

STUDY GUIDE

CHIP INGRAM



THE MIRACLE

OF LIFE

CHANGE



HOW GOD TRANSFORMS  
HIS CHILDREN

# SESSION

## THE BODY OF CHRIST

### HOW GOD BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN HIS CHILDREN

Can you imagine becoming the kind of person you've always longed to be? God's Word provides a game plan for you to become like Jesus. Think of someone you really respect. What characteristics does that person have that draw you to spend time with him or her? God intends to do something very personal and special as He transforms each of us into the likeness of His Son. That's why He didn't give us all the same gifts or abilities. He wants our service to one another to be meaningful—we actually need each other! Just as the cells in the human body have basic components but specific duties and abilities, so it is in the body of Christ. We all share certain character traits and needs, but our Creator has intended each of us for very special service that the rest of the body requires.

The person we long to be will emerge from a process God has designed. We examined the call to morph and the process of morphing (Ephesians 4:1-2) in the first session. Now

*“The person we long to be will emerge from a process God has designed.”*

we will look at how transformation occurs. In addition to the attitudes of humility, gentleness, patience, and bearing with others in love that develop through our relationships with other Christians, Paul now describes certain unique gifts that God equips some in the body to use for the specific training of others. No believer is exempt from this training process.

## HOW GOD BRINGS OUT THE BEST IN HIS CHILDREN

### What is God's game plan for transforming His children?

*And He gave*

*some as apostles,  
and some as prophets,  
and some as evangelists,  
and some as pastors and teachers,  
for the equipping of the saints for the work of service,  
to the building up of the body of Christ;  
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.*

*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;  
but speaking the truth in love,  
we are to grow up in all aspects into Him  
who is the head, even Christ,  
from whom the whole body,  
being fitted and held together by what 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.  
—Ephesians 4:11-16 (NASB)*

*“The person we long to be  
will emerge from a process  
God has designed.”*

### How God Brings Out the Best in His People— The Church

**Leaders** are gifted to \_\_\_\_\_ God's  
people for service. (Ephesians 4:11-12a)

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**Apostles**—those who break through, start new things, pioneer.

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**Prophets**—those who take the Word of God in a culturally relevant way and deliver it to others.

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**Evangelists**—those who are gifted to share the gospel in such a way that people come to Christ and motivate others to share their faith.

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*“A pastor’s job is not to shepherd all the people; a pastor’s job is to make sure all the people get shepherded.”*

**Pastors/Teachers**—those who shepherd, comfort, and help others to grow in their relationship with Christ.

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**Every member** is a \_\_\_\_\_.  
(Ephesians 4:12)

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**God has called** \_\_\_\_\_ to be a minister of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

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*“God’s game plan is multiplication—massive impact—not for a few hired professionals to do the work.”*



SESSION 5 Transformation Conversation

- 1** How are you actively equipping people in your circle of influence? List the names of those you're equipping and pray for them this week.

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- 2** Where are you currently ministering in the body of Christ? Share an area of personal ministry involvement. How has your involvement impacted your personal spiritual growth? Why?

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- 3** Why is it so crucial that members in the body of Christ understand that they are called and gifted, and that they need to be equipped to be the real “ministers” in the church?

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- 4** In what ways did you relate to Chip's stories about people holding on to the concept of the pastor as the one who meets everyone's needs instead of the biblical model of equipping leadership? Would you describe your church as ministry by too few or ministry by many?

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- 5** Do you currently have a mentor, leader, or coach? If so, what characteristics are you learning from that person's model? If not, what will you do to identify someone with those gifts?

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**THIS SESSION BEGAN** with a look into the future. Not an easy-going future, but a future of significant challenges and deep satisfaction flowing from spiritual maturity. Christ has empowered His church to be the place where people grow up spiritually. He has gifted certain people within His body to be His tools for equipping other believers for service. According to Jesus, everyone in the body serves everyone else. You may start out thinking you have nothing to offer other believers, but God called you into His body as a cell, an intimate component, connected by Christ with other believers. God has entrusted you with gifts that can help others.

Think about those who are serving spiritually in your life right now. What people has God provided in your church, small group, or class who are serving in the equipping roles that you need? Begin to identify the gifts of others around you. Ask God to give you insight. When you notice someone exercising a gift, let that person know. Often, people are unaware of the positive effect they are having for Christ. Use the grid below to begin identifying those people.

	Biblical Leadership Roles	Potential Equippers I Know	What I've Noticed about Them
<b>Apostles</b>			
<b>Prophets</b>			
<b>Evangelists</b>			
<b>Pastors/Teachers</b>			

**GREAT ENERGY FLOWS FROM KNOWING** that we belong and that we have a purpose. The personality traits we desire to exercise ultimately have little to do with titles or labels. We long to leave an impact for good on those around us. That longing may be distorted and covered by many conflicting priorities, sins, and hurts in life, but it remains. We want our lives to mean something. We were created with divine design and purpose.

In the action step above, we focused on those serving and equipping *into* our lives. In this action step, we want to track how service flows *out* of our lives. Think about both the services you are presently performing and opportunities that may be open to you. Use the grid below to list at least two of each, but expand the grid in your journal or a notebook and begin to compile a portfolio to help you identify your gift(s). This exercise will help you prepare for the next session.

	Service	Am Doing/Could Do	Gift Indication
<b>Present Service</b>			
<b>Present Service</b>			
<b>Opportunity</b>			
<b>Opportunity</b>			

**THIS WEEK**, say “Thanks” to at least one person (an equipper) who has been a positive role model in your life. Be specific in your description of how that person has helped you be a better servant of Christ. By the way, if this comes easy to you, you may have the gift of encouragement, but all of us are commanded to encourage those around us. You can do this by writing a letter of appreciation to the person, emailing, calling, or even taking them out for coffee and telling them in person. The choice is up to you!

**FOR THE NEXT SESSION**, carefully read Ephesians 4:11-16 as you ponder an important question: How will you measure or know when life change is occurring in you?

Pray for the leaders and equippers in your life by name.