

“Christ’s Gifts to the Church”

Text: Ephesians 4:8-12

Intro:

- The word of God tells us as a result of Christ ascending that He gave gifts unto to men.
- Here the gifts spoken of are people not “tongues” not “miracles”, not “healing”.
- Christ gives these gifts through the Holy Spirit.
- In verses 9 and 10, we are given a parenthetical statement.
- Then the gifts Christ gave are listed in verse 11,
 - “...he gave some apostles; and
 - some, prophets;
 - some, evangelists;
 - and some, pastors and teachers;”
- There are no apostles today.
 - The apostles of Acts chapters 1-10, were necessary during the formative years of the church as it began to grow.
- There are no prophets today.
 - The prophets of Acts chapters 11-28 were necessary for its maturity preceding the completion of the New Testament canon.
- Since that time we have “some evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”

- Evangelists go from place to place holding meetings and on the road 38-40 weeks a year.
- Some names we are familiar with are Billy Sunday, Sam Jones, Bob Jones, Sr., Charles G. Finney, George Whitfield, Dwight L. Moody, Billy Graham, and Johnny Campbell.
- The last group ministering to the body of Christ before the Rapture will be “pastors and teachers.”
 - Notice there is no semicolon after pastors.
 - So, what that means is that pastors and teachers are one in the same.
 - According to the Word of God, the pastor is to be a teacher.
 - In 1 Timothy 3, where the Word of God lists the qualifications of a pastor, we are told in verse 2 that one of the qualification is “**apt to teach**”
 - If a man is not a teacher of the word of God, then he has no business being in the pulpit as a pastor.
- The focus of my message is to look at the purpose that Christ gave these men to the church.
- The answer is found in **Ephesians 4:12**.
 - For the perfecting of the saints
 - For the work of the ministry
 - For the edifying of the body of Christ

I. For The Perfecting Of The Saints

- The word perfecting means to complete, furnishing, equipping.
- You see someone does not get saved and that is it.
- If that was the case then there would be no need for evangelists and pastors.
- Salvation is just the beginning of a person's new life in Christ.
- Still is a whole lot of perfecting that needs to be done.
- Many of us got saved later on in life and still very rough around the edges.
- How does the man of God perfect the saints that God has given him charge over?
- Primarily, by taking the word of God that is given by inspiration of God and using it for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and for instruction in righteousness.
 - **Doctrine** - Of all the things we want to learn from the word of God, doctrine is the most important.
 - ("*Doctrine*" simply means the things that the Bible teaches about a certain subject.)
 - There are over 5,000 different denominations in the United States today, each one having a different interpretation of the scriptures.
 - Members of these denominations strictly adhere to the teaching of their own peculiar sect.

- However, we are interested in what *the word of God* teaches, because it is the only pure source of doctrine we will ever study.
- We must set our hearts upon learning *what the Bible **says**, and not* what a man or a denomination believes.
- The only way we will ever know the truth is to take the scriptures in the King James Bible at face value.
- **The Final Authority** for the believer, above what anyone teaches, the faithful standard by which we may judge all things, is the *1611 Authorized Version*.
- As we read in the book of Romans:

"Let God be true but every man a liar."— Romans 3:4

- The Psalms also warn us:

"It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man."— Psalm 118:8

- **Reproof** - implies the exposing of error and conviction of sin, with a suggestion of shame upon the one convicted.
- Scripture can be very pointed about our sin, but it is always for our good and in preparation of the *remedy*.
- The purpose of pointing out our sin is that we might receive correction and instruction.
- Some things may be hidden from men; but scripture is the light that uncovers all things, for nothing is hidden from God.
- *"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path."— Psalm 119:105*

- *"All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light."— Ephesians 5:13*
- *"For everyone that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be **reprov'd**."— John 3:20*
- Once reprov'd, we should heed the warning of Proverbs 29:
- *"He, that being often reprov'd hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroyed, and that without remedy."— Proverbs 29:1*
- Let us not be as this man, but accept the reproof of the scriptures as a kindness from the Lord, and the attending correction with joy.
- **Correction** - Correction is the *remedy* that will lead us to the restoration of our relationship with the Lord after we have sinned.
- In the scriptures, chastening is closely linked to correction.
- *"Behold happy is the man whom God **correcteth**: therefore despise not the **chastening** of the Almighty."— Job 5:17*
- *"My son, despise not the **chastening** of the Lord; neither be weary of his **correction**." Proverbs 3:11*
- For we know that;
- *"[N]o **chastening** for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them that are exercised thereby."— Hebrews 12:11*
- **Instruction In Righteousness** –
- *The Bible never leads anyone to do wrong; it always instructs us to do right.*

- *It is not even necessary that we understand everything in the scriptures in order to profit by them; but it is necessary that we believe them.*
- *We know that by and by the Holy Spirit will give understanding to the man who believes what God said.*
- *Paul expressed his desire for all believers in this regard.*
- *"For this cause also, since the day we heard it, do not cease to pray for you, and to desire that you might be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding;"— Colossians 1:9*
- *The Bible teaches us how to live a life pleasing unto the Lord, but we must study the word of God and give attendance to the teaching and preaching of the word of God.*
- *Thereby we can learn the great doctrines of the faith.*
- *Studying the scriptures will help perfect us and thoroughly furnish us unto all good works.*

II. For the work of the ministry

- Preaching and Teaching of the Word of God
- Studying the Word of God to be able to feed the flock of God.
- Praying for the people and the ministry
- Visiting the sick and needy
- Comforting members when need to be comforted – i.e. death, illness.
- Being able to reach each member 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
- Resolving conflicts within the church.

- Directing the financial affairs of the church.
- Being an encouragement to members.
- Establishing soul winning ministries
- Baby dedication, marriages, & funerals

III. For the edifying of the body of Christ

- Edifying means to build up.
- In regards to the body of Christ it means building up in Christian knowledge.
- Promoting another's growth in Christian wisdom, piety, happiness, and holiness.
- Again, the man of God accomplishes primarily through the use of the Word of God.
- It is the responsibility of the man of God to promote the individual spiritual growth of each member of the church.
- In everyday word he speaks, in each action he takes should come from a motivation to aid in the spiritual growth of each member of the church.
- What will be accomplished by all of this is found in **Ephesians 4:13-16 – Read.**

Conclusion:

- My dear friends, Christ has given me as gift to this church as its pastor and teacher for the purpose of
 - For the perfecting of the saints
 - For the work of the ministry
 - For the edifying of the body of Christ

- That is exactly what I have tried to do.

- Everything that I have tried to do since coming here has been to try to perfect and edify each every one of you.

- It has been part of the work of the ministry that God has called me to do.

- However, I have been faced opposition every step of the way not from without but from within.

- Before, I came here for over 3 years this church was a woman run church.
 - With a woman leading and making all the decisions.
 - You had a Pentacostal woman preacher and a bunch of pentacostals in leadership positions who all loved to have the preeminence.
 - There was no soul winning going on.
 - This church was being used for drinking and smoking pot and who knows what else.

- And when I decided to limit the folks who had keys to the building all I heard was murmuring going on behind my back.
- The parsonage is housing a man that is not in church, still drinks, uses the Lord's name in vain and brags about having guns in his possessions.
- This past June we had a conference meeting of the New England Evangelical Baptist Conference.
- This conference has as its president a man who does not believe that the King James Bible, is the preserved, inspired, infallible, inerrant word of God.
- At the conference he ridiculed both our guest speaker, Bro. Johnny Campbell. And myself.
- This conference by the way has members that are not even Baptist in their name.
- As result of all of this I declared that this church would no longer me part of this conference.
- Now, I find out behind my back that people in this church are receiving letters inviting them to attend a conference meeting on October 13,
- If that is not bad enough, some folks from here are planning on going.
- That is nothing but wickedness,
- This ministry is split again.

- You are going to have to decide who you are going to look for leadership either Mrs. Viall or myself.
- The Viall ministry is over.
- I am tired of playing second fiddle to a ghost.
- The decision is yours.