



Poema

“Church Growth God’s Way”

Ephesians 4:12-16

Throughout the Scripture believers are instructed in spiritual growth. The Lord did not provide redemption for us in a holding pattern. He fully intends for His people to grow up in Him.

During much of the 20th century, the church continually misunderstood how this worked. That misunderstanding is also true today. In our eagerness to please God and display our appreciation for His grace, we begin to develop the wrong understanding when it comes to growing the church.

The Western church has resorted to a business model for growth as opposed to a Biblical one. Whether intentionally or unintentionally, we see the senior pastor as the CEO of church, and the elders or deacons as forming the “Board of Trustees.” The CEO is then accountable for filling the pews or chairs, implementing and executing programs that will bring people into the church, as well as teaching positive, inspirational messages that enhance a “feel good” Christianity. This philosophical misstep has been the impotence behind seminars and conferences that have lured pastors and church leaders toward the business model of church growth.

“Seminars, conferences, books, programs, and even special organizations are devoted exclusively to teaching and discussing principles and methods of church growth. Many of the efforts are helpful, but only to the extent they are consistent with the principles Paul teaches in Ephesians 4:12-16.”
(John MacArthur)

God’s plan by which Christ produces church growth is most succinctly written in Ephesians 4:12-16. This plan of God by which Jesus grows His church is seen in three ways. We are shown the progression, the purpose, and the power of God’s divine pattern for the maturing and the function of the church.

- ***The PROGRESSION of God’s plan for the spiritual maturity of the church. (Ephesians 4:12) “...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ...”***

From this verse we see three primary things to which the pastor-teacher is tasked in the ongoing spiritual growth of believers: ***equipping – service – building up.***

- ***The PURPOSE of God’s plan for the spiritual maturity of the church. (Ephesians 4:13-15)“...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, 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. Rather, speaking the truth in love we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ...”***

Biblical truth is under assault today – not so much by the skeptics and unbelievers of the world – but by Christians who have believed the lies concerning cultural norms versus Old and New Testament Biblical truth. Immature Christians are soft targets for this because they are subject to every sort of counterfeit truth: humanistic, cultic, pagan, demonic, or whatever. The New Testament is replete with warnings against this ever-present danger. The immature Christian is gullible, and in the history of the church no group of believers has fallen into more foolishness in the name of Christianity than has much of the church today. Despite our unprecedented education, sophistication, freedom, and access to God’s Word and sound teaching, it seems that every religious hacker can find a ready and willing Christian to buy into the lie.

➤ ***The POWER of God’s plan for the spiritual maturity of the church. (Ephesians 4:16)***
“...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.”

The church receives power, not from human leaders, but from Christ Himself. He is the head from whom the whole body functions. The increase of the church is only through Christ. Additionally, the effective ministry of the church is through His power alone. Nothing happens unless it happens through Him.

The church has the responsibility to learn, study, apply, and obey the Word of God. When that becomes our very life, then and only then, will we see the power of God on earth through His people.

cd.TCT.12216

www.thechurchattampa.com | [@thechurchatTPA](https://twitter.com/thechurchatTPA)