

Walking Together In Unity

Ephesians 4:7-16

Christ Gave Gifts To Support Unity

Verse 7, *"But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."* KJV

"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift." NASU

"Grace given" – cf. 3:2, 8

"Measure" – The measure of Christ's gift, "good measure" (cf. Luke 6:38). Christ gave full measure ...

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Verse 8 – Ascended, *"When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men."* NASB

What did He lead captive?

- Sin – John 8:34; Romans 6:16ff
- The law of sin. Romans 8:1ff
- Fear of death – Hebrews 2:12-15

Note: Revelation 1:18

"Gave gifts unto men ..." cf. verse 11ff

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- Verse 8 quoted from Psalms 68:18. Context refers to the return of the Lord in victory to his people.

- OT refers to the Lord's having received gifts and through victories (spoil) giving strength and power unto his people. (cf. Psalms 68:35)
 - Note: Isaiah 53:12

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Verses 9-10 He ascended: cf. John 20:17; Acts 1:11; *"far above the heavens"* Hebrews 4:14; 7:26; 9:24; Ephesians 1:20-21; Acts 2; cf. Zechariah 6:12; cf. Daniel 7:14

He descended: John 3:13, *"And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, (even) the Son of man, who is in heaven."*

"Lower parts of the earth" ... cf. Philippians 2:5-8

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Verse 11 – Apostles and Prophets

- These laid the foundation of the church by teaching. Ephesians 2:20
- Apostles were eyewitnesses. Acts 1:15ff
- NT Prophets – These were inspired men and women used in the process of revelation.
 - Ephesians 3:5; cf. Acts 2:17; 11:28; 21:9; cf. Acts 13:1; 1 Corinthians 12:28-29
 - Chosen by the Holy Spirit through the laying on of the apostles' hands. Acts 19:6
 - Their work is completed in revelation. Ephesians 3:1-5; 2 Timothy 3:16-17

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Verse 11 – Evangelists

- ▶ Proclaim the glad news. 2 Timothy 2:2; 4:1–5
- NOTE: Philip the evangelist. (Acts 21:8; cf. 8:5)

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Verse 11 – Pastors.

- ▶ Pastors – “*pastors, shepherds, elders, presbyters, bishops, overseers*” and are the same. Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:2; Philippians 1:1
- ▶ Each local church is to have a plurality of Elders. Acts 14:23
- ▶ No organization larger or smaller than the local church for the collective functioning of the saints in the work of the church!

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Verse 11 – Teachers.

- ▶ These give instructions in the faith. 2 Timothy 2:2; Acts 13:1
- There is a possibility that the phrase “*pastors and teachers*” refers to one function, that is, teaching pastors.

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NOTE: All these “gifts,” workers, or functionaries named (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers) have in common the function of teaching.

- ▶ This should help us to be able to draw some conclusion about the main purpose of the church.

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Paul is not discussing “spiritual gifts” here, but workers to make the church sufficient for His purpose.

NOTE: These workers are the gifts of Christ to men in order to make the church sufficient for His purpose.

Purpose Of The Gifts Ephesians 4:12–16

Verse 12, “***FOR*** the perfecting (*equipping*) of the *saints*.”

katartismós “to make fully ready. Perfection or completion (Eph 4:12).” (The Complete Word Study Dictionary: New Testament)

- ▶ ***unto*** *eis* the work of ministering,
- ▶ ***unto*** *eis* the building up of the body of Christ:

“*Pros* – Of the goal aimed at or striven toward ... with conscious purpose for, for the purpose of, on behalf of.” (Greek – English Lexicon, by Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, Danker)

Purpose Of The Gifts

Verse 12 – **The work of ministering.**

diakonía:

Used of teaching:

- Paul's ministry. 2 Corinthians 4:1; 6:3; 1 Timothy 1:12
- Paul ... "**the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God.**" Acts 20:24
- Timothy to "**do the work of an evangelist, fulfill thy ministry.**" 2 Timothy 4:5

Purpose Of The Gifts

Verse 12 **Build up the body of Christ.**

oikodomeō "Edification of the body" (Eerdmans)

- **With these gifts the body is spiritually strengthened.**

NOTE: With these gifts the church is equipped to do everything the Lord wants it to do.

- Church is all-sufficient!

Desired Results Of The Gifts 4:13–16

Verse 13, "**till we all attain unto the unity of the faith**"

"TILL" **méchris**; "marking a terminus both of place and time ... refers solely to the limit implying that the action terminates there." (The Complete Word Study Dictionary)

NOTE: Does not indicate a specific duration that has already been reached.

Desired Results Of The Gifts 4:13–16

Verse 13, **What is that termination point? "till we all attain unto the unity of the faith"**

- **Spiritual maturity is the objective!**

- Unity of the faith.
- Knowledge of the Son of God.
- Full grown men. (versus children, verse 14)
- The measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.
 - cf. Galatians 2:20; Galatians 4:19

NOTE: There will always be the need for "evangelists, pastors, and teachers" to equip the saints.

Desired Results Of The Gifts 4:13–16

Verse 14, "**be no longer children.**"

- Babies. 1 Timothy 3:6; 1 Peter 2:2; Ephesians 4:14; 1 Corinthians 16:13; Hebrews 5:12ff; 2 Peter 3:18

- NOTE: In some ways we ARE to behave like children. **Matthew 18:1–6; Luke 14:8–11; Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 14:20; 1 Peter 2:1**

Desired Results Of The Gifts 4:13–16

Verse 15, "**speaking truth in love**" ...

Truth versus Wiles of error. cf. John 8:32
Truth spoken in love. cf. Galatians 4:16;
Philippians 1:15–18

"Grow up" versus "Children" (verse 14)

Desired Results Of The Gifts 4:13-16

Verse 16, NOTE: The body is:
“fitted together” (cf. Ephesians
2:21)
“knit together,”
Through that which ***“every joint”*** supplies.
1 Corinthians 12:14ff
When every member does his part, the body will
grow.

Desired Results Of The Gifts 4:13-16

Verse 16,
NOTE: The body is fitted together; knit together,
through that which ***“every joint”*** supplies.
When every member does his part, the body will
grow.
“In love.” cf. ***verse 3*** – Principle regulating unity
and growth.

Emphasis on growth through teaching!