

## EPHESIANS: PRECISION THINKING FOR ACCURATE THEOLOGY

### SESSION 15 | EPHESIANS 4:7-16

#### THE GRACE GIVEN TO FOR THE UNITY OF OUR FAITH | EPHESIANS 4:7-16

- Verse 7 –
  - Each one of us has the same measure of grace.
    - Grace is given **according to the measure of the gift of Christ**.
    - This **gift of Christ** is an endless fountain. Compare Romans 12:3.
  - Note that here the emphasis is on **every** while in v. 13 the emphasis is on **some**.
- Verse 8 –
  - Paul quotes from Psalm 68:18, which is a Psalm of Reign (the victory of the Messiah and His future reign).
  - The verse speaks of the then future victory over all that had been taken into **captivity**, and the day when He would take **captivity captive** (that is, gain control over it from the Satanic control it was under).
  - This victory would have taken place at the resurrection, and given in full at the Second Coming.
  - Paul changes the text slightly when he says **and gave gifts unto men**, while the Hebrew says, **Thou hast received gifts for men**.
  - In the Psalm, the verse goes on to speak about **the rebellious**, a reference to Israel, but Paul applies the verse to the church in the present tense.
- Verse 9 –
  - Jesus used this same argument (to argue His divinity) in John 3:13 and 6:33. Compare also Jn 6:62 and 20:17.
  - When Paul says that Jesus **descended first into the lower parts of the earth** he is making reference to the world of the dead (as in Ps. 63:9 and Mt. 12:40).
  - While the Apostle's Creed says "He descended into hell," hell (the lake of fire) was uninhabited at that point, and remains so today.
    - It is only populated beginning with the Second Coming.
    - Today, unbelievers go to the world of the dead and await the resurrection.
    - (Note: from this teaching some have wandered into a doctrine of "Soul Sleep," which is *non sequitor*).
- Verse 10 –
  - The *session* of Christ is His position today, at the right hand of the Father. He has ascended **that he might fill all things**.
  - The word **fill** is translated **fulfill** in 2 Thessalonians 1:11, where it is used in the exact same form. The ascension of Jesus Christ is part of fulfilling all things (Ps. 110:1).
- Verse 11 –

- Earlier Paul spoke of how Christ **gave gifts unto men**, but now he speaks of **some** who received *particular positions*.
  - The list is not a list of *spiritual gifts*, but of *spiritual offices* that Christ has given:
  - **Apostles** - those given direct orders from Jesus Christ.
  - **Prophets** - those who received direct oracles from God.
  - **Evangelists** - those who were sent forth proclaiming the Good News.
  - **Pastors and teachers** - those assigned a role of shepherding and teaching.
- Note that this doesn't say that Christ *gives* but that **he gave**. If these positions are still given by Christ, one would have to find another passage of Scripture to prove such. Those who designate these as the "five-fold offices of the church" are doing eisegesis.
- Verse 12 –
  - The purpose of giving these positions was for **the perfecting of the saints**.
    - Note that **perfecting** is a better translation than *equipping*.
    - The Greek καταρτισμός [katartismos] is "*the ultimate work of art*."
  - The list in verse 12 is not a list of three separate things, but one building on another. It was **the saints** who did the **work of the ministry** toward the **edifying of the body of Christ**.
  - In 1 Cor 12:27-28 Paul also speaks of the **body of Christ** in the context of gifts.
  - In both 1 Cor. 12 and in this verse, the **body** is the local church, the reflection of the physical body that is in heaven.
- Verse 13 –
  - Continuing the purpose of the giving of offices, the goal of these offices was a **unity** in both **the faith and of the knowledge** of Jesus Christ.
  - This unity will bring the local church to be **a perfect man** who displays **the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ**.
  - That is, the local church is the perfect reflection of the body of Christ, which is in heaven.
- Verse 14 –
  - If we reach this unity and become the **perfect man** (v. 13), then we would not be **children** in faith, who display these characteristics:
    - **tossed** and carried **about with every wind of doctrine**.
    - Fooled by the **sleight of men** along with their **cunning craftiness**.
    - These two issues are one of the greatest maladies in the church today.
- Verses 15-16 –
  - Rather than being **tossed to and fro, and carried about** (v. 14), we **may grow up into him in all things** when we are **speaking the truth**.
  - There is a good possibility that the comma should go after truth, thus "speaking the truth, in love we might grow up into him..."
  - The important matter is that we now **deceive** (v. 14) but speak truth.