

He Gave Gifts unto Men

A Study of Ephesians Chapter 4

Duane Gallentine

God's design in the edification process is to bring into the lives of the saints, the members of the Body of Christ – the Church of this “*Dispensation of the Grace of God*” – “*doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness*” (II Timothy 3:16).

At the dawn of the Dispensation of Grace, God called His arch-enemy Saul of Tarsus by His Grace and made him to be the apostle to the Gentiles, the teacher of the Gentiles, an evangelist of the Gospel of the Grace of God, a prophet and a pastor (Galatians 1:15; Romans 11:13; I Timothy 2:7; Colossians 1:23; Acts 13:1; II Corinthians 11:28).

Starting with Paul as the apostle of the Gentiles, God in the ascension of Christ to be Head of all things, gave gifts unto men so the Body of Christ would be built up in the body of truth called “*The Mystery*” (Romans 11:13; Ephesians 4:8-12; Romans 16:25, 26; Ephesians 2:20).

According to Ephesians 4:9-11, these “*gifts*” were **men**; yes, gifted men but nevertheless men as the “*gifts*.” These apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers were part of the Body of Christ. These were not the same as the Twelve apostles or the Old Testament prophets. These were Body ministers.

God set the members every one of them in the Body as it pleased Him (I Corinthians 12:18). Paul and the other God given “*gifts*” were ordained of God (I Timothy 2:7; Philippians 2:19-21, 25). They were the “*higher powers*,” “*the rulers*,” and “*the ministers of God*” (Romans 13:1-4). These men were to have an effective ministry which would provide edification, exhortation, and comfort to the members of the One Body (I Corinthians 14:3; Ephesians 4:12; I Timothy 4:16). These “*gifts unto men*” were “*to thee (Body of Christ) for good*” continually looking upon this edifying (Romans 13:4).

All of these “*gifts*” [men] were temporary in nature – for they have all died. Some of them, specifically those sign-gifted ministers, possessed spiritual gifts that were to cease, vanish, and fail as the full knowledge (Greek: *epi-gnosis*) of the **mystery revelation** was given to Paul (I Corinthians 13:8-12; II Corinthians 12:1, 7).

These sign-gifted ministers had these special manifestations removed from their ministry. This removal occurred during the two year period of Acts 28:30. After the close of the Book of Acts and while the writings containing the *epi-gnosis* (full-knowledge) of “*the mystery*” were being penned, there were no more God-given tongues, miracles, healing, and prophesying, for God Himself removed the sign-gift ministry.

During those two years as Paul was in jail at Rome, he penned the epistles which contain the full knowledge of the **mystery revelation**: Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. During this time there still existed those who were apostles, prophets, evangelists, teachers and pastors, though their particular ministries could no longer exhibit the supernatural manifestation of the Spirit. Factually, Paul was still an apostle and wrote as such (Ephesians 1:1; Colossians 1:1), but after the close of the Book of Acts his ministry was without the “*signs of an apostle*” (Philippians 2:27; II Timothy 4:20).

After the full deposit of **grace truth** was given to Paul that concluded this particular “*revelation of Jesus Christ according to the mystery,*” God finalizes the edification process through Scripture. Those men who were once the “*gifts unto men*” were diminishing by the time Paul had written his last epistle which brought to fullness the canon of Scripture.

II Timothy 3:16-17 reveals that the four-fold ministry of the gifted men had been replaced with Scriptures that do the very same thing. God replaced their four-fold ministry of “*doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness*” with His Word of Truth found in a Book rightly divided. No longer were men provided as “*gifts*” unto the Body of Christ, but God’s full complete Word of Truth.

With the Epistle of Second Timothy being the last book in the Bible to be written, God had used His internal *gift-system* to copy, collect, and collate all which is Scripture. The Body of Christ, the church of the living God, was the pillar and the ground of the truth (I Timothy 3:15).

God’s design was to have all Scripture resident within the Body of Christ before Paul died, with his Second Epistle to Timothy concluding the **deposit of truth**. We have sixty-six books of Scripture found in a one volume book. These are the Writings that God breathed, called Scripture (II Timothy 3:16-17; Romans 16:25-26; I Corinthians 14:37; Colossians 4:16).

Though religion will not recognize it and moves to oppose it, it is very clear that since the death of Paul God’s edifying process for giving “*doctrine, reproof, correction and instruction in righteousness*” to the Church has been through the Bible, **not** a man in a ministry, for that is not the means as stated in II Timothy 3:16. Through the Word of Truth found in a BOOK studied “*rightly divided*” we grow up **in Christ** and become workmen of God (Ephesians 4:15; II Timothy 2:15).

To neglect God’s revelation concerning present day edification of the saints is to cavort with a shipwrecked faith having the “*form of godliness*” but “*denying the power thereof.*”

Taken from the *Bible Student’s Notebook*™, a weekly Bible study publication available in two formats (electronic and printed)

www.BibleStudentsNotebook.com

PROPHETIC
APPEARANCE OF CHRIST

"Son of Man"
Messiah
Daniel 7:13



Acts 7:56

MYSTERY
APPEARANCE OF CHRIST

"Head of the Body
of Christ"
Ephesians 1:22, 23

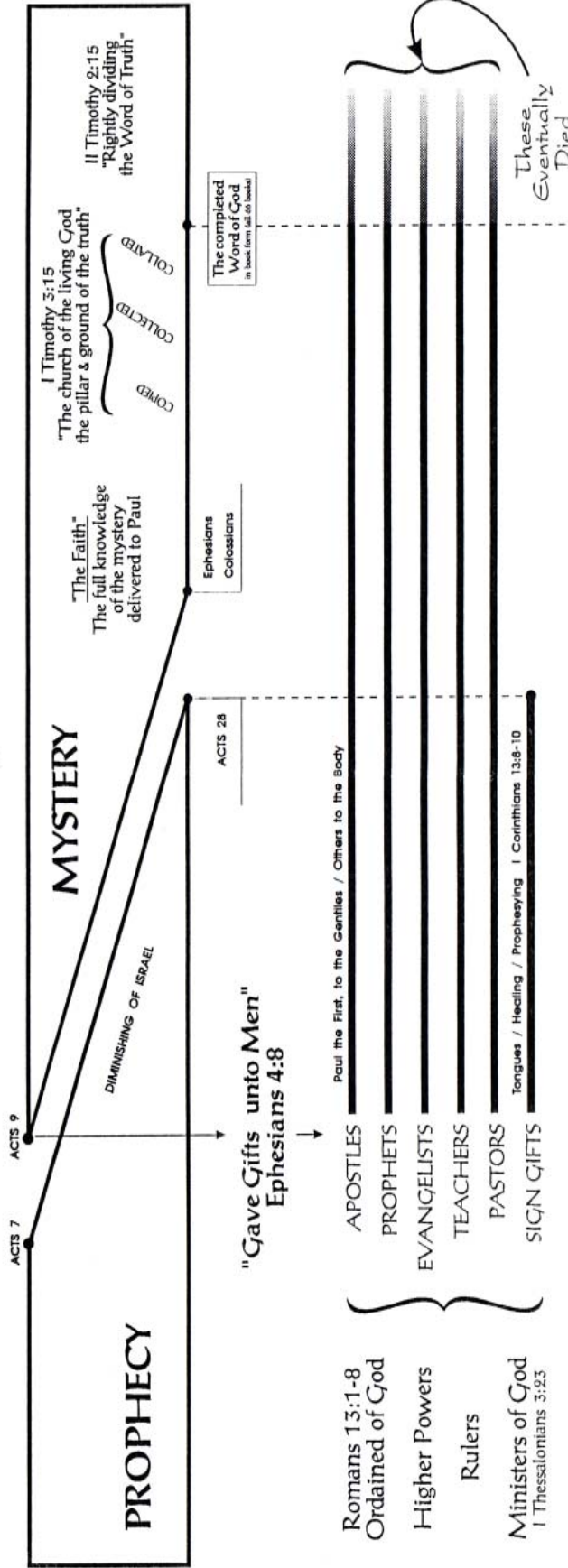


Acts 9:3

"When He Ascended up on high, He ... gave gifts unto men"
Ephesians 4:8



The Completed Bible II Timothy 3:16



Study Shelf, PO Box 265, Windber, PA 15963
1-800-784-6010 / www.StudyShelf.com

B I B L E S T U D E N T ' S P R E S S TM
Windber, Pennsylvania

