

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

Lesson 14

Chapter 4:07-11, The Study

"The Church As The New Mankind" P-2"
"The Corporateness of the New Mankind"

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REVIEW

Our Condensed Outline to date:

GOD'S SPECIAL SECRET

- X. CHAPTER 1 – The Church AS The Body of Christ
- XI. CHAPTER 2 – The Church AS The Temple of Christ
- XII. CHAPTER 3 - The Church AS God's Top Secret
- XIII. CHAPTER 4 – The Church AS The New Mankind
 - A. The Coordination of the Church 4:1-6
 - 1. The Problem of a Godly Walk 4:1
 - 2. The Problem of a Godly Love 4:2
 - 3. The Problem of the Unity of the Spirit 4:3
 - 4. The Provisions for Coordination 4:4-6

As we walked through Ephesians 4:1-6 we were taught that there were four different problems involved in the coordination of the various aspects of this new body of mankind known now as "The Church."

The **first** was, "How do you coordinate a people (Gentiles) who have not experienced living according to a Godly Walk?" Paul tells his readers that they are of such a high calling, in God's Calling of them, that they needed to learn how to *"live your life in a manner worthy of the calling with which you were called."*

Second, after giving them clues: All possible humility of mind, gentleness, stretched out spirit, and putting up with each other... He tells them that they must do these things in "godly love."

Third, he knows that they have experienced an amazing experience of "peace" after coming to Christ in belief and he calls them to join in "oneness of the Spirit" in that same manner of peace.

Forth, "How?" we might ask. Paul's instruction takes them to God the Father and understanding just who He is. 1). He is the Father. 2). He is the Father of All. 3). He is absolutely in control overall, through all, and in all. So, you better listen to His words and act according to His Spirit.

THE STUDY, 4:07-11, The Introduction

GOD'S SPECIAL SECRET

- I. CHAPTER 1 – The Church AS The Body of Christ**
 - II. CHAPTER 2 – The Church AS The Temple of Christ**
 - III. CHAPTER 3 - The Church AS God's Top Secret**
 - IV. CHAPTER 4 – The Church As The New Mankind**
 - A. The Coordination of the Church 4:1-6
 - B. The Corporateness of the New Mankind 4:7-11**
 - 1. The Rightful Giver 4:7-10**
 - a) The Measure of Christ's Gift 4:7
 - b) Christ Gave Gifts to Men 4:8
 - c) Christ left His heavenly home to come to earth and do The Father's Will. 4:9
 - d) Christ's return to heaven brought great Honor and Glory to Jesus Christ The King. 4:10
 - e) Christ the King has given men many great gifts for the leading and expanding this new body of believers. 4:11
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THE STUDY, Ephesians 4:7

Picking up our outline:

GOD'S SPECIAL SECRET

- I. CHAPTER 1 – The Church AS The Body of Christ
- II. CHAPTER 2 – The Church AS The Temple of Christ
- III. CHAPTER 3 - The Church AS God's Top Secret
- IV. **CHAPTER 4 – The Church AS The New Mankind**
 - A. The Coordination of the Church 4:1-6
 - B. **The Corporateness of the New Mankind 4:7-11**
 - 1. **The Rightful Giver 4:7-10**
 - a) **The Measure of Christ's Gift 4:7**

4:7 [Mac]

*But, in addition,
 grace was given to each one of us
 in accord with the measure
 of Christ's gift.*

4:7 [NASB]

*But
 to each one of us
 grace
 was given
 according to the measure of Christ's gift.*

THE COMMENTARY

This is the beginning of one very long sentence (Ephesians 4:7-16).

But, first we need to look back to the very beginning of the chapter and see our general situation. In the first 3 verses Paul lists three specific major problems with mankind. 1) Humans lack the general ability to follow a "Godly Walk." Man, outside of God's enablement through faith and belief, considers himself to be a god and looks to have all things fall into his individual control. 2) Humans lack the general ability to follow a "Godly love." Once again, we are self-love-driven, even when we are "in love with" another. Our love is

based on whether we feel loved. 3) Humans lack the general ability to bind together in absolute unity. Once again, this is related to our self-godliness. In each of those first three verses Paul speaks to believers who have the indwelling Holy Spirit of God, and a relationship with Almighty God, and a commitment to God's Son Jesus and tells us that it takes work to listen the Spirit's knowledge and guidance and ACT in a manner pleasing to God's holiness.

In the next 3 verses (4-6) Paul tells us about the workings of God (Father, Son, Spirit) in calling all believers into a single "corporation" that is "Coordinated" by God the Father through His grace into a multi-layered UNITY. There is One Body, One Spirit, One Hope, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and He is Father of All, He is Over All, Through All, and In All. Paul calls each believer to learn to function in this corporation of Unity and to be Unified in our cooperation belonging to this corporation.

BUT, Paul also tells us that there is more than enough of God's Grace to cover each and every one who believes, and enough of God's grace to cover the full and entire Universal Body of Christ. He also refines his knowledge of God's working of Grace by "measuring out" God's gift of grace, through Christ's Gift to us, "appropriately enough to meet any single or corporate need." "But all gifts were meaningful in the corporate group and purposeful in the long view."¹

"But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." (1 Corinthians 12:7)

"And He has said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me." (2 Corinthians 12:9)

¹ God's Special Secret, Copyright 1993 by Douglas B. MacCorkle. Printed and bound in the United States of America. Published by the not-for-profit MacCorkle bible Ministries, Inc. Books, P.O. Box 320909, Cocoa Beach, Fl. 32932-0909. P.156

"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."
(1 Peter 4:10)

THE STUDY, Ephesians 4:8 GOD'S SPECIAL SECRET

B. The Corporateness of the New Mankind 4:7-11

1. The Rightful Giver 4:7-10

- a) The Measure of Christ's Gift 4:7
- b) **Christ Gave Gifts to Men 4:8**

4:8 [Mac]

It is for this reason

He says, When

He ascended into the height

He led a host of prisoners captive,

He gave gifts to men.

4:8 [NASB]

Therefore it says,

"When

He ascended on high,

He led captive a host of captives, And

He gave gifts to men."

THE COMMENTARY

Paul is making an allusion to Psalm 68:18, not a quote. He's building a picture of the differences between the heights of heaven (up from here – way up) and the depths of the earth (down from here on the surface, perhaps way down) while he is addressing verses 8-9. Paul's original words seem to indicate the picture of a triumphal march of persons rescued in war. Our hero, Jesus, upon His death on the cross and His burial, became the only one ever who could, in the past or the future, take those who have been captives of sin and sins and lead them, march them, from an earthly life/death to an eternally living life in the heavens above.

"And He gave Gifts to men." Paul's emphasis is that these gifts were given to the Church and not upon the gifted individuals.² The meanings here are that men given with spiritual gifts were given to the Church, and spiritual gifts were given to Church functioning men so they can properly function in their spiritual responsibilities.

Such a grand corporate structure, but who but God could design so complete a design. What started out in A.D. 33 with a handful of men and women, has currently grown to over 2.4 billion who are alive in the world today – roughly one-third of the world's population. We all know that many of those may not be true believers, but still...!

² Ibid.

THE STUDY, Ephesians 4:9 GOD'S SPECIAL SECRET

C. The Corporateness of the New Mankind 4:7-11

1. The Rightful Giver 4:7-10

- a) The Measure of Christ's Gift 4:7
- b) Christ Gave Gifts to Men 4:8
- c) **Christ left His heavenly home to come to earth and do The Father's Will. 4:9**

4:9 [Mac]

(But

what does

'He ascended' imply?

Nothing other than

*He also previously descended into the lower regions,
which are the earth?*

4:9 [NASB]

Now this expression,

"He ascended,"

what does it mean except that

He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth

THE COMMENTARY

I suppose that we could come up with many possible interpretations of this verse, But MacCorkle has helped us here. **"Christ left His heavenly home to come to earth and do The Father's Will."**

Once again, we are being reminded of who this person is who has done all these wonderful things for His Father who is in heaven. We have to be reminded, due to our human hearts and minds, that the whole story, from beginning to end, is about Jesus. John reminds us:

"In the beginning was the word, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being. In Him was life, and

the life was the Light of men. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it.

(John 1:1-5)

We should see here that the whole plan of God, as told to us in the scriptures, is about Jesus... and the Father's plan to offer and bring salvation to those humans who would freely and voluntarily (as the Hebrew Shema proclaims to their nation Israel):

"The Lord our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might" (Deuteronomy 6:4-5).

John further explains:

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish, but have eternal life." (John 3:16)

The whole plan is for Jesus to bring completion to the plan and make human salvation possible by giving His life on the Cross. Jesus, God Himself, came down from heaven to accomplish this task. Having completed it, He returned to heaven. As we would tell it, from heaven to hell and back again – all for completing His Father's plan.

**THE STUDY, Ephesians 4:10
GOD'S SPECIAL SECRET**

D. The Corporateness of the New Mankind 4:7-11

1. The Rightful Giver 4:7-10

- a) The Measure of Christ's Gift 4:7
- b) Christ Gave Gifts to Men 4:8
- c) Christ left His heavenly home to come to earth and do The Father's Will. 4:9
- d) **Christ's return to heaven brought great Honor and Glory to Jesus Christ, The King. 4:10**

4:10 [Mac]

He Himself,

Who descended,

*is also the One Who ascended far above all the heavens,
with the purpose of filling all things.)*

4:10 [NASB]

He

who descended

is Himself also

He who ascended

far above all the heavens,

so that He might fill all things.)

THE COMMENTARY

Paul continues His description of what Jesus had done and here he tells us that on His return... He ascended above all of the heavens so that He might fill all things, but He does not tell us what that means. Instead, he will move on to telling us what "gifts" he gives, as a result, to the Church Universal and to those who are part of it.

THE STUDY, Ephesians 4:11
GOD'S SPECIAL SECRET

- V. CHAPTER 1 – The Church AS The Body of Christ
- VI. CHAPTER 2 – The Church AS The Temple of Christ
- VII.** CHAPTER 3 - The Church AS God's Top Secret
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 - A. The Coordination of the Church 4:1-6
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 - c) Christ left His heavenly home to come to earth and do The Father's Will. 4:9
 - d) Christ's return to heaven brought great Honor and Glory to Jesus Christ The King. 4:10
 - 2. The Right Gifts 4:11**
 - a) Apostles
 - b) Prophets
 - c) Evangelists
 - d) Pastors/Teachers (the same gift)

4:11 [Mac]

And it is

*He Himself that gave
 some as apostles,
 some as prophets,
 some as evangelists,
 some as pastor and teachers.*

4:11 [NASB]

And

*He gave
 some as apostles, and
 some as prophets, and
 some as evangelists, and
 some as pastors and teachers,*

COMMENTARY

Paul is still focusing upon God the Father and the reasons why He is worthy of such Glory. We should not see these gifts as a way to glorify those who have been given a gift. We should see that each gift was given to an individual for the benefit of the whole body of the Church. The Glory belongs to the giver, not to the individual receiver.

MacCorkle points out that there are four (4) classes of "Gifts."³ Apostles; Prophets; Evangelists, and Pastors and Teachers. If we go back to Chapter 2 and verse 20 we should see that the first two classes of "Gifts," Apostles and Prophets, were to lay down the "foundation" of the Church Universal, and then the second two classes, Evangelists and the Pastors / Teachers would be then gifted for the continued building of the superstructure – using Paul's imagery of the building of the "Body of Christ."

Paul wrote his letters two thousand years ago. It was His job to "start-up" the Church. At that time, it was clear to him, and by the revelation given to him, that Apostles and Prophets were a dying breed – used by God over the centuries to get to this miraculous place where the plan of God had accomplished the start of this brand-new administration. The nation of Israel had been put aside, the elements of their covenant had been put aside. Now the Gospel was opened up for the whole world. The Apostles and Prophets jobs of laying the biblical foundation for the Church was done. It was time for the evangelists, those who travel and spread the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and Pastor/Teachers, those who stay at home teaching the local church to begin building the rest of the amazing Church Temple of Christ – and the right gifted men and women were given for accomplishing this task. There are more gifted men and women ahead to be defined, but we'll have to wait till the next lesson to begin that part of this new administration.

To God be the Glory!

³ Ibid.

**HOMEWORK:
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS – 4:7-11**

Look at the question and ignore the answer. Then study the answer!

4:7 [Mac]

7 But, in addition, grace was given to each one of us in accord with the measure of Christ's gift.

1 In Addition to what?

In this new "Body of Christ" there was "Grace," and One Body, One Spirit, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism.

2 Define the grace "in accord with the measure of Christ's gift."

God's grace given in each of Christ's gifts is given in such a way that the gift given was flexible in that whatever the powers of the gift needed for the given task would be able to complete the task.

4:8

[Mac]

8 It is for this reason He says, When He ascended into the height He led a host of prisoners captive, He gave gifts to men.

For what reason – that He gave gifts to men?

Exactly as it says in the questions above. Because there was this new administration that was under the power of unity (One: body, Spirit, Lord, Faith, Baptism) Christ gave gifted people for the administration and growth of it (The Body of Christ, The Church Universal).

4:9 [Mac]

9 *(But what does 'He ascended' imply? Nothing other than He also previously descended into the lower regions, which are the earth?)*

No question implied here, just the fact.

Jesus ascended back to heaven after completing God's plan for Him, back home to heaven where He came down from.

4:10 [Mac]

10 *He Himself, Who descended, is also the One Who ascended far above all the heavens, with the purpose of filling all things.)*

Why restate the same thing again?

It may appear like the same statement again, just using a different image, but the key to understanding this image is the end of the sentence – "With the purpose of filling all things." This little tag tells us that Jesus, as the Glorifying factor of God, was now placed into the position of the one who would be in charge of ALL Things, everywhere, always.

4:11 [Mac]

11 *And it is He Himself that gave some as apostles, some as prophets, some as evangelists, some as pastor and teachers.*

1 WHY?

The answer begins for us in the preceding answer. As the One who would be in charge, then in the matter of the Church Universal, He would have to establish an administration team to establish and administer that new body on earth and heaven.

2 What made up the team?

Since God (Jesus) works through all of eternity, the team chosen covers that same administration. Throughout the Past He called and used Apostles (those called with a message) and

Prophets (those called with New Scripture revelation) to create a foundation upon which this new administration would build it's "Temple of Christ." Then in a more immediate past (post Jesus death and ascension) He called Evangelists (those who would work through the Holy Spirit to bring Salvation consciousness to each human individual – through whom many would be "saved.") and Pastor/Teachers (those who were gifted with teaching, leading, training, in the Word of God and the spreading of the Gospel message among all the people).

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Jeremiah 18:15

"Don't stumble from the Ancient Path."

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