

"Heartbeat Part 7: It's Not For You" | Ephesians 4:1-16 | Pastor Ryan Welshans

July 20th, 2025 @ Crossbridge Church

Service: Welcome/Call To Worship → Songs → Prayer → Church Life → Sermon → Response → Blessing

Sermon: Intro/Hook → Tension → Story → Truth → Application → Sending

Highlights: Bible → Growth → The Point → Application → Next Steps

WELCOME

→ Welcome to Crossbridge Church (In person and online)

→ Introduce the theme or topic of the sermon: "Living into our God given ministry and mission"

→ Greeting time

CALL TO WORSHIP (BASED ON MATTHEW 11:28-30)

Leader: Come, all who are weary and burdened, for Christ's yoke is easy, and the burden is light.

Lift your hearts, for God's yoke is gentle and life-giving.

People (together): We come seeking rest for our souls, trusting in the heart of Christ to guide and renew us.

Leader: By grace we are called into freedom, into hope,

SONGS

"This Is Amazing Grace", "Here I Am To Worship", "What A Beautiful Name", "Agnus Dei"

PRAYER

→ Terry Kochersperger and his family

→ Joe and Lexi Butak and their new baby boy, Jaxson Wesley Butak

→ Our New Associate Pastor, Dalton Handwork

→ We lift up those who are on each of our hearts today

OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN,

HALLOWED BE THY NAME.

THY KINGDOM COME,

THY WILL BE DONE,

ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN.

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD.

AND FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES,

AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS AGAINST US.

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION,

BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL.

FOR THINE IS THE KINGDOM,

AND THE POWER, AND THE GLORY,

FOREVER AND EVER. AMEN.

CHURCH LIFE

- Back To School Supply Drive/Missions Closet July 20-Aug 10 | Cristina Slattery
- August 3rd, Pastor Dalton starts and Summer Potluck w/ Burgers, you bring your Summer Dish
- Crossbridge Unplugged Worship Night tonight @ 6 pm! Bring a chair and come enjoy some food
- Dismiss Kids 2-5 for their teaching time

SCRIPTURE READING | EPHESIANS 4:1-16

Ephesians 4:1-16 (NLT)

1 Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. 2 Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. 3 Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. 4 For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future.

*5 There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism,
6 one God and Father of all,
who is over all, in all, and living through all.*

7 However, he has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ. 8 That is why the Scriptures say,

*"When he ascended to the heights,
he led a crowd of captives
and gave gifts to his people."*

9 Notice that it says "he ascended." This clearly means that Christ also descended to our lowly world. 10 And the same one who descended is the one who ascended higher than all the heavens, so that he might fill the entire universe with himself.

11 Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. 12 Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. 13 This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. 14 Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. 15 Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. 16 He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

INTRODUCTION

From our Vision:

*The **heartbeat of our church family** is this:*

Every person, from every generation, fully alive in their God-given mission and ministry, no matter who they are or where they come from.

THERE'S ONLY ONE YOU

"You are special. It's you I like—not the things you wear, not what you do for a living—but you."
— Fred Rogers

"Be yourself; everyone else is already taken."
— Oscar Wilde

Have you ever considered that in all the world, in all the cosmos, in all of human history, and among the 8 billion people on the planet right now, **there has factually and truly only been one of you.**

You are unique, you are the very definition of unique; you are the only one of you that will ever exist.

We get this intellectually, of course, we understand that we have our unique DNA strand, there's ever only been one of our fingerprints in all the world, but do we appreciate the reality that there really is only one of ourselves.

Even identical twins, although much about them is similar, your life and personality, and choices are still you're own.

You are not here by accident, you are not a mistake, you are not an afterthought, you are not a burden, you're not unworthy. You have significance, you matter more than you know, **and you have been created.**

Someone took time to think about you, to **craft** you, to **design** you, to **intimately mold and shape** you before you even took your first breath.

Psalm 139:13-14 (NIV)

13 For you created my inmost being;

You knit me together in my mother's womb.

14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;

Your works are wonderful,

I know that full well.

If you have breath in your lungs, I want you to know that you are not only created, **but you are a gift.**

No one may say that to you

No one may have ever said that to you

No one may ever know how to say that to you

But you truly are a gift to this world,

SELF HATRED AND SELF OBSESSION

Yet, a struggle many of us have is valuing and loving the way God has made us.

Many people want a refund on who they are.

I was thinking about when it starts to occur to you as a person that there's something about yourself you don't like, or you want to change.

When we were little kids, we didn't care about how we looked or what quirks we had. Then there comes a moment where we start to compare ourselves to others, or someone points out something about us, and before we know it, we're looking at ourselves, our personality, our looks, our life, our family, our everything, and there's a bunch we don't like.

We wish we had a different personality. "Why am I not more outgoing like them?"

We wish we had a different look, "I wish I were taller and not bald."

We wish we had what others have. "Oh, I want their house..."

We wish we had different abilities. "I wish I could play that guitar like they do."

What grows in us is a devaluing of ourselves.

A narrative that is strong in our world today is that we can be whatever we want to be, we should do whatever we want to do, and live based on how we feel, and so yeah, we question, doubt, and reject who we are and how we're wired because we think there must be something better.

And yet because we're so focused on what we're not, we're also obsessed with ourselves.

So many of us teeter between self-obsession and self-hate, and we can sometimes obsess over what we hate about ourselves.

God wants none of that for us. God wants us to know who we are, not who we wish we were, and he wants us to grow in who he's called us to be, not who we wish we could be.

And God has given you and me something that can break us out of that self-obsession and times of self-hate!

He's given each of us a **gift**.

Yes, you're not just a gift, but you are gifted!

This young prophet named Jermeiah was questioning his purpose and God's call on his life, and the Lord said this:

Jeremiah 1:4-5 (NLT)

*4 The word of the Lord came to me, saying,
5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
before you were born I set you apart;
I appointed you as a prophet to the nations."*

Isn't that insane? Biblically speaking, **even before you were born, God knew you, formed you, set you apart, and has gifted you. Each of us has been gifted with natural talents, abilities, strengths, passions, and superpowers that are meant to point you to your Creator.**

Lexi just gave birth to a little boy, Jaxson. That baby already has so much in him that God has wired and created for his future. He's already got a personality, a temperament, passions, and gifts... and he can't even feed himself yet!

God looks at us like an artist does to a blank canvas, or like a writer does to a blank page, or a sculptor does to a lump of clay. They approach those things that are blank and nothing with an idea, purpose, and inspiration.

God's got an idea and purpose for what he wants to do with you, his masterpiece, and as you grow and mature, your passions and natural gifts are not just created on a whim; they're simply revealed to you and others around you. The gifts, abilities, talents, and purpose are already there; God's already planted them!

Some need to be discovered and refined, but they're already there.

And when it comes to your natural gifts, those are gifts from God that are meant to be used to better the lives of others.

- A talented artist doesn't just want to draw; they want others to be moved by their art.
- An engineer uses their gifts not just for their brain-teasing, but for the engineering of things that make things run and operate better.
- A good teacher doesn't do what they do for fun; they do it for the "aha" moment in a kid's life that opens up a whole new world for them.

God has not designed you to be self-obsessed and self-critical; He's made you not to be about yourself.

I think it's so cool that **God has naturally wired every single person on the planet to be able to give something of themselves to others through their gifting.**

And the enemy of our lives tricks us into thinking that we're made to be about ourselves.

You may be sitting here thinking that you don't have any gifts... if that's you, **try asking someone you trust, and they'll tell you, because that's how you know what your gifts are, by how you impact others.**

And there's something even better if you are in Christ, and you have the Holy Spirit, you aren't just naturally gifted, you're spiritually gifted.

Many of us hear that, but don't believe it. And that's because most of us have a very broken view of the Church. We think Church is about coming to a place where we can get something, get good worship, get good friends, get a. Good sermon, get some inspiration for the week. None of those things are bad, but there's so much more.

We're landing in the middle of Ephesians, a letter written by the Apostle Paul that is basically Church 101, and Paul begins the fourth chapter, a critical chapter in the Bible, with a call to unity in Christ and the love of one another in Christ.

GIFTED BODY BUILDERS

A Unified Body, With A Diversity of Gifts

Ephesians 4:3-6 (NLT)

3 Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. 4 For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future.

5 There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

6 one God and Father of all,

who is over all, in all, and living through all.

Can you feel the power in those words, the unity and binding power of our ONE LORD!

In a world of division and ambiguity of purpose and belief, we are not confused... Crossbridge, we have our one love, one allegiance, the only one *"who is over all, in all, and living through all."*

Ephesians 4:7(NLT)

7 However, he has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ.

Yes, we're one unified body, but we also have a diversity of gifts, and using Psalm 68, Paul paints the most amazing picture that the first time it clicked for me, I have never been the same.

The picture that Paul gives is of Jesus, the one who came down, who descended to our world to save his, and then, when he ascended back to the Father, he gave gifts to his followers through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Why? **So we could be the Body of Christ on earth!**

Jesus told his disciples it would be better for him to leave on go back to the Father, and that he was sending the Advocate, the Spirit, to be with his followers forever (John 14), not just to make them feel good, but to empower them to live like him, and to gift them to live like him!

You don't have a spiritual gift because you're meant to do something with it in Christ's name!

Gifts Given By God

Ephesians 4:11 (NLT)

11 Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.

Apostle – Starts new ministries, builds teams, and helps the church move forward into new areas of mission.

"Apostles ensure the church is living on mission, not stuck in maintenance mode."

*Paul – Church planter, missionary, and strategist for spreading the Gospel (Acts 13–28).

Prophet – Keeps the church spiritually honest, listens to God, and challenges people to live with integrity and purpose.

"Prophets keep us from drifting into comfort and compromise."

*John the Baptist – Boldly called people to repentance and prepared the way for Jesus (Luke 3:1–18).

Evangelist – Shares Jesus naturally, brings new people in, and inspires others to care about the lost.

"Evangelists remind us the message is too good to keep to ourselves."

*Philip – Led people to Christ, including the Ethiopian eunuch, and shared the gospel across regions (Acts 8).

Shepherd (Pastor) – Makes sure people feel seen, loved, and supported through life's highs and lows.

"Shepherds help us be a family, not just a crowd."

* Timothy – A caring leader mentored by Paul, known for his heart for people and church health (1 & 2 Timothy).

Teacher – Breaks down the truth so others can understand it and apply it to real-life situations.

"Teachers make sure we're not just excited, but also rooted in God's story."

*Apolllos – Described as knowledgeable in Scripture and effective in teaching about Jesus (Acts 18:24–28).

These are roles and functions within the Body of Christ, but there are more gifts even beyond these that Paul and others describe in other letters:

Romans 12:6–8

Prophecy, Serving (Ministry), Teaching, Encouragement (Exhortation), Giving, Leadership, Mercy

1 Corinthians 12:4–11, 27–31

Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Discernment, Helps, Administration

1 Peter 4:10–11

Speaking, serving

Others

Hospitality (Romans 12:13, 1 Peter 4:9), Intercession (Romans 8:26–27)

And I am telling you, this was certainly what Paul and others saw people doing. I am sure if he were now, he'd have a whole lot of other gifts listed.

It doesn't matter how old you are, where you come from, what you've been through, or what you've done, **in Christ you are gifted! Every child in Christ has a gift, every 90 year old who comes to Christ has a gift!**

But, look at what Paul says our gifts are meant to do:

Ephesians 4:12-13 (NLT)

12 Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

13 This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

These gifts we have are not for ourselves. **The spiritual gifts you've been given by Christ are specifically given to you to build up the Church.**

That's what it means to be mature in Christ. If you want to know if you're maturing in Christ, just reflect on how you're using your gifts and graces in his name to build up His Church.

Ephesians 4:1-16 (NLT)

14 Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.

And this is why it is so tragic to watch people claim the name Christian and never be a part of a local church, or never really serve or give, because they just stay immature in their faith, and they don't ever really grow in being more and more like Christ!

Ephesians 4:1-16 (NLT)

15 Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. 16 He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

The Church Isn't A Place That We Go To Get Something From; It's A People To Whom We Have Been Called And Gifted By Christ To Build Up.

DISCOVERING YOUR GIFTS

→ If You Are On Team Jesus, You Have A Role To Play

How sad it is to watch people get drafted and hand-picked by Jesus, given a new uniform, all the equipment, and then for them to go sit on the bench. You're meant to get out there and play!

→ Not Living Into Your Gifting Will Suffocate Or Stunt Your Growth

There are many of us who feel stuck or like we can't move forward in our faith. If you're not giving or serving amongst this body, that's what could be holding you back.

→ You'll Discover Your Gifts As You Serve Others, Not By Just Doing What You Like

Your gift is how you best help and build up others, this is not always just what you want to do, it's what adds the most value to helping the Church be the best it can be!

→ It All Starts With Believing That God Has Gifted You

It makes all the difference if you actually believe this, and walk in it by faith. There is no humility in acting like you don't have special gifts, it's actually just a disbelief in God's power in your life.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS TEST



My friends, you are a gift, and in Christ you are powerfully gifted... lets act like!

Amen.

RESOURCES FOR CONTINUED GROWTH

Questions For Personal Reflection Or Group Discussion:

1. Do you believe that you are naturally gifted? With what?
2. Do you struggle with self doubt or hate... self obsession?
3. How has Christ gifted you? Did you see some of those gifts in yourself?
4. Why do we not talk more about spiritual gifting in the Church?
5. How might you take some next steps in growing in your gifts?

Readings Week 28: July 21-25

Mon: Nehemiah 8

Tue: Nehemiah 9

Wed: 2 Timothy 3:10-17

Thu: Psalm 33

Work Cited

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