

GROW UP: When Every Part Does Its Share

Ephesians 4:7-16 (NKJV)

Key Thoughts

1. **Grace is measured, not identical.** Salvation comes equally to everyone who confesses and believes, but the gifts Christ gives beyond salvation are apportioned differently and on purpose (Ephesians 4:7; Matthew 25:15). Like the body, which sends 20% of its energy to a brain that is only 2% of its weight, unequal distribution is by design and gives life.
2. **Christ gives gifted people to the church.** The ascended Victor who first descended and now fills all things gives apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors and teachers (Ephesians 4:8-11). They are given not to replace the congregation's ministry but to equip the saints to do it.
3. **Leaders equip; the saints do the work.** The "work of the ministry" is humble, hands-on service (the word behind it gives us "deacon"), and it belongs to every believer, not a professional few (Ephesians 4:12). If you think ministry is someone else's job, you are stepping outside God's will for His children.
4. **The goal is maturity, not spiritual childhood.** "Perfect" here means mature and fully developed, not sinless. Believers are meant to grow up into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ and to stop being children tossed by every wind of doctrine, including performance-based counterfeits of the gospel (Ephesians 4:13-15).
5. **The body grows itself up in love.** Christ builds His church (Matthew 16:18) through a process: when every joint supplies and every part does its share, speaking the truth in love and sacrificially loving one another, the whole body grows (Ephesians 4:16).

Discussion Questions

1. Ephesians 4:7 says grace was given "to each one" according to "the measure of Christ's gift." Why do we accept that salvation comes equally, yet struggle with envy when it comes to the different gifts God gives?
2. Read Matthew 25:15 and remember the brain-and-body illustration. How does it change your view of your own gifting to know that God distributes gifts unequally on purpose, for the health of the whole body?
3. Ephesians 4:11-12 says Christ gave gifted leaders "for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry." Where have you been treating ministry as the leaders' job rather than your own, and what would doing the work look like for you?
4. Consider the five stages of spiritual maturity from the message: spiritually dead, infant, child, young adult, parent. Which stage best describes where you are right now, and what is keeping you there?
5. Ephesians 4:15 calls us to speak "the truth in love." Why can telling the truth still be an act of love even when it causes offense (Matthew 15:12), and how does maturity shape the way we deliver hard truth?
6. Ephesians 4:16 says the body grows when "every part does its share." What is one specific way you can supply what your part of the body needs this week, and who could help hold you to it?

Applications

1. **Name your part.** Identify one specific way God has gifted you to serve the body, and take one concrete step to put it to work this week (serve, encourage, meet a need, or start a conversation you have been avoiding).
2. **Move from consuming to contributing.** Pick one area where you have been waiting to be fed, and flip it: feed someone else. Share what God is teaching you, or begin praying and discipling regularly with one person.
3. **Grow up on purpose.** Choose one input that builds maturity (a Life Group, a book of the Bible to study, a mentor to pursue) and commit to it before next Sunday, so you are no longer tossed by every wind of doctrine.

Closing Prayer

Father, thank You for the grace You gave to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Thank You that the risen Christ ascended far above all the heavens and gives good gifts to His people. Forgive us for the times we have envied the gifts of others, for the times we stayed spiritual children when You called us to grow up, and for the times we treated Your church as something to consume rather than a body to serve. Equip us through Your Word, and make us mature, reaching for the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Teach us to speak the truth in love, to do our share, and to sacrificially love one another, so that the whole body grows and the world may know that You sent Your Son. In Jesus' name, amen.