Discipleship - We value the ministry of discipleship within the body of Christ. This is the biblical method and divine example of true spiritual ministry within the church. The principles of fellowship, teaching, spiritual authority and accountability are vital to the spiritual growth of Christians. Through the mutual encouragement of discipleship and the expression of each of our own personal spiritual gifts, we seek to be effective and productive ministers of the gospel. This is a vital part of the Christian life for all who seek to obey Christ.

Through the mutual encouragement of discipleship and the expression of each of our own personal spiritual gifts, we seek to be effective and productive ministers of the gospel - These things all work together for the edification of the church and cause the individual members of the body to grow in respect to salvation and become like Jesus in thought, word and deed. As each of us uses our own God given spiritual gifts to minister to one another, we fulfill that God-ordained order which He has established for the growth of His church.

1 Corinthians 12:27-28 - 27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it. 28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues. NASB

We are all members of the body together, but the body is made up of individual members. As each one of us fulfills the work of service which fits our gifting, the whole body is built up and strengthened, and we grow into maturity.

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 fulness 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. NASB

In the Christian life as a body of believers we are pressing forward toward a goal. This goal is “the building up of the body until we attain to the unity of the faith” and “the knowledge of the Son of God.” We are pressing toward this great goal Christian maturity together “to a mature man,” and to “the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”
This process of Christian maturity is described as happening so that we will “no longer be children” but will “grow up in all aspects into Him.” Furthermore this process is described as happening as each member fulfills his/her part in the building up process, “according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.”

Therefore **WE VALUE THE USE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS AMONG THE BODY** so that we can all be built up in the faith and become productive, fruit-bearing ministers of the gospel.

*Romans 12:4-6* - 4 For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 And since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly. NASB

We all have the God-given responsibility to fulfill the great commission and to make disciples. Therefore we are to employ **our unique spiritual gifts** in order to build up the body and also to evangelize the world around us.

*Matthew 28:18-20* - 18 And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. 19 ”Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age. NASB

**This is a vital part of the Christian life for all who seek to obey Christ.** – It is unmistakable that discipleship is a fundamental part of the Christian life. It is what Jesus taught His disciples to do, and then commanded them to go and teach others the same way of life. If we fail to obey this teaching, we are failing to fulfill the most basic elements of Christian life. Jesus has commanded us to make disciples. At some point in our Christian life we need to become the teachers and ministers God has called us to be.

*Luke 6:40* - 40 "A pupil is not above his teacher; but everyone, after he has been fully trained, will be like his teacher. NASB

If we are to be like Jesus and do what He does and go where He goes, then we must be about the business of making disciples. This is Jesus desire in calling us to follow Him….

*Matt 4:18-20* - 18 And walking by the Sea of Galilee, He saw two brothers, Simon who was called Peter, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea; for they were fishermen. 19 And He said to them, "Follow Me, and I will make you fishers of men." 20 And they immediately left the nets, and followed Him. NASB

Question is…..at what point do we truly become fishers of men?

*Acts 1:8* - 8 but you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth. “ NASB