

# The Purpose of Gifts of the Holy Spirit

## **Ephesians 4:11-16 NKJV (more accurate)**

11 And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the **body of Christ**, 13 till we all come to the **unity of the faith** and of the **knowledge of the Son** of God, to **a perfect man**, to the measure of the **stature of the fullness** of Christ;

*14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,* 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may **grow up** in all things into Him who is **the head**—Christ — 16 from whom **the whole body**, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the **effective working** by which **every part does its share**, **causes growth** of the body for the **edifying of itself** in love.

## **Ephesians 4:7-16 NIV (more readable)**

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, 12 to prepare God's 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 men in their deceitful scheming.

15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into 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.

# The Purpose of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

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14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may **grow up** in all things into Him who is **the head**— Christ — 16 from whom **the whole body**, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the **effective working** by which **every part does its share**, **causes growth** of the body for the **edifying of itself** in love.

I want us to carefully see and perceive the nuances of the passage before us. Here we go. First, I want to point out what we saw last week in verses 11 and 12. God gave the church leaders, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, for one purpose – to pray and preach God’s word and thereby equip the saints (believers) for the work of ministry. What is the work of ministry? It is the edification or building up of the body of Christ. So here is how we can paraphrase this to be clearly understood.

*Christ gave gifts in the church. First of all he gave some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, so that they would equip the church through the preaching of the Word, so that the church could do the work of ministry to one another.*

*That ministry they do is the edifying of the body of Christ. That by speaking the truth of God’s word one to another, and serving one another with their gifts they might grow up tightly knit together by everyone using his gift, so that we might become unified (strong) in our faith and grow deep in our experiential knowledge (epi-gnosis) of Jesus Christ our Lord, and that we might become more and more mature, and be just like Jesus.*

Three things need to be clarified to our minds.

- 1) What is the Body of Christ?
- 2) What is the Building up, or this “edifying itself”?
- 3) What is this Bonding, or tightly knit together?

The Body, The Building, and The Bonding, helps us understand the purpose of the gifts Christ sprinkled liberally throughout the church.

## **I. The Body of Christ -**

This is a favorite metaphor of the Apostle Paul “the body of Christ.”

He often uses it to describe the church of true believers.

The Head (Christ)

The Whole Body (all of us)

Each (every) Body Part(s) [parts is parts] – **I Corinthians 12:14-27**

1. Joined and Knit together (welded, bonded, tight)
2. Every joint supplies its part (Every part does its share)
3. Causes Growth in knowledge – not numerical but biological maturity

Jesus used the metaphor of the vine and branches. Stay attached.

The body of Christ needs to be often together with each other and with their source of nourishment and strength Christ.

## **II. The Building up (Edifying Itself) -**

This is another word picture, or metaphor, the Paul often uses. The idea of a building being built up. Every piece is important. It all makes the building. He does not use it as a noun, a thing, but as a verb, an action.

Speaking Truth (in love) – Malachi 3:16 (spoke often one with another)

*(Main verb of action – speaking God’s truth one to another in love)*

1. Grow up (no more children), Joined and Knit together (togetherness)
2. Unity of faith (togetherness, oneness) Knowledge (conhecer, not saber)
3. Maturity (perfect man) Whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (to be Christ-like)

The church edifies itself and becomes mature by every part doing its job in loving togetherness. By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

## **III. The Belonging and Bonding - v.16**

Joined and Knit Together – bonded

This is called by Ray Stedman, *Body Life*. It is the true church (body of Christ) alive and lovingly speaking God’s word into the lives of one another.

(ie) Example from Ralph Neighbor’s book. (Piper)

Men: We need to do some male bonding. We strut, we puff up, we flex, we brag, we try to look our best, give the best impression, etc. We are like to Tom Turkeys, strutting in the yard, boasting our feathers, showing our prowess, but never really connecting. Men don’t talk. They grunt. Men don’t express inner feelings and battles. They strut. They cover. They avoid

showing weakness. They don't bond, they James Bond. They compete for Alpha male position, dominant role.

Men: Every Man's Battle, by Stephen Arterburn, every man in our culture ought to get into a small group of men who read this together and admit their struggles together, and together seek God's deliverance and victory over sexual thoughts and sins. *The Man in the Mirror*, by Patrick Morely. What a powerful book to help men bond. Men and friendships.

Not an accountability group: It is a friendship group a band of brothers. Not preaching, but sharing, reminding, challenging, admonishing, correcting, edifying, comforting, encouraging, and sometimes rebuking. etc. You maturity, or lack thereof, is showing. (One Another Passages)

How often during any given day, week, month, year, do you speak the Word (not your words or your opinions, but His Word) of God into the lives of other people.

**(Do things together! Golf, fish, camp, canoe, hike, backpack, hunt, play ball, go to a ballgame – make some friends. – get tight, knit together, bonded friendships last a lifetime.)**

That is why **testimony meetings** are important, **prayer meetings** are important, **small group bible studies** and **fellowship groups** are important. It cannot be done passively by sitting and listening only. The whole body has become the ear.

### **Speak one to another**

Malachi 3:16 Then they that feared the LORD spoke often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the LORD, and that thought upon his name.

### **Iron sharpens Iron**

Proverbs 27:17 Iron sharpens iron; so a man sharpens the countenance of his friend.

Proverbs 17:17 A friend loves at all times, and a brother is born for adversity.

Proverbs 18:24 A man *that has* friends must show himself friendly: and there is a friend that sticks closer than a brother.

Proverbs 27:6 Faithful *are* the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy *are* deceitful.

### **Fitly (tightly) Joined Together**

Ephesians 2:21 In whom all the building **fitly framed together** <4883> groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

Ephesians 4:16 From whom the whole body **fitly joined together** and **compact** by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

# Books and Studies

## Marriage

### Men – A Place to Start

- 1) **The Man in the Mirror**, Patrick Morely
- 2) Pursuit of Holiness, Jerry Bridges
- 3) Wild at Heart, John Eldredge
- 4) Half Time, Listening to the Gentle Whisper, Bob Buford
- 5) The Fourth Seed, Finding Your Band of Brothers, *men's devotional magazine*
- 6) Devotions for Couples, Patrick Morely
- 7) *Every Man's Battle*, by Stephen Arterburn,
- 8) Twelve Ordinary Men, John MacArthur

Father's Day Celebration 48 Books for \$50.

<http://booksfor1dollar.maninthemirror.org/SearchResults.asp?Cat=30&Click=24831>

*The Man in the Mirror Bible Study Online* (<http://www.maninthemirror.org/biblestudy/register.htm>)

<http://www.maninthemirror.org/>

### Event Outings

Softball League

Golf Scramble and Weekly Golf Foursomes

Backpacking Days

Canoe & Camping

Pirates Baseball Game (tailgating)

Sweat Equity – building project

**(Do things together! Golf, fish, camp, canoe, hike, backpack, bike, motorcycle, hunt, play ball, go to a ballgame – make some friends. – tightly knit together.)**

## one Another Passages

*These are commands... not suggestions!*

1. Accept ... (Romans 15:5-7)
2. Be Kind ... (Eph 4:32)
3. Lay Down Your Life ... (1 John 3:16)
4. Put up with ... (Eph 4:2)
5. Honor ... (Romans 12:10)
6. Love ... (John 13:34; 15:12; 17) Fervently (1 Pet 1:22)
7. Serve ... (Gal 5:13)
8. Submit to ... (Eph 5:21)
9. Wash Feet ... (John 13:14)
10. Bear Burdens ... (Gal 6:2)

1. Greet ... (Romans 16:16)
2. Admonish ... (Romans 15:14)
3. Confess Faults ... (James 5:16)
4. Comfort ... (1 Thess 4:18)
5. Edify ... One Another (1 Thess 4:18)
6. Exhort ... (Heb 3:13)
7. Forgive ... (Eph 4:32)
8. Sing to ... (Eph 5:19)
9. Pray For ... (James 5:16)
10. Spur on ... (Heb 10:24)

1. Judge not ... (Romans 14:13)
2. Envy not ... (Gal 5:15)
3. Provoke not ... (Gal 5:15)
4. Bite not ... (Gal 5:15)
5. Devour not ... (Gal 5:15)
6. Lie Not ... (Colossians 3:9)
7. Defraud Not... (1 Thessalonians 4:6)
8. Show no Partiality To ... (1 Tim 5:21)
9. Forsake not Gathering ... (Heb 10:25)
10. Put No stumbling block ... (Rom. 14:13)

These one another ministries were never intended to be done Sunday morning in church, but together in each other's homes. (Acts 2:46 / Acts 20:20)

It is the rejection of togetherness in the body of Christ that destroys the true church's testimony. (Heb. 10:25)

## NIV I Corinthians 12

12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 14 Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

18 But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" 22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment.

But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. 27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

**Ralph Neighbor's book, *Where Do We Go From Here.***

A visiting pastor in Auckland, New Zealand was asked by the pastor of a church to come to a small group to help it understand its function. He came early for dinner and the husband was not there. The wife was embarrassed and explained that the husband owned a construction company and worked late.

The group arrived after dinner and the visiting pastor taught for a while on how to use spiritual gifts to build each other up. Then he asked them to get alone for a few minutes to seek God for how each one might channel God's grace to the others for their upbuilding.

When they came back together he assumed they knew each other's needs because they had been together for several years. The husband came home, showered and joined them in a few minutes. When the opportunity was given to speak or to pray for each other there was an awkward silence. They had never done anything like this before—seeking the Lord for how he might want them to minister to each other in that moment to build each other up.

The visiting pastor felt a fiasco was on his hands and turned the meeting back to the pastor to close. The pastor asked if anyone had a special problem they would like prayer for. The hostess said yes and showed the group the rash all over her arms. She said that the doctors had prescribed medicine but it hadn't helped. They invited her to put her chair in the middle for prayer. And as they prayed, Christ, the head of the church, did his ministry. The pastor said, "I sense in my heart the Lord is telling me your problem is the result of great anger."

She was silent for a moment then began to cry softly. Then she confessed, "I am so angry at my husband. He promises to be home for dinner, but night after night we eat without him. . . . He's broken his promises to me over and over, and I feel I am a widow as I raise our children."

There was an awareness that something had just been revealed that two years of small group meetings had not revealed. And the husband was blushing with embarrassment.

To make the story shorter, several of the men began to speak about how they had wrestled with the same problem in their homes and had almost ruined their marriages. One in particular spoke of a deep meeting with God in such a crisis and how God had made everything new.

By the grace of God the husband knelt down in front of his wife and wept into her lap, as the group prayed for them more earnestly than they had ever prayed. The visiting pastor commented later, "The Lord had invaded His Body, and the gateway into the supernatural world had been crossed by us all."

The following Sunday the visiting pastor was to preach and saw the small group gathered on the parking lot outside the church. When they found him inside the woman pulled up her sleeves and said, "Look, no rash anywhere!" The husband approached and said, "I've cut back my workday to eight hours. I took the kids to the zoo yesterday. We have a new home."

(Ralph Neighbor, *Where Do We Go From Here?* p. 161-64)

From John Piper's Sermon

How Christ Enables The Church to Upbuild Itself In Love

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