

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

“We Are His Workmanship”

Date: 10-20-24 Lesson: 24
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THE TEXT - (Ephesians 4:7-16)

(7) But grace was given to each one of us according to **the measure of Christ's gift.**

(8) Therefore it says,

"When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."

(9) (In saying, "**He ascended,**" what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth?

(10) He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

(Ps 68:18; Prov 30:1-4; Mk 16:19; Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:1-11; 2:32-35; Rom 3:24; 12:3; 1 Cor 12:7-11; Col 2:13-15; Heb 4:14; 7:26; 9:24; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Rev. chap. 5)

(11) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers,
(12) to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up **the body of Christ,**

(Mk 6:30; Ac 1:21,22; 11:27; 13:1; 20:28; 21:8; Rom 1:1; 2:21; 12:5-7; 14:19; 1 Cor 1:1,17; 12:5,6,10,27,28; 13:2,8; 14:1,3,4,26,39; 2 Cor 13:9; 1 Tim 1:7; 3:1-7; 2 Tim 4:5; Heb 3:1; Jas 3:1; 1 Pet 2:15; 2 Pet 3:2; Jude 17)

(13) until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of **the knowledge of the Son of God,** to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of **the fullness of Christ,**

(14) so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

(Is 57:20; Mt 11:27; Jn 1:16-18; Ac 2:42; Php 3:8; 1 Cor 2:6; 3:1,2; 14:20; Col 1:28; 1 Tim 4:1,2; Titus 1:9; 2:1; Heb 5:12-14; Jas 1:6; 1 Pet 2:2; Jude 12)

(15) Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into **him who is the head, into Christ,**

(16) from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.



STUDY HELPS

IX. THE DESCENT OF CHRIST TO HELL

Note: This article attests that **Christ descended into hell** to proclaim and announce His victory over sin, death, and the devil; not as part of His atonement for the sins of the world. It put an end to the squabbling that had arisen among Lutherans over the meaning of **Christ's descent to hell**, and it based its conclusions on one of Luther's sermons discussing this issue.

(See also Apostles' Creed; Nicene Creed; Athanasian Creed; SA I; SC II; LC II; FC SD IX.)

STATUS OF THE CONTROVERSY THE CHIEF CONTROVERSY ABOUT THIS ARTICLE [1]

This article has also been disputed among some theologians who have subscribed to the Augsburg Confession:
When and in what manner did **the Lord Christ**, according to our simple Christian faith, descend to hell?

Was this done before or after His death?

Did this happen only to His soul, only to the divinity, or with body and soul, spiritually or bodily?

Does this article belong to Christ's passion or to His glorious victory and triumph?

[2] This article, like the preceding article, cannot be grasped by the senses or by our reason. It must be grasped through faith alone.

Therefore, it is our unanimous opinion that there should be no dispute over it. It should be believed and taught only in the simplest way.

[3] Teach it like Dr. Luther, of blessed memory, in his sermon at Torgau in the year 1533 [WA 37: 62– 67]. He has explained this article in a completely Christian way. He separated all useless, unnecessary questions from it, and encouraged all godly Christians to believe with Christian simplicity.

[4] It is enough if we know that **Christ descended into hell**, destroyed hell for all believers, and delivered them from the power of death and of the devil, from eternal condemnation and the jaws of hell. We will save our questions <and not curiously investigate> about how this happened until the other world. Then not only this <mystery>, but others also will be revealed that we simply believe here and cannot grasp with our blind reason.

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LIFE APPLICATION

“He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.”

What is the significance for you of both the descent into hell and the ascent into heaven of our Lord Jesus Christ?