

The "Equipping Gifts" by Dan Trygg

"But to each one of us
the grace was given (past completed action)
according to the measure of the free-gift of the Christ.

Consequently, it says,
"Ascending/going up (at a point in time) unto (a) high place/heaven,
He took captivity captive/He took control of a group of captives,
He gave gifts to the humans."... Ephesians 4:7,8

1. God has given each of us special portion of grace.

- a.) The "us" refers to anyone in Christ.
- b.) This is a "done deal" -- the verb is past completed action, "the grace was given".
- c.) In the context, the phrase "the grace" refers to a spiritual gift and calling.

Paul used this phrase in 3:2,7,8 to refer to his own gifting and appointment to ministry. The way he speaks of it is identical to what he is telling the Christians in 4:7, and also the way he spoke of it in Romans 12:3 (concerning both himself and the Roman Christians) and 12:6.

"And He gave
on the one hand the apostles,
on the other hand the prophets,
on another hand the evangelists,
on another hand the shepherds and teachers..." Ephesians 4:11

2. Christ has provided certain gifts to some people in order to help us all function more effectively.

- a.) Some call this the "five-fold ministry". Actually, the structure of the Greek seems to indicate that there are really four types of people described here.
- b.) Note that all of these gifts seem to be about proclaiming God's truth.
- c.) Christ is the one who gives these gifts as He sees fit (cf. I Cor. 12:11,18).

toward the "fitting-according-to"/mending/restoration/equipment/adaptation/arrangement of the holy [ones]
unto/toward work of service,
unto/toward "house-building"/edification/ building-up of the Body of the Christ/Anointed-King,

3. There is a direction or purpose for these "equipping gifts".

- a.) The Greek word translated as "equipping", is a noun, katartismōn. This refers to the process, or end result, of the verbal form. **The Greek verb, katartizō, literally means "fitting-according-to"**. Its basic root word, artizō -- to make a joint (artos), to prepare, adapt, fit, join, complete, restore, arrange in an orderly fashion -- is intensified by the preposition kata -- down, or, according to. **It covers a broad scope of ideas**, depending on the context.

- i.) **It is used to describe the process of mending, repair, and maintenance** of fishing nets

-- Matt. 4:21; Mk. 1:19; cf. Gal. 6:1 -- "restore".

- ii.) **It is used to describe the training, equipping process** that a disciple undergoes in relation to his/her teacher -- e.g., Lk. 6:40 .
- iii.) **It is used to describe the adaptation, or "shaping", of parts** so that they will fit together neatly, or will be more effective in their use.
- iv.) **It is used to describe the process of fitting things together**, as in the construction of a joint. Try this definition in this passage to see the shift in the picture created in your mind. The choice of "according to" versus "down" for kata is very significant in developing a model for how this works.
- v.) **It is often translated as "be made complete" or "perfected". This does not imply sinlessness, but the fulfillment of the above ideas.** E.g., II Cor. 13:9,11; I Pet. 5:10.

The primary job of the so-called "equipping gifts" is to work with the others in the Body of Christ in ways that encompass the word pictures described above.

unto/toward work of service,

unto/toward "house-building"/edification/ building-up of the Body of the Christ/Anointed-King,

b.) **This "fitting-according-to" process is further focused by the next two phrases.** The shaping, mending, equipping or arranging together is not an end in itself. Though this process may in itself produce good, healthy, benefits for the people involved, it is *not* only for self-development, it is for service.

i.) **The preparation/equipping of believers is for the purpose of service's (diakonia) work.**

There is no "the" in the Greek, so there is no particular defined action in mind. The phrase could be rendered as: "(a) work/deed/action/occupation/undertaking or practical expression of service".

Diakonia is a word meaning practical service, often "to wait upon", or "attend to someone's needs", such as a domestic servant might do. In more general terms, it meant "to provide" or "care for" someone. In secular Greek it was often used to describe the work of women. It is interesting to note, too, that although OT Judaism had a deep understanding of service, and highly valued it, especially serving God, the term **diakonia is never used in the Greek Septuagint translation (LXX) of the OT.**

Jesus, however, had used the word to confront the abuse of power so common in the world system (Lk. 22:24-27). The apostles saw the relation between "table waiting" and "serving up the word of God" (Acts 6:1-4), and saw them both as diakonia to God and to the community of believers. **The word certainly *did not* have the religious connotations that "ministry" has for us today.**

ii. **The preparation of the saints is for the purpose of their participation in building up Christ's Body.**

This is the work of constructing a functional corporate reality. **We are not only to serve individuals, we are to serve the group by assembling its parts.** We are all being trained to help in that process.

A Primitive Translation of Eph. 4:7,8,11-16

- 7 "But to each one of us
the grace was given (past completed action)
according to the measure of the free-gift of the Christ.
- 8
Consequently, it says,
"Ascending/going up (at a point in time) unto (a) high place/heaven,
He took captivity captive/He took control of a group of captives,
He gave gifts to the humans."...
- 11
And He gave
on the one hand the apostles,
on the other hand the prophets,
on another hand the evangelists,
on another hand the shepherds and teachers,
- 12 toward the "fitting-according-to"/mending/restoration/equipment/adaptation/arrangement of the holy [ones]
unto/toward work of service,
unto/toward "house-building"/edification/ building-up of the Body of the Christ/Anointed-King,
- 13
until/to-the-extent-that/as-far-as "the all [ones]" we might-attain-to/reach [at a point in time]
unto the one-thing-ness
of the faith
and/also
of the true-knowledge/personal- experiential-knowledge of the Son of the God,
unto a mature/fully-grown/brought-to-completion person,
unto [a] measure/degree/quantity of maturity/stature of the contents/fullness of the
Christ/Anointed-King,
- 14 in order that [purpose clause]
...no longer might we be infants/suckling babies/immature,
tossed about by waves/rough water
and...
carried around by every wind of the teaching
in/with/by the sleight-of-hand-tricks/skillful-deception of the humans
in/with/by (an) "all-working"/ready-to-do-anything-[unscrupulous]-conduct/craftiness
to/with the method/cunning-device/stratagem of the deception/leading- astray/seducing,
- 15 ...but/rather truthing in love [agapē] we might grow/increase all things into/towards Him,
[i.e., Him] Who is the head (metaphorically -- source, origin, one who brings to completion),
Christ,
- 16 out from Whom all the Body
...being-fitted-together-with/(for itself) co-joining, or fitting-(itself)-together-with
...and
...being-knitted-together-with/ (for itself) co-knitting
by means of every ligament of the full/abundant supply
according to the in-working/operation/energeian in measure of each part/limb
it [i.e., the Body](for itself) makes the growth/increase of the Body
unto/toward up-building/edification of itself in/with/by love (agapē)."

Occurrences of Katartizō and Related Greek Words in the NT

Katartizō

Matthew 4:21 -- *mending* their nets

21:16 -- You *have prepared* praise

Mark 1:19 -- in the boat *mending* their nets

Luke 6:40 -- everyone, after he *has been fully trained*, will be like his teacher

Romans 9:22 -- vessels of wrath *prepared* (Middle voice -- Lit., *having fitted themselves*) for destruction

I Corinthians 1:10 -- but you *be made complete* in the same mind

II Cor. 13:11 -- *be made complete*, be comforted,

Galatians 6:1 -- *restore* such a one

I Thessalonians 3:10 -- [we] *may complete* what is lacking

Hebrews 10:5 -- a body You *have prepared* for Me

11:3 -- the worlds *were prepared* by the word of God

13:21 -- *equip* you in every good thing

I Peter 5:10 -- *will* Himself *perfect*, confirm, strengthen, and establish you

Katartisis

II Corinthians 13:9 -- and this we pray for, that you *be made complete*

Katartismos

Ephesians 4:12 -- for the *equipping* of the saints