

“Do Your Part”
Ephesians 4:7-16
Sermon Series: “The Walk”

Introduction: Verses 1-6 emphasize the unity we have in Jesus. Part of the way we live like we are one is by each of us using our spiritual gifts to serve the rest of the body. Verses 7-16 focus on the diversity that we have within our unity in Christ. We are unique but interdependent, and it takes each of us using our gifts in ministry for the body to be properly built up.

Main Idea: We are gifted through the finished work of Jesus so we can do the work of ministry in order to accomplish the work of building up the church.

1. Jesus gifts all believers to serve by His grace.

A. Jesus came and set us free through His finished work (v. 7-10). These verses are speaking of the incarnation and ascension of Jesus, His humiliation and exaltation.

John MacArthur explains the phrase “He led captivity captive” in the following way, “Psalm 68 is a victory hymn composed by David to celebrate God’s conquest of the Jebusite city and the triumphant ascent of God (represented by the Ark of the Covenant) up Mount Zion (cf. 2 Sam. 6-7; 1 Chron. 13). After a king won such a victory he would bring home the spoils and enemy prisoners to parade before his people. An Israelite king would take his retinue through the holy city of Jerusalem and up to Mount Zion. Another feature of the victory parade, however, would be the display of the king’s own soldiers who had been freed after being held prisoner by the enemy. These were often referred to as recaptured captives—prisoners who had been taken prisoner again, so to speak, by their own king and given freedom. The phrase when He ascended on high depicts a triumphant Christ returning from battle on earth back into the glory of the heavenly city with the trophies of His great victory. In His crucifixion and resurrection, Jesus Christ conquered Satan, sin, and death (cf. Col. 2:15), and by that great victory He led captive a host of captives, who once were prisoners of the enemy but now are returned to the God and the people with whom they belong.”

B. He gives us grace through His finished work. There are at least four expressions of grace, although this passage is focusing on the last of the four in this list:

-Saving Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

-Sanctifying Grace (Titus 2:11-12)

-Sustaining Grace (2 Corinthians 12:9)

-Serving Grace (1 Peter 4:10)

C. We are graced to serve God with the spiritual gifts that the Spirit bestows upon us (Romans 12:3-8). Verse 7 teaches us that every Christian has received this grace so all believers have at least one gift, but some have more because we have received different measures of serving grace. Here are some practical implications:

-More grace equals more responsibility.

-We are stewards of the grace gifts we have been given.

-Our gifts are undeserved blessings that we are to be thankful for and not proud of.

-Serving is empowered by God’s grace.

-Serving is both an expression of and a response to God's grace.

-We have to serve to be obedient, but the best attitude is one that says, "I GET to serve!"

D. Here are some myths about ministry that we need to lose:

-It is a myth that only a select few are gifted and called to ministry.

-It is a myth that a pastor is the minister of the church.

-It is a myth that ministry from a pastor is fundamentally different or better than ministry from any other Christian.

-It is a myth that you are not responsible to or capable of ministering to others.

E. Here is a list of spiritual gifts that are mentioned in the New Testament. Bible students debate whether or not this is exhaustive or representative and also debate whether or not some of these gifts are still in effect today. However, the following are mentioned in the New Testament: Missionary, Prophecy, Evangelist, Pastor, Ministry, Teaching, Exhortation, Giving, Leadership, Administration, Celibacy, Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Discerning of Spirits, Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues.

F. Here are some practical suggestions for how to discern what our spiritual gifts are and how to use them:

-It can seem supernatural instead of natural.

-It fulfills us.

-It energizes us.

-Others affirm us in the use of the gift.

-The use of the gift yields spiritual fruit.

-An area that we are passionate about or breaks our heart is a guide to where to use our gifts in service.

2. Jesus gifts some believers to lead and equip others (v. 11-12). These verses are clear that Jesus has gifted and called some people to offices in the church whose focus is to lead and equip the entire body to fulfill her God-given ministry. There is some debate about these verses. I believe that all five are valid spiritual gifts today. I believe that all five were offices when the church was founded but only the last three are still church offices today.

3. Jesus calls all believers to minister together for the building up of the Church. Every believer is a minister. We are saved to serve. We need each other (1 Corinthians 12). God graced you with a gift for the purpose of building up the church. Are you doing your part? Jesus promised to build His Church in Matthew 16:18, but He does it through us. Acts 9:31 speaks of the church being edified and multiplied. Is that what you want to see happen in the church. If it is, **DO YOUR PART!**

Conclusion: Have you received the grace of God by faith? Are you trusting in Jesus and His finished work alone? Do you see what He has done for you to set you free and transform your life?

If you are saved, you are gifted by grace! Are you using your gifts for the glory of God? **ARE YOU DOING YOUR PART?**