

L O V E

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Introduction:

Have you ever been part of a club, team or workplace that gave out gifts (or “swag,” if you’re under 50) to everyone for the purpose of building team unity? It must be effective because my wife comes home every six months with a new shirt from work! These gifts are meant to remind the team what they’re all about, and in a way, how they should function together. I’m probably over-spiritualizing what happened the last time you got a new jersey for your softball team or *Bachelor* viewing party club, but the principle is the same. God gives gifts to his church because there is a specific way we are to live our lives as Christ followers.

Previously, we have looked at the first half of the book of Ephesians. There we saw that the church is Christ’s body and was created for good works that “God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” (2:10). Now Paul turns our attention to how Christ’s body is intended to live, what these good works are, and how will we be able to do them.

This Week’s Main Focus:

God calls believers to walk in a manner worthy of our calling in Jesus Christ and has given them spiritual gifts to build up the church in unity and maturity.

In this passage Paul begins with an exhortation that believers are to walk according to their calling in Christ. Whenever Paul uses the imagery of “walking” a certain way, he is describing the lifestyle of a person. The believer’s walk results in three specific benefits to the church. First, there will be great unity, or oneness, among believers. Next, this unity is built through the exercise of gifts, which every member of the body is given by Christ. Finally, these gifts result in sanctification of believers which leads to greater maturity of the church, growing up to be more like Christ. Note here that “oneness” doesn’t mean “sameness,” “gifts” don’t mean “natural abilities,” and “maturity” doesn’t mean “age.” God is supernaturally building his church through Christ!

This week’s:

- Scripture Passage: [Ephesians 4:1-16](#)
- RightNow Media Video: [Session 5](#) & [Session 6](#)

RightNow Media Video Recap:

1) In the video for Session 5, Pastor J.D. says, “There are certain things that only you can reveal about Christ to others.” How has God uniquely equipped your small group to help others know Jesus and grow in maturity of faith?

Bible Study Questions:

(Read Ephesians 4:1-16)

2) Re-read these verses again. What is the main point of this passage, and what are the primary sub-points?

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- 3) How does Paul describe “walking in a manner worthy of our calling” in verses 1-3?

- 4) List all of the words that communicate unity or oneness from verses 1-6. What type of unity is Paul describing?

- 5) Where do the “gifts of grace” or spiritual gifts described in verse 7 come from?

- 6) List the spiritual gifts that Paul mentions in verse 11. What about this list stands out to you?

- 7) Paul says the spiritual gifts purpose are to “equip the saints for the work of ministry” and “for building up the body of Christ.” According to verses 13 to 16, what is the intended result?

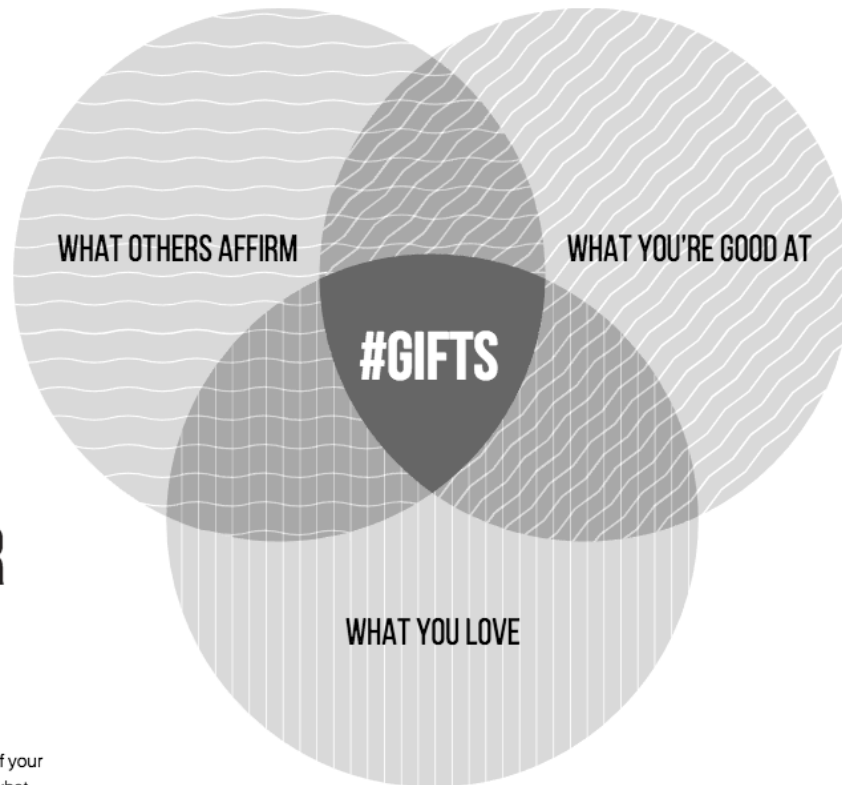
- 8) Based on your study, what would believers walking *unworthy* of their calling look like in the church? What would be the result?

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Group Application Questions:

9) Spiritual gifts can be recognized at the intersection of your *ability, your affinity, and what is affirmed in you by others*. Use the diagram below think about what your spiritual gifts might be, then share them with your group - they'll let you know if you are right!



WHAT'S YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT?

Your spiritual gifts are found at the center of your ability (what you're good at), your affinity (what you're passionate about), and affirmation (what others see in you).

10) How can you, and your group, proactively help maintain unity in the church?

Prayer:

- Read Ephesians 4:20-32.
- This passage list a number of attributes that should (or should not) characterize the life of a believer.
- Using this list, get with a partner and pray through these verses for one another.