

“Growing to the Measure of Christ’s Stature Together”

Our Current Climate

*We are growing more **isolated** as a culture

- Technological Influence
- COVID-19
- Today’s messaging

*The Research—Barna Research Group

- 1 in 3 “Christians” desire to pursue spiritual growth on their own
- 41% of “Christian” adults consider their spiritual life to be entirely private

*The Result

- **“Close” relationships are on a steady decline**
- **Truth becomes as an individual chooses to define it**
- **Selfishness abounds**

The Problem

*God created humans to be **relational beings**

- This was a pre-fall reality! (Genesis 2:18)

The Gifts

*God gifted man with **others** (Genesis 2)

- Spouse/Family/Friends

*God gifted man with **Himself** (John 3:16; 1 Peter 3:18, Acts 3:18)

- “What a Friend We Have in Jesus”
- His Spirit within us

*God gifted us with the **church** (Acts 2:42-47)

The Two-Fold Goal of the Church

1. Introduce the World to Christ: **Share the Gospel!** (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8)
 - a. Begin where God has placed you (Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, End of the earth)
2. Mold Individuals into the Image of Christ, Equipping them for Ministry: **Discipleship!** (Ephesians 4:11-16)

Discipleship Defined

DISCIPLE = FOLLOWER

DISCIPLESHIP = MAKING FOLLOWERS (GOAL= Christlikeness)

*Is for **ALL believers**

- You must be a disciple in order to disciple others
- Use the **gifts** God has given you within the body of Christ (Eph 4:11; Romans 12:4-8)

*Done in the context of **community** (Eph. 4:12, 16)

- Provides Encouragement and Allows Us to Challenge One Another

*Improves through **study of God’s Word**

***Never ends** until heaven!

- Growth driven! (Eph. 4:13-15)