

***KATARTIZO*, NOT EQUIPPING: THE PRIMARY TASK OF APOSTLES**

Ephesians 4:11-13, 16 (KJV)

11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ....

16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

The chief responsibility of Apostles, and other five-fold ministers is to *katartizo* other leaders and the Body of Christ so that its members will be able to (1) edify (bless and build) the Body of Christ and (2) do the work of ministry (Kingdom planting and nurturing).

It is the word *katartizo* here in verse 12 that is interesting and most informative. Nowhere in the *King James Version* is it translated “equipping” and the word does not appear in *Strong’s Concordance*. The *King James* uses “perfecting” and the *New International Version* uses “to prepare.” Its first appearance in the *English Bible* occurred in Ephesians 4:12 in the *Revised Standard Version* produced by the National Council of Churches in 1946 (New Testament) and 1952 (Old Testament added).

Yet, the idea of “equipping, arming, or supplying” others with armor, material and technique has become the supreme paradigm of apostolic ministry in the New Apostolic Reformation! This seems to miss the force of Ephesians 4:15-16 which indicates alignment, not equipping for *katartizo*: “from whom the whole body being fitted and held together (aligned) by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love” (NAS). Hence, we apostles are not just supply sergeants working for the body; we are “*charipractors*” (new word) working on it.

The root verb, *artizo*, (which does not appear in the New Testament as such without modifiers like *kata*, *pro*, or *ex*) means “to adjust, fit, finish, or align.” It is to do the work of an artist.



It comes from the noun *artios*, which does appear and means “fit, aligned, complete, or perfect.” See 2 Timothy 3:17: “That the man of God may be perfect (*artios*), thoroughly furnished (*exartizo*) unto all good works.” This fits right into Paul’s idea of “one body and many members” in Romans 12. Note the similarities: “For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office (*praxis* – function), so we (being) many are one body of Christ and every one members one of another. Having then gifts (*charisma*) differing according to the grace (*charis*) given to us...”

The basic sense of this word group is not to equip by supplying armor but “to put a thing into its appropriate position.” Therefore, to fit/align, establish/set (ordain/commission); adjust/adapt are much nearer to the essence of *katartizo* than equip.

THE VARIOUS USES OF *KATARTIZO* IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

In fact, a careful study of Ephesians 6:10-20, especially verses 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, over against Ephesians 4:12 where the idea of “equipping the saints for the work of ministry” has produced our current paradigm, indicates that each warrior is himself or herself charged with the responsibility to “put on the whole armor of God” and to stand in it.

1. Three passages where the verb *katartizo* is used as Prepare, Frame, or Fit

- Hebrews 10:5: “...sacrifice and offerings thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared (*katartizo*) me.”
- Hebrews 11:3: “Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed (*katartizo*) by the word (*rhema* – spoken word) of God...”
- Romans 9:22: “...vessels of wrath fitted (*katertismena*) to destruction.

2. There are five specific passages where the verb *katartizo* is used as Perfect, Finish, or Complete.

- Matthew 21:16: “...Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected (*katertiso*) praise?”
- 1 Thessalonians 3:10: “Night and day praying exceedingly that we might see your face, and might perfect (*katartisai*) that which is lacking (*husterema* – deficient, needs to be made up) in your faith?” Note: Paul was only in Thessalonica three weeks in founding that church before the Jews ran him out of town.
- Hebrews 13:20, 21: “Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus...Make you perfect (*katartisai*) in every good work to do His will.”
- 1 Peter 5:10: “But the God of all grace...make you perfect (*katartisai*), establish, strengthen, and settle you.”
- Luke 6:40: “The disciple is not above his master: but every one that is perfect (*katertismenos*-fully instructed) shall be as his master (*didaskalos* – teacher).”

3. Perhaps the strongest use of *katartizo* is to **Realign, Mend, Repair**.

- This is applied to nets which have been broken (Matthew 4:21; Mark 1:19): “(Jesus) saw James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother, in a ship with Zebedee their father, mending (*katartizontas*) their nets...”
- 1 Corinthians 1:10: *Katartizo* means “reunite in mind, sentiment, or heart; or reconcile, as opposed to having schisms or ruptures. “...that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together (*katertismenoi*) in the same mind and in the same judgment.”
- In Galatians 6:1, it means “reduce, restore, align as it were a disjointed limb.” “Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore (*katartizete*)...”

DERIVATIVES

Finally, let’s look at the derivatives of this word that appear in the New Testament. First, *katartisis* is a noun and means completing, perfecting and is in 2 Corinthians 13:9: “...we wish, even your perfection (*katartisin*).” It denotes a process, a work in progress.

Prokatartizo is a verb and means “to perfect or align beforehand, to make right, adjust ahead of time.” 2 Corinthians 9:5 (of the offering for the saints in Judea) “Therefore I thought it necessary to exhort the brethren that they would go before unto you and make up beforehand your bounty (offering)...”

Katartismos is the same as *katartisis* but denotes a process as already completed. Hence, it indicates perfection or completion. See Ephesians 4:12: “For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...” Thus, this pivotal passage really means to align and adjust the saints and not to supply and equip them.

Exartizo comes from the intensive *ex* and *artizo* meaning adjust, thoroughly fit, or align. In other words, it means “to put in appropriate condition; furnish thoroughly; to complete entirely.” See Acts 21:5 (spoken of time): “And when we had accomplished those days, we departed ...” There is a variant in 2 Timothy 3:17: “That the man of God may be perfect (*artios*-fitted), thoroughly furnished (*exertismenos*) unto all good works.” Here it means to align, fit, and furnish out completely.

CONCLUSIONS

From this study of every use of *katartizo* and its derivatives in the New Testament, several helpful conclusions might be drawn for present-day apostles.

1. The basic idea of *katartizo* is not “to equip” in the sense of supply with armor or anything else. Instead, the basic idea of *katartizo* is to bring one into proper alignment by establishing (commissioning), setting (positioning), adjusting, adapting, fitting, or mending as needed to make one ready to fulfill his or her calling, anointing, or destiny.
2. Admittedly, these two ideas of “equipping” and “aligning” are not foreign to each other or contradictory. However, they are far from identical. And an overemphasis on the supply side of equipping has produced a lack on the emphasis of aligning and adjusting. Often, instead of being spiritual fathers, some apostles see themselves as “CEOs and executives” to their spiritual sons and daughters.
3. The primary meaning of *katartizo* is to align ministers and ministries by setting them in their appropriate positions and enabling their optimum effectiveness by adjusting, adapting, fitting, repairing or mending, reconciling them to be “thoroughly furnished for every good work.” This is not a corporation; it is a family.
4. We in the New Apostolic Reformation need to re-examine our primary purpose. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are set in the Ekklesia (Ephesians 4:11-16 and 1 Corinthians 12:28) to recognize, realign, release, and resource the saints (members of Christ’s body) for their work of ministry in their own spheres of anointing and influence and to build them up and strengthen them as they do so.
5. To establish and maintain the right alignment and clear, strong government of elders, deacons, and other members of the Body of Christ is the primary task of apostolic leaders.