

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

<https://tinyurl.com/Call2Unity>

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.

- **Christ at center** - ministry flows from reconciliation in Christ, not ego or platform.

Eph 4:14 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.

- **Doctrinal stability** - gospel centrality, guard against fads.

Guardrails that Preserve Unity (2)

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

Eph 4:15 But practicing the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into Christ, who is the head.

- **Truth + Love** - correct gently; never weaponize truth or sentimentalize love.

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.*
- **Character over charisma** - competence matters, **character rules**.

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.

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.

Maturity Marker: Willingness to send their best leaders for mission rather than keep them for local benefit.

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.

Maturity Marker: Long-term investment in leadership reproduction.

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.
- **Goodness** – sacrificial giving for the benefit of others.
- **Faithfulness** – consistent partnership in mission.

Maturity Marker: Prioritized gospel work over personal comfort.

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.
- **Love** – sacrificial hospitality.

Maturity Marker: Using personal resources (home, skills) for gospel advancement.

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).