

Our Gifts and Calling – Part 1

Ephesians 4:1-16 NIV

Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ

4 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I ***urge you to live a life worthy of the calling*** you have received. ² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing ***with one another*** in love. ³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; 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 ***to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.*** ⁸ This is why it^[a] says: “When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.”^[b]

⁹ (What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions^[c]? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹ So Christ himself gave the ***apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,*** ¹² ***to equip his people for works of service,*** so that ***the body of Christ may be built up*** ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and ***become mature,*** attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ ***From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.***

Matthew 6:25-34 NIV

Do Not Worry

²⁵ “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? ²⁶ Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? ²⁷ Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life^[a]?”

²⁸ “And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labor or spin.

²⁹ Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ³⁰ If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? ³¹ So do not worry, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ ³² For ***the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them.*** ³³ But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and ***all these things will be given to you as well.*** ³⁴ Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

John 2:13-17 NIV

Jesus Clears the Temple Courts

¹³ When it was almost time for the Jewish Passover, Jesus went up to Jerusalem. ¹⁴ In the temple courts he found people selling cattle, sheep and doves, and others sitting at tables exchanging money. ¹⁵ So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple courts, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. ¹⁶ To those who sold doves he said, “Get these out of here! Stop turning my Father’s house into a market!” ¹⁷ His disciples remembered that it is written: “***Zeal for your house will consume me.***”^[1]

Someday When...

- When I’m not so busy with my family, I’ll serve
- When I’m more settled in my career, I’ll have the time to get involved in ministering to others

- When I'm financially stable, I'll tithe
- When everything is together in my life, I'll go on that missions trip.

Getting life in the right priority:

- Seek first the Kingdom of God – Then God worries about the things you worry about (Matthew 6:25-34)
 - ³¹ So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?' ³² For ***the pagans run after all these things***, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. ³³ But ***seek first his kingdom and his righteousness***, and all these things will be given to you as well.
- Zeal for Your house will consume me (John 2 13-17)
 - The house of God when Jesus was living on earth was the temple
 - At Jesus's death the temple curtain/wall was torn open and God's presence left the temple. At the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was poured out and within people. We are now the temple of God. As we gather as church we become God's house on earth.
 - **Ephesians 2:21-22 NIV** ²¹ In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²² And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.
 - Commitment to each other
 - Commitment to gathering - **Hebrews 10:25 NIV** ²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

God has a purpose for each of us (vs. 7)

- It is beyond our plans, ideas and dreams!
- Things to learn
- Things to try
- People/places to serve

We grow as we serve (vs. 12)

- Serving is a wonderful form of selfishness – You get more than you can give
- Serving works our spiritual muscles and develops a dependence on God. It builds us up.
- Serving helps and blesses others so that they are blessed and built up.
- God has wired us to serve the church – it is our pathway to growth and maturity.
 - It's not a second or third place attitude – We serve from our best, not from what's left over.
 - We give our best
 - On time, Awake, Purposeful as we serve and as we worship

Everyone Needs Impartation:

- Ephesians 4:11-12 NIV ¹¹ So Christ himself gave the ***apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers***, ¹² ***to equip his people for works of service***, so that ***the body of Christ may be built up***
- Learning to receive from others keeps us out of the trap that we are to make our own decisions and that we are to be the ones that discern God's will, direction and plan for our lives. We are easy targets for Satan when we try and do it all alone or internally.
 - Satan can empower you with any gift

Dreaming God's Dreams:

- Look at what He's calling us to
- Imagine what's next!