



[Vision 2019]

In 2017 A 67-year-old woman scheduled for routine cataract surgery thought it was just dry eye and old age causing her discomfort. But the real cause of her discomfort was much more concerning: 27 contact lenses, stuck in the woman's right eye in a "blue mass."

The eye doctor, said the woman hadn't complained about any visual trouble before the operation. But when the anesthetist at the hospital started to numb her eye for surgery, he found the first cluster of contacts.

The woman had been wearing monthly disposable contact lenses for 35 years, but it's unclear how long they had been gathering in her eye. Sometimes when she would try to remove a contact from that eye, she couldn't find it. The patient had just figured she'd dropped it somewhere, but it was actually getting stuck in her eye with the others.

Clear vision is crucial. Often we can add add add until our vision for the simple and fundamental truths of our faith is clouded. So today we look at how we as a local gathering of God's covenant community live in a way that the Lord changes the world through us. **God give us clear sight, purpose, and vision.**

Read [Ephesians 4:11-13]

Our mission: The share the whole gospel with the whole person with the whole world.

We believe that every last word in the Word of God is for our good, instruction, living, inspired, and active. We don't want to leave anything out.

We believe that Jesus Christ changes everything about you. There is no part of you that Jesus has not forgiven, and fundamentally redeemed by His blood.

We believe that the message of the glorious good news of Jesus Christ is for every person in the whole world. **But How?**

Vision: we accomplish this through belonging, growing, and going

An apology. I believe I as pastor, and the tradition of religious faith in general, have unintentionally perpetuated an unbiblical view of the body of Christ (church) and the pastors/ elders. Often, we view the pastor as the professional who leads and does the work of ministry and the laity as the ones who support as needed.

Ultimately this unbiblical view of the pastor leads to a **country club set up**. You come, join, and pay your dues, and the church staff serves. This relegates the pastor to a chaplain: a person whose primary goal is to provide religious services, spiritual guidance and counseling to those in need. ***If I have said or lived in a way where you think my job is to meet your needs, I am sorry. I love you too much and I love Jesus Christ too much to only meet your temporary needs and wants. It is much more!***

Right here in Ephesians we see the biblical role of the pastor to equip the people of God for the work of the ministry and to build up the body of Jesus Christ. What would happen if the dynamic changed? **If we become who God wants us all to become?**

Discipleship Pathway Graphic

Belong

If anyone is **in** Christ, he is a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). In Christ is the most used descriptor for Christ followers in the NT (more than Christian, born again, evangelical, etc.) Remember you do not, **you can not go to church. Rather, you become the church.** You either belong in Christ or you do not. And if you belong in Christ you are made new. And when you are made new, you acquire a new identity. And this new identity has a name: **saint**.

For some that word saint makes you think of St Clair high school, or Drew Brees (who dat) or a holy man with a funny haircut, or a righteous person who will have a halo. The word (hagios) is a word that means holy. It is used for the tabernacle or the Temple and members of the first Christian communities. **Are you a holy one?** The vision of belonging? That we as a church desire all people to know Christ, be redeemed made whole, and belong in the body of Christ.

What does it mean to belong? One young Yale student said this: I don't know the word for the opposite of loneliness but that is what I want. **Sign language** you move your hand towards your chest. As if to say I am His and He is mine.

What if we lived as those belonging to Jesus. What if we were consumed with others needing to belong to Jesus?

What if you committed not to be a part of the crowd, or just an attender but to belong in Christ? Are you a covenant member or an attender? Our next covenant members class will be next Sunday January 20th. **Will you make a fresh commitment to truly belong to Jesus Christ?**

Grow

What does the Lord want for your life? God wants **everyone** to grow. Listen to the words build (4:13), growing, stature, no longer little. How does that happen? The goal is not that some grow but that all (4:13) mature in Christ. **And you will never grow up until you grow deep.**

First, the Lord wants to **equip** you. It is used of (1) broken limbs being healed and made useful again; (2) fishing nets being mended and thereby able to catch fish; (3) ships being fitted with ropes and sails and tacked for sea; and (4) chickens who had grown large enough to be taken to market. Are you willing to be

useful, mended, fitted, and grown? **In Christ, and through the power of the HS, you have everything you need.** Are you useful to Christ and his kingdom?

The Lord wants to **build** you. Paul mixes his **building metaphor (cf. 2:20–22) with his body metaphor (cf. 1:23; 4:12; 5:30)**. Who better to instruct His people to build than the master carpenter? Are you, or have you, intentionally built up the body of Christ today? This week? This month?

If you are in Christ, you are **gifted for the common good, not for individual acclaim**. Spiritual gifts are servant towels, not merit badges! Healthy things grow, unhealthy things die (wages of sin). When you grow you we grow. **We not Me.**

Yahweh wants to **unify** you. When you grow in Christ we also grow in oneness. Oneness and unity is central to the gospel message and gospel impact. Unity was the last prayer our Savior had for you. May they be ONE. Unity is good and pleasant (Psalm 133). Unity is the picture we have in the Holy Trinity. 3 in 1. We have the ultimate university in the Godhead. And the church should be a mini universal university. Different people living in perfect unity because of the perfecting work of Jesus.

Why? Until you reach (4:13): literally means “to arrive at a destination.” The church’s goal is that each member and thus the entire church will show to the world all the attributes and qualities of Christ. Grow 2019:

This is why life groups are crucial to your growth. Smaller groups of like minded people of faith committed to grow. If you are in a group, please go online or fill out the connect card. If you are interested in a D-Group?

Go

What happens when you grow? God equips you to do the work of the ministry. What does this look like? Loving others as yourself. Helping those in need. Visiting those who are sick. Sharing the hope that is within you.

When you take ownership, and do the work that God has called and equipped you to do, the world will change because they see Christ in you. [Matt 5:16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.](#)

Will you commit to serve Christ within the body of Christ? We have provided you a guide to serve. At Bethel, we believe serving together in teams. And we want you to be a part. Right now we have men and women praying for the service. We have people watching children and greeters opening doors and shaking hands with a smile. Every time you serve the Lord in the power of the Holy Spirit, lives are changed.

Jesus does not give us a great suggestion. He gives us a great commandment/mandate. Go and make disciples of all nations! **And one day all nations will gather around the Throne!** So how and where will you go? Influence: going means that change your business for Jesus. You step up and coach a sports team. Maybe that spending time, for the first time, praying for and with your family.

Gospel conversations. Will you commit to share the hope of Jesus Christ with one person a month or 12/year. 7,091 unreached people groups around the world that are less than 2% of professing Christians.

What local ministry will you serve? What mission or mission trip will you take? How will you make a difference in 2019?

Conclusion

2019: Everyone Belonging, Everyone Growing, Everyone Going.

1. Don't be content to stay as a spectator. No I want to join the Lord in His work.
2. Are you growing? Life group? D-Group? Read the Bible?
3. Going? Will you share Jesus with one person/month this year?

How will you respond? Do you belong to Jesus Christ?

John 10:25 “I did tell you and you don't believe,” Jesus answered them. “The works that I do in my Father's name testify about me. **26** But you don't believe because you are not of my sheep. **27** My sheep hear my voice, I know them, and they follow me.

Notes

11 And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, 12 equipping the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ,

Pastors and teachers. Pastors or *shepherds*. The verb ποιμαίνω *to tend* as a shepherd, is often used in this sense. See on 1 Peter 5:2; Matthew 2:6. The omission of the article from *teachers* seems to indicate that pastors and teachers are included under one class. The two belong together. No man is fit to be a pastor who cannot also teach, and the teacher needs the knowledge which pastoral experience gives.

“Pastors” were literally “shepherds” (used for overseers in the Old Testament, e.g., Jer 23:2–4), elsewhere in the New Testament identified as overseers of local congregations (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Pet 5:1–2); they were called to shepherd God’s people by declaring his message accurately (Jer 23:18–22). “Teachers” were expounders of the Scriptures and of the Jesus tradition; if they functioned like Jewish teachers, they probably offered biblical instruction to the congregation and trained others to expound the Scriptures as well.

Leaders are God’s gifts given to train the Body of Christ for the work of ministry! The church needs to recapture the power, giftedness and biblical assignment of all the members of the church (clergy—laity, old—young, male-female cf. Joel 2 quoted in Peter’s Pentecost sermon in Acts 2). Every Christian is a full-time, God-called, God-gifted minister.

Saints

ἅγιον, ου *n*; ἅγια, ων *n*: (derivatives of ἅγιος ‘holy,’ 88.24) the tabernacle or the Temple in Jerusalem as a consecrated place — ‘sanctuary.’

ἅγιος *hagios* 233x
separate from common condition and use; dedicated. Lk. 2:23; hallowed; used of things, τα ἅγια, the sanctuary; and of persons, saints, e.g., members of the first Christian communities; pure, righteous, ceremonially or morally; holy → consecrate; holy; sacred; saint; sanctify.

Equipping/ For the perfecting (προς τον καταρτισμον). Only here in the New Testament. In classical Greek of refitting a ship or setting a bone. The preposition *for* denotes the *ultimate* purpose. Ministering and building are means to this end. Hence its emphatic position in the sentence. For *perfecting*, see on *mending*, Matthew 4:21; *perfected*, Matthew 21:16; Luke 6:40; 1 Peter 5:10. Compare 1 Corinthians 1:10; Hebrews 13:21. The radical idea of *adjustment* is brought out in ver. 13.

The term “equip” means to cause something to be ready for its assigned purpose. It is used of (1) broken limbs being healed and made useful again; (2) fishing nets being mended and thereby able to catch fish; (3) ships being fitted with ropes and sails and tacked for sea; and (4) chickens who had

grown large enough to be taken to market. Also, notice the goal is not that only some mature, but all (cf. v. 13).

The ancient world would bring a ship into the dock to add or replace elements, modify, modernize, or restore parts of the vessel. Ships were built around a keel- typically white oak- and extremely hard wood impervious to termites and wood bugs. After a long journey or a short difficult trek, the ship could come into port for examination. Most often the masts or the seams needed repacking with tar or pitch. **What was the purpose of refitting? To get the vessel sea worthy.** The ship was refit for the purpose of sailing. In the same way, *the Holy Spirit has equipped, and is constantly refitting you for the work of ministry.*

To Build

The gifts are given to every believer for the common good (cf. 1 Cor. 12:7, 11). Every believer is called, gifted, full time minister of Christ. Not all are “vocational” ministers, but all are servants. The modern church is crippled by (1) a clergy/laity mentality and (2) the concept of salvation as a product instead of a relational process of servanthood!!!

“to the building up of the body of Christ” Paul mixes his building metaphor (cf. 2:20–22) with his body metaphor (cf. 1:23; 4:12; 5:30). Believers are gifted for the common good, not for individual acclaim (1 Cor. 12:7). The focus is not on the individual but on the body (cf. v. 4–6). Spiritual gifts are servant towels, not merit badges! Believers are worker bees!

Edifying (οικοδομῆν). Rev., *building up*. See on Acts 20:32. Notice the combination of *perfecting* and *building*. *Building* defines the nature of the work of ministry, and *perfecting* comes through a process.

13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God’s Son, growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ’s fullness.

Maturity “Perfect” is *teleios* (τέλειος), “mature, complete, full grown.” *Expositors* says: “The state at which unity is lacking is the stage of immaturity; the stage in which oneness in faith and knowledge is reached, is the state of mature manhood in Christ.

Growing “until we all attain” This is an AORIST ACTIVE SUBJUNCTIVE which denotes an aspect of contingency. It literally means “to arrive at a destination.” Note that “all” speaks of our corporate responsibility. Notice the three aspects of maturity mentioned: (1) unity of the faith, (2) knowledge of the Son of God; unto a (3) Christlike maturity. Also, notice the goal is not that some mature, but all!

The expression “the fulness of Christ,” refers to the sum of the qualities which make Christ what He is. These are to be imaged in the Church (1:23), and when these are in us we shall have reached our maturity and attained to the goal set before us.

All are to reach the **fulness of Christ**. The church’s goal is that each member and thus the entire church will show to the world all the attributes and qualities of Christ. Then the church will truly be the one body of Christ.

14 Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit. **15** But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head Christ.

How will this church grow? Look at yourself. When you grow into Christ, this promotes the growth of the body of Jesus.

16 From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part.

Application

The presence of Jesus Christ does not prevent His own from suffering. Even more, His presence prepares us