

January 7, 2018

The Bridge Bible Fellowship

Pastor Paul S. Brown

Eph. 4:7-10

“Unity through Diversity of Spiritual Gifts – Part Two”

1. Walk in Unity – 4:2-16 (one paragraph)

- a. **Unity in the Church: The human spirit (attitude) (2)**
- b. **Unity in the Church: The Divine Spirit (3)**
- c. **Unity in the Church: The Foundation Stones (4-6)**
- d. **Unity in the Church: The Diversity of Spiritual Gifts (7-16)**
 - 1) **Who (7-10)**

⁷ **But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift.**

⁸ **Therefore it says, “When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men.”**

- **Is this a quote of Ps. 68:18? “You have ascended on high, You have led captive *Your* captives; You have received gifts among men...”**
 - **Aramaic Targum? Paraphrase? Summary of Ps. 68?**

- **Who are these captives and what gifts were given?**
 - **Moses leading captive Israel out of Egypt and giving the Levites to the rest of Israel as a gift (Numbers 8:6–19; 18:6)**
 - **Moses ascending Mt. Sinai (or heaven) and then descending to give the Law to the people**
 - **OT believers led out of a holding cell (Abraham’s bosom) until the ascension of Christ**
 - **Captives are all sinners who are redeemed by Christ and given gifts of the Holy Spirit**
 - **Demonic beings who were defeated by Jesus and paraded as being conquered (cf. Col. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:18-19); spiritual gifts are then given to those who follow Jesus the King**

⁹ **(Now this *expression*, “He ascended,” what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.)**

- **What are the lower parts of the earth?**
 - **Earth itself (Is. 44:23)**
 - **The womb (Ps. 139:15)**
 - **The grave (Ps. 63:9) / the belly of the fish (Mt. 12:40)**
 - **Sheol (Col. 2:15; 1 Pet. 3:18-19)**

- **Where is far above all the heavens?**

- **What does it mean that He might fill all things? (Cf. Eph. 1:21)**

So what?

Discussion & Application:

1. Read Ps. 68. What is the point of the Psalm? What point is Paul making in Eph. 4 when he quotes this passage? Why would quoting this passage help bring unity to the Jews and Gentiles in Ephesus? Who is the person being referred to in Ps. 68? Who does Paul apply this to in Eph. 4?
2. Which view of the “**captives**” and “**gifts**” makes the most sense to you? Why?
3. Commentators spill a lot of ink on the “**lower parts of the earth**” and “**far above all the heavens**” in v. 9. What is the main point Paul is making about descending and ascending? **Who is Christ?** What did He do? Where is He now? How does understanding this help us experience unity in our diversity of spiritual gifts?
4. Paul says that Christ did all of this “**so that He might fill all things.**” What does this mean? How does this relate to the doctrinal truths he gave us in Eph. 1:18-23? How might the diversity of spiritual gifts operating in unity in the body of Christ make the **positional truth** of Christ filling all things be a **reality** in our local church?
5. Since this passage is making it clear that Jesus Christ is GOD, and since it makes it clear that He sovereignly gives gifts to individual believers to accomplish His purposes in His Church, what do you call it if a person chooses not to identify, develop, and use their gift(s) in the body of Christ?
6. How do you **identify** your unique spiritual gift mix that was sovereignly measured out to you by Christ Himself? How can others in the body of Christ help you with this?
7. What are you doing to strengthen and use your unique spiritual gift mix in our local church? Where specifically are you employing your gift(s)? Have you filled out your Volunteer Interest Application? Are you actively pursuing involvement in the church or are you waiting for someone to ask you to help?
8. What are you doing to encourage and strengthen the spiritual gifts of others? Are you celebrating the diversity of gifts in the body? Are you glad that some have a higher profile gift than yours? Are you content to use yours with great diligence even if you aren’t noticed by anyone other than the Lord who gave the gift(s) to you?