

## Ephesians, Chapter Four, Lesson Two

WALKING IN GRACE Ephesians 4:7-10

### STIMULATE

\*\* Last week we learned four characteristics of "walking worthy of our calling", do you recall from Ephesians 4:2 what they were?

1) Humility, 2) gentleness, 3) patience (with the circumstances of life) and 4) forbearance (with the people in our life).

\*\* According to verse three of that passage, if we are always "Walking in Love", what will be our common goal in the body of Christ?

We will be "diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace".

\*\* Did anyone experience the love and unity of Christ this past week?

Hopefully we all did in our times of fellowship, worship and even social interaction with the other believers in our church family.

### MOTIVATE

\*\* The apostle Paul will focus on our "walk" with Christ throughout the remainder of this letter, but today in particular he is going to show us that if we are "Walking in Grace" we can be very effective for the cause of Christ. Let's turn to Ephesians 4:7-10 and learn together what it means to be "Walking in Grace" and how that can be applied to our daily life.

Read passage (V.7-10)

Opening Prayer

### *Walking in Grace*

### INVESTIGATE

**V. 7** \*\* As we begin our passage for today, what does the first word used by Paul indicate?

"But" - a contrast, in this case between the unity of believers and the uniqueness of believers.

\*\* Paul mentions that grace was given to "us". How does he describe this group of recipients?

God's grace was given "to each one of us". A group of individuals who have collectively been blessed in unique ways with the grace of God.

\*\* Who are these people?

All Christians - in Paul's letter, he is referring to the Christians in Ephesus and Asia Minor to whom he is writing, but the truth he is sharing applies to us today as well.

\*\* Is it possible for the children of God to walk, or do anything else for that manner, outside of God's grace?

No - in Him we live and move and have our being.  
cf. John 1:16-17, Acts 17:28 and Romans 5:1-2

\*\* If we are Christians, and by definition always "Walking in Grace", what are we to do with the grace that is continually being bestowed upon our lives? For the answer to that question, let's go a little further into this verse. When God bestowed His grace upon us, what was it according to?

"the measure of Christ's gift."

\*\* Do you see that there must be a difference between God's grace and "Christ's gift"?

Yes - one is "according to the other" or is manifested by the other. Paul is referring to an enabling grace from God that equips us for a very special job. Here are some examples of this kind of grace:

Ephesians 6:10 - strength of His might  
Philippians 4:13 - ability to do all things  
1Timothy 1:12 - made usable for service  
2Timothy 4:17 - boldness and deliverance

\*\* Alright then, we received this grace according to Christ's gift - what is that?

Our own, individual, unique spiritual gift! cf. 1Peter 4:10

\*\* Do we receive our spiritual gift because we decided how we wanted to serve the body of Christ and then put in our order for the area of giftedness that suits us best?

No - it is the gift of Jesus Christ to us at the time of our salvation and is determined by the Holy Spirit. It is all by God's marvelous grace. cf. 1Corinthians 12:4-7 and verse 11.

\*\* Is it important for us to use our spiritual gift?

Yes, it is critical! 1Corinthians 12:18, 22 & 25

\*\* This is quite rhetorical, but should we think that our gift is the best - after all God gave it to us?

Absolutely not, the exercise of our giftedness is for God's glory, by His grace, in an attitude of humility. cf. Romans 12:3

\*\* What did we see Peter say a few moments ago about the purpose of our "special" spiritual gift - how is it to be used?

"employ it in serving one another".

This gives us the best application of the Biblical reality that we as Christians are "Walking in Grace". We should be willing to apply that grace to the lives of those around us as God directs.

**V. 8** \*\* We will look deeper into spiritual gifts next week, but for today - what does Paul say about the Giver?

He "ascended on high, led captive a host of captives and gave gifts to men".

**\*\* From which Old Testament passage did Paul get that?**

Psalm 68:18 - In its original context this was a victory hymn composed by King David to celebrate God's conquest of a Jebusite City and the triumphant ascent of God up Mount Zion.

**\*\* Why did Paul use it here?**

Under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul is using the earlier historical fact as an analogy to what Christ has done on our behalf. Jesus alone has earned the right and the victory, so as to be able to bless us with spiritual gifts.

**V. 9 \*\*** In using the Old Testament psalm of David, Paul's reader could become confused. So he now offers an explanation of how we are to understand his meaning. How does Paul explain the "He ascended" portion of what he just said in verse eight?

"Now this expression, 'He ascended'..." means that "He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth".

Ascended - Acts 1:9-11, Ephesians 1:20

Descended - Colossians 2:15, 1Peter 3:18-19

**\*\* To where did Jesus Christ descend?**

To "the lower parts of the earth".

**\*\* Where is that?**

Sheol, Hades, the place of the dead.

All see - Luke 16:19-31, cf. 1Corinthians 15:55-57

Scriptures show us two locations in Hades that death held people captive prior to the time of Jesus Christ. The pleasant side was known as Abraham's bosom, while the other was "a place of torment". When Paul used Psalm 68, he was describing how Jesus Christ took captive to Himself those who had believed in God by grace and where being held captive by death.

**V.10 \*\*** Why do you suppose Paul would now reemphasize his point about Jesus Christ's descension and ascension?

Three reasons:

1) To mark out Jesus Christ as the only One who could do what He did on behalf of His own.  
cf. John 10:11

2) To show that His humiliation preceded His glorification. cf. Philippians 2:8-9

3) To illustrate His glorious divine presence and power expressed in universal sovereignty.  
cf. Ephesians 1:23 and Colossians 3:11

Let me say also, that the context of Ephesians 4:8-10 is not strong enough on its own to support the view that we have just explored. However, with the support of all of the other passages we have looked at, I am strongly convinced of the use and application of the Scriptures we have seen today.

\*\* In your own words, what do you think is Paul's main point relative to the Person of Jesus Christ here in verses 8-10?

No one else who ever lived could be described in this manner. Christ alone is sovereign and has earned the right to "give gifts to men"(V.7).

### **EXTRICATE**

\*\* According to verse seven, how many Christians have not received a spiritual gift by God's grace?

None! God's grace has given Christ's gift to "each one of us"! (V.7)

\*\* If we are "Walking in Grace" each day, how will we use our spiritual gift?

We will "employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God".  
(Remember - 1Peter 4:10)

### **DELINEATE**

\*\* How do we know that the spiritual gift we have received comes with the authority to use it?

It comes from the only One who could prove Himself to be the Sovereign Ruler of the universe by both descending to the lower parts of the earth to reclaim His own from the captivity of death and by ascending to the right hand of the Father, thus filling all things with His glory!

### **EVALUATE**

\*\* If I want to be "Walking by Grace", using the spiritual gift that Christ has bestowed upon me through His Holy Spirit, how can I know what my areas of giftedness are?

If we will submit our lives to His use and will, as we serve our Lord, He will make known to those around us how He has graciously gifted us for His glory!

### **ACTIVATE**

\*\* Let's ask our Father in heaven to use us this week in our own unique area of giftedness, that the glory of Christ might be put on display as we are "Walking in Grace".

Closing Prayer