

How do you get that love?

'When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.'
(What does 'he ascended' mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)" Ephesians 4:8-10

Here's how God did it:

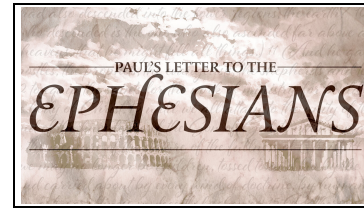
Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to.⁷ Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form,⁸ he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.
Philippians 2:6-8

Why?

But God showed his great love for us by sending Christ to die for us while we were still sinners.⁹ And since we have been made right in God's sight by the blood of Christ, he will certainly save us from God's condemnation.¹⁰ For since our friendship with God was restored by the death of his Son while we were still his enemies, we will certainly be saved through the life of his Son. Romans 5:8-10

Community Group Questions:

1. What's the connection between unity and a diversity of gifts?
2. Read Vss. 11,12 Are you equipped for works of service? If so, what services are you doing? If not what equipping do you need?
3. What happens to the Body of Christ if the leaders do all the works of service?
4. What evidences of spiritual growth does Paul mention? How can you contribute to the unity and maturity in the Body of Christ?



The Purpose of Your Spiritual Gift Ephesians 4:7-16

But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.⁸ This is why it says: (Paul is quoting Psalm 68:18 here) "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people."⁹ (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...

¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ.¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

1. What are spiritual gifts?

Spiritual gifts are differing abilities given by the Holy Spirit to each believer to meet needs in such a way that it creates a community of people who are growing into the fullness of the character of Jesus Christ. Pastor Tim Keller

A. Spiritual gifts are *abilities to meet needs*.

Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, and 1 Peter 4.
Every one of the lists are different.

B. Spiritual gifts are different and yet given to every believer.

In spite of the fact, we are all one in Christ, spiritual gifts create enormous diversity in churches.

Everybody gets a portion

⁷ But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.⁸ This is why it says: "*When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people.*" Ephesians 4:7,8

2. What is the goal of spiritual gifts?

¹²...to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:12,13

- **Spiritual gifts make us a body.**

¹²... so that the body of Christ may be built up Vs.12

- **To become like Christ.**

¹³we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Vs. 13

What kind of church does that create?

"For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Ephesians 2:10

1st Implication of spiritual gifts:

There are certain things God wants you to do.

How does the believer discover and develop their gifts?

*Only foolproof way to discover and use your gifts: Ministry experience.
Roll up your sleeves and get to work in some area of ministry.*

⁴³ ... Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, ⁴⁴and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. ⁴⁵For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:43-45

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,¹² to equip his people for works of service. Ephesians 4:11,12

Make no mistake vs 12 indicates clearly that the point of God calling apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastor/teachers is so every Christian can serve in the way they were called to do for the building up of the whole body. Theologian N.T. Wright

2nd implication of spiritual gifts:

Spiritual fruit has to be the real goal, and spiritual gifts have to be seen only as the means.

3. How can we rightly use spiritual gifts?

Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. Ephesians 4:15