

Major Event: The Church

Lesson 8: Purpose of Spiritual Gifts

Central Text: Ephesians 4:11-16

Suggested Subjects for Teacher to Cover:

Spiritual gifts are given by God to believers for the purpose of edification and unity within the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-16

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:12 mentions two things for which the leaders are to equip believers in the body of Christ:

1. “for the work of service” (Ergon ministry or service) - All believers are in full time Christian service; We are not saved by works, but we are called to walk in them (Ephesians 2:8-9).
2. “building of the body of Christ” - “building” (building up, a building, or edification). The verb oikodomeo (oikos- house; domeo - to build) means to build a house or to build anything. Ephesians 4:12 uses the word “building” for the spiritual strengthening, building, and edification of believers in the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:13 mentions three things that the believer is to attain:

1. “the unity of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God” - Believers are to be unified in God’s word and grow in the knowledge of Christ.
2. “to a mature man” - Believers are to grow to spiritual maturity
3. “to the measure of stature of the fullness of Christ”

Point: As each believer grows in the spiritual life through God’s word and functions in accord with the spiritual gift(s) God has given him, the body of Christ as a whole enjoys unity as believer’s become more spiritually mature and more like Christ in all of His fullness (the character of Christ is formed in him- cf. Rom. 12:2; Gal. 4:19; 5:16-23).

Ephesians 4:14 - Emphasizes that as a believer matures in Christ he will not be carried away into false teaching and error.

Ephesians 4:15-16 - Focuses on importance of unity and love in the body of Christ.

Summary of Ephesians 4:11-16

Spiritual gifts were designed to edify the body through the word of God, with the desired goal of spiritual maturity, unity, and love among the brethren rather than remaining in spiritual infancy and adhering to false teaching.

Suggested Attributes and Characteristics of God:

Humility- Even though God is above all, He still sent His Son to serve us (John 13:1-17). Therefore, we should serve one another even if we are not a deacon in the church.

Suggested Reading for Parents and Child at Home:

John 13:1-7; Ephesians 4:11-16; Galatians 5:16-23