

## STUDY 2

# GROW

GROWING MORE LIKE JESUS



The second of our Big Four words is **Grow**. This is about growing more like Jesus together.

We're not born adults! We arrive as babies and take many years to grow to maturity. Our bodies are designed and geared to grow but growth doesn't happen magically. Essential ingredients for growing big, strong and healthy are diet, exercise, sleep, and the love and affection of family or loved ones.

Feeding children a steady diet of lollies and screens will have a marked difference to feeding them nutritional food, limiting screen time, and providing a home culture that values conversation, curiosity, affection, discipline, care and encouragement. Likewise, there's a certain diet required to grow up in the faith.

What do you think a Christian needs in order to grow up?

What do you think a 'grown up' Christian will look like?



## BUILDING THE BODY

### *Ephesians 4:11-16*

<sup>11</sup> So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. <sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

### *The Gifts Distributed*

**Prophets:** Those moved by the Spirit to speak words from God to strengthen, encourage and comfort (1 Cor 14:3)

**Apostles:** Those sent by Jesus to proclaim their testimony about his resurrection (Acts 1:22)

**Evangelists:** Those especially gifted to proclaim the 'eu-angelion' (good news, gospel) about Jesus (Philip in Acts 8:5, 21:8)

**Pastor-Teachers:** Those gifted to shepherd God's people by teaching God's word (1 Timothy 3:2)

### Read Ephesians 4:11-16

Paul says that when Jesus rose from the dead He was like a triumphant Roman General returning from battle with the spoils of war, generously distributing them to His people.

4. What do the gifts of the risen Lord (v11) have in common?
  
5. What are the goals of these gifts to the church? (v12-13)

The gift Jesus gives to his church is people who proclaim God's word! People speaking God's word to people IS the way God builds up the body to maturity.

6. The phrase 'works of service' in v12 is equally well translated 'works of ministry.' According to these verses, who does the 'ministry' in a church, and who 'prepares' them for this?
  
7. What does "speaking the truth in love" mean (v15)? What else is needed for growth apart from just the "truth"? (v13,16)

8. What things will characterise an immature church where people are not using their gifts to build one another up in the truth about Jesus (v14)?
9. What things will characterise a church where people are using their gifts to build one another up in the truth about Jesus (v15-16)?

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## GROWING TOGETHER

Our MPC teaching team, growth group leaders, kids ministry leaders, and youth leaders and our music teams are committed to seeing us grow more like Jesus together! Consider the questions under the three categories below:

### MEETING

10. As a member of a growth group, what practical steps can you take to encourage one another to **grow more like Jesus together?** (e.g. Regular attendance; Reading and reflecting on the Bible passage beforehand; Enabling and inviting people to ask any question; Asking each other about your growth through the year; Praying for each other through the week.)

### SINGING (see sidebar)

11. If you were selecting songs to sing in church, how would our 'grow goal' help you in the process? Think of some:
- Criteria for choosing songs?
  - Principles for playing music?

### *Singing the Word*

<sup>18</sup> Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, <sup>19</sup> speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, <sup>20</sup> always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Ephesians 5:18-20*

One of the key ways Christians speak the truth in love to each other is through singing about Jesus. Being filled with the Spirit is marked, not by a lack of control, but by singing songs with good intent! When Christians gather our singing is to be directed two ways - to one another, and then together to the Lord. And the content of our songs should be biblically true (psalms, hymns, from the Spirit) as well as with a consistent note of thankfulness (giving thanks to God the Father for everything).

## PRAYING

12. Prayer expresses our dependence on God. Prayer is our response to God's word. And God's word should shape our prayer - what we pray for and how we pray for it. How can we ensure that prayer is an essential part of our lives and the life of the church family? (e.g. daily personal prayer, prayer in Growth Groups, prayer triplets, etc.)

## PERSONAL REFLECTION

13. Push the pause button on life and take stock. Where would you mark the 'Christ-likeness of:

*Yourself*

Immature ●—————● Mature

*Your Growth Group*

Immature ●—————● Mature

*Your Family*

Immature ●—————● Mature

14. What will you prioritise and commit to this year in order to grow as a follower of Jesus? (e.g. daily prayer, intentional evangelism, daily Bible reading, attend Growth Group regularly, family Bible time, etc.) Write it down...

*Our Big Four words are **Invite, Grow, Love and Send**. And yet we recognise that the fruit of all these things depends on God, who extends the invitation and gives the growth and moves us to love by His Spirit and sends us on mission. Spend some time praying that God by his Spirit would use his word to **grow us more like Jesus** together.*