



The WORD Series

Part 10 – The GIFTS!

Introduction...

- In our last session, we reflected on the unity of the Body of Christ and the deep implications of ONENESS.
- We looked at the 7 Ones of verses 4-6.
- Body, Spirit, Hope, Lord, Faith, Baptism, Father.
- Due to the depth of these verses in Ephesians 4, we could only finish three verses!
- Let us now continue in our study as we read the next four verses!



Bible Reading...

- *⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸ Therefore He says:*
- *"When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."*
- *⁹ (Now this, "He ascended"— what does it mean but that He also [^d]first descended into the lower parts of the earth?*
- *¹⁰ He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) Eph 4:7-10 NKJV*

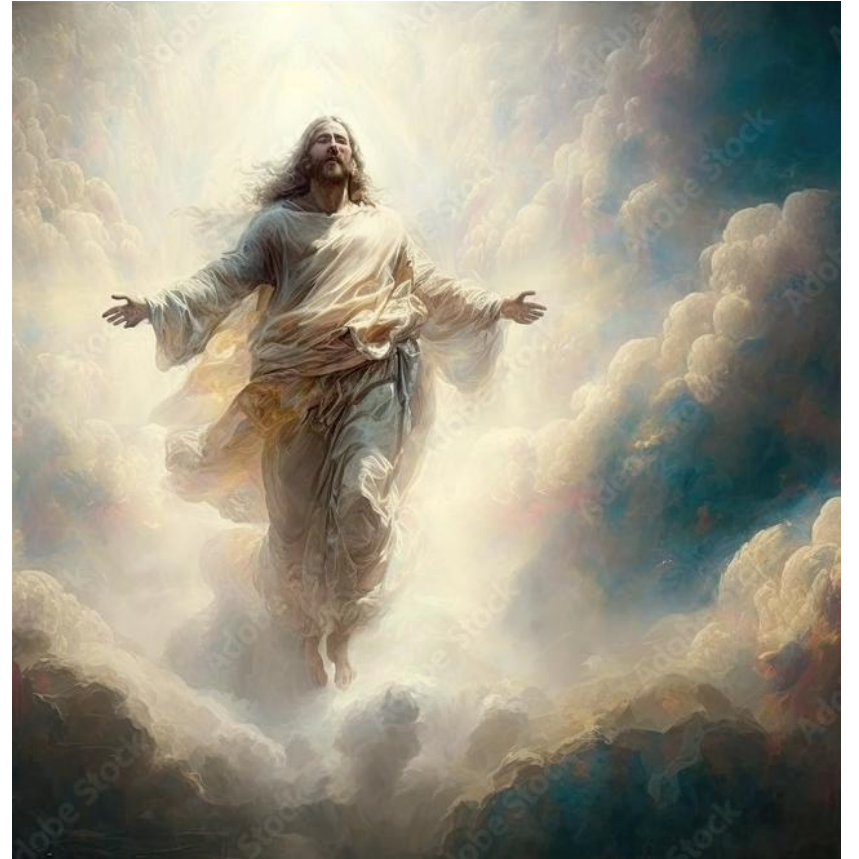
- *⁷ Yet grace [God's undeserved favor] was given to each one of us [not indiscriminately, but in different ways] in proportion to the measure of Christ's [rich and abundant] gift. ⁸ Therefore it says,*
- *"WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVITY CAPTIVE, AND HE BESTOWED GIFTS ON MEN."*
- *⁹ (Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had previously descended [from the heights of heaven] into the lower parts of the earth?*
- *¹⁰ He who descended is the very same as He who also has ascended high above all the heavens, that He [His presence] might fill all things [that is, the whole universe]). AMP*

Each One...

- **But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.” (v.7)**
- Paul begins by reminding the church that unity does not mean uniformity.
- Every believer shares a common salvation, but Christ distributes *grace-gifts* uniquely.
- This is not ***saving grace***; something all Christians receive equally—
- but ***servicing grace***, the divine enablement to fulfil the ministry God assigns.
- Christ Himself measures and dispenses these gifts,
- meaning no gift is random, inferior, or overlooked.
- In His wisdom, Christ equips the body diversely so that it may function harmoniously.
- What may seem like diversity among believers is actually the artistry of Christ shaping His church.

Ascended...

- **“This is why it says: ‘When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.’” (v.8)**
- Paul quotes Psalm 68, originally a victory psalm celebrating God’s triumph over His enemies and His victorious ascent to Zion.
- By applying this text to Jesus, Paul declares Christ to be the divine warrior who has conquered the ultimate enemies—sin, death, and the spiritual forces of darkness.
- In ancient victories, a conquering king would parade through the city with captives and distribute the spoils to his people.
- Paul shows that Christ’s ascension is this victorious procession. But instead of earthly plunder, Jesus pours out spiritual gifts. The ascended Christ does not hoard victory; He shares its fruit with His church.



Descended...

- “What does ‘he ascended’ mean except that he also **descended to the lower, earthly regions?**” (v.9)
Here Paul explains the logic of Christ’s triumph.
- Before Christ could ascend in victory, He first **descended**: a reference likely to His descent into hell.,
- Christ did not conquer from afar. He stepped into our world, took on flesh, entered our suffering, and even tasted the lowest depths of human experience.
- The One who fills the heavens first humbled Himself by coming down to us.
- The descent is the pathway to the ascent; the humiliation precedes the exaltation.
- In Christ, victory is always born from sacrificial love.





Higher...

- **“He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.” (v.10)**
- The same Christ who came down is now exalted above every domain of creation.
- His ascent is not merely a return to heaven; it is an elevation above all cosmic powers.
- He is enthroned with authority to rule, to fill, and to permeate all things.
- His purpose in ascending “to fill the whole universe” is to extend His presence and power everywhere—particularly through His church.
- By giving gifts to His people, Christ extends His reign into the world through their Spirit-empowered service.
- The church becomes the visible expression of the ascended Christ’s fullness on earth.

Bible Reading...

- *¹¹ And [His gifts to the church were varied and] He Himself appointed some as apostles [special messengers, representatives],*
- *some as prophets [who speak a new message from God to the people], some as evangelists [who spread the good news of salvation],*
- *and some as pastors and teachers [to shepherd and guide and instruct],*
- *¹² [and He did this] to fully equip and perfect the saints (God's people) for works of service, to build up the body of Christ [the church];*
- *¹³ until we all reach oneness in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God, [growing spiritually] to become a mature believer, reaching to the measure of the fullness of Christ [manifesting His spiritual completeness and exercising our spiritual gifts in unity]*
Ephesians 4:11-13

Himself...

- **“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers...” (v.11)**
- Paul reminds the church that ministry roles are not human inventions but divine appointments.
- Christ Himself—now ascended and reigning—gives certain people to the church as gifts.
- The emphasis is not on titles but on functions: apostles establish foundations,
- prophets declare God’s revealed will, evangelists proclaim the gospel to the lost, and
- pastor-teachers nurture and instruct the flock.



Apostle...

- **Apostles** provided the foundation of doctrine and church planting.
- Even though the original apostolic office unique to the twelve is not ongoing,
- The apostolic *function* continues today in pioneering mission, cross-cultural church planting, and foundational gospel work.



Prophet...

- **Prophets** provided Spirit-guided proclamation and discernment.
- Their practical contribution includes calling the church to faithfulness,
- convicting of sin, encouraging obedience,
- and offering Spirit-shaped guidance rooted in God's revealed truth.



Evangelist...

- **Evangelists** ensure the church never turns inward.
- Their role pulls the community outward into mission, reminding us the gospel must be proclaimed, not preserved in a vault.
- They instil boldness into the church and a fearlessness that enhances the preaching of the Gospel everywhere



Pastor-Teacher...

- **Pastor-teachers** (grammatically linked as one function)
- shepherd believers through instruction, care, counsel, and doctrinal grounding.
- They keep the church aligned with the truth and nurtured in spiritual health.
- These are the generic Church leaders (not exclusively) but commonly these gifts are evident in the average anointed Church pastor.



Nourishing...

- These ministries are therefore not separate from Christ's own work.
- They are extensions of it. Christ continues His ministry **through** the people He gives to His church.
- Ephesians 4:11 teaches us that leadership in the church is fundamentally a *Christological* reality:
- Christ governs, nourishes, and matures His body through these grace-endowed offices.



Equipping...

- “...to equip his people for works of service, so that the **body of Christ** may be built up...” (v.12)
- The purpose of these ministry gifts is *not* to perform all ministry themselves but to **equip** the entire church to do the ministry.
- In Christ’s design, ministry is not a spectator event but a shared labour.
- Leaders are equippers; believers are ministers.
- When every member is engaged in service, the body of Christ is “built up” and strengthened in faith, deepened in love, and expanded in witness.
- The health of the church is not measured by the talent of a few but by the mobilisation of the whole.



Reaching...

- “...until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God...” (v.13a)
- Paul’s vision for the church is not merely organisational but spiritual and relational.
- Christ desires that His people grow toward **unity in the faith**, meaning a shared confidence in gospel truth and a shared experience of trust in Christ.
- This unity is grounded in “knowledge of the Son of God”....not abstract theology alone but relational knowledge:
- knowing Christ personally, deeply, and transformatively. Christian maturity is measured by how clearly we see Christ and how closely we walk with Him.



Becoming...

- “...and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” (v.13b)
- The ultimate goal of equipping, unity, and knowledge is **maturity**
- Becoming more like Jesus in character, wisdom, love, and holiness.
- Paul uses the astonishing phrase “the whole measure of the fullness of Christ,”
- Meaning Christ is both the standard and the supply of Christian growth.
- Spiritual maturity is not defined by comparison to other believers but by conformity to Christ Himself.
- The church is called to reflect His fullness, His presence, His likeness in the world.



Grounding...

- **“Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves...” (v.14)**
- A mature church is a stable church. Without grounding in truth, believers remain vulnerable,
- Easily influenced by emotional impulses, theological fads, or persuasive false teachers.
- Spiritual immaturity leaves one spiritually seasick, without an anchor or direction.
- But Christ’s design is that through sound teaching and communal growth, the church becomes resilient, Able to discern truth from error and remain steadfast amid cultural currents that constantly shift.



Speaking...

- “Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.” (v.15)
- Paul presents the church’s growth strategy in one of the most potent phrases in Scripture:
- **“speaking the truth in love.”**
- Truth without love becomes harsh and wounding;
- Love without truth becomes sentimental and misleading.
- Together, they create an environment where fundamental transformation can occur..



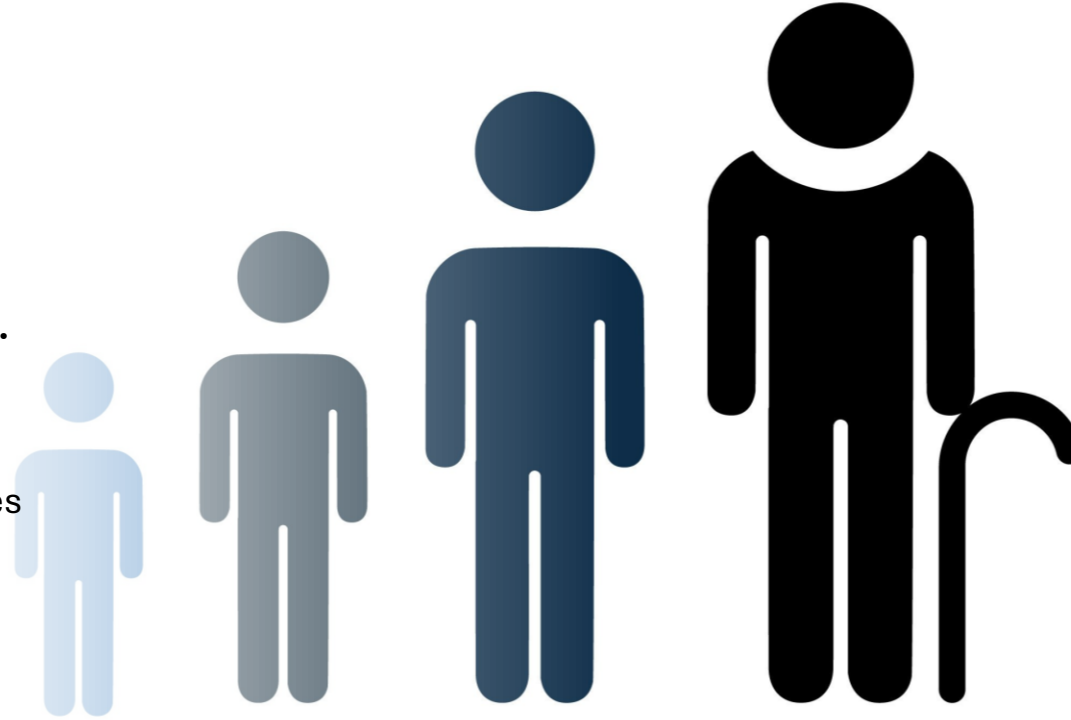
Supporting...

- **“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament...” (v.16a)**
- Christ is not only the head but the source of life and cohesion for the whole church.
- Paul uses the imagery of a body whose parts are interconnected, each ligament supporting the others.
- The church does not function through isolated individuals but through interdependent relationships.
- Unity is not the erasure of differences but the coordination of diverse members working together under one head.
- Christ Himself binds the church together, sustaining its unity and giving it strength.



Growing...

- “...grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” (v.16b)
- The church grows not merely through programs or personalities but through **love**.
- The active, sacrificial, Christlike love that believers express toward one another.
- And this growth happens “as each part does its work”:
- Every believer has a role, a gift, and a responsibility within the body.
- Maturity is a family - community project. When each member contributes faithfully and lovingly, the entire body becomes a living testimony of Christ’s fullness in the world.





REFLECTIONS...

