

Life Together - Part 5
Gifts of Grace – Ephesians 4:7-8
Crosspoint – Dave Spooner – Oct. 10th, 2021

Intro:

- God created life to be lived together. Part of being made in His image is being made in and for community. The Trinity is a community, and we were made in this image which means we were meant to be in relationships together. Indeed, it is not good for us to be alone.
- The family of God has been expanded to the ends of the earth from every time zone and time period. Each local church is an outpost or a local expression of His family. This church is one of those expressions, and we are a gift to one another.
- I have told our children in the past that the best gift we could have given to them outside of the gospel is each other. In healthy families, this is true. And if you live in one, you know this is true.
- We will continue to grow as a healthy family as God continues to give us His grace and Spirit to unify us in Himself. God wants this place to be a place where His grace, wisdom, and glory are displayed, and I am grateful for His work and presence among us. We have more that binds us together than what pulls us apart.
- As individuals, each of us is built into the greater house and family of God (point to the nametag church). Inside of this house, each individual is a gift and is gifted. And the Holy Spirit, through the writing of Paul in our passage, turns our focus to how each of us is gifted. Christ, by His grace, chooses to gift each one of us, and each one of us has a choice to activate our gifting to benefit and bless others so that together we will see the will of God accomplished among us.

Eph 4:7-8 ESV

But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high, he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."

We are gifted because of His grace

- The gifts of God do not come to us because of our goodness but because of His. He did not have to give us anything, He is the one who saved us, and He is the great King. Therefore, we are the ones who should be giving gifts to Him because of what He has done for us. However, because we are in His family and we are a part of His kingdom, the great warrior king gives gifts to His kingdom.
- He gives us these gifts because His greatness is reflected to us in His grace. This means the gifts you have received from the King do not come from you but are given to you. You can not earn them, and you did not create them. They are given from Him to us. This truth should help us be humble and use what has been given us to honor the one from whom the gifts have been given. We are gifted because of His grace.

Each one has been gifted

- If you are a part of the kingdom of God, you have been given a gift by Christ. Each one has been gifted. He did not skip over anyone. Christ has gifted everyone in the kingdom of God. I want you to see yourself as a gifted person, not in a prideful way but in a confident way. There is no such thing as an "ungifted Christian." All of you have been gifted; this can be said with 100%

accuracy because of this verse. We are one because of what binds us together, and also each one of us is gifted by Christ. Don't ever see yourself as not gifted because you are gifted because Christ has given you gifts. Don't underplay this, and don't overplay it. We have them because of the grace of God.

Christ chooses what we receive

- According to the measure of Christ's gift. Christ is the one who determines what gifts go to whom and in what measure these gifts are given. Know that He has given you the gifts that He wants you to have. This helps us focus on the way we have been gifted, and with what we have been gifted. It helps us develop and use what He has given, and use it to honor Him. He is the one who chooses to give what He does to whom he deems best. You can ask, but you cannot choose because He is the one who holds what is given to whom.
- We are now going to flip to another passage that deals with some of these gifts, and you will see three truths in the passages that focus on the various gifts. The passage I want you to turn to is 1 Corinthians, chapter 12. These three chapters are the fullest treatment of gifts in the New Testament. They deal with where the gifts come from, what they are, how they are to be used together in the body, and then in 14, there are more instructions about how they are to be used in more detail. However, the chapter in the middle is the "love chapter," and that chapter flows from the discussion of the gifts in recognition that love "is the most excellent way." We will quickly cover a lot of ground, so you can see how these chapters fit together and understand them in context.

1 Cor 12: 1-3 ESV

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. 2 You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

- Don't be uninformed about spiritual gifts. You need to know that no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit. This is about salvation. What this is saying is that you cannot have Jesus as your Lord if you have not been given the Holy Spirit. Which means you have the Holy Spirit in you at the point of salvation. **"Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit" (Eph 1:13b NIV).**
- All the people in the upper room when the Holy Spirit fell upon them for the first time were believers (Acts 2:1-13). The Holy Spirit who was in them also fell upon them to empower them to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). And in being witnesses, we are witnesses of the truth of the gospel, that Jesus is who He says He is, and His Spirit continues to work in the world in and through the lives of believers. We are witness of Him, for Him and through Him, that He is the great King, that He saves and regenerates and redeems. We can ask Him to come upon us and empower us by His presence and supernatural power. And here are some of the gifts that He gives to His children.

1 Cor 12: 4-6 ESV

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.

- There are a variety of gifts, services, and activities, and they are all empowered by the Trinity (which is the source of our unity – same Spirit, same Lord, same God – diversity within unity, which is increasable and beautiful and powerful).

1 Cor 12: 7-11ESV

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

- The gifts are given for the “common good.” They are for you, but they are not about you. They are given for the good of everyone, and they are not given to exult you but to benefit others. Use them for the common good, so others can benefit from the grace of God given to you.
- There is supernatural wisdom, supernatural knowledge, supernatural faith, supernatural healing, supernatural miracles, supernatural prophecy, supernatural discernment, supernatural tongues, supernatural understanding of tongues, all of them given by the same Spirit. You see this highlighted throughout this list of some of the gifts.
- And again, notice who is the one who chooses what gifts are given to whom. It is by Christ through the Holy Spirit who apportions to each one individually as He wills. Each of us has received this enabling grace in the exact proportion that Christ gave it. (And yes, you can ask for the “greater gifts” (I Cor. 12:31; I Cor. 14:1), but He is the one who decides who gets what.)

Every member matters

1 Cor 12: 14-20 ESV

For the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

- We have all different types of giftings, and we need all of them because every member matters. We are not all the same, which is a good thing! Just as each part of our body matters, so does each part of the body of Christ. We are many parts, yet one body. So be who you are created to be (everyone else is taken) and find joy in it! This means we should celebrate the gifts that God has given and be grateful for one another, and if we lack things in the body, we should ask God

for it. This keeps us from being jealous of others and keeps us grateful for who God has made us and what God has given to us.

- And then God shows us the “more excellent way” (I Cor. 12:31b).

Choose the way of Love

1 Cor. 13:1-3

If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing.

- Even if you are the most gifted person in the world, if you do not love, you are nothing, and you gain nothing. Love is the most excellent way because it is all that will remain in the end. It is of eternal value because everything else will fade away. What you do is important, but why you do it is more important—motivation matters. People can use their gifts for all sorts of reasons, so if they are not motivated by love, they don't count, and you count for nothing. Let love guide, motivate, and move you. **Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends (7-8).**

Conclusion

- Possible interviews.
- Know, you are gifted because of His grace, and He chooses—every member matters. Love must move and motivate us.
- Prayer.