

MEN AS GIFTS: Ephesians 4:7-17

In this passage, Paul writes to the believers about the work Christ accomplished and the gifts he dispensed.

What work has Christ accomplished?

1. He ascended up on high (8) far above all heavens (10)
2. He descended into the lower parts of the earth (9)
3. He led captivity captive. (8)
4. He gave gifts unto men (8)

What will be accomplished through the work realized by Christ?

He will fill all things (4:10).

How will the purpose of Christ be practically carried out?

As individuals, we have all received grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ (7). As the church, Christ has granted us men as gifts. As co-laborers with Christ, these individuals are called to fulfill divine work.

Who are these gifts granted to the church?

1. Apostles
2. Prophets
3. Evangelists
4. Shepherds
5. Teachers

As co-workers with Christ, what divine work are they called to carry out?

1. To perfect the saints unto the work of the ministry
2. To perfect the saints unto the edifying of the body of Christ

How long will this divine work continue?

The work done by these gifts will continue until the church ...

1. Comes to the unity of the faith (13)
2. Comes to the knowledge of the Son of God (13)
3. Comes unto a perfect man (13)
4. Comes unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (13)
5. Ceases to be a child tossed to and fro (14)
6. Ceases to be a child carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness (14)

What do we do during the process of this work?

1. Speak the truth in love (15)
2. Grow up into him (the head, Christ) in all things (15)
3. Become a supplier according to the effectual working of God in you (16)

What does it look like?

The whole body will be fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplies (16). Every member is to supply/function according to the effectual working in the measure of every part (16). This activity will cause the body to increase unto the edifying of itself in love (16)

GIFTS FOR SERVICE: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 28-31

In this portion of Scripture, Paul informs us that we are not to be ignorant regarding spiritual gifts. (1) Paul begins by declaring that the Holy Spirit is responsible for the GIFT department of God's plan and proceeds to highlight three major divisions established by the Holy Spirit.

1. Diversities of gifts (4)
2. Differences of administrations (5)
3. Diversities of operation (6)

Paul states that at the end of the day, it is Father God that works all in all.

Before providing the reader with details about the gifts, Paul addresses the purpose for gifts.

What is the purpose for the gifts?

They are given to every man to profit withal. (7) The gifts of the Spirit are tools provided to each believer so that he or she can do divine work. Paul points out that gifts are in fact manifestations of the Holy Spirit. From time to time, as we go about the business of living, the Holy Spirit will manifest himself through us in order to accomplish certain tasks.

How does the Holy Spirit manifest himself?

Paul provides the following list of the gifts/manifestations:

1. The Word of Wisdom (8)
2. The Word of Knowledge (8)
3. Faith (9)
4. Gifts of Healing (9)
5. Working of Miracles (10)
6. Prophecy (10)
7. Discerning of Spirits (10)
8. Divers kinds of Tongues (10)
9. Interpretation of Tongues (10)

Who controls the distribution of these gifts/manifestations?

At the end of the day, it is the one and same Spirit that works all these gifts/manifestations. The Holy Spirit divides to every individual as he sees fit (11). We are all important in the context of the body of Christ. We all have a role to fulfill. We have been baptized into this body and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. Our role in the body has been decided according to God's pleasure (12-24). We cannot carry out God's will apart from others (25-27). According to Paul, God has established an order of importance in regard to the gifts in the church.

1. Apostles
2. Prophets
3. Teachers
4. Miracles
5. Gifts of Healings
6. Helps
7. Governments
8. Diversities of Tongues

Paul points out that we are not all apostles, prophets or teachers. (29) We will not all become channels of every gift/manifestation of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit does not manifest the gifts of healing through us all. He does not manifest the speaking of tongues or their interpretation through us all. We are to covet earnestly the best gifts. At the end of the day, it is God who sets us in the church to carry out a task or to become a channel of the Holy Spirit's manifestations. (28)

FUNCTIONS: Romans 12:1-8

God has dealt to each of us the measure of faith (3). We are all members of the body, but do not have the same office. (4) We possess different gifts based upon the grace that is given us. Paul outlines some of those gifts as follows:

1. Prophecy – Do it according to your proportion of faith (6)
 2. Ministry – Wait on it (7)
 3. Teaching (7)
 4. Exhorting (8)
 5. Giving – Do it with simplicity (8)
 6. Ruling – Do it with diligence (8)
 7. Showing Mercy – Do it with cheerfulness (8)
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Other Gifts: 1 Peter 4:8

Peter challenges the believer to have fervent love among each other because it will cover a multitude of sins. He discusses some of the gifts that we are to exercise. These include the following:

1. Hospitality – Do it without grudging (9)
2. Minister – Do it as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (10)
3. Speaking – Do it as the oracles of God (11)
4. Minister – Do it as of the ability which God gives (11)

These gifts are to be exercised to the end that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ. (11)

The Exercise of two Gifts: 1 Corinthians 14

In this portion of Scripture, Paul encourages the believer to follow after love, desire spiritual gifts, but rather to prophecy. (1) There is nothing inappropriate with desiring the spiritual gifts mentioned in Scripture. We are encouraged to be zealous of them. In this chapter, Paul begins his discussion with a comparison of two gifts: Tongues and Prophecy.

The Gift of Tongues:

The gift of tongues is exercised to speak to God. The spirit prays, but the understanding remains unfruitful (14). Even though you may be offering thanks (17) to God, others will not profit by it because the spirit speaks mysteries (2). Those who use this gift edify themselves (4). Paul encourages speaking with tongues, but prefers prophecy (5). Tongues serve the same edifying purpose as prophecy if an interpretation is included (5). There is no profit to others if there is no interpretation (6). The gift of tongues without interpretation is like an instrument that makes no distinctive sound. It is like the trumpet that gives an uncertain sound. Others will not know when to prepare for battle (7-8). Tongues without interpretation are like speaking into the air. Nobody will understand (9). Remember that there are many kinds of voices in the world and they all communicate meaning (10). If others do not understand me, I will be like a barbarian to them. Those that speak in tongues to me will also be a barbarian to me (11). If you speak in tongues in a church meeting, ensure that you also pray for an interpretation so others can benefit from your speaking (13). According to Paul, tongues are for a sign to those that do not believe (22). If the nonbeliever comes into the church meeting, he will think you mad if you speak with tongues (23).

Paul informed the believers that he spoke in tongues more than any of them (18), but preferred to exercise the gift of prophecy so others could benefit (19). He preferred to speak 5 words with his understanding than 10,000 words in an unknown tongue (19).

In regard to the practice of speaking in tongues, Paul recommends that it be done at most by two or three in turn and that one interpret. If there is not interpreter, the tongue speaker should keep silent in the church. He should speak to himself and to God (27-28). Paul states that we should not forbid to speak with tongues, but that things be done decently and in order (39-40).

The Gift of Prophecy:

The gift of prophecy is exercised to speak to men. When used, men are edified, exhorted and comforted. (3) Those who use this gift, edify the church (4). Paul prefers that the believer prophecy (5). Those who prophesy are considered greater because they

edify others. Others will profit from our speaking if we do so by revelation, knowledge, prophesying or doctrine (6). According to Paul, prophecy serves the believer (22). If an unbeliever or an unlearned person comes into the church meeting and hears all prophecy, he will be convinced and judged of all. The secrets of his heart will be made manifest. He will fall down on his face and will worship God reporting that God is in you of a truth (24-25).

All can prophecy. When you come together, everyone can offer a psalm, a doctrine, a tongue, a revelation, or an interpretation (26). Ensure that all things be done unto edifying. Men should covet to prophecy.

In reference to the practice of prophecy, Paul recommends that prophets speak two or three and that one judge (29). If someone else receives a revelation, the prophets should hold their peace and allow the other participant to speak. Paul makes clear that all can prophecy one at a time. The result will be that all will learn and be comforted (30-31). The prophets are never overwhelmed to the point of no control. The spirit of the prophet is subject to the prophet (32). Again, Paul exhorts that all things be done decently and in order (40).

What is the purpose of gifts?

In this letter, Paul declares that we are to excel to the edifying of the church (12).

Paul provides the reader with contrasts between the gift of tongues and the gift of prophecy:

Tongues: (15-16)

Pray with the spirit
Sing with the spirit
Bless with the spirit

Prophecy (15-16)

Pray with the understanding
Sing with the understanding
Bless with the understanding

The Great Commission: Mark 16:15-20

In this portion of Scripture, Mark outlines the great commission as assigned by Jesus. The mandate includes a general directive (15). Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.

Two possibilities are outlined: (16)

1. Those who believe and are baptized shall be saved.
2. Those who do not believe shall be damned.

According to Mark, those who believe will be granted certain abilities. In fact, their activity will be followed by signs. In the name of Jesus, they will ... (17)

1. Cast out devils (17)
2. Speak with new tongues (17)
3. Take up serpents (18)
4. If they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them (18)
5. Lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover (18)

Mark indicates that Jesus was received into heaven after speaking these words and sat on the right hand of God. The disciples went forth and preached everywhere. The Lord worked with them, and confirmed their work with signs following (19-20).

The Commission to the Twelve: Matthew 10:7-8

According to Matthew, when Jesus sent out his twelve disciples, he gave them the following mandates and exhorted them to exercise their gifts at no cost. (7-8)

1. Preach saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand
2. Heal the sick
3. Cleanse the lepers
4. Raise the dead
5. Cast out devils

The Great Commission: Matthew 28:19-20

After his resurrection, Jesus received all power in heaven and in earth. He gave his disciples a mandate and provided them with the following directives: (18)

1. Go and teach all nations (19)
2. Baptize them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost (19)
3. Teach them to observe all things whatsoever he commanded (20)

Jesus promised that he would always be with them unto the end of the world (20).

The Commission to the Seventy: Luke 10:19-22

Jesus commissioned 70 disciples to carry out divine word. He said to them:

1. I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions (19)
2. I give you power over all the power of the enemy and nothing shall by any means hurt you (19)

Upon returning from their mission, Jesus charged the 70 to rejoice, not because devils were subject to them in his name, but to rejoice instead because their names were written in heaven. (20)

GIFTS

The New Testament speaks of various gifts which have been provide to the believer. They are as follows:

1. The gift of Christ
2. The gift of the Holy Spirit
3. The gift of grace
4. The gift of righteousness
5. The gift of eternal life
6. The gift of God

