your perspective on your own role in the church?**
- **What does the giving of these as gifts for the growth of the church suggest about being a loner Christian?**

3. Deep Dive • No Longer Children

Read Ephesians 4:13–15.

- **What "winds of doctrine" or worldly influences today make it difficult for Christians to maintain a stable, biblical worldview?**
- **How do God's Word, truth spoken in love, and life together in the church help steady us?**

4. Application • Every Part Matters

Read Ephesians 4:15–16.

- **If the church is a body, what function do you think God has gifted you to fulfill?**
- **What is one practical way you can use that gift to help someone else in this group "grow up" in Christ?**
- **What is the risk in withholding the practice of your gift and presence from the fellowship?**

5. Closing • One Body Because of Christ

Read Ephesians 2:13–14.

- **How does the reality that Christ has "broken down the dividing wall of hostility" encourage us to work together as one church despite our differences?**

PERSONAL APPLICATION This week I can help the body grow by:

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