

# THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE Ephesians

an apostle of Jē'sūs Christ by the  
of God, to the saints which are at  
us, and to the faithful in Christ Jē's.  
be to you, and peace, from God our  
and from the Lord Jē'sūs Christ,  
be the God and Father of our  
s Christ, who hath blessed us with  
blessings in heavenly places in  
as he hath chosen us in him  
undation of the world, that we  
oly and without blame before  
destinated us unto the adop-  
n by Jē'sūs Christ to himself,  
e good pleasure of his will,  
ise of the glory of his  
e hath made us accepted in  
have redemption through  
iveness of sins, according  
grace;  
n abounding toward us in  
dence;  
own unto us the mystery  
g to his good pleasure  
ed in himself:  
sation of the fulness of  
r together in one all  
which are in heaven,  
; even in him;  
ave obtained an in-  
nated according to  
worketh all  
vn will.

raised him from the dead, and set him at his  
own right hand in the heavenly places,  
21 Far above all principality, and power,  
and might, and dominion, and every name  
that is named, not only in this world, but also  
in that which is to come:  
22 And hath put all things under his feet,  
and gave him to be the head over all things to  
the church,  
23 Which is his body, the fulness of him  
that filleth all in all.

2 AND you hath he quickened, who were  
dead in trespasses and sins;  
2 Wherein in time past ye walked according  
to the course of this world, according to the  
prince of the power of the air, the spirit that  
now worketh in the children of disobedi-  
ence:  
3 Among whom also we all had our con-  
versation in times past in the lusts of our  
flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of  
the mind; and were by nature the children  
of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his  
great love wherewith he loved us,  
5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath  
quickened us together with Christ, (by grace  
ye are saved;)  
6 And hath raised us up together  
and hath raised us together with Christ, (by grace  
ye are saved;)  
7 That in the

# ephesians

THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE WALK OF THE CHRISTIAN

A STUDY ON PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS  
(adapted from the Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible)



## SERMON

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# WALK WORTHY OF YOUR CALLING (EPHESIANS 4:1-2)



**EPHESIANS 4 MARKS A MAJOR TRANSITION IN THE EPISTLE. IN THE FIRST THREE CHAPTERS, PAUL DEALS WITH THE DOCTRINE OF THE HIGH CALLING OF BELIEVERS IN CHRIST.**

- the eternal plan of God,
- the great blessings of God,
- the knowledge and power of God,
- the work of God's mercy and the gift of God's grace,
- the believer's great salvation,
- the believer's reconciliation with God,
- the church, which is the body of believers.

## OVERVIEW OF EPHESIANS 4–6

In the remaining chapters (4–6) Paul beseeches believers to walk worthy of Christ. How are we to live our lives on earth? How does our position in Christ work itself out in our lives? Paul's instructions here will cover every aspect of our lives, and every sphere of relationship in our lives (marital, parental, professional and ecclesiastical).

- We are to walk worthy of our calling (Eph. 4:1-6).
- We are to walk by using our gifts (Eph. 4:7-16).
- We are to walk differently from the other Gentiles (Eph. 4:17-24).
- We are to walk putting off the garments of the old man (Eph. 4:25-32).
- We are to walk following God (Eph. 5:1-7).
- We are to walk as children of light (Eph. 5:8-14).
- We are to walk carefully and strictly (Eph. 5:15-21).
- We are to walk a spirit of submission and love in marital relationships (Eph. 5:22-33).
- We are to walk under God's authority in parental relationships (Eph. 6:1-4).
- We are to walk under God's authority in professional relationships (Eph. 6:5-9).

## THE ENCOURAGEMENT OF PAUL – “I BESEECH...” (EPH. 4:1)

In the Sermon on the Mount, our Lord Jesus presents two options – the wide gate that leads to the broad way or the strait gate that leads to the narrow way; the implication is that it is not enough to enter the gate, one must also walk in the way. Likewise, Paul here says that believers must walk – we ought to walk worthy of our calling.

Paul here did not assert his apostolic authority; rather he exercised his pastoral exhortation. Instead he said, “I beseech...” The word “beseech” means “to exhort” (2 Tim. 4:2; Tit. 1:9). Paul being a prisoner of the Lord used himself to encourage believers to walk worthy of the honoured position to which God has exalted us (Phil. 3:17; 1 Thess. 4:1).

## THE ENTREATY OF PAUL – “WALK WORTHY...” (EPH. 4:1)

Walk is a metaphor for living. Walk describes the spiritual lifestyle of the individual; how one conducts his life. In the New Testament, “walk” denotes a person’s ethical, moral and religious life. A believer’s walk – by the help of the Holy Spirit – is pleasing to God. In contrast, sinners walk according to the spirit of this present evil age.



Our Lord Jesus is “the light of the world” that shines in order to allow those in darkness to see (John 8:12). Without the light men stumble in their walk (John 11:10; cf. John 12:35). John uses “walking in the light” as an image of Christian faith (1 John 1:6; 2:6; 2 John 4, 6; 3 John 3, 4). Paul also uses the same metaphor in his epistles (Rom. 8:4; 1 Cor. 3:3; 2 Cor. 10:3; Gal. 5:16; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:12; cf. Eph. 4:1), not “according to the course of this world” (Eph. 2:2). Believers are to “walk in newness of life” (Rom. 6:4), “in love. . . as children of light” (Eph. 5:2,8).

## THE MOTIVATION TO WALK WORTHY – “YE ARE CALLED...” (EPH. 4:1)

Believers are “to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called” (Eph. 4:1).

“Worthy” is also translated “becometh” (Rom. 16:2; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thess. 2:12; Col. 1:10). It denotes the proper way of doing things. The phrase “walk worthy” means that we are to live in a manner worthy of our position in Christ.

The word “vocation” has the same root as the word “called”. Verse 1 can be rendered as “that ye walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye are called” (Eph. 4:1).



Paul writes that as God’s people, we are not to commit “fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints” (Eph. 5:3; see also Tit. 2:3). We who bear the Christian badge must live the Christian life.



## THE MANNER OF WALKING WORTHY (EPH. 4:2)

How does the worthy walk of the believer look like? He/she is to walk...

- with all lowliness and meekness. This is the fruit of the Spirit that controls one's self-interest.



As believers, we are to concentrate upon Christ and His ministry to people. We are not to be focused upon self. We must forget ourselves. We must quit looking upon our own things (Phil. 2:3-4; Gal. 5:22-23; Matt. 19:21; 25:43; Luke 9:23-24; 1 Cor. 10:24, 33; 2 Cor. 8:9).

- with longsuffering. This is the fruit of the Spirit that enables one to be patient in all circumstances and with all people. Longsuffering is an attribute of God.



As believers, we are never to retaliate because we are given the power of longsuffering (Rom. 2:4; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Peter 3:9; Col. 1:11; 2 Tim. 4:2).

- with forbearing one another in love. This is the fruit of the Spirit that extends selfless love to all persons, including those who do not deserve to be loved. This is the love of God for sinners.



This selfless love can be experienced only if a person knows God personally. This love has to be "shed abroad" (Rom. 5:5). This love is the greatest possession and gift in human life according to the Scripture (1 Cor. 13:1-13).

# WALK IN UNITY (EPHESIANS 4:3)



**BELIEVERS ARE TO WALK WORTHY OF THEIR CALLING.  
BELIEVERS ARE TO WALK IN UNITY. "ENDEAVOURING TO KEEP THE  
UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IN THE BOND OF PEACE" (EPHESIANS 4:3).**

## THE PRESUMPTION OF UNITY IN THE CHURCH (EPH. 4:3)

Paul does not say that we are to work for the unity of the Church. The unity of the body of Christ is presumed. The middle wall of partition separating Jewish believers and Gentile believers have been torn down.



Every sinner regardless of race, nationality, social status, or gender can be saved (Gal. 3:28; James 2:5; Prov. 22:2; Rom. 10:12).

When a person comes to faith in Christ, the Spirit of God enters his life and binds the person to all other believers. Every believer comes through Jesus Christ and on the same ground and on the same level. Unity is the beauty and the strength of the church (Ps. 133).

However, it must be pointed out that there is a difference between unity and uniformity. Unity is when we are one – one mind, spirit, purpose, mission, and goal. Uniformity is when we all practice the same thing. As one writer puts it, "one star differs from another star in glory, but amid all the varied glories in the skies, there is no want of unity."

## THE KEEPING OF UNITY IN THE CHURCH (EPH. 4:3)

Believers are to work at keeping the peace so that they can stay bound together in the unity of God's Spirit. Believers are to endeavour "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3). The word "endeavour" has the idea of labouring diligently (2 Tim. 4:9, 21; Tit. 3:12; Heb. 4:11; 2 Pet. 1:10). To "endeavour" means to "do one's best".



Unity in the church is a precious commodity (Ps. 133; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 10:17; 12:12; Gal. 3:28). The lack of it spells trouble for the church (see 1 Cor. 1:10-13).



As God's people, we must always strive for unity, to "be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor. 1:10; see also 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 1:27; 4:2; Col. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:8).

## THE FACTOR OF UNITY IN THE CHURCH (EPH. 4:3)

There is a great spiritual bond of peace wrought by the Spirit of God between all believers. All divisiveness, differences, and prejudices are set aside; and a spirit of love, peace, and unity exist.

The Holy Spirit is the bond that unites all believers, and it is a unity that is marked by peace. That means that within the church there is a prevailing spirit of peace wrought by God's Spirit. Nothing is more destructive than divisiveness between believers.



The only way to walk worthy of God's great calling is to work at keeping the peace and unity which God has given us. We, who are indwelt by the Spirit, must walk in the Spirit (1 Cor. 1:10; 2 Cor. 13:11; Phil. 1:27; 1 Pet. 3:8).

# MANIFESTATION OF UNITY (I)

## (EPHESIANS 4:4-6)

Unity in the church needs to be emphasized. This matter is so important to Paul that he gives seven reasons that believers should walk worthy and strive to keep the peace and unity of God's Spirit in the church.



### THERE IS "ONE BODY" (EPH. 4:4)

There are not two bodies nor several bodies of believers. In this imperfect world, there are many different Christian denominations and churches. However, the intent of God is to have one body of people who trust and follow Christ. Every person who places his trust in Jesus Christ is placed into the body of Christ and enjoys the same privileges.



"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit" (1 Cor. 12:13). As believers, we must be careful of attitudes that can hurt and damage the body, such as struggle for position, self-centered differences, envy, factionalism, etc. There is only one body, and only as we keep the peace and unity of the body, can we walk worthy of God's great calling (Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:27; Col. 1:24; Col. 2:19).

- He is born again (John 1:12-13; 3:3-6; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 1:23; 1 John 5:1).
- He is a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10).
- He has a divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4).
- He has the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-17; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19-20).
- He is empowered to bear the fruit of the Holy Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23).
- He is placed into the new body of Christ, His church.

## THERE IS “ONE SPIRIT” (EPH. 4:4)

The same Spirit that indwells the Jewish believers also indwells the Gentile believers. The manifestation of the Spirit in the Jewish believers is also seen in the Gentile believers (Acts 1:8; see Acts 10:44-46; Eph. 2:14; 3:6).

- It is God's Spirit that causes a man to be born again (John 3:5-6; 6:63; Rom. 8:11).
- It is God's Spirit that calls and gifts and directs each member to fit in and work within the body (Acts 13:2; Rom. 8:14; 1 Cor. 12:7).



As believers, we are indwelt by the Spirit, given gifts; thus every believer has to do his part in carrying out the mission of the body – for Christ. There is no room for independence for the believer, as we have “received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Pet. 4:10).

## THERE IS “ONE HOPE” (EPH. 4:4)

Every genuine believer has the same hope: the great day of redemption. Life in the new heavens and earth will be a life of love and joy and peace, a life of oneness and unity (Rom. 15:4; Col. 1:4-5; Tit. 2:12-13; 1 Pet. 1:3-4).



The hope for eternity is to be the driving force that stirs us to live together in peace and unity (1 John 3:2-3; 2 Pet. 3:10-12).

The hope of the redeemed is that we shall be reconciled to God and to each other – all living together in a perfect world of love and joy and peace for ever and ever. And God's intent for believers is that we should live now as we shall live in the future.



# MANIFESTATION OF UNITY (II)

## (EPHESIANS 4:4-6)

### THERE IS ONLY “ONE LORD” (EPH. 4:5)

There is only one “Lord” (Gk: kurios), which means “master, owner”. There is only one master (1 Cor. 12:5). Every believer who bows to the same Lord has to become His subject and to receive His orders. To this one Lord we owe absolute allegiance.

As subjects of the King, we are to...

- live as He said: holy and righteous and pure, bearing the fruit of His Spirit (Gal. 5:19-21)
- carry out His orders as one body (Matt. 7:21–23; 1 Cor. 12:5; Phil. 2:9–11)



To this one Lord we owe absolute obedience. Our Lord Jesus warns us that “Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but **he that doeth the will of my Father** which is in heaven. Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matt. 7:21–23).



As believers, our allegiance to Christ must be absolute. We cannot serve “God and mammon” (Matt. 6:24; see also Josh 24:15; 1 Kings 18:21).

## **THERE IS ONLY “ONE FAITH” (EPH. 4:5)**

It is said that all roads lead to Rome. But there is one way that leads to heaven. Our Lord Jesus Christ is “the way, the truth, and the life” and no man can go to the Father, but by Him (John 14:6).



Every believer has come to God in the very same way – by believing the Lord Jesus Christ. Faith in Him is the only way, the only true faith (Gal. 1:23; Jude 3).

There is only one faith that leads into God’s presence. The one faith here refers to the objective faith in Christ. There is no other approach to God (Acts 4:12; 1 Tim. 2:5). Therefore, there is no room for any differences. Every believer stands on the same ground of faith.

## **THERE IS ONLY “ONE BAPTISM” (EPH. 4:5)**

There is only “one baptism”. Every believer must give public witness to his/her faith in Christ by submitting to the sacrament of water baptism. Every believer is in Christ and united to the body of Christ – the local church. Having entered the church through baptism, there is no room for division because divisiveness denies and brings reproach to the meaning of the baptism.



The sacrament of baptism is a symbol of our union with Christ (Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27). It also signifies our unity in the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13).

## **THERE IS ONLY “ONE GOD AND FATHER OF ALL” (EPH. 4:6)**

There is only “one God and Father of all”. This is probably an ancient confession of faith.

- One God – God is creator of all and as such is supreme over all (Deut. 4:35, 39; Isa. 45:5-6, 14, 18, 21-22).
- One Father of all – As a Father, God protects, provides and loves all.
- God is above all – God is sovereign. He controls all.



If there is only one God and Father of all believers, how then could He be leading two believers to oppose each other? The answer is obvious: He could not. One or both believers are following their own fleshly carnal ways. Someone is not following the only God and Father (Mark 12:29; 1 Tim. 2:5-6).

# DIVERSITY IN GIFTS (I)

## (EPHESIANS 4:7-10)



There is "one body...one Spirit... one Lord... one God and Father of all... But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ" (Eph 4:4-7). Paul has been focusing on the unity of believers (Eph. 4:2-6), and every believer is to strive to keep the oneness and unity of the Spirit.

Verse 7 is a contrast to the preceding verses. In verse 7, Paul will focus on the diversity of believers. There are differences between believers. The differences are spiritual gifts given by God which are to be used to strengthen believers and to reach the world.

### GOD'S GIFTS ARE GIVEN TO ALL BELIEVERS (EPH. 4:7)

"But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ" (Eph. 4:7). Every believer is gifted. Our Lord Jesus Christ has given every believer some spiritual gift.

What are spiritual gifts? A spiritual gift does not mean the natural ability or talent of a person. Of course, God will give to believers spiritual gifts that are in line with their natural abilities and talents. Spiritual gifts refer to those gifts that are given to believers with the purpose of building up other believers in the church and in witnessing to the world.



God has given every genuine believer spiritual gifts to serve God (1 Pet. 4:10).

Christ gives to us the grace to use our gifts. Grace means the strength, wisdom, courage, and power. This means that not only are we given spiritual gifts, but we are also given the grace to use those spiritual gifts. And Christ measures out the exact amount of grace needed for the maximum use of a gift. Believers do not have the same spiritual gifts. Believers also do not have the same spiritual gifts to the same degree (Matt. 25:15). Every believer is gifted by Christ. And every believer is given the measure of grace to use our gifts.



This means that our gift is the gift of Christ. We should not be displeased with our gift, nor should we covet to be like someone else and have his gift. Christ has placed us and given us the very best gift for us to serve Him (Rom. 12:3, 6; 1 Cor. 4:7; 12:7).

### **GOD'S GIFTS COME BY WAY OF CHRIST'S VICTORY (EPH 4:8)**

Christ giving of gifts to men is pictured as that of a king who has defeated and conquered his enemies. On the king's victory parade as he returned from battle, the people lined the streets to welcome the king. Following in his triumphal procession is his army and the spoils of victory. The victorious king then bestows the gifts upon his own people (Ps. 68:18).

Man has two great enemies – sin and death. Christ has gone to war against both on behalf of man. Christ has conquered them, and now He gives the greatest gift of all – the gift of salvation and deliverance, the gift of eternal life, and the meaning, purpose, and significance in life. Christ has come to give life and life more abundantly (John 10:10). In addition, His gifts fill the believers' lives with meaning and purpose. Since Christ has given meaning and purpose to life, there is no reason for believers to find life meaningless. Those, who do, have not fully committed themselves to Christ.



Abundant life is found in total commitment to Christ (Luke 9:23). Abundant life is found in whole-hearted service to Christ (Matt. 16:25; 23:11; Luke 22:26; John 4:35). Abundant life is found in walking and sowing to the Spirit (Gal. 6:8).

## GOD'S GIFTS ARE GIVEN AT GREAT COST (EPH 4:9-10)

Salvation is free to believers, but it comes at a great cost to God. He had to give His only begotten Son. The Son had to “[descend] first into the lower parts of the earth” (Eph. 4:9). The phrase “descended first into the lower parts of the earth” (Eph. 4:9) has three interpretations:

- The earth to which Christ came – His incarnation.
- The sepulchre in which the Lord’s body was laid – His burial
- Hades – the abode of the dead.

“He ascended” is a clear reference to the ascension of our Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:20-21; 2:6). And that comes after he “descended first into the lower parts of the earth” (Eph. 4:9). This may simply denote this earth, which is so low in comparison with His heavenly home (Isa. 44:23). Or it may denote the fact that Christ suffered the greatest humiliation on Calvary when He endured death itself (Phil. 2:8; Ps. 69:15; Rom. 10:7).

The Westminster Shorter Catechism states that “Christ’s humiliation consisted in His being born, and that in a low condition, made under the law, undergoing the miseries of this life, the wrath of God, and the cursed death of the cross; in being buried, and continuing under the power of death for a time” (WSC, Question 27).

Christ died that He might ascend above the heavens and fill all things; that He might fill the whole universe with His presence. Jesus Christ is the Sovereign Lord of the universe. He is seated at the right hand of God the Father, and He rules and reigns over all.



Our Lord Jesus had to suffer humiliation and death in order to gain the right to give spiritual gifts to us. This is the enormous price of our gifts (Eph. 1:19-20; Phil. 2:8-9; Rev. 5:12).



# DIVERSITY IN GIFTS (II)

## (EPHESIANS 4:11)

"He gave..." Every spiritual gift is Christ-centered. Christ alone gives spiritual gifts to believers. And believers cannot generate the gifts themselves, nor give the gifts to other men. Christ alone possesses the spiritual gifts to give to men. Paul mentions five spiritual gifts.

### APOSTLES

The word "apostle" (apostolos) means "to send out". An apostle is a representative, an ambassador who is sent out into one country to represent another country.

In the New Testament, "apostle" has both a narrow and a broad usage.

- In the narrow sense, "apostle" refers to the inner group of twelve (Judas Iscariot, who betrayed our Lord Jesus was replaced by Matthias) and Paul (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1). These were the men who were directly chosen by the Lord Himself (see Matt. 10:1-2; Mark 3:13-14; Rom. 1:1), and who had seen or been a companion of the Lord Jesus, and had been an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Cor. 9:1). In the narrow sense, an apostle was bound to die out because of the unique qualifications.
- In the broad sense, an "apostle" refers to other men who preached the gospel, such as Barnabas (Acts. 14:4, 14, 17), Silas (1 Thess. 2:6), Titus (2 Cor. 8:23) and Epaphroditus (Phil. 2:25). Andronicus and Junia (Rom. 16:7) are referred to as apostles. In the broad sense, we are all apostles.



An apostle...

- belongs to the Lord who has sent him out.
- is commissioned to be sent out.
- possesses all the authority and power of God who sends him out.



Every believer must have a personal relationship with an experiential knowledge of Christ. In that sense, we have seen Christ, and we are to bring the message of the Gospel to the world (Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8).

## PROPHETS

The prophet is blessed with the gift of speaking under the inspiration of God's Spirit. The prophet's ministry includes both prediction and proclamation; that latter being the more prominent gift.



The purpose of prophecy/proclamation is to edify the saints (1 Cor. 14:3).

## EVANGELISTS

The evangelist is given the gift of carrying the gospel all over the world. It is the gift that specializes in proclaiming the gospel to the lost of the world. An evangelist is a missionary.



For every specific calling that God has for individuals, He also has a general calling for all believers (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; 21:8; 2 Tim. 4:5).

## PASTORS AND TEACHERS

The word “pastor” means “shepherd”. Our Lord Jesus called on Peter to shepherd His sheep (John 21:16). The Apostle Peter called on the elders in Ephesus to shepherd the church (Acts 20:28). The Apostle Peter exhorted the other ministers to shepherd the flock of God (1 Pet. 5:2).

How does a shepherd look like, and what does he do? Christ is the chief shepherd of believers (1 Pet. 5:4), and pastors are under-shepherds to the Chief Shepherd.

- The shepherd knows the sheep; He knows each one by name (John 10:14; 1 Cor. 8:3; 2 Tim. 2:19; Isa. 43:1).
- The shepherd feeds the sheep even if He has to gather them in His arms and carry them to the feasting pasture (Isa. 40:11).
- The shepherd guides the sheep to the pasture and away from the rough places and precipices (Ps. 23:1-4).
- The shepherd seeks and saves the sheep who get lost (Matt. 18:11-12; Ezek. 34:16; John 10:11; Heb. 13:20).
- The shepherd restores the sheep who go astray and return (1 Pet. 2:25).
- The shepherd rewards the sheep for obedience and faithfulness (1 Pet. 5:4).
- The shepherd shall keep the sheep separate from the goats (Matt. 25:32-33).

Our Lord Jesus told Peter – feed my sheep (John 21:15-17). The feeding here denotes spiritual feeding by pastoral and pulpit ministry. Teaching is part of the gift of the pastor. The function of the teacher is the gift to instruct believers in the truth of God and His Word. The gift of teaching is one of the greatest responsibilities given by God. Thus, the teacher will be required to give a strict account to God for his faithfulness in using his gift.



As believers, we are to saturate ourselves with the Word of God. We must be like the Bereans who “received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 2:15; 3:16; 1 Pet. 2:2-3).