

Fourfold Cycle for Equipping

For many years now, leaders have caught the biblical emphasis for equipping saints to the work of the ministry.

Eph 4:11-13 - 11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the **equipping** (*katartismos*) of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. NKJV

2 Cor 13:9, 11 – 9 For we are glad when we are weak and you are strong. And this also we pray, that you may be **made complete** (*katartismos*). 11 Finally, brethren, farewell. **Become complete** (*katartismos*). Be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you. NKJV

Several years ago, I studied all the references that used the Greek word for equipping and discovered four basic aspects of equipping saints. The Greek word for “equipping” is *katartismos*. It means to come under (down, *kata*), to make fresh repair, adjust, to make complete, fix, adapt, furnish, to perfect. Its process is meant to result in complete furnishing. The various references seemed to fall into four categories, although I exercised my subjective discernment in the process of categorization.

Step One: Mend and Restore – The first step of the Great Commission is to “go make disciples.” Essentially, the new believer is equipped to enter into **the finished work of Christ**. When a new believer comes to Christ, he or she brings baggage in with them. Equipping here often amounts to a rescue operation. The spiritual leadership of the church must work with them on very basic things. Things have to be mended in their lives and a sense of what it means to be a child of God restored to them. The goal is to help people come into a sense of the worship of God and to experience spiritual life in Christ and a new sense of empowerment.

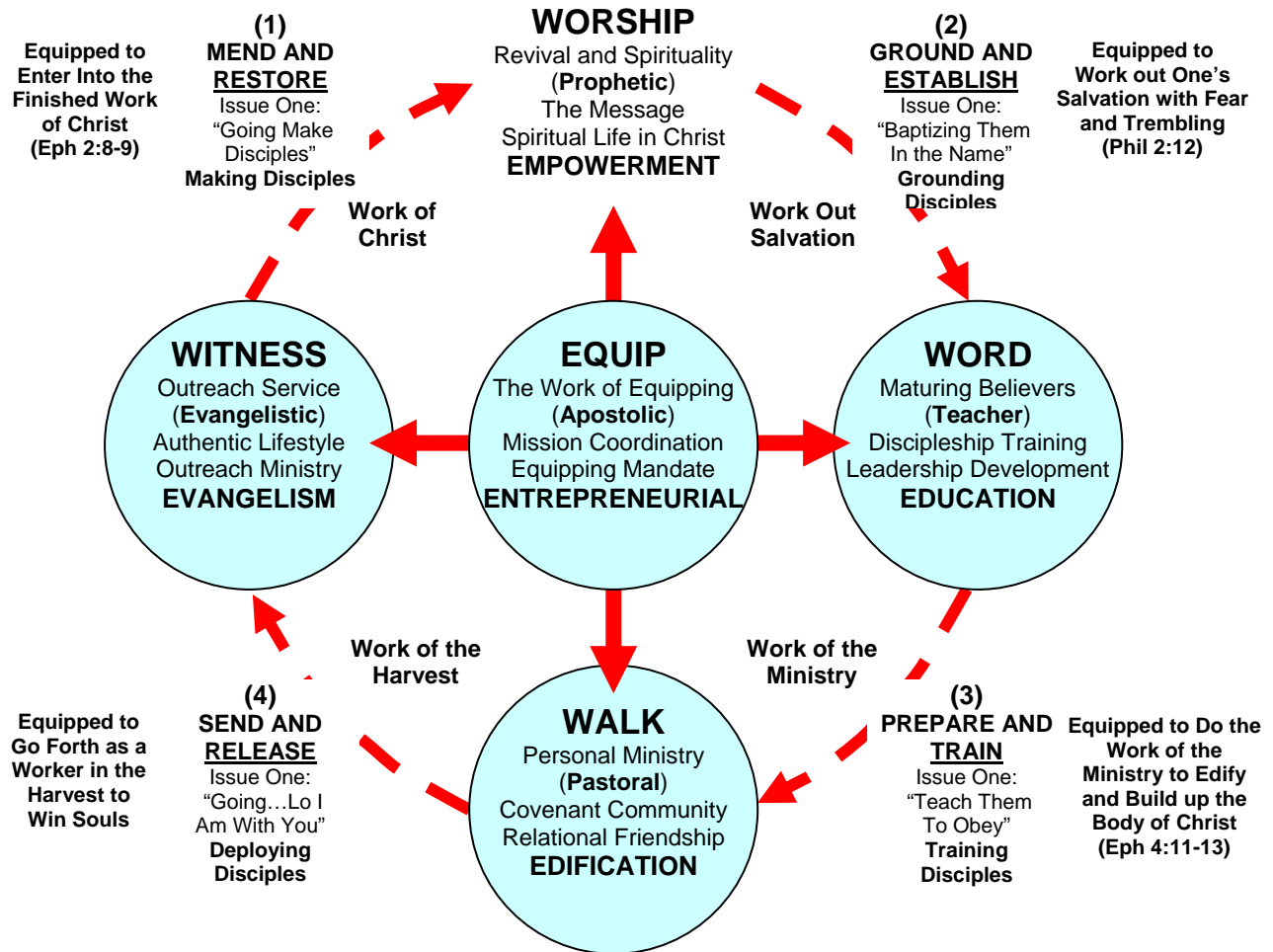
Step Two: Ground and Establish – The second step of the Great Commission is to “baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.” Essentially, the growing believer is equipped to know how to **work out their salvation** with fear and trembling (Phil 2:12). The leadership of the church helps every believer to become grounded and established in their faith and in their lifestyle. Foundations are laid in the believer’s life. Issues of character and faithfulness are addressed. The key goal in this stage is helping the believer to mature by getting into the Word of God. This stage is all about discipleship training.

Step Three: Prepare and Train – The third step of the Great Commission is to “teach them to obey everything Christ commanded.” Essentially, the believer continues to grow and deepen their faith and to enter into the mutual interactivity of edifying one another as members of the body of Christ, the joy of ministering to one another. At this stage the believer is equipped **to do the work of the ministry**, to edify and build up the body of Christ (Eph 4:11-13). This is the work of training disciples. The result is Christians begin to help others walk out their faith and this in the context of covenant community and relational friendship.

Step Four: Send and Release – The fourth step of the Great Commission is “going,” we remember that Jesus said, “Lo, I am with you to the end of the age.” Essentially, the maturing and matured believer is equipped to go forth as a worker in the harvest to win souls and lead such souls through the first three steps of equipping as outlined above. This is the work of deploying disciples to become disciples of others. New leaders are sent and released to do the work of the ministry. The result is believers become active in outreach and witness. By means of living authentically, they touch the lives of others.

Notice the way these four aspects of equipping works out in the diagrams on the next page.

The Biblical Cycle of Equipping Ministry



A Ministry Plan Involves...

A Connecting Strategy Creating Worshippers Miraculous Faith	A Cultivating Strategy Strengthening Believers Biblical Discipleship	A Congregating Strategy Building Community Relational Cell Groups	A Contacting Strategy Multiplying Servants Compassionate Ministry
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This Fulfills the Biblical Model Observed in Acts 14:21-23

Preaching Christ Acts 14:21a WORSHIP The Finished Work Soteriological Kingdom John 3:3, 5 Grounding Believers Leading Them To Love God To Love God Involves Celebrative Worship A Prophetic Focus (Worship)	Developing Disciples Acts 14:21B WORD Rooted In Christ Accessional Kingdom Rom 5:1-2; Eph 2:5-6 Discipling Followers Teaching Them To Obey God To Walk In His Ways Involves Christlike Character A Teaching Focus (Discipling)	Building Community Acts 14:22 WALK Edifying the Body Ecclesiastical Kingdom Matt 16 and 18 Mobilizing Servants Learning to Love Others To Bless Others Involves Contagious Grace A Pastoral Focus (Ministry)	Multiplying Leaders Acts 14:23 WITNESS Going, Make Disciples Eschatological Kingdom I Cor 15:24-28 Winning Unbelievers Organizing to Reach the Lost To Impact Society Involves Concerted Servanthood An Evangelistic Focus (Outreach)
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Jesus' Overall Strategy

Jesus Invited Them "Drop your nets and follow me"	Jesus Grounded Them "He called twelve to be with him"	Jesus Transformed Them "I will make you fishers of men"	Jesus Released Them "Go and make disciples and I will be with you."
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