

Christ's Gifts to His Church

During June we are going to spend a good deal of time in Ephesians 4.1-16. We will be discussing church unity as well as some of the principles needed as we talk about ordaining additional elders and deacons to serve the Cornerstone Church. In 4.1, Paul urges Christians to live out their salvation in accordance with the Father's will. Next, in 4.2-3, he shows *how we live out our salvation*. Then he shows us in 4.4-6 what the foundation of our spiritual life is, walking in oneness with the Father, Son and Spirit. And finally, 4.7-11 shows us the resources for living out our salvation. In this lesson we will focus on Ephesians 4.7-11.

I. Ephesians 4.7: Christ's Gifts to Us

- A. Grace is an Act of Giving
 - 1. 4.7: *to each one of us **grace** was given...*
 - 2. Christianity is not just about what we do for God. It is a response to what God has done for us. Grace is a self-donation.
- B. Everyone Receives
 - 1. 4.7: *to **each one of us***. There is no Christian left out.
 - 2. 4.7: *according to the **measure** of Christ's gift.*
 - a) Each one of us has a measured out gift ...
 - b) 1 Peter 4.10: *Just as each one has received a gift, **use it** to serve others, as good stewards of the varied grace of God.*
 - c) 1 Peter 4.11: Two basic categories: speaking gifts and serving gifts.
- C. We Must Use the Gift We Have Received

II. Ephesians 4.8-10: How Christ Obtained the Right to Give Gifts

- A. Ephesians 4.8: this comes to us from Psalm 68.18. Paul applies the Psalm to Jesus.
- B. Ephesians 4.9: Christ descended to the underworld where he proclaimed a message of victory to rebellious demonic powers. See also 1 Peter 3.19.
- C. Ephesians 4.10: *The one who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens, to **fill all things**.*
- D. Jesus paid the ultimate price for our sins, won the victory, and is qualified as King to give gifts.

III. Ephesians 4.11: Christ's Gifts to the Whole Church

- A. Ephesians 4.11: *And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers,...*
- B. Apostles and Prophets
 - 1. Apostles were chosen directly by Jesus and were witnesses of His resurrection.
 - 2. Prophets were instrumental in building up and strengthening the local church.
- C. **Evangelists**: preach the good news of salvation in Christ to those who have not yet believed.
- D. **Pastors** and Teachers
 - 1. Pastors is the word we use for shepherd.
 - 2. Acts 20.28: Shepherds lead the flock (overseers), and they shepherd or care for or feed the flock. Shepherds lead and feed.

IV. As We Close...

- A. Those who lead over us and serve us in ministry ... be it as an evangelist or minister ... or a shepherd ... are gifts Christ has given to His church.
- B. So how do we regard our leaders? How do we see them?
 - 1. 1 Timothy 5.17: ... **good leaders are to be considered worthy of double honor,...**
 - 2. 1 Thessalonians 5.12: ... **give recognition to those who labor among you and lead you...**
 - 3. Hebrews 13.17: **Obey your leaders and submit to them, ...they keep watch over your souls...**
- C. Are you following them?