

2

Leader Guide

The Gifts You Bring

August 13, 2023

Main Passage: Ephesians 4:7-16

Theological Theme

The Lord gave all believers gifts for specific purposes. We should be intentional about using our gifts to bring glory to God and support the body of Christ. Paul wrote to the Ephesians about the gifts and their roles in the local church.

Introduction

- ? What kind of gift giver are you? Who gives you gifts that make a difference in your life?
- ? What is the gift you've received that stands out to you the most and why?

1. The Giving of Gifts (Ephesians 4:7-10)

Paul wrote this letter to the church at Ephesus to help them know how to live as Christians. Though written to a specific audience, it is also applicable to the church today. In seeking to remind the believers of the gifts God had given them, Paul started with grace. To understand the importance and significance of spiritual gifts, we should first grasp the gift of grace. Paul stressed that this grace was given to us based on the work of Jesus and had nothing to do with our earning or deserving it.

- ? Why is it important to recognize we do not earn gifts from the Lord?
- ? How does the image of Jesus as a victorious military leader speak to you? How does this highlight Jesus's authority and power to give spiritual gifts?
- ? Application: How is your daily life impacted by God's grace to you? How might you live in response to this moving forward?

2. The Purpose of Gifts (Ephesians 4:11-12)

Referring to Jesus, Paul wrote that He was the one who established the roles of the different gifts. These gifts are not dependent on or dictated by people but are the work and appointment of Jesus. The gifts of the Spirit should be considered as divine institutions and not human creations. Paul's wording describing the different gifts makes it clear that there is divine purpose behind the distribution of each gift.

- ? Why does it matter whether these gifts are divine institutions or human creations?
- ? Why do you think Paul was so specific about the purpose of these gifts? How might the Ephesians (and we) be tempted to use them wrongly?
- ? Application: How are you being equipped for the work of the ministry so that the body of Christ is strengthened through your involvement? What responsibility do you have in this?

3. The Goal of Gifts (Ephesians 4:13-16)

After stating the purpose, Paul expressed the end goal of the gifts. Unity among believers in the body of Christ is paramount to the work of the ministry. Paul stated the goal as unity of the faith. He urged the body to be unified around the knowledge of the Son of God. When the gifts are used together, the body is equipped for the ministry, and we have greater knowledge of and intimacy with the Lord. That is the goal.

- ❓ How does unity within the body of Christ contribute toward or detract from the church's pursuit of God's mission to make His name known in the world?
- ❓ How do you see people falling prey to making decision based on what is popular or politically correct instead of biblical wisdom?
- ❓ Application: How well would you say you function as an individual who is connected to the whole body of Christ? What needs to change for you to fulfill your role?

Questions to Guide Your Group's Discussion

1. What does this passage say?
2. What did this passage mean to its original audience?
3. What does this passage tell us about God?
4. What does this passage tell us about man?
5. What does this passage demand of me?
6. How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (*How can you use this information this week at work or with friends and neighbors?*)
7. How does this passage prompt me to pray to God?

*Adapted from Seven Arrows by Matt Rogers pastor of The Church at Cherrydale, Greenville, SC

Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).

Prayer

1. What gifts do you believe God has given you? Ask God for guidance on how to use your gifts to bring Him glory and build up the body.

2. Pray over someone in your community and the gifts God has given them to use for His glory.