

The GOAL of the Body

Ephesians 4:1-16

2 Corinthians 3

Matthew 25:14-30

The Times We Live In



Christ Is Coming for His Church

- NOT for those who ignore His Word. (1 John 3:4)
- NOT for those who do not serve His Body/Him. (John 12:26; Matthew 20:28)

Goals for 2025: PERFECTION (Philippians 3:12-14)

- RUN together. (Hebrews 12:1-2; Romans 12:4-5)
- RUN to WIN. Giving our ALL. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Luke 14:33)
- BE DISCIPLINED. (1 Corinthians 9:24-27; Hebrews 6:11-12; 2 Peter 1:5-8)
- LIGHTEN OUR LOADS. (Hebrews 12:1-2; Colossians 3:8-10; Ephesians 4:22-23) Living our SAID priorities.
- GATHER TOGETHER MORE OFTEN. (Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 2:42-46)

Six D's of Discipleship

Church Is Not What Many Think

- When did Church become optional.
- When did Church become redefined
- Many have been deceived concerning what Church is and therefore are living in sin believing all is well when it is not well.

God Adds Every Believer to a Church

- No where in the NT do we read of one who calls themselves a Christian and not be active in a local Church.
- A church-less Christian is NOT a Christian.
- A non-functional Christian is NOT a Christian.
- God gifts ALL Christians with a gift and grace to be used in a local Church.
- Christians GROW as they SERVE a local Church.

Who Is A Believer?

- Definition: One who continually repents of his sins and believes God. (Mark 1:15)
- In the NT, the gospel message includes repentance **and** faith. Faith without continual repentance is a dead faith. (See Luke 13:1-5; James 2:14-26)

Before and After the Gift of Eternal Life

- Life before the gift of ETERNAL LIFE - WE ARE **DEAD!**
- **God does not offer gifts He gives gifts!** (Romans 6:23)
- Eternal life come by a SUPERNATURAL act of God's unmerited grace - power.
- Eternal life **BEGINS** at rebirth.
- What is ETERNAL LIFE?
 - **Quantity:** It is FOREVER. God gifts are irrevocable. (Romans 11:29)
 - **Quality:** Eternal life is lived in accordance with God's written Word.
- After REBIRTH
 - Selfless Service
 - Continual Growth

What Is Church?

- It is a Body with many members and ONE HEAD. (Rom 12:4-5; 1 Cor 12:1-27)
- It is a Family. (Matthew 12:49-50)
- It is a spiritual temple built up with living stones. (Ephesians 2:21-22; 4:16)
- Body, family or spiritual temple - they are of ONE ACCORD! (Acts 2:46)

What Does a Church Do? (Acts 2:42-47)

- **THEY continue steadfastly** in (devoted to; addicted to) doctrine, fellowship, in breaking bread, and prayer.
- THEY study together, fellowship together, they worship together, and they pray together.
- What was the results? Note the word "then" in verse 43.
 - The fear of the Lord fell upon them.
 - They witness God working in/among them.
 - They meet each other's needs.
 - They were full of joy.
- What did the first church NOT HAVE? HAVE?
- BUT they met DAILY. See Acts 2:46; Hebrews 10:25

God's Letter to the Church at Ephesus (Ephesians 1:1)

- FIRST and FOREMOST: All Scripture is the Word of God - MEDITATE: (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
 - ALL men are to live their lives on *every Word of God*. (Luke 4:4)
 - GOD moved Paul to write this letter.
 - ALL that has been written was written and preserved for our learning and doing. NOT to learn and NOT to do is SIN against God! (Romans 15:4)
- Author: Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God. (Acts 9:15)
 - An apostle: One who has be commission by Christ. Paul's words carry with them the same authority of Christ. To ignore the words of Paul is to ignore Christ. To ignore Christ is to ignore God. (Luke 10:16)

- Audience: “to the **saints** who are in Ephesus, and **faithful** in Christ Jesus”
- What is a saint? Literally: “one who has been set apart”. A saint is one who has been set apart by God for God’s purposes.
- By definition a saint:
 - ★ Serves God. (Eph 2:10; Titus 2:14; Matt 7:21; 1 Thess 1:9; Heb 12:28)
 - ★ Is holy in all of his/her conduct. (1 Peter 1:13-16)
 - ★ Purifies themselves just as Christ is pure. (1 John 3:3; 2 Cor 7:1)
 - ★ Understands his calling - that he/she was chosen by God, set apart from the world, set apart unto God, for the purpose of fulfilling His purpose. A “holy one” belongs solely unto the Lord to be used by Him for holy purposes.
 - ★ Saints are “peculiar people” (1 Peter 2:9) which means:
 - ① They belong exclusively to one Person.
 - ② They are **DISTINCT**; **DIFFERENT** from the usual.
 - ☆ Separated from the world.
- God preserves the souls of **His saints!** (Psalm 97:10; 31:23, 28)

The Body’s Goal (Ephesians 4:1-16)

- (vv. 1-2) **THE BODY** walks worthy of their calling.
 - A member of a local church walks with **all** lowliness and gentleness, with long-suffering, bearing with one another in love.
 - **FIRST - “walk with all lowliness” - BE A NOBODY!**
 - Forget yourself. BE HUMBLE. (Luke 9:23; Colossians 3:12-13)
 - Like Christ, set aside your reputation. (Philippians 2:7)
 - Deny SELF - Luke 9:23.
 - Considers others more important than yourself. (Rom 12:10; Philip 2:3-4)
 - Like Christ, lay down your **LIFE** for your brethren. (1 John 3:16)
 - Like Christ, become a slave to ALL. (Matthew 20:26-28; Philip 2:7)
- (vv 3-6) A Body endeavors to maintain **the unity** of the Spirit. **NOTE: You can only obey this command by being a member of a local Body.**
 - ★ The members of a Body live in ONE ACCORD with each other.
 - There is ONE Body, ONE Spirit, ONE Lord, **ONE FAITH**, ONE baptism, ONE God and Father.
- (vv. 7-11, 16) Members of the Body use their God-given gifts for the good of the Body. NOT to be using your God-given gift in a local Body is poor stewardship of that gift. (Matthew 25:14-30)
- (v. 11) God gifts local Bodies with teachers.
- (v. 12; Ephesians 4:1) The Body is made up of saints.
- (v. 12) Saints **NEED** teaching/equipping for ministry. The Body needs edifying!
 - “equipping” - literally, “perfecting”
 - **“FOR the WORK of SERVICE”**

The Goal of the Body - PERFECTION! (Ephesians 4:13)

- ① Unity in **THE** FAITH. (“**the**” - Jude 3; 2 Cor 13:5; Acts 6:7; 14:22; 16:5; Romans 1:5; 4:12; 1 Cor 16:13; Col 2:7; 1 Tim 1:19; **4:1**; 6:10)
 - ★ This includes growing in ALL doctrines.
 - ★ The goal is for the Body to have ONE MIND! (1 Corinthians 1:10)
- ② The knowledge of the Son of God.
 - The Holy Spirit uses the Greek word “ἐπίγνωσις” – this is more than just “head” knowledge. This is INTIMATE KNOWLEDGE or RELATIONAL KNOWLEDGE. This knowledge is the foundation of an INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP with Christ.
 - **See Philippians 3:8, 10**
- ③ A PERFECT MAN - not individual but THE CHURCH.
 - A fully grown mature man.
- ④ The measure of the stature of the **FULLNESS** of Christ.
 - MEDITATE on 2 Corinthians 3:18; 1 John 2:6

The Goal of the Body: Maturity (Ephesians 4:14-16)

- Maturity: “not like children - tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine”
 - Mature saints TEST EVERYTHING. (Isaiah 8:20; 1 Thess 5:21)
- “speaking the truth” is ἀληθεύω aletheuo {al-ayth-yoo'-o} means “to speak, deal, and act truthfully.” LIVING THE TRUTH!
- Spiritual maturity ONLY comes within a Body of Christ where **EVERY** part (member) is doing their part so that their brothers and sister can mature. (1 Corinthians 12:12-27) **EVERY MEMBER OF THE BODY IS NECESSARY!** (1 Cor 12:22). The desire to grow is a mark of a disciple (Christian).
- According to the NEW TESTAMENT, the Word of God, a person CANNOT grow and mature as a Christian apart from being an active serving member of a local church.
- “jointed and knit together” shows the intimacy of the “togetherness” of the each member of the Body of Christ.

Are You Active, Serving Member in Church?

- Is your walk as a Christian worthy of your calling? (Ephesians 4:1)
- Are you using your God-given gift in a local church to serve the Lord and others in the Body? (Ephesians 4:7; 1 Corinthians 12:1-27)
- **Are you a saint?**
- Are you edifying yourself **and** others within your Church?
- Is PERFECTION your goal for yourself and your Church?
- Are you SERVING the Lord and others in your Church?