



Ephesians 4:12-13

Equipping the Saints for Service

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Ministry Gifts Equip All Saints

Ephesians 4:12a (NRSV)

to **equip the saints** for the work of ministry...

- The five ministry gifts are for the purpose of equipping the saints
- "Saints" are all the redeemed
- "Equip" is a noun here which describes being put in proper order or fully ready
- There is a translation issue concerning the prepositions in verse 12

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Clergy/Laity or All?

Ephesians 4:12 (KJV)

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:12 (ESV)

to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

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All Believers Serve the Body

Ephesians 4:12b (NRSV)

for building up the body of Christ

- The Greek prepositions in verse 12 are *pros, eis, eis*
- There is good evidence that the first preposition (*pros*) modifies "gave" (vs 11) and the next two apply to all
- "building" is repeated in verse 16 which forms an inclusio, which gives more evidence that all believers serve

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The Unity of the Faith

Ephesians 4:13a (NASB)

until we all attain to the unity of the faith...

- “Attain” means to arrive at a destination or reach an objective
- “The faith” here is objective and refers to content (see Ephesians 4:5)
- This is NOT the unity of a religious organization

The Knowledge of Christ

Ephesians 4:13b (NASB)

...and of the knowledge of the Son of God...

- Knowing Christ is both conceptual and relational
- Jesus Christ as the Son of God is unique
- This means understanding the person and work of Christ and trusting Him with our lives (see Philippians 3:7-10)

The Mature Man

Ephesians 4:13c (NASB)

to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

- The ultimate goal is to be conformed to the image of Christ (Romans 8:29)
- We are to be “holy and blameless” (Ephesians 1:4)
- One day we will be fully as Christ intended (Ephesians 5:27)

Implications and Applications

- All believers are gifted to serve
- Live with the eschatological goal as your motivation

The Necessity of Each Believer

1 Corinthians 12:21, 22 (NASB)

And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which **seem to be weaker** are necessary;

- God saves each one He redeems for a purpose
- The reality is not what it seems to us

Conformed to His Image

Romans 8:28, 29 (NASB)

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For those whom He foreknew, He also predestined **to become conformed to the image of His Son**, so that He would be the firstborn among many brethren;

Living for the Goal

Philippians 3:14 (NASB)

I press on toward **the goal** for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.

- The fact that God will do it motivated Paul and should motivate us
- This is an athletic metaphor of the runner who does not look back (vs. 13)
- God's promises and God's sovereignty give more, not less motivation