

**Directional Devo**  
**Letter to the Ephesians**  
**Ephesians 4:12-16**  
**4/4/16**

**Purpose of the Ministry Gifts**

*v.12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:*

Here we see the primary purpose for the above mentioned gifts.

When these gifts work together the church is edified.

Some will say that the primary purpose of the church is to reach the world with the gospel, but it says here that the purpose of these ministry gifts are for perfecting of the saints for the ministry and edification of the Body.

That being said, mature Saints will by nature attempt to see that sinners are converted.

Healthy trees always produce fruit.

*Act 1:8 But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*

I shouldn't have to guilt and manipulate people into sharing their faith.

Jesus did not say, "Peter beat my sheep!" He said, "Peter feed my sheep."

So, the gifts that God gave to the church via these men is to equip them for the work of the ministry.

And when these gifts work together, the body is built up and edified.

The word perfecting literally means "to be restored". When the gifts are functioning properly, the body is restored to its original condition!

The end result is that churches are being planted, the Word is going forth, people are being saved, cared for, and nurtured.

The problem today is that churches are not well-rounded in that they tend to focus on a few of the gifts at the expense of the others.

For example, some churches focus on evangelism at the expense of teaching, and others teaching at the expense of evangelism.

They word best when done together. A church should be known for all of them.

Another example of this is Act 2:42 which says *they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.*

This next verse tells us that we should be doing this...

**v.13** *Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:*

### **Strong Sheep Needed**

**v.14** *That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;*

Strong sheep won't be led away from their shepherd.

A strong church emphasizes teaching the Word, so the people have a sound scriptural base to help them discern between true and false doctrine.

A strong church is engaged in doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread, and prayers.

Someone that is actively engaged in a church like this will not likely be led astray.

But, unfortunately, sometimes the little sheep don't listen and they fall away.

It doesn't happen overnight by the way.

It grieves me to watch them fall.

They should know better.

*"Having ears to hear they did not hear and eyes to see they did not see."*

And of course those who fall tend to spread their discontent on their way out and usually take a few ignorant sheep with them.

I always warn those types with Proverbs 6:16-19 *These six things the LORD hates, Yes, seven are an abomination to Him: A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A heart that devises wicked plans, Feet that are swift in running to evil, A false witness who speaks lies, And one who sows discord among brethren.*

**v.15** *But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

Paul is saying that the truth needs to be spoken and that it must be spoken in love.

Albert Barnes said, "Truth is the representation of things as they are, and there is no virtue that is more valuable in a Christian than the love of simple truth."

### **The Church Needs You**

**v.16** *From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.*

Each of us adds a unique part to the Body of Christ.

The church needs you.