

Strange Gifts

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Ephesians 4:7-12

Eph. 4:4-12

4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. **7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore it says,**

**“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”**

9 (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? 10 He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

Rom. 12:6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Ps. 68:16 Why do you look with hatred, O many-peaked mountain, at the mount that God desired for his abode, yes, where the LORD will dwell forever? 17 The chariots of God are twice ten thousand, thousands upon thousands; the Lord is among them; Sinai is now in the sanctuary. **18 You ascended on high, leading a host of captives in your train and receiving gifts among men, even among the rebellious, that the LORD God may dwell there.** 19 Blessed be the Lord, who daily bears us up; God is our salvation. Selah 20 Our God is a God of salvation, and to GOD, the Lord, belong deliverances from death.

21 But God will strike the heads of his enemies, the hairy crown of him who walks in his guilty ways.

1Cor. 12:28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.

Num. 18:6 And behold, I have taken your brothers the Levites from among the people of Israel. They are a gift to you, given to the LORD, to do the service of the tent of meeting.

1Cor. 12:8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

1Pet. 4:10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: 11 whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Questions and Discussion Topics:

- I. How have you traditionally viewed the roles of teachers, shepherds, and evangelists in your life?
 - A. List out by name the ones who are meaningful and that God has used for your good. If you cannot name one, ask yourself, why not?
 - B. What is it that makes these people "good" in and for your life? Does he or she point you to Jesus?
 - C. Can you think of a time when an authority figure rebuked you and then led you closer to Jesus because of it?
- II. Can one say that there are still "apostles" and "prophets" in the way that Paul was an apostle or Elijah a prophet?
- III. How might a teacher, pastor, or evangelist equip you for work of ministry? What area of service/ministry do you see yourself called towards?
- IV. What does it mean to "build up" "the body"? How do these mixed metaphors effect the way we think about our role in the church
- V. Does being a captive of Christ sound terrible? Or incredible? Why or why not?