Ephesians 4:8-13 God Gives What is Needed

Vs.8-he quotes Psalm 68:18 as a parenthetical analogy to show how Christ has the right to bestow the gifts
(Ps.68 was written by David to celebrate the conquest of Jerusalem from the Jebusites and the triumphant ascent of God up to Mount Zion- II Sam.6-7)

*after such conquest, the king would bring the spoils and prisoners back with him
-Paul uses this to illustrate the King (Jesus) returning from His battle and conquest of sin (Calvary) with His spoils
(since He is King and the One who conquered, it's His right to bestow gifts as He sees fit)

-"captivity captive"- this refers to the person and their condition
(He restores what was lost to sin and returns them to God)

(Vs.9-10)- for Jesus to ascend means He first had to descend (this speaks of His eternal Divinity)
*He ascends back to His rightful place (above all) after He accomplishes the purpose of His descent (incarnation)

-the purpose was that man needed redemption and only Jesus could accomplish that as his substitute
-"fill all things"- (pleroo) to complete, to perform and execute
*Christ's descent fulfilled all prophecy completely while His death and resurrection fulfilled God's plan of redemption

Vs.11- "He gave"- His finished work gives Him the right to rule over the church and give gifts to each member
*and here, we not only see that He gives gifts, but also gives gifted men

-"apostles"- this term is used specifically of the 12 with the exception of Judas (Matthias replaced him-Acts 1)
*later on, Paul was uniquely set apart as the apostle to the Gentiles (Gal.1:15-17)

Truth- this would be a temporary office as Scripture never teaches of apostolic succession
(the apostles were eyewitnesses of the Resurrection and could heal and raise the dead)

-"prophets"- these were both foretellers and forth-tellers (these men, like the apostles, spoke by direct from God and their office ceased at the completion of Scripture

-"evangelists"- these proclaim the good news of Jesus to unbelievers (missionaries)
(several examples in Scripture show that some had more than one gift- Paul, Peter, John)

-"pastors and teachers"- notice how these 2 are placed together (this is 1 office with 2 functions)
-"pastor"- (poimen) an overseer of an assembly, a herdsman in which others commit their care to
(this is a shepherding term that pictures one who defends sheep from attackers, to heal sick sheep, to find and help lost or trapped sheep, and share their lives and earn the trust of those sheep)

Vs.12- this verse tells us why gifts and gifted men are given

-"perfecting"-(katartismos) the only place in Scripture this word is used
*it means a complete furnishing or equipping
(every other time it used, it has a salvation meaning- here, it's a term for growth)
*the word "saints" helps us to conclude this meaning as saints are already saved
-this is a term that means to equip them to become vessels of honor and service

-"work of the ministry"- God sends these gifted men to help equip saved people, help them to realize their Spiritual gift(s), and to prepare them for the ministry God has for them

-"edifying"- (oikodome) to build up or to promote another's growth

Vs.13- "Till"- meaning that it hasn't happened yet and so God will continue to send His called for the purpose of vs.12

-"unity of the faith"- meaning to hold the same truths and to have the same confidence in Christ
-"knowledge"- this is the complete comprehension of his analogy in vs.8 and the truth of vs.9-10
-"perfect"- (teleios) complete, finished, lacking nothing (this is the salvation term)
-"stature"- no under-shepherd (poimen) has finished his work while the sheep fall short of this goal
*this stature is growth in Christlikeness as Jesus Himself is the standard of spiritual maturity and perfection
(this is what God meant when He says the He predestined us for this- Romans 8:29)