

## The Purpose of Gifts

Ephesians 4:7-13

5/07/06

### Intro

At the beginning of this chapter, Paul encourages us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling. In other words, we have been called to salvation as adopted sons and daughters of God the Father.

He says that there is one body and one Holy Spirit and we were called in one hope. In other words, we're all called to be part of something marvelous, holy, awesome, and wonderful and so we should walk in it.

He then says that by the same grace by which we were saved, we were also each given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. We need to begin by recognizing that gift.

These verses help us understand the purpose of God's gifts and how we are to use them in our lives.

### **These are insights into God's grace in giving us gifts.**

#### **I. Use Your Gift for God**

##### A. It's loving Him in return

- The more you love Him, the more you want to do something for Him.

##### **Illus – Bringing home part of my cookie...**

- He gives us gifts so we can love Him by serving those He loves.

**Matthew 25:33-40** What you've done to the least...

##### B. He expects us to use our gifts

- God gives us gifts for the purpose of using them.

**Illus – Imagine a virtuoso pianist who would never play, or someone who is a great singer that only sings in the shower.**

##### **Matthew 25: 14-30 Parable of the talents.**

- Some people plan on building a big nest egg and then when they're all taken care of, they'll do something for the Lord.  
Don't wait, use your gifts now.

**Luke 12:48, From everyone who has been given much, much will be required; and to whom they entrusted much, of him they will ask all the more.**

**I Corinthians 4:2, Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.**

##### C. Use your gift in a venture of faith

- God wants us to use our gift in a venture of faith.
- In other words, He will stretch us in the using of our gifts.
- But if you are not using your gift at all, you're certainly not being stretched.

**Illus – I know I successful businessman who is starting an organization to challenge other businessmen to be "kingdom minded." In other words, to use their abilities for the kingdom of God rather than for their kingdom. He is challenging them to have a venture of faith.**

**Romans 12:6-8, Since we have gifts that differ...**

- Paul also writes that we should never be lacking zeal...

**Romans 12:11, Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord.**

## II. Our Gifts are for Our Growth

- The purpose of Christ's gift is for the building up of the body of Christ. In other words, our gifts are for the edification of others.
- But when we exercise our gift, we are also the ones who grow.

### A. To the measure of Christ's stature

- Vs 13 – Paul says that God's purpose in all this is that we become mature even to the measure of Christ's stature.
- How will this be seen?
  - When we all attain to the unity of the faith. (*Division and strife is therefore not of God*)
  - Of the knowledge of the Son of God. (*One of the goals of our faith is that we would grow in the knowledge of Christ.*)

**Illus – That means we need to start with spiritual milk and then keep growing into the meat of the Word.**

**I Corinthians 3:1-4, And I, brethren, could not speak to you as to spiritual men, but as to men of flesh, as to infants**

**in Christ. I gave you milk to drink, not solid food; for you were not yet able to receive it. Indeed, even now you are not yet able, for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?**

**I Corinthians 14:20, Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be babes, but in your thinking be mature.**

### B. Ministry brings maturity

- Maturity is not just thinking of ourselves, but thinking about others.

**Illus – When someone is an infant everything is about him. He wants his bottle, he wants his diaper changed. He wants someone to stay up all night with him.**

**But what if as he grows physically, it was still always about him? "I want a boat, Daddy, and I want it now!" Would this be considered growing up?**

- When you're ministering, you are giving of yourself for the growth of others.

**Hebrews 5:13-14, For everyone who partakes only of milk is not accustomed to the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil.**

**Illus- Don't be discouraged when some ministry doesn't go right the first time, as we continue to minister, we grow in maturity.**

**I remember one of my first sermons. It was so bad that I took Jordi into another room and I cried.**

**Or the time, my music was so bad, someone else cried, or was he praying?**

C. Grow up in all aspects

- Vs 15 – Paul says that we are to grow up in all aspects into Christ.
- The application is that every area of our lives will be affected by our walk with the Lord.
- We are to grow in maturity in how we handle our:
  - business dealings;
  - our relationship to our wife or husband,
  - our relationship to God.

**Hebrews 6:1, Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity,**

Conclusion
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**God gives grace for different things, rather than wanting someone else's grace, we should grow in the gifts we have been given and we will be the ones who get to grow because of it.**