

Identity 13: Ephesians 4:7-12

The gift of Christ gives dimension to grace and defines our individual value. (Grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of the gift of Christ. One measure, one worth! Our worth is defined by his gift not a reward for our good behavior). [Eph. 4:7](#).

If Christians truly understood this scripture, COMPETITION, COMPARISON, AND JEALOUSY WOULD DISAPPEAR. **CHRIST DEFINES YOUR INDIVIDUAL VALUE! Not accomplishments, whether you're a mother, whether you're a wife, whether you're a minister, etc. BECAUSE CHRIST LIVES IN YOU, YOU HAVE VALUE!** I thought I had value BEFORE Christ! But value has two connotations: It is the price one is willing to pay and the usefulness an object has.

In relation to the PRICE ONE IS WILLING TO PAY, God determined with His free will and motivated by affection that you were valuable to Him enough to send His Son, the highest price, to purchase your redemption so you can be restored into His kingdom.

In relation to the USEFULNESS AN OBJECT OR PERSON HAS, NO PERSON IS USEFUL IN THE KINGDOM APART FROM CHRIST. **EVERY HUMAN BEING IS VALUABLE TO THE LORD BUT NOT EVERY HUMAN IS USEFUL. AND! IN THE KINGDOM, WE HAVE SOME THAT ARE NOT USEFUL BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT YET FIGURED THIS OUT!** If you truly understand that Christ lives in you, you won't feel rejection. If you truly understand that Christ lives in you, you won't compare yourself to others. If you truly understand that Christ lives in you, you won't feel insignificant. **HOW CAN YOU WITH THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE LIVING IN YOU?!** This must become revelation. NOT ONLY ARE YOU VALUABLE BUT YOU ARE DOUBLY SO WITH CHRIST IN YOU.

WE ARE VESSELS OF THE HIGHEST HONOR DUE TO HIS PRESENCE. **ALL OF US HAVE THE SAME WORTH BUT NOT ALL HAVE THE SAME VALUE IN TERMS OF USEFULNESS IN THE KINGDOM.** If we understood this, there would not be any PERFORMANCE BASED relationship with God and ministry work nor any comparison or jealousy. WHEN PEOPLE ARE DOING THEIR CALL AND WORK FROM THIS PLACE OF REVELATION, WHO CARES IF THE OTHER PERSON IS DOING MORE OR BEING SEEN BY MORE?! Paul did his assignment. Peter did his. And note that Peter had a problem with this because he would repeatedly point out another apostle and ask what about them.

God's gracious relation to *all* is a relation also to each *individual*. Not one of them was left unregarded by Him who is the God and Father of all, but each was made partaker of Christ's gift of grace, and each, therefore stands pledged to do his part toward maintenance of unity and peace."

Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament – Volume 1.

The NKJV of verse 7 says:

[Ephesians 4:7 \(NKJV\)](#)

⁷ But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

Expositors explains as follows: "Each gets the grace which Christ has to give, and each gets it in the proportion in 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." We must be careful to note that this grace has to do with the exercise of special gifts for service, not the grace for daily living. The former is limited, and is adjusted to the kind of gift and the extent to which the Holy Spirit desires to use that gift in the believer's service. The latter is unlimited and subject only to the limitations which the believer puts upon it by a lack of yieldedness to the Spirit. The context here, ([4:11, 12](#)), is one of service, not of general Christian experience.

Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament - Wuest's Word Studies from the Greek New Testament – Volume 1.

Let me ask you: If you are a mother, does the size of your child affect his or her value to you? For example is an infant any less important than a teenage child of yours? Is the prayer of a mother for her child who later becomes a Great Awakening leader any less important than the son who is leading it? IT IS NOT THE SIZE OF YOUR GIFT OR YOUR PREDETERMINED INFLUENCE OF OTHERS THAT DETERMINES YOUR IMPORTANCE. ARE YOU DOING WHAT GOD DESIGNED YOU TO DO?

Scripture confirms that he led us as trophies in his triumphant procession on high; he repossessed his gift (likeness) in man. The fact he ascended confirms his victorious descent into the deepest pits of human despair. He now occupies the ultimate rank of authority from the lowest regions where he stooped down to rescue us to the highest authority in the heavens, having excused his mission to the full. (Fallen man is fully restored to the authority of the authentic life of his design. [Eph. 4:8-10](#).)

Listen to the NKJV:

[Ephesians 4:8-10 \(NKJV\)](#)

⁸ Therefore He says: "*When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men.*"

⁹ (Now this, "*He ascended*"--what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?)

¹⁰ He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

Christ was in hell (Hades/Sheol) for 3 days. For many, hell carries the idea of the place for the condemned dead, which is true now. But when the Lord was there, it was also where the righteous dead went called Abraham's bosom. A great chasm separated the two. The story of the beggar Lazarus illustrates this.

1 Peter 3:18-20 (NKJV)

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit,
¹⁹ by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,
²⁰ who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

While dead on earth, Jesus Christ was in hell PUBLICLY ANNOUNCING HIS VICTORY (this preach is not the same one used to describe preaching the good news but to publicly pronounce) to the spirits in prison (called tartarosas, the prison house for fallen angels), which were behind the corruption of the world in Noah's day by mixing angelic seed with human seed in an attempt to corrupt the bloodline PREVENTING THE TRUE SEED, THE MESSIAH, FROM COMING AND CRUSHING THE SERPENT'S HEAD! Remember that it says that Noah was PERFECT IN HIS GENERATIONS. Perfect means blameless and over half the times used, it used to describe the sacrificial animal without spot or blemish. His line, seed of children, didn't have corrupted blood. And the righteous dead in Hades would also be resurrected with Him that following Sunday and even went into Jerusalem and testified of Him.

Matthew 27:51-53 (NKJV)

⁵¹ Then, behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,
⁵² and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;
⁵³ and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many.

By descending and ascending as Man, Christ FILLS ALL IN ALL. Once seated in heaven, He gave gifts to men. Gifts here is not charisma but doma and is referring to GIFTED MEN AND WOMEN mentioned in verse 11 to equip the saints for ministry. As a Man, Christ possessed all of these in one Person, but for His body on earth, the church, He has divided the task among men and women.

What God has in us is gift wrapped to the world: some are commissioned to pioneer, others are gifted prophetically, some as announcers of good news, some as shepherds with a real gift to care and nature, and others have a gift to ignite instruction through revelation knowledge ([Eph. 4:11](#)).

Now let's read the NKJV:

[Ephesians 4:11 \(NKJV\)](#)

¹¹ And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

Not everyone has the call to what we have termed "offices." I like "function" as a word to use as well. Many have coveted these offices for the title. But when you view it as a function, it can keep things in perspective. An engine functions to run a vehicle but the engine is not more important than the body of the car. BOTH ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT BUT SERVE DIFFERENT FUNCTIONS. Let's look at each function:

1. Apostle. I like the "Mirror Bible" definition of PIONEER. These are included in the foundational functions of the church along with prophet. They are sent by Christ to be His witness, establish churches, govern the church within their sphere of authority, etc. APOSTLES ARE VERY KINGDOM FOCUSED.
2. Prophet. Prophet literally means "a foreteller of future events." But if you restrict a prophet to this only, you will miss one of their PRIMARY FUNCTIONS: INSTRUCTORS OR PREACHERS WHO SPEAK REVELATORY KNOWLEDGE FROM THE SCRIPTURES. THEY PREACH INSPIRED MESSAGES THAT CARRY IMPARTATION PEOPLE CAN RECEIVE IF THEY RECOGNIZE THE PROPHET AS A PROPHET. A prophet will preach or teach messages that seem to fit exactly with your current situation and/or even mirror what you have been studying or even talking about to others. You might think they are targeting you, but they are not. THESE ARE KINGDOM FOCUSED and the other foundational function of the church.
3. Evangelist. An evangelist is a PREACHER OF THE GOOD NEWS WITH SIGNS AND WONDERS CONFIRMING. A preacher isn't limited to just preaching the good news to the unsaved but often function in breaking people out of ruts that are already born again. Phillip is the best one listed in the Bible. EVANGELIST IS THE FUNCTION THAT ADDS TO THE CHURCH. EVANGELISTS TEND TO BE PEOPLE-FOCUSED.
4. Pastor/teacher. Some believe this is one function. Pastor is shepherd. Teacher is master and instructor. So this function is a SHEPHERD WHO TEACHES. Teachers give line upon line of instruction to the sheep to feed them and care for them. PASTORS TEND TO BE PEOPLE FOCUSED. You need pastors/teachers to care for what the evangelist brought in.

All of these functions are important for a healthy church being built up by Christ. Each expression of his gift is to fully equip and enable the saints for the work of the ministry so that they may mutually contribute their specific function to give definition to the visible body of Christ ([Eph. 4:12](#)).

We will go into this in more detail on the last teaching. But the main gist is that each function EVEN THE PASTOR is to equip the saints for ministry NOT DO IT ALL THEMSELVES. The KJV says the PERFECTING OF THE SAINTS. Others use the term EQUIPPING. It means "TO MAKE FULLY READY." It is different from another word in that

it denotes a COMPLETED PROCESS. In classical Greek this word was used for SETTING A BONE DURING SURGERY. Christ uses His officers to make the necessary adjustments so the church will not be OUT OF JOINT.

Listen to the "Kingdom Dynamics" section of my Bible:

"True supernatural ministry at work in the church begets vital, spiritually functional people throughout the whole church family. The body is to be built up by the mutual efforts of all members supplying their contribution to the whole."

Each saint has the assignment to PERFORM MINISTRY and BUILD UP the church. The world build speaks of building a house. THE HOUSE WE ARE BUILDING IS GOD'S. Listen to Zodiates:

When one is in public worship, the paramount concern must be how all the believers should be built up and not how someone or a small group may selfishly benefit by the public experience. In Christian worship individuals ought to be concerned how they can spiritually benefit others by what they do or say.

Complete Word Study Dictionary, The - The Complete Word Study Dictionary – New Testament.

We have an entitlement, give-me-what-I-need mentality in the church BUT THE REALITY OF TRUE CHURCH LIFE IS THAT NOTHING IS DONE UNLESS IT BUILDS UP ALL! If your supposed service, dancing, singing, prophesying, etc. is not building up everyone but is only feeding your ego or need for attention, then you are out of joint and out of line. This is crucial to grasp for without it, the body cannot mature, which we will get in to next week.