

Going or Growing?
Ephesians 4:11-16

How do we know if we are going to church or really growing up in Christ?

Ephesians 4:11-16, “And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 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 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, 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 up itself in love.”

What is the role of the Pastor-Teacher? Ephesians 4:11-12, “And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”

Kirk Welch, “The role of a pastor is to provide leadership, protection and spiritual resources that help believers take on the likeness of Jesus Christ through continual obedience to His Word.”

What is the role of the congregation? Ephesians 4:12-16, “for building up the body of Christ, 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 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, 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 up itself in love.”

GRACE IS A GOOD ACRONYM FOR SEEING IF YOU’RE MATURING:

Growing up in Christ – First mark is spiritual discernment. Tim Challies, “Spiritual discernment is the God-given, Spirit-empowered ability to understand and interpret truth, so that we can apply truth to our lives, thus bringing glory to God and furthering our enjoyment of Him.” Growing in your understanding and application of Scripture to the glory of Christ.

Reaching out to others – Second mark is a servant’s heart. You come to serve instead of coming to be served. Mark 10:42-45, “And Jesus called them to him and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But

whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Anchored to the Word – Third mark is your ability to understand Christ from the whole Bible. “The unity of the faith *and* of the knowledge of the Son of God.” See Luke 24:44-47. Notice where Jesus took the two guys on the road to Emmaus to help them understand the meaning of His death and resurrection – The Old Testament.

Connected to Each other – Fourth mark is genuine fellowship with other believers. “Sanctification is a community project.” – John Piper. Hebrews 3:13, “Hebrews 3:13, “But exhort one another every day, as long as it is called “today,” that none of you may be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” We need accountability to stay focused on serving Christ.

Eager to serve – Fifth mark is that you know where you’re gifted and you apply that gift to the furtherance of the gospel. I Peter 4:10-11, “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”