



# IN EPHESIANS

## CHRIST

### Lesson #34

#### Grace & GIFTS

(Ephesians 4:7-11)

### We Are Living in Dangerous Times

- (2 Timothy 3:1-5) Christendom is chiefly made up of those who have “a form of **godliness** but denying its power.”
- (2 Timothy 3:16-17) All Scripture is profitable for doctrine (but many do not think the study of doctrine is important); for reproof (but many do not take the reproofs of Scripture seriously); for correction (but many do not want to change how they live to conform it strictly to the Word of God); for instruction in righteousness (but many live their lives according to what they think is right and not strictly according to God’s righteousness).
- (2 Timothy 4:3-4) Today many do not study, know, or live by sound doctrine. They believe that they know enough without study, they live according to their own desires and standards of righteousness, they have turned away from God’s truth and have turned to fables.
- Many do “church” their own way and ignore God’s design for HIS BODY - the Church.
- Questions for serious disciples of Christ:
  - ① Do the words Jesus, Luke, John, Paul, Peter, etc., used in the first century mean the same thing today?
    - If not, who decides the meaning of the words?
    - If not, who has the authority to change the meaning of words?
  - ② Do the “customs” or “traditions” of the first century church still pertain today?
    - If no, then who decides what a “tradition” or “custom” is appropriate and/or acceptable to God?
  - ③ Does the Bible still mean what it said when it was written down for our learning?

**Are We Walking Worthy?** (Ephesians 4:1-2)

**Are We Endeavoring to Keep the Unity?** (Ephesians 4:3-6)

### He Descended and Ascended for His People

(Ephesians 4:8-10)

- The distance: “the lower parts of the earth” to “far above all the heavens”.
- Have we meditated on ALL that Christ did and is doing for sinners like us!
- Having ascended into heaven Christ received God’s gift of the Holy Spirit and in turn gave the Holy Spirit, through Whom spiritual gifts come, to His people.

### To Each One of Us Grace Was Given

(Ephesians 4:7)

- This grace is NOT salvation grace. It is enabling power to use God’s given gifts for His glory and for the good of the members of the Body.
- Therefore, each of us – every Christian – has been given grace and gifts to be used.
  - ★ “He gave gifts to men” – Christ gives gifts; He does not offer gifts.
  - ★ Gifts are not determined by a person’s preference, talents, or abilities.
  - ★ Gifts are given according to God’s sovereign will..
  - ★ Gifts are given to fulfill God’s plan and purpose.
  - ★ Gifts are NOT interchangeable. Eye cannot take the place of a hand. An ear cannot replace of foot.
    - ILLUSTRATION: the setting up of the Tabernacle in the wilderness. - GOD determined what each family was to do. (Numbers 3-4)
    - See Handout: Priests of the MOST HIGH
  - ★ Gifts are given according to God’s measure!
  - ★ A Christian has no say in what his/her gift is – it is decided by God.
  - ★ Spiritual gifts are like DNA. A spiritual gift is a “gift” of God that God forms for each of His children to be used for His purpose; to fulfill His plan for the individual, church, and world.
- (1 Peter 4:10) “As **each one** has received a gift, minister **it** to one another, as good **stewards** of the manifold grace of God.”
  - ★ “steward” one entrusted with something of the Master’s; to be used in accordance with the Master’s will/wishes/desires.
    - See Matthew 25:14-30
    - The Master gave different amounts of talents. They became “**stewards**” of the Master’s talents.
      - (v. 19) Upon His return the Master expected His servants to USE HIS TALENTS wisely.
      - (v. 30) The one who did not use was “thrown into the outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
- ★ We will learn that without **every** part doing his/her part the whole Body suffers.

## He Gave Some to Be Apostles and Prophets (Ephesians 4:11)

- Both of these offices were given to the Church at her beginning.
- At the beginning the Church only had the Old Testament and now that God was doing something “new” the Church needed help in understand how to go forward.
- The office of apostle was one who had been “sent by” (commissioned by) Christ Himself to be His representative on earth.
- There were five requirements for one to be an apostle:
  - ① He had to be an eye-witness of the resurrected Christ. (1 Cor 9:1)
  - ② He had to be called and commissioned by Christ Himself. (Gal 1:1)
  - ③ He had to be given supernatural revelation of the Truth. (Eph 3:2-3)
  - ④ He was given power and authority to speak infallibly. (2 Peter 3:14-16)
  - ⑤ He was given power to work miracles to authenticate his message. (Acts 15:12; 19:11)
- An apostle could not appoint himself. In 2 Corinthians 11:13-14, Paul writes of “false apostles”.
- Once the apostles died the office died.
- Prophets worked alongside with Apostles – see Ephesians 2:19-20; 3:4-5.
- A prophet was one who spoke under the direct inspiration of God. (Agabus - Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-11)

## He Gave Some to Be Evangelists and Pastor-Teachers (Eph 4:11)

- As the Church became established on the “foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ the chief cornerstone” God gave He evangelists and pastor-teachers.
- An evangelist is one who preaches and explains the **good news** of salvation through/in/by Jesus Christ. One becomes an evangelists by the call and equipping of God.
- Pastor-teachers are those who care for, teach, and equip the saints under their care. “Pastor” is ποιμήν (poimen) meaning “shepherd”. Pastors are “undershepherds” with Christ as the Chief Shepherd. (1 Peter 5:1-4)
- The primary of function of “pastor-teacher” is teaching. In order to teach one must have extensive knowledge of the Word of God. He, himself, must be a diligent student of God’s Word. One becomes a pastor-teacher by the call and equipping of God.
- If God “gifts” His churches with pastor-teachers then God expects His people to be students, sitting under these pastor-teachers.

