



Truth Matters

A Publication Discussing Matters Related To Truth Because Truth Matters

Scripture Reading
Week of
October 23rd - 29th

Monday

- ❖ Jeremiah 39, 40
- ❖ Ecclesiastes 9
- ❖ Hebrews 7

Tuesday

- ❖ Jeremiah 41, 42
- ❖ Ecclesiastes 10
- ❖ Hebrews 8

Wednesday

- ❖ Jeremiah 43, 44
- ❖ Ecclesiastes 11
- ❖ Hebrews 9

Thursday

- ❖ Jeremiah 45, 46
- ❖ Ecclesiastes 12
- ❖ Hebrews 10

Friday

- ❖ Jeremiah 47, 48
- ❖ Songs 1
- ❖ Hebrews 11

Saturday

- ❖ Jeremiah 49, 50

Sunday

- ❖ Jeremiah 51, 52

Dynamic Church-Life:

Every Member Ministering, Part 2

By Pastor Powers

One of the biggest drawbacks from every member ministering is the feeling of personal inadequacy and the belief that there is always someone more qualified than me who can do the job. This is what we need to call the "Moses Syndrome."

You remember. Moses had just been called by God for an exciting ministry of leading the Hebrews out of Egypt. And what was Moses' response? "I can't, God. I'm not qualified. I have this speech impediment; I st...st...st...stutter. Aaron is better. Send him!"

In my last article I argued from Ephesians 4 that every member of Christ's body is called to a lifestyle of personal ministry. Right about here, I sense the potential for a major objection: "But Pastor, I am so inadequate for helping others." Paul knows that the tendency will be for us to cry out like Moses, "But I stutter. Send Aaron!" So your reaction is prone to be, "But I don't know what to say in ministering to others.

Call Pastor!" My response is, "Hold on! Don't tell God he doesn't know what he is doing by calling all of his people all of the time to do the work of ministry." **You have everything you need to be used by God as an instrument of change in the life of someone else!**

The Gifting

Listen to Paul as he continues on in Ephesians 4:7:

⁷ 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."

Every single believer has been given a gift in some measure. Let me repeat that sentence: "every single believer has been given a gift in some measure."

I want to point out that according to this text, we have all been given **the same gift but in various degrees**. There is no distinction upon certain

individual spiritual gifts here. In fact, Paul is not even referring to spiritual gifts. He does not use the word "charismata," from which we get the idea of spiritual gifts. Rather, the gift that was given here does not come from the Spirit but from Christ. And furthermore, it is not "charismata" (spiritual gift) but the word for "present." Every believer was given a measure of the spoils earned in Christ's victory and left behind when he ascended into glory. (That is the purpose of the parenthesis in vv.10-11). The argument really goes from the words "grace was given" (v.7) and "he gave presents" (v.8) to "And he gave" at the beginning of v.11. In other words, in order to really catch Paul's train of thought, you might need to skip the parenthetical verses of 10-11.

⁷ 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,

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...continued

and he gave gifts to men.”

¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,

So first of all, realize that we all have been given the same gift (present) from Christ but we possess it in differing degrees (“in measure”). The question left on your mind should be – what is the gift that Christ left as a type of spoils of victory?

Well, look at the way Paul says the gift came to him. Remember, we want to know what the gift of grace is that was given to each one of us “according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (v.7). We are looking for a gift of grace that comes meted out by Christ.

Go back to 3:1

¹ For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles— ² assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you,

Do you see the connection? Paul was given a portion of the

stewardship of grace from Christ on our behalf. What did he receive? Answer: the revelation of the gospel, specifically stating that Gentiles are welcome into the church.

³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. ⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

Paul was chosen by God to receive a higher degree of the measure of Christ’s gift in that he was marked among the holy apostles and prophets who received the revelation of God and put it into written form. Paul was used by God in writing Scripture. In this way, he truly received grace from the stewardship of God on behalf of us all. We, by extension have been given the same gift in a

differing measure in that we too have the scriptures in written form. The Gospel has come to us.

Look at 3:7

⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

So when Paul says that “grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift” (4:7) and that “he gave gifts to men” (4:8); and when he says that “he gave the apostle and the prophets” as those gifts, he means that the ministry of those men in receiving and writing the Gospel is a gift we all have in some measure. This is the very ground upon which the church is built. The gospel is the good news that Gentiles are in the promises of Christ (cf. Eph. 2:19-20).

The first part of the gift is the ministry of the written word of God – the Gospel.

The second part of the gift is that the ministry of the written word comes to you in a context – the context of the church.

We have already seen that the written word, the Gospel, forms and

grounds the church, but you also need to see that the church is the context in which the ministry of the Word really flourishes. This is what Paul means in v.12 by the second group of men given to the church as gifts. “Evangelists” are men gifted in bringing the ministry of the Word to people for the very first time – men like Philip and Paul – missionaries who go where no one else has ever gone. They come with the message of the gospel and establish a church. They quickly appoint pastors to come next – men like Timothy and Titus – who will begin to teach and thus equip the saints to do the work of ministry.

My point is very simple. You have everything you need in order to fulfill your call to full-time lifestyle ministry. You have been given a gift from Christ in various degrees. The gift is the ministry of the Word in the context of the church.

You have a call. It is a way of life that fits the salvation you were called to. You were a person in need of change who is being transformed by the Gospel as it comes to you through the ministry of the Word in the context of the church.

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...continued

The way of life that you are called to as a Christian is to minister to others maintaining the unity of faith by bringing others into a unity of faith that comes from the knowledge of God. In other words, your way of life is to minister the Word to others in the context of the church. (Next week we will answer the question – “what is ministry?”)

For now I want you to see that I exist as your pastor/teacher and this church exists to increase your measure of the gift and to equip you for the way of life to which you were called. You must avail yourself to the various teaching and

equipping ministries of this church. They exist as a way of furthering your understanding of scripture thus making you more effective at living the Christian life in contact with other Christians.

- Do not shut yourself out from increasing your measure of the gift of God’s Word. It comes through teaching.
- Do not impede your ability at effectively ministering the Word to the needs of others. That comes through equipping.
- Do not forsake the call upon your life – the call to a lifestyle of full-time ministry to

others. That comes by purposefully and meaningfully participating in the life of other Christians. Participate in a Growth group. Why?

Ephesians 3:8-10 (ESV)

⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom

of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

The church functioning in this way – with every member involved in personal ministry – makes God look glorious to the rulers and authorities in heaven who are watching us!

Do you want to make God look glorious? Fulfill your call. Plug yourself in to the life of someone else. Avail yourself to teaching and desire to be equipped in ministering to the needs of others!

Corporate Arsenal Passages

God is Faithful to All His Promises

Promise 31: Promise to deliver you from trouble

Psalm 34:7-8 &17

The angel of the Lord encamps around those who fear him, and delivers them. [8]

Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good!

Blessed is the man who takes refuge in him! [17] When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears and delivers them out of all their troubles.

