

**Metro Calvary Women's Bible Study**  
**Ephesians 4:7-16**

**Lesson 9**

In the previous verses of Ephesians 4, Paul has emphasized the unity of the church that can be attributed to the beliefs we have in common. Now, beginning with verse seven, he speaks of the differences of each member and the gifts that when used properly, lead to unity. As you study these verses, may you be stirred to use the gifts God has given you, that you may be doing your part in God's plan for unity.

**DAY ONE: Read Ephesians 4:7-16**

1. Read through this week's verses using both your Observation Worksheet and another Bible translation or paraphrase.

a. Ephesians 4:7-16 has been divided into two sections. List below the subjects(s) covered in each section.

**Verses 7-10**

**Verses 11-16**

**OPTIONAL:** From the list below record the key words and their symbols on your chart.

**New to this lesson:** *body, ascended, descended, and gave*

**Term of conclusion:** *therefore*

**Contrast:** *but*

**OPTIONAL:** Using the symbols you have chosen, mark each of the key words every time they are used in Ephesians 4:1-6. Remember, as you mark the words: *God, Jesus, and Holy Spirit*, to mark any personal pronouns that refer to Them.

2. Make a list of what God has *given* using the verses containing the word *gave*.

3. The first six verses of Ephesians 4 speak of the things we have in common as Christians. Notice verse 7 begins with a word of contrast. What is it?

**Paul is still expounding about how we are to preserve the unity in the bond of peace. He uses the disjunctive word *but* to emphasize that his call for unity is not a call to uniformity. He is not calling for the body of Christ to be absolutely identical in every single aspect, with no differences at all. Unity is oneness and harmony but it is not sameness in all cases and at all times without variation.**

**As we look at verses 7 through verse 16, Paul wonderfully explains how the body of Christ is characterized by and held together in the face of both unity and diversity. Notice in Ephesians 4, Paul moves from his focus on unity (Eph 4:4-6) to diversity in Eph 4:7-10, and then back again to unity in Ephesians 4:11-16.**

4. Read Ephesians 4:7. Who is Paul writing to?

a. How does verse 7 refute the claims that only certain believers have gifts?

**b. Each one (hekastos)** serves to reiterate that each and every member of the body of Christ has received a spiritual gift. Before we go any further we want to make absolutely certain that we clearly distinguish between “spiritual gifts” and the natural abilities you were born with. In the spiritual realm, each believer has at least one spiritual gift, independent of their natural abilities. A spiritual gift is a sovereign given, supernatural ability to serve God and other Christians in a way that other believers are edified and Christ is glorified. How does 1 Peter 4:10 reiterate this truth, and what is the exhortation concerning gifts?

**1 Peter 4:10**

5. From verse 7, what has been given to *each one of us*? The Greek literally reads “*Yet to each one of us individually.*”

6. This reference to **grace** is not so much the grace that saves but the grace that *enables us to live the supernatural life and exercise our spiritual gifts*. Here grace is the ability to perform the task God has called us to. How did Paul use the word **grace** the same way from 2 Timothy 2:1?

**2 Timothy 2:1**

***Grace was given: grace has been given to all of us according to the measure of Jesus' gift. This gift is grace and is the basis for God's distribution of spiritual gifts through His church: grace is the free, unmerited giving of God. No one deserves or has earned spiritual gifts.***

7. This *grace* is God's enablement to use the gift(s) we have been *given*. How was this *grace given*? See verse 7.

8. The word **According to** (2596) (**kata**) means proportionate to Christ's wealth, not just a portion of it, and **Measure** (3358) (**metron**) refers to a measure of capacity. Each Christian gets the grace which Christ has to give, and each one gets it in the proportion to which the Giver is pleased to bestow it; one having it in larger measure and another in smaller, but each getting it from the same Hand and with the same purpose. How do you see this illustrated from Matthew 25:15?

**Matthew 25:15**

9. Verse 7 says, *Grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift* - With this statement Paul explains the reason unity and diversity can coexist in one body. What is at the core of that unity according to 1 Corinthians 12:4-5?

**1 Corinthians 12:4-5**

**DAY TWO: Read Ephesians 4:8-10**

1. According to Ephesians 4:8, what two things did Jesus accomplish when He ascended on high?

2. Verse 8 is a quotation from the Psalms; a messianic psalm of victory in which God is praised for deliverance. Write out Psalm 68:18.

**Psalm 68:18**

a. Look up the phrase, *He led captivity captive*, in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

**He led captivity captive-**

**When Christ ascended to heaven, he triumphed over all his foes. It was a complete victory over the malice of the great enemy of God, and over those who had sought his life. But he did more. He rescued those who were the captives of Satan, and led them in triumph. Man was held by Satan as a prisoner and his chains were around him. Christ rescued the captive prisoner, and designed to make him a part of his triumphal procession into heaven, that thus the victory might be complete—triumphing not only over the great foe himself, but swelling his procession with the attending hosts of those who “had been” the captives of Satan, now rescued and redeemed.**

3. Verse 9 reads, “*Now this, “He ascended”—what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?”* What do we learn about what happened to Jesus after He died on the cross from 1Peter 3:19?

When Christ died on the cross, He in the Spirit **“went and preached unto the spirits in prison”** The word “preached” can be better translated “proclaimed”—that is, proclaimed His victory over Satan. He returned from Hades with **“the keys of hell and of death”** (Rev 1:18), bringing **“captivity captive”** with Him as He returned.

4. According to verse 10, why did Christ ascend?

a. Look up the phrase *He might fill all* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

**He might fill (fill)**

b. Paul has already expressed this in Ephesians 1:22-23. What did he write about Jesus in these verses?

**DAY THREE & FOUR: Read Ephesians 4:11-13**

1. In Ephesians 4:11 Paul lists five spiritual *gifts*. Define them by matching the *gifts* with the proper definition. One who speaks God's Word \_\_\_\_\_ One who explains God's Word \_\_\_\_\_ One who is sent with a commission \_\_\_\_\_ One who shares the gospel \_\_\_\_\_ One who shepherds God's people \_\_\_\_\_.

2. What one word in Ephesians 4:11 reveal that not everyone receives the same spiritual *gifts*?

3. Spiritual gifts given by God are the subject of these verses in Ephesians. These gifts are special abilities given by God, which are to be used to strengthen believers and to reach the world for Christ. Look up the following verses and underline what you learn about *gifts*:

**Romans 12:3-8** “<sup>3</sup>For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. <sup>4</sup>For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, <sup>5</sup>so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. <sup>6</sup>Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them*: if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith, <sup>7</sup>or ministry, *let us use it* in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; <sup>8</sup>he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence”

**1 Corinthians 12:4-12** “<sup>4</sup>There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup>There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup>And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. <sup>7</sup>But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all*: <sup>8</sup>for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup>to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, <sup>10</sup>to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another *different* kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup>But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”

**1 Corinthians 12: 28** “<sup>28</sup>And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.”

**1 Peter 4:10-11** “<sup>10</sup>As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. <sup>11</sup>If anyone speaks, *let him speak* as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

4. Because we are human, we are susceptible to misusing spiritual *gifts*. Share an example of how this might occur.

a. In what way is not using a spiritual *gift* a misuse of that gift?

5. What was Paul's exhortation about spiritual gifts from the passages below?

**1 Timothy 4:14**

**2 Timothy 1:6**

a. Commentator Boice in speaking about Ephesians 4:7 says, “*The gifts are given to each*

*Christian—that is, everyone has at least one gift—and for that reason, the church is only fully dynamic and healthy when all are ministering. That gift may be lying dormant within you, embryonic and unused. You may not know what it is, but it is there. The Holy Spirit makes no exceptions to the basic equipping of each believer. No Christian can say, "I can't serve God; I don't have any capacity or ability to serve Him." We all, as authentic followers of Christ, been gifted with a "grace" of the Spirit."* I believe this statement to be very true! Where do you see your place in the body of Christ? Are you participating in making your church healthier & dynamic by using your gift(s) or are they lying dormant?

6. Ephesians 4:12 shows us two purposes for God giving spiritual gifts. What are they?

a.

b.

7. **The first purpose** for God giving spiritual gifts is for the equipping of the saints. Look up the word *equipping* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

**Equipping-(Perfecting)**

8. According to verse 12, what is the purpose for the *equipping of the saints*?

**Serving the Lord will require some expenditure of Work! (2041 ergon from érgo = to work) Notice that the pastor-teachers are not doing their work for the saints, but are preparing the saints for their (the saint's) work. The leaders are God's gift to the church for the purpose of perfecting or equipping believers to carry on this work. We have forgotten that the church is not to be a spiritual rest home, but a barracks for training soldiers of the cross. So many today think that it is the job of the pastoral staff to do the work of ministry! This is not the divine design! Each and every single one of the saints (not just church staff) is to carry out the work of the ministry.**

a. The word **Ministry (Service)** from verse 12, ( 1248) (**diakonia**) means the rendering or assistance or help by performing certain duties, often of a humble or menial nature, including mundane activities that in men's eyes (but not God's!) are without apparent dignity. Paul is describing the spiritual service expected (and required) of every believer; not just of church leaders. What did Paul write in 1 Corinthians 15:58 about the work of the Lord?

**1 Corinthians 15:58**

b. We live in a culture (Christian too) that is focused on **self-fulfillment** and **personal pleasure** and finds very little value in **servant hood**. Not very many Christians are jumping at the opportunity to clean church bathrooms, wash windows, or vacuum carpets. There are the few whom I am humbled to know, who do not think it beneath themselves to roll up their sleeves to perform these humble tasks! **Lord** we are so desperate for you to change our thinking and our attitudes. What was Christ's attitude in Philippians 2:5-7?

**Philippians 2:5-7** <sup>45</sup>Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: <sup>6</sup>Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: <sup>7</sup>But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant."

9. **The second purpose** for God giving spiritual gifts in Ephesians 4:12, is *for the edifying of the body of Christ*. Look up the word *edifying* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

**Edifying-**

**Building up of the body of Christ** - Paul in this phrase is not speaking of the increase of attendance on a Sunday morning! The emphasis in this verse is not **quantity** of saints, but **quality** of saints; saints equipped for the work of edifying so that they can then be engaged in the edification of the saints! Does this describe the philosophy and practice of your church? It should because it's God's pattern for real "church growth"! The body is built up **externally** through evangelism and new believers are added to the church, but the emphasis in this verse is on being built up **internally** as all believers are nurtured to fruitful service through the Word of God being taught.

10. Scan the gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11. Notice, they are all speaking *gifts*. Choose two of these gifts and share how you have been *built up* by someone who used their *gift*.

11. Read Ephesians 4:13. How long will these *gifts* be necessary?

a. Look this verse up in another translation. What does it say?

12. **John MacArthur** makes an excellent point about verse 13 regarding the unity of the faith, "The **ultimate** spiritual target for the church begins with the **unity of the faith**. As Paul stated in verse 5, *one faith* does not refer to the act of belief or obedience, but to the faith is the content of the gospel in its most complete form of Christian doctrine. The church at Corinth so clearly illustrates that disunity in the church comes from doctrinal ignorance and spiritual immaturity. When believers are properly taught and faithfully doing the work of ministry, the body is thereby built up in spiritual maturity, thus unity of the faith is an inevitable result." According to this quote why does disunity exist?

a. Most often it isn't doctrinal truth that divides brothers or sisters in a church, it's petty differences such as; personality conflicts, differences of personal opinions, etc ....If a Christian man or woman wants to be mature and perfect, keeping unity in the body of Christ, what must they do?

b. How does 1 Peter 2:1 instruct us towards unity?

c. What are the foundational Doctrinal truths we should never compromise?

13. Verse 13 says, "<sup>13</sup>till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man." Define the word *perfect* as it is used in verse 13 by looking it up in your Concordance and writing out the English translation.

**Perfect-(Mature)**

14. Ephesians 4:13 speaks of a *perfect man*. Describe a mature Christian.

a. What does Paul express from his heart in Colossians 1:28-29?

**Colossians 1:28-29** "<sup>28</sup>Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. <sup>29</sup>To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily."

15. Verse 13b ends with, "*to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*" Look at the following definitions below.

**Measure** (3358) (**metron**) is a measure of capacity.

**Stature** (2244) (**helikia** from **helix** = adult, full-aged) conveys the idea of maturity in years or size. It speaks of the "ripeness" of full age. In this context it speaks of the maturity of one's renewed Christian mind.

**Fullness** (4138) (**pleroma** from **pleroo** = make full, fill, fill up) speaks of a full measure with emphasis upon completeness. God wants every believer to manifest the qualities of His Son, Who is Himself the standard for their spiritual maturity and perfection.

a. After reading the following definitions, how are you striving toward Christ likeness Sisters? How were you challenged by any of these definitions?

b. What does the passage below say should be our highest destiny, the reason we were created, redeemed, and sanctified?

**Romans 8:29** <sup>29</sup>"For whom He foreknew, He also predestined *to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.*"

### **DAY FIVE: Read Ephesians 4:14-16**

1. The purpose of maturity discussed in the previous verses is emphasized by the contrasting picture in Ephesians 4:14. Underline what the reason is for becoming mature in our faith. *"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."*

a. What phrases in this verse describe the instability of being like a child?

b. Look up the word *children* in your Concordance and write out the English translation.

#### **Children-**

c. As believers, what causes us to be like children?

d. What do you learn from Hebrews 5:12-14 that adds to your understanding about spiritual immaturity?

**Hebrews 5:12-14** *"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."*

e. What does the phrase from verse 14, "no longer" imply?

**The phrase "Tossed to and fro and carried about" speaks of the Christian being agitated mentally like the waves in a stormy sea. It means: to be disturbed, to be thrown in confusion. It describes the Christian who has an unstable opinion and who fluctuates or**

frequently changes the way he or she thinks or believes depending on the latest teaching fad.

Think of a spinning top. Such is the confusing effect of false doctrine! It pictures one whirled around by a violent swinging that makes them dizzy. Paul uses these metaphors to bring out the danger of a believer continuing as a babe. I think of all the fads that have come and gone in the 35 years of being a Christian.

2. Sadly I have seen many fall prey to false teachings and others who have gone off into biblical tangents, and many whose faith shipwrecked because they did not enjoy the stable and consistent teaching of the Word of God. How can you make sure you do not become one of these?

**To avoid being pulled into error,  
Keep a firm grip on the truth!**

3. According to verse 14, by whom and what can we be, *carried about with every wind of doctrine*?

a. These *men* are not confined to unbelievers outside the church, but are specifically referring to those who would claim to be believers who are inside the church. How are they described in the passages below?

**2 Corinthians 11:13-15** <sup>13</sup>*For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. <sup>14</sup>And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. <sup>15</sup>Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works."*

**2 Peter 2:18-19** <sup>18</sup>*For when they speak great swelling words of emptiness, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through lewdness, the ones who have actually escaped from those who live in error. <sup>19</sup>While they promise them liberty, they themselves are slaves of corruption; for by whom a person is overcome, by him also he is brought into bondage."*

**CHALLENGE:** Look up the following words from your dictionary or your Concordance.

**Trickery** (sleight of men)-

**Cunning Craftiness**-

**Deceitful plotting** (lie in wait)-

b. Unfortunately, Satan even uses true believers to cause disunity in the church. What do you think might be signs of *deceitful plotting* causing disunity?

4. **But**, in verse 15 means "*but rather*" or "*but on the other hand*". In contrast to being like children, what does Paul say they are to do in this verse?

a. Explain *speaking the truth in love* in the context of these verses as you understand it.

b. **Speaking the truth** pictures the right doctrine. **In love** pictures the right spirit or attitude. We should have a great love for the truth and also a great desire to live the truth out in our daily lives; but we must live the truth in love. Truth without love is brutality, but love without truth is hypocrisy. Have you found yourself struggling with either one of these? Explain?

5. Verse 15 says we are to *speak the truth in love and grow up in all things into Him who is the head, Christ*. How are we *grow up in all things into Him*? See John 15:5.

**John 15:5**

6. The last phrase of Ephesians 4:15 reminds us that Christ is the head of the *body* (the church). Using verse 16, answer the following questions:

a. From whom is the *whole body joined and knit together*?

**Note:** the joints are the points of union where the supply passes from one member (or part) of the body to another. The supply given is in proportion to the need of that member to do its job.

b. For the body *to work effectively*, what must *every part do*?

c. What happens to the body when *every part does its share*?

d. What does the body do to *itself* when it *grows*?

7. Read the passage below. How does knowing that you are connected as a part of the body of Christ for the growth of the Church stimulate a response from you?

**1 Corinthians 12:12-26:** The Body of Christ and its importance

"For as the **body** is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body — whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free — and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact **the body is not one member but many**.

15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling? 18 But now **God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased**. 19 And if they were all one member, where would the body be?

20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body. 21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." 22 No, much rather, **those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary**. 23 And those members of the body which we think to be less honorable, on these we bestow greater honor; and our unpresentable parts have greater modesty, 24 but our presentable parts have no need. But **God composed the body**, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it, 25 that **there should be no schism in the body**, but that **the members should have the same care for one another**. 26 And **if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; or if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.**"

8. What stood out to you the most after reading the above passage?

### **DAY SIX: Review Ephesians 4:7-16**

1. The emphasis of the first six verses of Ephesians 4 is what we have in common as believers. Why do you think Paul chose to stop and talk about spiritual *gifts*?
2. What you have learned in this lesson that describe God's purpose in giving spiritual *gifts*?
3. In what ways can spiritual *gifts* be used to divide a church?
4. In what ways does spiritual gifts bless the church?
5. Record on your Worksheets "**Truths about God, Truths about Jesus, Truths about the Holy Spirit, Truths about the Believer, and Instructions.**"

*Under his direction, the whole body is fitted together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love. - Ephesians 4:16 NLT*