

## Ephesians 4:7-16



### Part 2: WALKING

## YES, NO & MAYBE

1. Most of the people in this room are more gifted than me.
2. Unity is only possible if you also prioritize individuality.
3. I know what my own spiritual gifts are.
4. The more spiritually mature you are, the more you are to speak to people concerning what is right and wrong.
5. God brings about unity by dividing things down into separate parts.

## DIG DEEPER

### > READ Ephesians 4:7-16 (NLT)

7 However, he has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ. 8 That is why the Scriptures say, “When he ascended to the heights, he led a crowd of captives and gave gifts to his people.”

9 Notice that it says “he ascended.” This clearly means that **Christ also descended to our lowly world.** 10 And the same one who descended is the one who ascended higher than all the heavens, so that he might fill the entire universe with himself.

11 Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. 12 Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. 13 This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son that we will be **mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.**

14 Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won’t be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. 15 Instead, we will **speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.** 16 He makes the whole body fit 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.

### However, he has given each one of us a special gift...

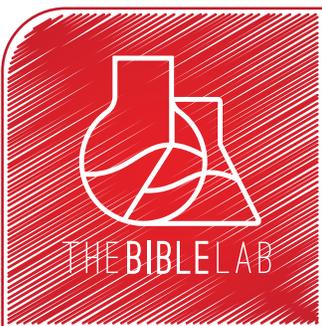
» (vs. 7) When you hear the term “spiritual gifts,” what do you think of?

« This section of Scripture begins with “However.” Why do you think that is? What was Paul just talking about?

### That is why the Scriptures say...

» (vs. 8) The imagery in this text (Ps 68:16-18) is of other mountains looking in envy “at the mountain where God chooses to reign”. God comes from Mt. Sinai, where he had revealed himself, and ascends to Mt. Zion, where he will “dwell.” The references to “chariots” in verse 17 and to “captives” in verse 18 suggest a scene of conquest in battle. But whereas in the psalm the emphasis is on God’s *receiving* gifts from the captives, in Ephesians it is on his *giving* gifts to his own people.

« Paul misquotes Scripture intentionally to help the Ephesians understand God’s character. Do we still struggle with this perspective like the early church?



## DIG DEEPER...CONTINUED

**These are the gifts Christ gave to the church:**

- **apostles** - Apostles were what we would call “church planters” today.
- **prophets** - Prophets could, but did not necessarily, predict the future. God spoke through them to people who needed specific direction or exhortation. They bring the living word of God to bear on a particular circumstance.
- **evangelists** - In the New Testament evangelists conveyed the “good news” about Jesus Christ. This good news, the gospel, centered on the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, especially the fact that “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures” (see 1 Cor 15:1-8).
- **pastors and teachers** - Pastors were those who cared for the local community like shepherds, and Teachers apply biblical truth to the pastoral needs of the flock. In the Greek text, these two are presented as being connected in some way.

» (vs. 11) In Ephesians 4 the gifts named are not abilities given to people; they are people given to the church. Whereas Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 speak of gifts given to believers, Ephesians 4:7 speaks more of gifted believers given to the church.

« In your lifetime, what spiritual mentors has God brought into your life?

» (vs. 12) What is the “responsibility” of these “gifts”?

**Speak the truth in love**

» (vs. 15) What does it say about God that His evidence of spiritual maturity is His followers speaking the truth in love?

**Each part does its own special work**

» (vs. 16) What is the way by which Christ, through his gifts, brings about unity and maturity?

« What does this say about God and His plan for our growth?



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## MY PRAYER...

1. What is my own special work that God has gifted me to build up His church?
2. How am I speaking the truth in love to the sphere of influence God has placed me within?
3. What new aspect of God's character does He want me to know?

