

stages of church GROWTH

Growth is the only evidence of life. - John Henry Newman

Info on church growth from:
anthonyhilder.com/stages-of-church

*I planted, Apollos watered,
but God gave the growth.*

1 Corinthians 3:6



Plant

= seed



1

= sprout



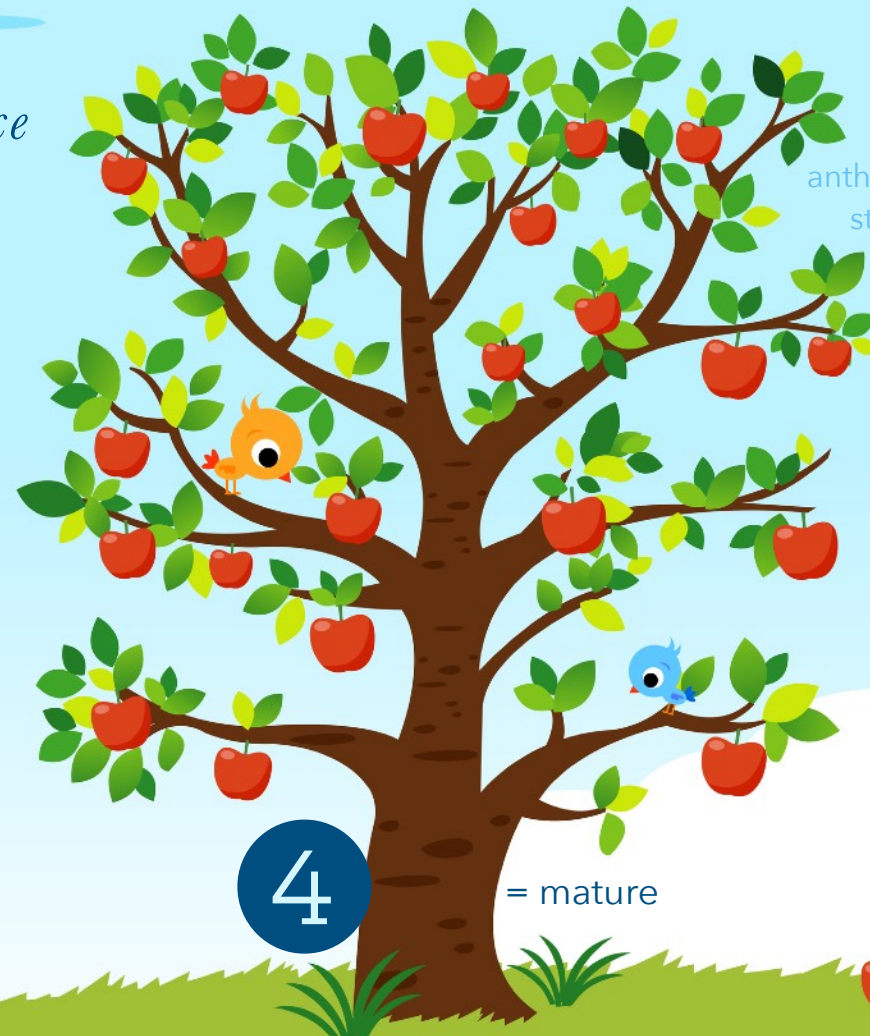
2

= seeding



sapling =

3



4

= mature



Seeds for replanting



1 Missional

The 1st phase begins when a church is planted. "All hands are on deck", everyone is involved. There is energy and excitement amongst all of the busyness. **Mission & evangelism** are key in this stage. Money is tight but no-one minds. The *family* feel amongst those part of the church is palpable as everyone has their say, and they seek to see **others join** in this exciting new endeavor.

2 Visionary

The 2nd growth stage is characterized when a single leader or core team casts a vision. Growth happens as new **initiatives & ideas** spring up - there is no shortage of creativity during this time. It can feel a little like a rollercoaster and not everything works out, but there are the beginnings of a **leadership team**, even if the senior leader is ultimately making the decisions and doing the lion's share of the ministry.

3 Alignment

This level of growth is marked by a focused leadership team who gets stuff done. There is an intentional clarifying development of **culture & structure**. Ministries multiply, succeed and sustain. More *generalists* (i.e. those willing to do whatever needs to be done) become *specialist*; people focused on 1 area of ministry. Additional **non-pastoral staff** added to the payroll who function in a non-secretarial, high-level admin. roles.

4 Multiplication

Maturity is seen in critical mass - with little or no shortage of resources; whether it's people, leaders, finance, gifting, etc. In fact, the **only limit** often is **physical space**. Solutions such as multi-campus, church planting, or 2+ services are some ways to address the increase. Regardless of varying approaches, all mature churches bear **spiritual fruit**; an ability to disciple *disciple makers*; i.e. **multi-generational discipleship**.