

Title: Spiritual Gifts Are Given to Prepare God's People for ServiceScripture: **Ephesians 4:11-16 (11-12)**Background Scripture: **John 21:15-17**

Background

God has not designed the church so that only a few people do all the work while everyone else watches. Every believer has a place in the Body of Christ. God gives spiritual gifts and calls certain people into leadership so that the entire church may be equipped, strengthened, and prepared to serve.

In Ephesians 4:11–16, the Apostle Paul teaches that Christ gives gifted leaders to the church for a specific purpose: **to prepare God's people for works of service**. Pastors, teachers, evangelists, apostles, and prophets are not called merely to perform ministry themselves. Their responsibility is to help God's people discover, develop, and use their gifts in service to the Lord and to others. The ultimate goal is a mature church—a church that is united in faith, grounded in truth, growing in love, and working together as one Body.

I. CHRIST GIVES GIFTS AND LEADERS TO HIS CHURCH

Ephesians 4:11 “And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”

Paul begins by reminding us that the gifts and leadership within the church come from Christ. Jesus is the One who gives individuals different responsibilities and abilities for the benefit of His people.

The leaders mentioned include:

Apostles – Those who were specially sent to establish and strengthen the early church and bear witness to the message of Christ.

Evangelists – Those especially gifted to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ and lead others toward faith.

Pastors – Shepherds who care for, guide, protect, and nurture God's people.

Prophets – Those who proclaimed God's Word and called people to faithfulness and obedience.

Teachers – Those gifted to explain and teach God's Word so believers can understand and apply it.

Although these individuals have different responsibilities, their purpose is not competition or personal recognition. Their gifts are given to strengthen the Body of Christ. There is no hierarchy in which one office is spiritually more important than the others. The emphasis is not who the highest position, but how each ministry contributes to the maturity of the body of Christ.

The leaders equip → the saints serve → the body is built up → believers mature → the church becomes more like Christ.

II. GOD'S PEOPLE ARE TO BE PREPARED FOR SERVICE

Ephesians 4:12 “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

This verse gives us the central purpose of spiritual gifts and spiritual leadership.

The word “**perfecting**” means equipping, preparing, or making ready. God gives leaders to help believers become spiritually prepared to serve.

The ministry does not belong only to the pastor, deacons, ministers, or church staff. **The saints—the people of God—are to be equipped for the work of ministry.**

Three important purposes are given:

1. For the Perfecting of the Saints

God's people must be trained and spiritually developed. Believers need instruction in God's Word, encouragement in faith, and opportunities to grow.

A church should help people move from simply attending worship to actively participating in ministry.

2. For the Work of Ministry

Every Christian has opportunities to serve.

Service may include:

- Teaching
- Encouraging others
- Visiting the sick
- Sharing the Gospel
- Serving children and youth
- Helping those in need
- Praying for others
- Showing hospitality
- Supporting the work of the church
- Using one's talents for God's glory

Spiritual gifts are not given to us to keep to ourselves. **They are given to be used.**

3. For the Edifying of the Body of Christ

When believers use their gifts, the entire church becomes stronger.

One person's service can encourage another person. One person's teaching can help someone grow. One person's compassion can bring comfort to someone who is hurting.

III. THE GOAL OF SERVICE IS SPIRITUAL MATURITY

Ephesians 4:13 “Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.”

The purpose of spiritual gifts is not simply to keep the church busy. The goal is spiritual maturity.

Paul describes several signs of a mature church.

Unity in the Faith

Believers should grow together in their understanding and commitment to the Christian faith.

Unity does not mean that everyone has the same personality, background, or gift. It means that believers are united in Christ and committed to His truth.

Knowledge of the Son of God

Spiritual maturity involves knowing Jesus more deeply.

The more we know Christ, the more our attitudes, decisions, and service should reflect Him.

Growing Into the Fullness of Christ

The ultimate example of spiritual maturity is Jesus Christ Himself.

Our goal is not simply to become more active in church. Our goal is to become more like Christ.