

paradise under the earth until Christ conquered death, hell, and the grave liberating them. he got these captives in the lower parts of the earth (v 8-10; Mt. 12:40). ¹

He led a body of captives to heaven, like an earthly conqueror. See II Cor. 2:14. Some were the many that were resurrected after Christ (Mt. 27:52-53), and the rest were the immortal souls that were not resurrected, but were liberated from captivity to Satan (Heb. 2:14-15; 12:23). ¹

An gave gifts unto men. Ephesians 4:8.

3 things Christ did in His ascension:

1. He liberated the righteous immortal souls from captivity in the lower parts of the earth (v 8, Ps. 68:18)

2. He took these captives captive to heaven (v 8; Ps. 68:18)

3. He gave gifts to men (v 8,11)

Ps. 68:18 reads, Thou hast received gifts for men. The Heb. here suggests that the gifts He gave were received in man , that is, by virtue of His incarnation He received these gifts to give to men. They are really gifts of God to men. ¹

He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth. Ephesians 4:9. Before He ascended to heaven, He descended to hell (v 9; Ps. 16:10; Mt. 12:40.

FOURTH STUDY

THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT (Ephesians 4:1-6)

I, Paul, the prisoner of the Lord; or I, Paul, who is completely of the Lord and a part of Him, *beseech* (ask) or exhort you, *that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called* (Ephesians 4:1). This is not referring to a particular ministry gift here. All of us whom God hath called to be a Christian, automatically becomes a minister for the cause of Christ and the gospel.

1. Paul exhorts the Ephesians and all other believers: past, present, and future, to walk worthy of their calling in 4 graces (or we could say 4 attitudes) all of which will help us keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. List the 4 from Ephesians 4:2)

(1) _____

(2) _____

(3) _____

(4) _____

We all have abilities through the grace of God to be a witness of the Gospel of Christ, this is our calling. Every born again Christian has a ministry outside or inside the Church. None of us are called to sit on the Church pew and do nothing.

If we walk these 'walks' in the Spirit, we will most likely not fulfill our ministry 'in the flesh.'

1. Dake, New Testament, p. 210.

2. There are 7 One's stated in Ephesians 4:4-6 which is the 7 fold unity of God and man. List the 7 One's.

- (1) _____
(2) _____
(3) _____
(4) _____
(5) _____
(6) _____
(7) _____

One baptism. The baptism that saves the soul, the baptism into the body of Christ (ref. see Hebrews 6:6). There are seven 'baptisms' mentioned in Scripture: John's baptism in water (Matthew 3); Christ's baptism in water (John 3:22;4:1) baptism in suffering (Luke 12:50); baptism in the cloud and sea (I Corinthians 10:2) ; Christian baptism in water (Matthew 28:19; Acts 2:38-41); baptism into Christ and into His body (Romans 6:3-7; I Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:27); and baptism in the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11,14; 20:22,23; Mark 1:8; 10:38,39; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; 7:37-39; Acts 1:5; 11:16; 19:2-3) (*Some information from the Dake Bible).

3. In your opinion, which of these baptism's are for the believers of today? _____

4. If you are one who believes there is a 'baptism'

of 'suffering' for the Church today, give some examples of that suffering. _____

UNIFYING OF THE FIVEFOLD MINISTRY

(Ephesians 4:7-16)

Each individual member in the body of Christ is given **grace** (unmerited favor) *according to the measure of the gift of Christ* (Ephesians 4:7; ref. see I Corinthians 12:4)). This grace mentioned here, is not referring to saving grace; but grace as a special gift. These gifts are measured out by Jesus Christ; and are given to the body *For the perfecting* (equipping) *of the saints, for the working of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, Till we all come in the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man* (mature man), *unto* (reaching) *the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ* (Ephesians 4:7,12,13). We could say that all the above helps to keep the unity of the Spirit.

When He ascended upon high. Ephesians 4:8. This was at the ascension of Jesus Christ, 40 days after His Resurrection (Psalm 68:18; Acts 1:3-11; Luke 24:51; Mark 16:19).

He led captivity captive. Ephesians 4:8.

The captives that were taken to heaven with Christ were the saints who had died from Abel to Christ, and who were held captive by Satan in