



*Every Spiritual  
Blessing*

**EPHESIANS - WEEK 10**  
**Uniquely Powerful Gifts**

**Opening prayer**

**Prayer for the millennial generation:**

We pray that the millennial generation would praise God and not curse Him. “Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!”  
(Ps. 67:3)

## **Prayer for a local church:**

This morning we pray for our brother Dave Dick and Canyon Lake Community Church.

## **Closing prayer**

### **INTRODUCTION**

We ended last week with Paul’s sevenfold repetition of the word one, as in one Lord, one

faith, one baptism, etc. where he stresses the unity of the church in that oneness. When it comes to church unity a wrong idea that continues to persist is the idea of conformity, that there is a sameness to each and every Christian. As we will see today, the biblical idea of unity is much different than mere conformity.

There is a unity in what each and every Christian believes about the Person and work of Jesus Christ, who He is and what He has done, how He has brought us back into a living relationship with the Living God. But there is great diversity in this

unity, as we will see, in accordance with the gifts Christ has given us. That is our subject this morning — uniquely powerful gifts.

- Two types of grace when it comes to gifts

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

**1 Point #1 - Every Christian has been given a uniquely powerful**

# gift.

There is a gift God has given you for the church body. And it is a uniquely powerful gift. If you don't believe that, that's probably why you're not using your gift to serve the Lord. There is a grace God has given you for the local church, for this local church, but many of us do not know what that is and some of us don't even see church in that way. We still have a very individualistic view of the Christian life and of church.

What's refreshing about this biblical view is that it corrects a common misunderstanding of fairness. There is a common view of fairness in our culture that has more to do with the American dream than the biblical testimony. The American concept of fairness is that everyone gets the same amount. Every group gets equal airtime, etc. Everyone gets an equal share, because we have to be fair. It's all over our culture. It's also common in parenting. Some parents give all their children gifts when only one of them has a birthday, because it's not fair to give presents just to one child. Their siblings

wouldn't feel special. Everyone gets a present whether it's their birthday or not. Everyone in the race gets a ribbon.

- Grade school's last day of school race

The good news is that the Bible reflects reality because it defines reality. The biblical reality is that every Christian has been shown grace and given a gift or gifts. But we have each been shown grace according to the measure Christ gave us. We do not all have the same gifts. And

even when we have the same gift, we are clearly given a different amounts.

- Singing as a gift

Not everyone bears the same amount of fruit because not everyone has the same degree of gifting.

**“He indeed bears fruit and yields, in one case a hundredfold, in another sixty, and in another thirty.” (Matt. 13:23)**



Now the Apostle Paul teaches us from Psalm 68.  
He writes:

**<sup>8</sup> Therefore it says,  
“When he ascended on high he led a host of  
captives,  
and he gave gifts to men.”**

Psalm 68 is a psalm of celebration and triumph,  
most likely written when the ark (which  
represented God’s presence) was brought into

Jerusalem. In Psalm 68, this verse, which is verse 18, refers to God. Paul is using it in reference to Jesus Christ, so we have yet another instance in Scripture that confirms the deity of Christ, that He is not only fully human, but Christ is fully God.

Now, Paul instructs us about the nature of Christ here. He gives us inspired commentary on Psalm 68.

**9 (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? <sup>10</sup> He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)**

- Explanation

**2 | Point #2 - The gifts are uniquely powerful because the One who**

**gave them is uniquely powerful.**

The point is — His gifts are powerful because the One who gave them is powerful.

**<sup>11</sup> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,**

**3 Point #3 - Christ has gifted people to train you to use your gift.**

There are five different leadership giftings in verse 11. It is argued by many that the office of apostle no longer exists, but here we have the Apostle Paul still speaking to us today. And he quoted a Psalm that was prophetic that is still speaking to us today. So, the offices of apostles and prophets may not be filled today with actual people, but they are still serving the church today through the Word.

In another sense, there are both apostolic and

prophetic-like giftings still in operation in the church. When you find someone who has a big picture vision of how to build a network of churches, that is an apostolic-like gifting, but not specifically the gift of apostle as Paul knew it.

Look at the legacy of John Wesley who along with George Whitefield left behind the Methodist Church. Now, historically, the early growth of Methodism was owed to Whitefield who had the gift of evangelism, but the organization and

structure of Methodism was largely due to Wesley. That big picture vision of organizing multiple churches is an apostolic-like gifting. It's also a great example of how gifts work in conjunction with each other.

Then there is the prophetic gifting. A.W. Tozer, Leonard Ravenhill and to an extent Martyn Lloyd-Jones all had insight into different issues that plagued the church. They were able to put their finger on problems the church needed to

address. In that sense they had a prophetic gifting, pointing out things the church needs to fix.

Now, you can see where the person with the prophetic gifting and the person with the gifting of shepherd might be in conflict at times. The prophet wants everyone on their knees repenting and the shepherd wants to encourage everyone. This is why Paul spent some time going over the admonition to be completely humble. Because



that's where the unity comes from — the humility. And we need to be reminded of that often because in our unity we find this diversity.

Just as God is One God who is three distinct Persons, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. He is unified, but diverse. The church body simply reflects the nature of God Himself.

Now, it has been pointed out that the tragedy in

church life today is that churches generally expect one person to fulfill all five of these leadership roles Paul lists. There may or may not be a correlation to this, but one statistic says that over 90% of those who start in ministry end up doing something else. That means only 10% of those who begin in ministry end in ministry.

The issue becomes verse 12. This is what the church in America is overcoming, the consumeristic mindset that we've discussed

before, but it's the mindset where people come to church to receive goods and services. (That's why there's a cover charge.) So, that's one issue the church has been addressing in the past few years in some circles.

The other issue is the extreme individualism that plagues the church because of American culture. This is the mindset that says, "My religion is between me and God. It's personal." After all, isn't He a personal Savior?

Well, if Scripture continually corrects us as we claimed last week and if we're open to Scripture correcting our viewpoint, these verses should provide the corrective we need.

Why does Christ give gifts to each one of us? And why does He then give the five leadership gifts to the church? Well, if you have a gift, you need to know how to use it. That's why He gives the leadership gifts...

**<sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry,  
for building up the body of Christ,**

**4 | Point #4 - Your gifts are given to  
spiritually build up the church.**

The saints are just the believers in a local congregation. In other words, you. Saint just means “set apart one” or “to make holy.” If you have been born again, if you know Christ as your Lord and Savior, you are a saint. You are now in

Christ and by virtue of His holiness, you are counted as holy because of His perfect obedience in your place. The same way that He died in your place taking the punishment for your sins that you deserve, He lived the life you could not in your place. You're made a saint through the grace of Christ.

Now if you're a saint, Paul says the leadership of the church should be equipping you for the work of ministry. That's a far cry from the attitude of

“isn’t this what we hired you to do?” Biblically, the paid staff should be training the congregation to do the work of ministry. Why? Because that’s how the church grows.

The only way any church is effective in its community is when there is buy-in from the greatest to the least that this is what we’re here to do. When everyone has the mindset that there is nothing more important in life than winning people to the Lord who gave His life for them,

that's when churches grow. There's nothing more important than turning people from darkness to light. There's nothing more important than loving people that others do not love. The attitude of the church should be — **everyone wins someone.**

**<sup>13</sup> 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,**



## **5 Point #5 - Spiritual does not mean magical. You must develop your gift.**

This building up is a process. This maturity is a process. This attaining to the unity of the faith is a process. And again, there is a diversity to this unity, but the process is about each and every Christian being trained to use their gift or gifts, to find their place in the local body so they can contribute to growing the body both spiritually and physically.

And here's the result of being completely humble (as we went over last week), and understanding our gifts and being trained and equipped in using them and growing in maturity.

## Applications

What's interesting about how God unfolds His plan of salvation history is that He uses us. That's why Jesus gives gifts for His church. God sent His Son and the Son sent the Holy Spirit and that's how God's accomplishing His plan of

renewing all things in Christ — through the Holy Spirit in us, working through us with the gifts He's given us.

We enter in salvation by a gift, that's first. The first gift Christ gives is Himself. He gives Himself to you.

- Not to condemn, but to save

Because the gifts Christ has given for His church

are for His church it tells us they are for public use. They are for others. Your gift is for others.

Christ is our model here as in all things. He came not to be served, but to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many. We can all serve in unique and powerful ways. Our unity is in Christ. Our diversity is in how He uses us.

What does the passage mean for the corporate life of our local church? Well, it means we have

committed to finding your gift or gifts and training you to use them. Everyone wins someone and we all win them together. One loving person at a church is a good thing. Two loving people at a church is a better thing. A group of loving people at a church can make a stranger into a neighbor.

