

February 27, 2022

## We Are...

Pastor David Uth

### **Passage: Ephesians 4:7-16**

[7](#)But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. [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, [13](#)until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, [14](#)so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. [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.

### **Background**

In our final sermon in the *We Are* series, we will be invited to see the beauty of the local church when everyone discovers, cultivates, and utilizes their spiritual gifts. In this passage, Paul continues to show the practical ramifications of his teachings in the first three chapters of his letter to the church at Ephesus. In the previous verses, Paul focuses on the unity within the church that comes from a focus on the shared faith, hope, and baptism in the person of Jesus. Here, again, Paul strives to show the believers at Ephesus the importance of seeing God's grace at work in and through them. Each believer has been entrusted with spiritual gifts by Christ to be used for the sake of others. Today, Pastor David will help us see that when each of us uses our spiritual gift to serve one another, not only will our lives be transformed, but our entire church will mature to look more and more like Jesus.

### **Service Notes**

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## Instructions

This discussion guide is to help you facilitate a conversation with your small group. The “Getting Started” section serves as a quick opener and introduction to the group conversation. In the “Talk it Over” section, feel free to use all or only some of the questions. Our hope is to have meaningful conversations around God’s Word, not simply answer all the questions. Finally, the “Live it Out” section is to help identify a specific next step. Use these questions as a guide to find practical ways to apply the passage to our everyday life.

## Getting Started

- What is one thing God is teaching you right now? How can we pray for you?

## Talk it Over

- What is the first thing that comes to mind you hear the phrase “spiritual gifts?” In what ways have you identified, cultivated, or used your spiritual gifts in the past? How does God help us discover and cultivate the spiritual gifts He has given us? How are you using your gifts to “build up” and “equip the saints” in our church right now?
- **Read Ephesians 4:7-14.** Paul calls the church a household of faith (Eph 2) and a body (1 Cor. 12). What does verse 7 tell us ALL believers have in common? Who is the source of this “grace?” Why is this important to remember? According to these verses, why has Christ given the local church people who function as apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor-teachers (vs. 12)? How would these functions operate within the local church now? So who does Paul consider the “ministers” within the local church? How does this change the way you see your own role and responsibilities? What is the purpose of Christ giving each of us a “gift” of grace (vs. 12-13)? In what ways can someone using their spiritual gift protect another believer from being deceived (vs 14)?
- **Read Ephesians 4:15-16.** Why do you think Paul reminds the believers to “speak the truth in love?” What would this look like practically in our relationships? What do you think it means to “grow up” into Christ? In what ways do you think spiritual gifts relate to spiritual maturity? What happens within the spiritual “body” when every “part” is functioning properly (vs. 16)? What are some positive examples of this you’ve experienced? What happens when there are missing or unhealthy parts of the “body” (church)? In what ways can a missing or unhealthy body part affect the entire “body” (church)? What is one way you would encourage another believer to use their gifts to help build up the “body” today?

## Live it Out

- The best way to discover and cultivate your spiritual gift is to simply start serving right where you are. What is one step you can take this week to either start discovering or begin cultivating and using the spiritual gift given to you?