

# CAPTIVE IN CHRIST

*“But to each of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.”*

*—EPHESIANS 4:7*

‘Grace’ is the Greek word “charis”, which doesn’t translate very well into English, but it means to find favour, to receive from. Essentially, it is a gift, and in this context, Paul is talking about gifts we receive from Christ. Usually, he speaks of the Holy Spirit as the giver, but here it is Christ and he gives an explanation.

In Ephesians 4:8, Paul writes, “This is why it says: ‘When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men’.” He then puts in brackets, (“What does he ascended mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions. He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.”)

When Christ descended to earth it was to set captives free, and He did that through the cross where our sin was atoned for, and we were liberated from the power of sin. Then Christ ascended in resurrection power, and took with Him as captives to Himself those He had set free. In other words, He delivered us from one captivity of which is sin in order to deliver us to another captivity in Him. That begs the question: For what purpose?

The Christian life isn’t merely about salvation. It’s also about being workers together with Christ for which He has spiritually gifted each of us. The right of the Lord Jesus to apportion gifts is that in liberating us from the captivity of sin, and bringing us into relationship with Him, He

has now made us captive to Himself and has the right to direct our lives. As we walk in unity with Him and one another, each of us becomes the recipient of gifts of grace, which Christ has apportioned to us. Though the church is a unity, as individuals we are diverse, but our differences are complimentary and work interdependently with one another. Christ gives every Christian functions, the enabling to do them and the empowering to live according to His will and purpose.

God calls each of us with unique gifts He has given to us so that we may minister to and enrich one another. This is not an extra to the Christian life. This is the Gospel. If we are serious about the Gospel impacting those around us, our communities, cities and around the globe, what we will discover is that the gifts we are given, working in harmony together with others, operate effectively. Within that context, many are led to Christ. And being captive in Christ, workers together with Him, is the adventure to which God has called every Christian.

***PRAYER: Thank You, Lord, for releasing me from the bondage of sin and making me captive in You. Keep me always in your hands and ready to serve You.***

***TO REFLECT UPON: Have I thought of myself as being captive in Christ, and how does that make me feel?***