

## "A Call to Serve" Ephesians 4:7-16

Paul presented the basis for **unity** in the Church at Ephesus in verses 1-6. He urges each of us to walk worthy of the vocation to which we have been called. There is one body, one spirit, one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and One God. This truth unites every believer in Christ. We need guidance from the Holy Spirit to indwell our hearts. (Helping us to do right, convict us when we have wrong thoughts, wrong motives). If a believer cannot get along with others, he has trouble obeying and hearing God.

Now Paul turns our attention to service. "Our Call to Serve". Remember:

**Matthew 20:27-28** NIV *"and whoever wants to be first must be your slave. Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

**Joshua 24:14a, 15a** KJV *Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve Him in sincerity and in truth: v15a And if it seem evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve;*

Ministry is a hard task but we should never try to work solo or independent from the Holy Spirit. Jesus, is our Load-Bearer and has given us the free gift of **GRACE**. When you receive a gift, the appropriate response is, "Thank you". It is from a grateful heart that we seek (*go looking*) to help and serve others with kindness, charity, and goodness to please God.

David wrote: **Psalms 20:6-7** NIV *"Now this I know: The Lord gives victory to his anointed. He answers him, from his heavenly sanctuary with the victorious power of his right hand. v7 Some trust in chariots, and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God."*

We must grow in Grace to fulfill our God given purpose. The body of Christ must be determined to work diligently to unify the body of Christ. God the Creator will not lower His standards to accommodate His creation. **Eph 2:10** NLT For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago. We serve a just and sovereign God. Christ, is the Lord of the church. The Chief cornerstone.

**Ephesians 4:7-16** KJV and NIV

7. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

- **Romans 12:3** NIV *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.*
- Every believer in Christ has received at least one gift: (Spiritual / Natural gifts)
- The gifts are *not* identical.
- He gives, allots, assignments and distributes spiritual gifts as He sees the need: Honor God by using your time, talents, and treasures in such a way that pleases God and brings glory to His name.
- **1 Corinthians 12:4-6** NLT There are different kinds of Spiritual Gifts, but the same spirit is the source of them all. v5 There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. v6 God works in different ways, but it is the same God, who does the work in all of us.
- Christ who has given himself for his church, will now give gifts to make certain the church is operating according to his specifications.

8, *This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."* NIV

9. *What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions?* NIV

10. *He who descended is the very one ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.* NIV

- Colossians 2:13-15 NIV When you were *dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, v14 having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us and that stood opposed to us; he took it away, nailing it to the cross. v15 And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross.*
- God is a giving God. Paul wants us to fully grasp the extent of God's love and grace.
- He is generous and gracious and will always give us better than we deserve.

11. And he gave some, apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some Pastors and teachers;

- Apostles and Prophets were foundational ministries in the early church. The evangelists built on the foundation of Christ by winning the lost to Christ. All ministries *should do the work* of an evangelist who are bearers of the Good News. Remain faithful to the call of service. (**2 Tim 4:5**)
- The key to greatness is not found in position or power, but in character. Christ was, before we became. We must identify with Jesus Christ in His service and suffering.
- We should not serve Him because we want to receive an expected reward. (Question to ponder): "What reward did Jesus receive after He completed His assignment on earth?"
- These Spiritual gifts to the church have a single unified purpose: preparing the members (saints) with the necessary education, competencies, attitudes and confidence in their assignment. Each is to contribute to the work of the church resulting in the edification of the body of Christ, to build a strong and effective church.

12. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

- Spiritual gifts are meant to promote the unity of the body. Unity is necessary for the church to grow.
- We are not saved merely for our own benefit but to serve Christ and build up the church.
- All Christians are called to serve. Each is to contribute to the work of the church. Serve Christ by serving others.
- The result should be "the edifying of the body of Christ".

13. Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

- Paul understood that a perfect church will not be found in this world. Yet he still expects churches and their members to strive toward maturing in Christ.
- Stretch out in your faith. Be patient and kind.

14. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. NIV

- We must teach and preach Christ, not ourselves. **2 Corinthians 4:5-7** NIV "For what we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. v6 For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness, made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God; his glory displayed in the face of Christ. v7 But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us.

15. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is Christ. NIV

16. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows, and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. NIV

- Let love be your motivation.
- Edification in love may lead us to confront those who are misbehaving, but love may cause us to hold our tongues and lead by example at times.