

God Gave Diverse Spiritual Gifts as Christ Apportioned It
Scripture: Ephesians 4:1-13 (vv. 7-13)

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I. Historical Background and Biblical Context

Paul, the Apostle, the author of the letter to the Ephesians, writing from prison underscores the seriousness and commitment to his faith and message. Ephesus a major city in Asia Minor, known for its diverse culture and the Temple of Artemis. The Ephesian church was a significant early Christian community.

The Ephesian Church, the recipients of the letter, a group of believers who were encouraged to live out their faith amidst a pagan society. Paul wrote while under Roman custody, most likely during His first imprisonment in Rome (Acts 28: 16-31). His chains resulted from faithful witness to Christ, yet he understood himself chiefly as belonging to the Lord Jesus. Roman authorities could restrict His movement, but they could not hinder the Gospel or diminish His calling. Paul's suffering gave weight to His appeal, for He asked believers to live faithfully in the same Lord for whom He had willingly endured loss.

Paul appealed as a spiritual father concerned about the health of the church. The appeal rests on all that God has accomplished in Christ: Redemption, reconciliation, and the creation of one new people from Jews and Gentiles. Christian obedience is the grateful response to grace, not an attempt to secure salvation.

Believers are to order their daily conduct in keeping with the new life God has given them. A worthy walk displays the character of Christ in humility, holiness, truthfulness, love, and unity. The gospel that has reconciled sinners to God must also shape their relationships with one another.

God's calling brings his people into salvation and joins them to Christ's body. The Ephesians had been called from spiritual death of pagan darkness into the hope of God's Kingdom. Their shared calling required a shared life marked by faithfulness to the Lord and peace within the church.

II. The lesson: God Gave Diverse Spiritual Gifts as Christ Apportioned It!

1. vv. 1-3. Breakdown of the Worthy Walk

Walking worthy means ensuring that your behavior, matches the wait of your calling in Christ. Paul defines the structural attributes of this lifestyle:

- Humility (lowliness): Putting others ahead of oneself. Recognizing ones total dependence on God and shedding personal arrogance.
- Gentleness (Meekness): Power under control. It is not weakness, but a quiet strength that refuses to retaliate or demand its own rights.
- Forbearance (bearing with one another): Making allowance for the faults, quirks, and idiosyncrasies of others out of unconditional Christian love.
- Unity of the Spirit: An active, eager effort to protect the harmony already created by the Holy Spirit through the structural bond of peace.

2. vv. 4-6. The seven pillars of Christian Unity

To show why believers must walk in harmony, Paul outlines seven Theological realities that bind the church together. These form a complete picture of Christian oneness.

- One Body: The universal Church, all true believers form one unified, living spiritual entity under Christ.
- One Spirit: The holy spirit, who dwells within every believer and seals them into Gods family.
- One Hope: The shared ultimate future, eternal life, resurrection, and Glorification with Christ.
- One Lord: Jesus Christ, who reigns supreme as the ultimate Master, Savior, and Head of the Church.
- One Faith: The core body of uncompromised truth and doctrine handed down to the saints.
- One Baptism: The outward identification with Christ's death and resurrection.

3. vv. 7-10. He led the captives free and gave gifts (Ps. 68:18)

This passage depicts our Lord Jesus returning from earth to heaven after his victory at calvary. Paul adds this section to show how Christ received the authority to give the gifts of grace described in Ephesians 4:8. This is not easy to grasp, (Who are the captives?).

There are different ways of looking at this:

- Those who needed to be rescued by Christ, namely, those on whom Satan, sin and death had in chains; they were defeated by Christ's death and resurrection and captives were set free.
- Those whom Christ freed from Satan, sin, and death, became captives of Christ through His redemption and now are His Followers.

It is important not to miss the forest for the trees, and the forest is

Christ, the conqueror of sin, death, Satan and Hell has rightly established as Head over His church, has been given the right to give spiritual gifts to each member of his body.

4. vv. 11-13. Christ gave Diverse Gifts to equip his people for service.

Christ is the one who gave some of the gifts to be Apostles. He gave some of the gifts to the prophets. He gave some, the gift of preaching the good news, and he gave some of the gifts to be pastors and teachers. He did it so that they might prepare God's people to serve. If they do, the body of Christ will be built up. That will continue until all become one in the knowledge of God's Son. Then we will be grown up in the faith. We will receive everything that Christ has for us.

III. CONCLUSION

Jesus the Christ died on Calvary's Cross and rose the third with all power, that we may have eternal life. And he gave us all gifts to share with dying men, women, boys, and girls, the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life. We are not perfect, but we are working for perfection in knowledge and action. Walk in the light as Christ is the light until God calls us home to be with Him.