

Introduction: Can you imagine . . .

- . . . driving home after an exhausting and stressful day only to get an “S.O.S.” voicemail from a not-so-close friend . . . and immediately experiencing a shift of focus off yourself and your stressful day and finding yourself filled with compassion and energy to help this person in need?

- . . . hearing of a promotion or a financial windfall in the life of your ex-husband/wife . . . and having the first thoughts that come to your mind be joy and gratitude to God for His blessing on their life?

- . . . being able to hear the honest conversations of your children and your closest friends as they've gathered at your home after your funeral . . . describing you as the most patient, loyal, and Christ-like person they had ever known?

How God brings out the best in His children:

Ephesians 4:11-16

¹¹*And He gave . . .*

*. . . some as apostles,
. . . and some as prophets,
. . . and some as evangelists,
. . . and some as pastors and teachers,*

¹²*for the equipping of the saints . . .*

*. . . for the work of service,
. . . to the building up of the body of Christ;*

¹³*until we all attain . . .*

*. . . to the unity of the faith,
and of the knowledge of the Son of God,
. . . to a mature man,
. . . to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.*

¹⁴*As a result, . . .*

*. . . we are no longer to be children,
. . . tossed here and there by waves,
. . . and carried about by every wind of doctrine,
. . . by the trickery of men,
. . . by craftiness in deceitful scheming;*

¹⁵*. . . but speaking the truth in love, . . .*

*. . . we are to grow up in all aspects into Him,
. . . who is the head, even Christ,*

¹⁶*from whom the whole body . . .*

*. . . being fitted and held together by that which
every joint supplies,
. . . according to the proper working of each
individual part,
. . . causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.*

1. **Leaders** are gifted to _____ God's people for service.
Ephesians 4:11-12a

2. **Every member** is a _____.
Ephesians 4:12b

3. **Ministries are developed** to help _____ _____ to
live **every day** in **every** way just as Jesus would live if He were living out His life in
their physical body.

Ephesians 4:13

4. God **measures spiritual maturity** by a specific, _____ criteria:

Ephesians 4:14-16

- Doctrinal stability
- Authentic relationships
- Full participation
- Growing love

Are you positioning yourself for God to bring out the best in you?

A diagnostic evaluation:

1. I am currently being equipped for ministry by:

- Worshiping regularly
- Listening / Reading for personal growth
- Being involved in an apprenticeship and/or mentoring relationship

2. I am currently ministering and building into the lives of others . . .

- Rarely or sporadically
- Functioning in my gifts with joy and fruitfulness
- Involved in ministry, but don't feel deeply useful
- Regularly seeing other's lives changed through me and my gifts

3. I am *becoming more like Christ* in my everyday life as evidenced by:

- Coming **B**efore God daily
- A desire to read God's Word
- A disciplined study and understanding of God's Word
- An ability to "see through" false teaching

4. I am *becoming more like Christ* in my everyday life as evidenced by:

- Doing life **I**n community
- Enjoying one or more deep, authentic relationships in Christ
- My regular attendance in a small group where "speaking the truth in love" is common
- Having three or four gut-level accountability relationships that are helping me through the most sensitive areas of my life

5. I am *becoming more like Christ* in my everyday life as evidenced by:

- Being **O**n mission 24-7
- A desire to become more deeply involved with God's people (worship, classes, friendships, meeting needs)
- A sense of belonging and acceptance with my church family
- A clear sense that I "fit" in my church body (I am loved by others and find myself caring and helping them in increasing measure)