



Ecclesiology: The Study of the Church

Lesson 5: The Growing Church

INTRODUCTION

1. Have you ever known (or been!) a self-confessed Lone-Ranger Christian? (A Lone-Ranger Christian is someone who believes that growing as a Christian is a private matter between that person and God.) What have you done to encourage them to join a local church? _____

MAIN IDEA

Christians grow as we buildup and are built up by other members of the body of Christ. According to Scripture, the way we attain Christian maturity is through the church.

DIGGING IN

In Ephesians 4, the apostle Paul turns from proclaiming the riches of what God has done for us in Christ to exhorting the Ephesian Christians to walk in a manner worthy of their calling (v. 1).

In the first six verses Paul exhorts the Ephesians to pursue unity in the church, and then in verses 7 through 10 he begins to explain how Christ has given gifts to his church.

Ephesians 4:11–17.

1. Why did Christ give apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers to the church? _____

2. Who is it who does “the work of ministry”? Who is supposed to build up the body of Christ (v. 12)? _____

3. How should verses 11 and 12 impact what we expect our pastors to do? _____

4. According to Paul, what is the goal of building up the body of Christ (vv. 13–14)? What are the different ways Paul describes this goal? _____

5. What threat to the church's maturity does Paul warn against in verse 14? _____

6. Paul's picture of a spiritual children being tossed to and fro by bad doctrine and human cunning is a graphic one. Ironically, the difference between real children and spiritual children is that spiritual children don't always recognize their immaturity. Building off of what Paul says in verse 14, what would be some concrete signs of spiritual immaturity in someone's life? _____

7. By what means does Paul exhort the church in Ephesus to combat this threat of false teaching (vv. 15–16)? _____

8. What are some concrete ways that you can help others grow in their knowledge of Christ and in resisting winds of doctrine and human schemes? _____

9. From whom does the body of Christ grow (vv. 15–16)? _____

10. How does the body of Christ grow? (v. 16) _____

11. What does this whole passage teach us about the nature of Christian growth? _____

12. How does this passage confront the person who thinks of himself as a Lone-Ranger Christian? _____

13. How should a commitment to build up the body of Christ by speaking the truth in love impact:¹

a) Our understanding of “ministry”? _____

b) How we use our time? _____

c) What we do on Sunday mornings? Sunday afternoons? Other weeknights? _____

¹ Bobby Jamieson, [*Built upon the Rock: The Church*](#), ed. Mark Dever, 9Marks Healthy Church Study Guides (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012), 31–33.