

## Christian, Commit Yourself to a Local Church - Part 2

Pastor Adam Hall ☞ Dryden First Baptist Church ☞ June 26, 2022

Ephesians 4:7-12 ESV

<sup>7</sup> But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. <sup>8</sup> Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,  
and he gave gifts to men.”

<sup>9</sup> (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.) <sup>11</sup> And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,



### Introduction and Background

a) “THE LONELY EMBER”?

- have you ever heard the story of the “THE LONELY EMBER”?

- it is a powerful illustration of how important the “local gathering of believers” is to each Christian!

*A member of a certain church, who previously had been attending services regularly, stopped going.*

*After a few weeks, the pastor decided to visit him. It was a chilly evening. The pastor found the man at home alone, sitting before a blazing fire. Guessing the reason for his pastor's visit, the man*

*welcomed him, led him to a big chair near the fireplace and waited. The pastor made himself comfortable but said nothing. In the grave silence, he contemplated the play of the flames around the burning logs.*

*After some minutes, the pastor took the fire tongs, carefully picked up a brightly burning ember and placed it to one side of the hearth all alone. Then he sat back in his*

*chair, still silent. The host watched all this in quiet fascination. As the one lone ember's flame diminished, there was a momentary glow and then its fire was no more. Soon it was cold and "dead as a doornail."*

*Not a word had been spoken since the initial greeting. Just before the pastor was ready to leave, he picked up the cold, dead ember and placed it back in the middle of the fire. Immediately it began to glow once more with the light and warmth of the burning coals around it. As the pastor reached the door to leave, his host said, "Thank you so much for your visit and especially for the fiery sermon. I shall be back in church next Sunday."*

- don't you wish you could say almost nothing and have such life transforming \_\_\_\_\_ ?
- we are years past the start of the pandemic and many professing \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ have not returned to in person \_\_\_\_\_
- most churches in Ontario are still down 10 to 40% of their pre-covid attendance
- how much more important is it for the \_\_\_\_\_ in Canada to hear this powerful illustration
- how much more important is it for the believers in Canada to hear Paul's \_\_\_\_\_ on the church in the book of Ephesians

## b) Overview of Ephesians

- Paul wrote this book of Ephesians to the \_\_\_\_\_ that was in the city of Ephesus
- this church had some serious \_\_\_\_\_ with Jews and Gentiles not getting along
- this church also had some serious problems with being influenced by the sinful \_\_\_\_\_ around them

- Paul wrote this book for \_\_\_\_\_ reasons

1) Paul wrote this book to \_\_\_\_\_ the Ephesians of the wonderful \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ

2) Paul wrote this book to \_\_\_\_\_ the dangerous disunity between Jews and Gentiles in this congregation

3) Paul wrote this book so that they would \_\_\_\_\_ in holiness

- the structure of the book of Ephesians is very simple

1) chapters 1-3 focus upon the \_\_\_\_\_ and salvation found in Jesus Christ with some \_\_\_\_\_ for the Ephesians

2) chapters 4-6 focus upon Christian \_\_\_\_\_ in light of the grace of Jesus Christ

- Ephesians 4-6 mainly focuses upon the \_\_\_\_\_ life and how to \_\_\_\_\_ in a way that is worthy of the Lord

- Ephesians 4:1-3 Paul commanded the Ephesians to carry out the godly characteristics of \_\_\_\_\_, patience, humility and \_\_\_\_\_

- Paul also called this church to maintain \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ

- Ephesians 4:4-6 Paul builds the foundation for unity with the use of 7 “ones”!

1) One \_\_\_\_\_ – there is only one body of believers who all belong to Jesus Christ

2) One \_\_\_\_\_ – the Holy Spirit

3) One Glorious \_\_\_\_\_ – the blessed hope of eternal life in heaven with the Lord for eternity

4) One \_\_\_\_\_ – there is only one Lord who is Jesus Christ

5) One \_\_\_\_\_ – we are made right with God through faith in Jesus Christ

6) One \_\_\_\_\_ – when Jesus saves us we obey Jesus by being baptized

7) One \_\_\_\_\_ and Father of All – there is only one God

- and now we come to this next section, Ephesians 4:7-16, which highlights the importance of a Christian being \_\_\_\_\_ to a local church, because of the \_\_\_\_\_ Christ has given to the church

### **Brief Outline**

**1) (4:7) God Gives Grace**

**2) (4:8-10) God Gives Himself**

**3) (4:11-12) God Gives Gifts**

**1) (4:7) God Gives Grace**

(4:7) But grace was \_\_\_\_\_ to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

a) most commonly “grace” refers to the saving grace of God

- Paul writes a “BUT” here to highlight that although God is glorious and awesome, He gives us \_\_\_\_\_ through Jesus Christ

- grace is given to every believer but what \_\_\_\_\_ is Paul referring to here?

- the word “grace” can refer to different things depending on the \_\_\_\_\_ of the passage

- most commonly the word “grace” refers to the \_\_\_\_\_ grace of God which is favour or mercy, given to people who do not \_\_\_\_\_ it

- of course, Paul talks about this \_\_\_\_\_ of grace given to us in Ephesians 2:1-10

- we deserve the \_\_\_\_\_ or anger of God for our sin but God, who is rich in mercy, shows us \_\_\_\_\_ when we truly do not deserve any good.

- the grace of God completely \_\_\_\_\_ upon Jesus Christ and His work upon the Cross

- \_\_\_\_\_ Christ takes the sin of His people and bears the punishment of God in place of them so that they can be \_\_\_\_\_ and be reconciled back to God

- the book of \_\_\_\_\_ also speaks clearly about God’s saving grace

**Titus 3:3-6** For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. <sup>4</sup> But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, <sup>5</sup> he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own \_\_\_\_\_, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, <sup>6</sup> whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

b) the grace that Paul is referring to is the spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ given to believers

- the grace that Paul is talking about here in Ephesians 4:7 is not the saving grace

- the grace that Paul is referring to is the spiritual gifts given to believers and for the work of \_\_\_\_\_

- of course, unless you have experienced the \_\_\_\_\_ grace of Jesus Christ you can never experience the grace that Paul is referring to in the form of \_\_\_\_\_ gifts

- Paul is teaching that through the \_\_\_\_\_ of God by the Holy Spirit we as believers are \_\_\_\_\_ spiritual gifts to do the works of ministry

c) mention of gifts in three other New Testament letters

- Paul and Peter talk about the spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ given to believers in three other New Testament letters

i) 1 Corinthians

- we have talked extensively about the spiritual gifts found in 1 Corinthians 12-14 when we looked at the Corinthians letters

ii) Romans

- Paul also talks about spiritual gifts in Romans

**Romans 12:6-8** Having gifts that \_\_\_\_\_ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; <sup>7</sup> if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; <sup>8</sup> the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of \_\_\_\_\_, with cheerfulness.

iii) 1 Peter

- and Peter talks about spiritual gifts in his 1<sup>st</sup> letter

**1 Peter 4:10-11** As each has received a \_\_\_\_\_, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: <sup>11</sup> whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever \_\_\_\_\_, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies-- in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong \_\_\_\_\_ and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

- if you are trusting in Jesus Christ \_\_\_\_\_ for the forgiveness of your sins, God has given you His Holy Spirit

- the Holy Spirit \_\_\_\_\_ within you by the grace of God

- but God gives the Christian more blessings and one of those \_\_\_\_\_ is a spiritual gift, or gifts, to be used for His \_\_\_\_\_

- for instance, God gives a person the \_\_\_\_\_ of service so that they will serve the body of Christ

- if you have been given the spiritual gift of service, then you are motivated and talented to \_\_\_\_\_ others in the body of Christ

- the use of your gift glorifies God and not \_\_\_\_\_

- these \_\_\_\_\_ gifts are given to each believer because of the grace of \_\_\_\_\_ given to us

## 2) (4:8-10) God Gives Himself

(4:8) Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave \_\_\_\_\_ to men."

- Paul starts out this section quoting from the \_\_\_\_\_ Testament
- Paul quotes Psalm 68:18 to back up his point that \_\_\_\_\_ gives gifts to people
- Psalm 68 reminds people of the gracious and \_\_\_\_\_ acts of God done for Israel while they were in the wilderness
- this Psalm speaks about the Lord being an all-\_\_\_\_\_, sovereign all-mighty God who \_\_\_\_\_ the enemies of His people
- do you see how many times the \_\_\_\_\_ of those who hate God are mentioned in Psalm 68?
  - 68:1 – God shall arise, His \_\_\_\_\_ shall be scattered
  - 68:2 – the \_\_\_\_\_ will perish before God
  - 68:21 – God will strike the heads of His \_\_\_\_\_

- Psalm 68 speaks about God's great \_\_\_\_\_ and deliverance of His people

- the Lord \_\_\_\_\_ His enemies and gives blessing to the people of God

- but Psalm 68 speaks to us about the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ upon the Cross

- Jesus Christ defeats His enemies on the cross and those enemies are the \_\_\_\_\_ powers

- Yes, Jesus Christ was triumphant over \_\_\_\_\_ and the demons

**Colossians 2:15** He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open \_\_\_\_\_, by triumphing over them in him.

- Psalm 68 speaks to us about Christ's work of deliverance and also of the \_\_\_\_\_ that He gives to His people

- in this context of Ephesians, the gifts that Christ gives are the spiritual gifts so that people can do the work of \_\_\_\_\_, proclaiming Christ's \_\_\_\_\_ over sin

(4:9) (In saying, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth?

- this is certainly one of the most controversial verses in Ephesians

- this verse speaks about the "descending" of Jesus Christ to the \_\_\_\_\_ regions of the earth

- there are three \_\_\_\_\_ views on what Paul means when He writes about the descent of Christ into the lower regions which is the \_\_\_\_\_

### 1) Jesus Descends into Hades

- some interpreters think that after Jesus died he \_\_\_\_\_ to hell
- the problem with this view is we have no \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus talking about a descent into hell
- this verse, interpreted properly, does not suggest this \_\_\_\_\_ at all

### 2) Jesus' Spirit Descends upon the Believers

- others think that Paul is referring to God the \_\_\_\_\_ Spirit descending upon the believers in \_\_\_\_\_ 2 at Pentecost
- but this cannot be true because the text clearly says that it is \_\_\_\_\_ who descends not the Holy Spirit

### 3) Jesus Descends upon the Earth in the Incarnation

- I believe this is the accurate interpretation since \_\_\_\_\_ uses this word "descend" several times to speak about His incarnation
- the incarnation means "God takes on \_\_\_\_\_ flesh in the person of Jesus Christ"
  - **John 3:13** No one has ascended into heaven except he who descended from heaven, the Son of Man.
  - **John 6:33** For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world."

- some think since Paul uses the phrase "the lower regions of the \_\_\_\_\_" that must mean that Jesus went to hell

- but this phrase "lower regions of the earth" can also refer to Jesus coming to \_\_\_\_\_, dying and then being buried

- Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ upon the lower regions of the earth, is persecuted, killed and then buried

- again, we see just how important the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus is to the early church writers

- God is \_\_\_\_\_ in Psalm 68 and we see Jesus Christ victorious as He dies and is \_\_\_\_\_ from the dead

- Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ death, hell and the grave

(4:10) He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

- but Jesus did not \_\_\_\_\_ dead, the Lord God raised Him from the dead
- also Jesus did not stay on earth but \_\_\_\_\_ back to the Father in heaven

- Jesus promised several times that He would go \_\_\_\_\_ to His Father in heaven and then later he would \_\_\_\_\_ the Holy Spirit

**John 20:17** Jesus said to her, "Do not cling to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and say to them, 'I am \_\_\_\_\_ to my Father and your Father, to my \_\_\_\_\_ and your God.'"

- Jesus went back to heaven to fill or to fulfill all things

- \_\_\_\_\_ coming to the earth, Jesus dying on the Cross, Jesus being raised from the dead and Jesus ascending into heaven, \_\_\_\_\_ the Old Testament prophecies about Him!

### **3) (4:11-12) God Gives Gifts**

(4:11) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,

- this is the \_\_\_\_\_ time where Paul speaks of Jesus "giving"

- the previous two examples are found in Ephesians 4:7, 8

- o 4:7 – grace is given to us through the measure of Christ's work
- o 4:8 – Jesus by means of His victory on the cross gives gifts

- now Paul goes into the gifts that are \_\_\_\_\_

- this is one of the four sections of scripture that speak about \_\_\_\_\_ gifts

- in this section Paul specifically speaks about the gifts that are given to people who are \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus Christ

#### **a) Apostles**

- when Jesus started His ministry, He \_\_\_\_\_ twelve men to be apostles

- these 12 men were selected and taught by Jesus Christ for \_\_\_\_\_ years

- the apostles replaced Judas after he hanged himself with Matthias

- Paul describes himself as an apostle who was abnormally born in 1 Corinthians 15:8



- to qualify to be an apostle, one must have witnessed the \_\_\_\_\_ Lord Jesus  
**1 Corinthians 9:1** Am I not free? Am I not an \_\_\_\_\_? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are not you my workmanship in the Lord?

- an apostle was an \_\_\_\_\_ witness to the message and the \_\_\_\_\_ of Jesus
- the office of apostle does not presently \_\_\_\_\_ because no one can physically see the \_\_\_\_\_ Lord
- these apostle's lives and teachings laid the foundation for the \_\_\_\_\_ church
- their \_\_\_\_\_ given to the church is the New Testament writings which encourage us and \_\_\_\_\_ us up

#### b) Prophets

- a prophet is someone who \_\_\_\_\_ on behalf of God
- the prophets in the \_\_\_\_\_ Testament spoke messages \_\_\_\_\_ from God
- the prophets' gift given to \_\_\_\_\_ the is the Old Testament writings which encourage us and \_\_\_\_\_ us up

#### c) Evangelists

- an evangelist is \_\_\_\_\_ to share the \_\_\_\_\_ message with people
  - Paul \_\_\_\_\_ Timothy to do the work of the evangelist and thus \_\_\_\_\_ the gospel to people who do not know Jesus
- 2 Timothy 4:5** As for you, always be sober-minded, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, \_\_\_\_\_ your ministry.
- the person with this gift is motivated and passionate about \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus with those who are \_\_\_\_\_ Christians

#### d) Shepherds

- a shepherd is someone who tends to the \_\_\_\_\_ of God's people
  - this office is \_\_\_\_\_ and is described in 1 Peter
- 1 Peter 5:1-3** So I exhort the elders among you, as a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, as well as a partaker in the glory that is going to be revealed: <sup>2</sup> shepherd the flock of God that is among you, exercising \_\_\_\_\_, not under compulsion, but willingly, as God would have you; not for shameful gain, but eagerly; <sup>3</sup> not domineering over those in your charge, but being examples to the flock.

## e) Teachers

- a teacher is someone who is passionate about \_\_\_\_\_ people with the word of God

## f) (4:12) to equip the saints

- Jesus gives gifts to people so that they can \_\_\_\_\_ the saints

- note that these gifts are used not for \_\_\_\_\_ gain but for the equipping of other Christians

- these leaders \_\_\_\_\_ and disciple the believers in Jesus Christ

- again, if a professing Christian is not \_\_\_\_\_ in a local church how on earth can they be equipped?

- unless believers in Christ are present and \_\_\_\_\_ to their local church they \_\_\_\_\_ be equipped for the ministry of the gospel

- these saints are equipped for \_\_\_\_\_ reasons

i) for the work of \_\_\_\_\_

- Christians are equipped for the \_\_\_\_\_ of ministry

- as we are equipped in the Lord, we ought to be eager to \_\_\_\_\_ the grace of Christ with others by \_\_\_\_\_ our spiritual gifts

ii) for \_\_\_\_\_ up the body of Christ,

- this is how we ought to function with our \_\_\_\_\_ in the body of Christ

- we ought to \_\_\_\_\_ for the building up of the body of Christ which is her maturity, growing \_\_\_\_\_, unity and knowledge of the Lord

- I need to say this again, if we are not \_\_\_\_\_ to a local church how can we be built up and \_\_\_\_\_ up the body of Christ

## Application

### 1) The Grace of Christ Given

- Jesus is victorious and \_\_\_\_\_ those who have been freed from sin to \_\_\_\_\_ in Him (Ephesians 4:8)

- Jesus Christ descended to the lower regions of the \_\_\_\_\_ (Ephesians 4:9)

- Jesus \_\_\_\_\_ Himself and came to the earth, suffered the will of God for the people of God

- Jesus was buried and God \_\_\_\_\_ Him from the dead

- Jesus also ascended \_\_\_\_\_ to the Father in heaven (4:10)

- in Ephesians 4:8-10, we have the plain & simple \_\_\_\_\_ message of Jesus Christ
- because of Christ humans can be \_\_\_\_\_ from the bondage of sin
- because of Christ \_\_\_\_\_ can be free from addiction to drugs and alcohol
- because of \_\_\_\_\_ humans can be free from the burden of anxiety
- because of Christ humans can be free from the \_\_\_\_\_ of all sin
- \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ we can be free of the \_\_\_\_\_ of all our sins knowing that through Christ we can be completely forgiven

- today if you are \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus Christ, you are still in bondage of your \_\_\_\_\_
- you might even \_\_\_\_\_ your sin and want to relish in your sins, but you will never have \_\_\_\_\_ apart from Jesus Christ
- today, \_\_\_\_\_ in Jesus Christ alone for the freedom that He \_\_\_\_\_ can give
- trust in the person and work of Jesus Christ to cleanse you from all of your sin
- if you are a follower of Jesus Christ \_\_\_\_\_ that you have freedom
- maybe you are beaten down by a repeating sin, \_\_\_\_\_ looking to Christ and His work on the \_\_\_\_\_ done for you
- if you are not \_\_\_\_\_ upon Christ, how on earth can you \_\_\_\_\_ for Christ?
- but to top all of this off, Jesus gives the born again Christian spiritual \_\_\_\_\_
- gifts are given to \_\_\_\_\_ people so that they can encourage and \_\_\_\_\_ each other up in the Lord for the \_\_\_\_\_ of God

## **2) The Body of Christ Needs You and You Need the Body of Christ**

- one of the main themes of the passage of Ephesians 4:1-16 is church \_\_\_\_\_
- Paul has explained the \_\_\_\_\_ and prays that that they would progress in \_\_\_\_\_ in Ephesians 1-3 and now Paul, in Ephesians 4, writes a long section on the importance of church unity and church \_\_\_\_\_
- we see in Ephesians 4:1-16 that the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ needs you and \_\_\_\_\_ need the body of Christ
- when a person is not \_\_\_\_\_ at church, and not committed to local church, two important things \_\_\_\_\_ happen
- 1) first you do not \_\_\_\_\_ your gifts to build up the body of Christ
- the body of Christ \_\_\_\_\_ when you are not present and using your spiritual gift
- 2) second, the \_\_\_\_\_ person is not being built up nor \_\_\_\_\_ for the ministry of Jesus Christ

- when you are not present or not committed \_\_\_\_\_ hurt yourself and you \_\_\_\_\_ the body of Christ
  - the church at Corinth was a challenging \_\_\_\_\_ to be in
  - the church had been overtaken by \_\_\_\_\_, prideful and arrogant people
  - Paul was giving instruction on how to \_\_\_\_\_ the situation at the Corinthian church so that they could be healthy and \_\_\_\_\_
  - be committed and present so that you can be a part of the solution not the \_\_\_\_\_
  - Paul \_\_\_\_\_ them that church is for the building \_\_\_\_\_ of each other
- 1 Corinthians 14:26** What then, brothers? When you \_\_\_\_\_ together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let \_\_\_\_\_ things be done for building up.
- let us be a \_\_\_\_\_ and be a people who are eager to \_\_\_\_\_ Jesus Christ by serving the \_\_\_\_\_ church
  - let us lay aside our \_\_\_\_\_, our selfishness and laziness and be the body of Christ
  - let us \_\_\_\_\_ one another in love using our gifts for the \_\_\_\_\_ of others!
  - Do you know your spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ of gifts?
  - if you do not know, investigate and do the work of discovering and \_\_\_\_\_ what your gift is and \_\_\_\_\_ the body of Christ
  - if you need help one of the elders would love to help you \_\_\_\_\_ what that is
  - this passage is clear, the Christian is saved by grace, but God's grace also gives gifts
  - let us be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to use God's gifts of grace for the building up of the body of \_\_\_\_\_

### **Coming Up:**

#### **July 3**

- **Guest Speaker – Pastor Terry Thiessen (Adult and Teen Challenge)**

#### **July 10**

- **Guest Speaker – Kristoph Koebel**
- **Communion**

#### **July 17**

- **Guest Speaker – Gordon Robinson**
- **“In a Pit?” – Psalm 40**