

# Every Member a Minister

## Growth, Maturity, Mutual Edification

Ministry is the Shared Responsibility of All

And He Himself gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, that is, to build up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God – a mature person, attaining to the measure of Christ's full stature. So we are no longer to be children, tossed back and forth by waves and carried about by every wind of teaching by the trickery of people who craftily carry out their deceitful schemes. But practicing the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head. From him the whole body grows, fitted and held together through every supporting ligament. As each one does its part, the body builds itself up in love.  
(Ephesians 4:11-16)

[Phil@UsefulEngines.com](mailto:Phil@UsefulEngines.com)

<https://tinyurl.com/Call2Unity>

## Every Member a Minister

Text: *Ephesians 4:11–16*

Objective: Ministry is the shared responsibility of all.

Key Themes: Growth, maturity, mutual edification.

Discussion:

- What gifts are present in your church?
- How can they be better mobilized?

Application: Take ownership of your ministry contribution.

## Overview (Ephesians 4:11–16)

**Christ gives the people:** “apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers” **to equip the saints** (not to do all the ministry themselves) **for the work of ministry** and the **building up** of the body (vv. 11–12).

The goal is **unity of the faith, knowledge of the Son**, and **maturity** - measured against “the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (v. 13).

Result: **stability** - not “children, tossed to and fro... by human cunning” (v. 14).

Method: “**speaking the truth in love**,” we **grow up into Christ** the Head; **from Him** the whole body, **joined and held together by every joint**, when each part is working properly, makes the

**body grow** (vv. 15–16).

**Core conviction:** Leaders are equippers; the people are ministers; Jesus is the source; love-saturated truth is the way; the whole body grows when **each** part works.

# Guardrails that Preserve Unity (1)

Until we all attain the unity of the faith...

***Eph 2:14-16*** *For he is our peace, the one who made both groups into one and who destroyed the middle wall of partition, the hostility, when he nullified in his flesh the law of commandments in decrees. He did this to create in himself one new man out of two, thus making peace, and to reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by which the hostility has been killed.*

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**Character over charisma** (1 Tim 3; Titus 1): competence matters, **character rules**.

## Guardrails that Preserve Unity (2)

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**1 Tim 3; Titus 1** *Qualifications for Overseers; Qualifications for Deacons; Mystery of Godliness*

- *1Ti 3:16 And we all agree, our religion contains amazing revelation: He was revealed in the flesh, vindicated by the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among Gentiles, believed on in the world, taken up in glory.*
- *Titus 1:9 He must hold firmly to the faithful message as it has been taught, so that he will be able to give exhortation in such healthy teaching and correct those who speak against it.*
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# The Jerusalem Church

Acts 2:42; Acts 4:32-37

**Pattern:** Devoted to teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayer.  
Shared possessions generously, meeting needs without compulsion.  
Worshiped together and in homes with glad and sincere hearts.

**Fruits Demonstrated:**

- **Love** – sacrificial care for one another's needs.
- **Joy** – gladness in worship and shared meals.
- **Peace** – unity of heart and mind.
- **Goodness** – generosity toward those in need.

**Maturity Marker:** They prioritized *people over possessions* and kept gospel proclamation central.

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Act 2:42-47 They were devoting themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (43) Reverential awe came over everyone, and many wonders and miraculous signs came about by the apostles. (44) All who believed

were together and held everything in common, (45) and they began selling their property and possessions and distributing the proceeds to everyone, as anyone had need. (46) Every day they continued to gather together by common consent in the temple courts, breaking bread from house to house, sharing their food with glad and humble hearts, (47) praising God and having the good will of all the people. And the Lord was adding to their number every day those who were being saved.

Act 4:32-37 The group of those who believed were of one heart and mind, and no one said that any of his possessions was his own, but everything was held in common. (33) With great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was on them all. (34) For there was no one needy among them, because those who were owners of land or houses were selling them and bringing the proceeds from the sales (35) and placing them at the apostles' feet. The proceeds were distributed to each, as anyone had need. (36) So Joseph, a Levite who was a native of Cyprus, called by the apostles Barnabas (which is translated "son of encouragement"), (37) sold a field that belonged to him and brought the money and placed it at the apostles' feet.

# The Antioch Church

Acts 11:19-26; Acts 13:1-3

**Pattern:** Multi-ethnic leadership team (Barnabas, Simeon, Lucius, Manaen, Saul). Intentional discipleship - Barnabas encouraged, Saul taught. Spirit-led sending of missionaries (Paul & Barnabas).

**Fruits Demonstrated:**

- **Faithfulness** – consistent teaching and disciple-making.
- **Gentleness** – Barnabas's encouragement to new believers.
- **Self-control** – Fasting and prayer before making major decisions.

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Act 11:19-26 Now those who had been scattered because of the persecution that took place over Stephen went as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch, speaking the message to no one but Jews. (20) But there were some men from Cyprus and Cyrene among them who came to Antioch and began to speak to the Greeks too, proclaiming the good news of the Lord Jesus. (21) The hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number who believed turned to the Lord. (22) A report about them came to the attention of the church in Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas to Antioch. (23) When he came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with devoted hearts, (24) because he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and a significant number of people were brought to the Lord. (25) Then Barnabas departed for Tarsus to look for Saul, (26) and when he found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught a significant number of people. Now it was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians.

Act 13:1-3 Now there were these prophets and teachers in the church at Antioch: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius the Cyrenian, Manaen (a close friend of Herod the tetrarch from childhood) and Saul. (2) While they were serving the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." (3) Then, after they had fasted and prayed and placed their hands on them, they sent them off.

# Paul's Mentorship of Timothy

2 Timothy 1:3-7; Philippians 2:19-22

**Pattern:** Encouragement to use spiritual gifts boldly. Modeling faith, perseverance, and doctrinal integrity. Passing on responsibility and leadership.

**Fruits Demonstrated:**

- **Patience** – in developing a young leader over years.
- **Kindness** – gentle encouragement instead of harsh rebuke.
- **Faithfulness** – entrusting ministry to a trustworthy co-worker.

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2 Tim 1:3-7 I am thankful to God, whom I have served with a clear conscience as my ancestors did, when I remember you in my prayers as I do constantly night and day. (4) As I remember your tears, I long to see you, so that I may be filled with joy. (5) I recall your sincere faith that was alive first in your grandmother Lois and in your mother Eunice, and I am sure is in you. (6) Because of this I remind you to rekindle God's gift that you possess through the laying on of my hands. (7) For God did not give us a Spirit of fear but of power and love and self-control.



Phil 2:19-22 Now I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you soon, so that I too may be encouraged by hearing news about you. (20) For there is no one here like him who will readily demonstrate his deep concern for you. (21) Others are busy with their own concerns, not those of Jesus Christ. (22) But you know his qualifications, that like a son working with his father, he served with me in advancing the gospel.

# The Macedonian Churches

2 Corinthians 8:1-5; Philippians 4:15-18

**Pattern:** Gave generously despite extreme poverty. Viewed giving as a privilege and fellowship in the gospel. Partnered with Paul in ongoing mission support.

**Fruits Demonstrated:**

- **Joy** – generosity flowed from joy in God, not abundance.
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2 Cor 8:1-5 Now we make known to you, brothers and sisters, the grace of God given to the churches of Macedonia, (2) that during a severe ordeal of suffering, their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in the wealth of their generosity. (3) For I testify, they gave according to their means and beyond their means. They did so voluntarily, (4) begging us with great earnestness for the blessing and fellowship of helping the saints. (5) And they did this not just as we had hoped, but they gave themselves first to the Lord and to us by the will of God.

Phil 4:15-18 And as you Philippians know, at the beginning of my gospel ministry, when I left Macedonia, no church shared with me in this matter of giving and receiving except you alone. (16) For even in Thessalonica on more than one occasion you sent something for my need. (17) I do not say this because I am seeking a gift. Rather, I seek the credit that abounds to your account. (18) For I have received everything, and I have plenty. I have all I need because I received from Epaphroditus what you sent – a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, very pleasing to God.

## Priscilla & Aquila

Acts 18:24-28; Romans 16:3-5

**Pattern:** Corrected Apollos's understanding privately and humbly. Hosted and supported churches in their home. Traveled with Paul to strengthen churches.

**Fruits Demonstrated:**

- **Gentleness** – correcting in a way that built up, not tore down.
- **Peace** – fostering unity through clear teaching.
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Acts 18:24-28 Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, arrived in Ephesus. He was an eloquent speaker, well-versed in the scriptures. (25) He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and with great enthusiasm he spoke and taught accurately the facts about Jesus, although he knew only the baptism of John. (26) He began to speak out fearlessly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and explained the way of God to him more accurately. (27) When Apollos wanted to cross over to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he assisted greatly those who had believed by grace, (28) for he refuted the Jews vigorously in public debate, demonstrating from the scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.

Rom 16:3-5 Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, (4) who risked their own necks for my life. Not only I, but all the churches of the Gentiles are grateful to them. (5) Also greet the church in their house. Greet my dear friend Epenetus, who was the first convert to Christ in the province of Asia.

# Gifted People for a Gifted Body

## A Framework for Effective Talent

### Biblical Framework

- **Romans 12:3–8** - Diverse gifts in one body; sober self-assessment; use your gift.
- **1 Corinthians 12:4–27** - One Spirit, many gifts; no “useless” parts; interdependence.
- **1 Peter 4:10–11** - “As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another... in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.”
- **Galatians 5:13** - Freedom expresses itself in **serving one another through love**.
- **Hebrews 10:24–25** - Mutual admonition to love and good works; gather to encourage.

### Diagnosing the Blockers

- **Consumer Christianity:** spectators, not servants (Eph 4:12).
- **Gift-Envy / Gift-Pride:** comparing parts of the body (1 Cor 12).
- **Bottlenecked leadership:** staff “doers” rather than **equippers**.
- **Fear & Perfectionism:** waiting to be “ready” before serving.
- **Burnout:** serving without shared loads, rhythms, or rest (Mark 6:31 principle).

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### Scripture References for Teaching & Discussion

**Core:** Ephesians 4:11–16.

**Gift lists & body life:** Rom 12:3–8; 1 Cor 12:4–27; 1 Pet 4:10–11.

**Serving through love:** Gal 5:13; Heb 10:24–25.

**Leadership as equipping/guarding:** Acts 20:28; 1 Tim 3; Titus 1.

**Truth in love / speech ethics:** Eph 4:15, 25–32; Col 4:6.

**Humility & unity posture:** Phil 2:1–5.

Mark 6:31 He said to them, “Come with me privately to an isolated place and rest a while” (for many were coming and going, and there was no time to eat).