

The background of the entire image is a photograph of ancient stone ruins. In the foreground, there are large, rectangular stone blocks arranged in a path or foundation. To the right, a high, tiered stone wall rises. In the distance, more ruins and some greenery are visible under a clear sky. A semi-transparent black horizontal band runs across the middle of the image, serving as a background for the text.

Understanding Who I Am

Ephesians

Becoming Who We Are

Grace & Gifts

Ephesians: Grace & Gifts



Series in Ephesians

- much about who we are; chosen, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, sealed, family, heirs, kindness shown for eternity, his workmanship, invited to participate in what God has already prepared!
- called to – walk in a manner worthy, be unified, adopt postures of; humility, gentleness, patience, bearing with one another, eager to maintain unity and peace.
- today – some of how this will work

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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,

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¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.”

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1. Spiritual Gifts and God's Grace

- clear about natural abilities and spiritual gifts

- a) Every Christian is given a Spiritual gift vs.7

- 1Cor. 12:7 “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good”

- Rom. 12: “⁵ so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. ⁶ Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them”

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b) that gift is God's alone to decide

- the what – determined by Jesus vs.7
- the measure – by his grace
- 1Cor. 12 “¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”
- the purpose – determined by him already
 - “But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹ If all were a single member, where would the body be?” 1 Cor. 12

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2. Gifts and roles in the body vs. 11-12

- all have a role for the body to function
- some gifts set apart to 'equip' other Christians

a) equipping

- Matt. 4:21 “²¹ And going on from there he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, in the boat with Zebedee their father, mending their nets, and he called them.”
- fix what is broken, prepare for use

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- 1 Thess. 3:10 “¹⁰ as we pray most earnestly night and day that we may see you face to face and supply what is lacking in your faith?”
- clear some spiritual gifts are to be used in ‘fixing what is broken’, ‘supplying what is lacking’
- note – we do not have people with these gifts so they can do the work of ministry while others watch. God gifted his church so we may be equipped to do the work of ministry!

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b) equipped for...

- work of ministry
- all the one anothers in scripture

*in reality:

- each has a spiritual gift
- each is commissioned to be involved
- the gift was chosen by God, the measure as well
- the role prepared just for you
- the body has gifts to equip that gift to be used

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3. Ministry to the Body – 4 Outcomes

a) Building up the body vs. 13

- note – opposite of tearing it down
- strengthen, bring health, building
- active and intentional
- easy to evaluate

b) Unity of Faith / Knowledge of Jesus

- unified around what Jesus did for us, calls us to, and promises for the future

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- knowledge of Jesus – important to study scripture, learn from the life of Jesus, his teaching. If we are to pursue Christ-likeness, need a good picture of what that is.

c) Corporate Personality of Christ-likeness

- marks and values of our family
- *“to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,”*
- not just individual maturity or wholeness, but as a group this is our identity

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d) Anchored and Rooted

- “ *so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.*” vs.14
- deeply anchored because storms are coming
- see how those with equipping gifts and elders are so important to guard the flock

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- Acts 20:29-31 *“I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; ³⁰ and from among your own selves will arise men speaking twisted things, to draw away the disciples after them. ³¹ Therefore be alert,”*
- winds of doctrine
- human cunning
- craftiness and deceitful schemes

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So What?

1. If you are a child of God – you have been given a spiritual gift. Chosen by God for you, specific and to the measure he determined.
 - you need to investigate this gift
 - you need to use this gift – not for you alone
2. God has provided gifts in some that are for your equipping. It is his plan for us to learn from one another.
 - means you must be teachable, present

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3. It is impossible for you to participate in ministry to the body without:

- joining a body
- engaging in serving one another
- learning and growing together
- acknowledging your life affects the whole
- realizing the importance of having others involved in grounding or anchoring your faith.