

## The Goal Of Membership

**MAIN IDEA:** *The goal of church membership is that every single church member would help the whole church grow to maturity in Christ.*

**Digging In:** In Ephesians 4, Paul exhorts us to *live in unity* in the church in light of the *unity we have in Christ* (vv.1-6). Then, after explaining how Christ conquered death and gave *gifts to the church* (vv.7-10), he *specifically names* some of those gifts and talks about the purpose for which Christ gave them:

Ephesians 4.11-16 ESV

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, <sup>14</sup> so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup> Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

1. What are the gifts Christ has give to the church (v.11)?
2. For what purpose did Christ give these gifts to the church (v.12)?
3. According to this passage, who is it who does the work of the ministry (v.12)? How is this different from the way we often think about ministry in the church?
4. What's the goal of church growth (v.13)? What does this teach us about how we should - or shouldn't -evaluate our church?
5. What threat does Paul have in view in (v.14)?

- 6. What does Paul say will happen once we attain to mature manhood (v.14)?**
- 7. If maturity means that we are all unified in the truth and are able to successfully resist false teaching, what are some practical ways you can help others grow toward that goal?**
- 8. By what means does the church grow up to maturity (vv.15-16)?**
- 9. What does each member speaking the truth in love look like practically? Where do these conversations occur?**
- 10. What percentage of the body needs to contribute in order for it to grow properly (v.16)?**
- 11. What are some ways in which a biblical practice of church membership helps contribute to the kind of growth this passage describes?**
- 12. How would a church's growth in these ways be hindered if it didn't practice membership?**