

## He Gave Gifts to Men

May 9, 2019

### Ephesians 4:8-12 ESV

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,

12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.

- *God's purpose and plan for the Church is not to have a corporate structure, business operations, media branding, marketing strategies, financial success, political influence, worldly approval, a campus of buildings or a portfolio of activities, target groups and classes.*
- *Though many of these things may be required to facilitate God's purpose and plan, they can never become the priority nor the validation of "success."*
- *In the consumer-church of America, many church-goers use the church as a success-in-life strategy, a social welfare program, a networking hub, etc., for personal gain and advantage.*
- *God's purpose and plan for the Church is RELATIONSHIP (first with Him, then with the members of His Body) and gifts that minister God's power, life, holiness and grace.*

### Ephesians 4:15-16 ESV

15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ,  
16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

- *Church is neither a presentation nor a performance for an audience of spectators.*
- *Church is a relational, collaborative, team effort, with each member engaged and interacting.*
- *Every member is a gift from God, endowed with gifts by the Holy Spirit, for the good of the assembly.*
- *God's life, power, salvation and grace freely flows in such an assembly.*

### 1 Peter 4:7-11 ESV

7 The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

8 Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins.

9 Show hospitality to one another without grumbling.

10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

11 whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies--in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

### James 5:14-18 ESV

14 Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

15 And the prayer of faith will save the one who is sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

16 Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

17 Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth.

18 Then he prayed again, and heaven gave rain, and the earth bore its fruit.

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 ESV

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit;

5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord;

6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.

7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit,

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,

10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.