

The Purpose of Ministry Gifts - Eph 4

by Phil Beach Jr.

The purpose of ministry gifts is to bring people back to Jesus Christ and help them grow in their faith, ultimately achieving unity of faith, knowledge of Jesus Christ, and perfection.

Duration: 29:03

Scripture: Ephesians 4:11

Topics: "Ministry Gifts", "Unity in Christ"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the purpose of ministry gifts as outlined in Ephesians 4, urging believers to return their focus to Jesus Christ rather than being captivated by individual ministries. He draws parallels to Nehemiah's determination amidst opposition, encouraging the church to seek unity in faith and knowledge of the Son of God. Beach warns against the dangers of following charismatic leaders instead of Christ, advocating for a ministry that leads individuals back to the headship of Jesus. The ultimate goal is for believers to grow into maturity and fullness in Christ, fostering a corporate unity that stems from individual relationships with Him. He concludes with a call to prayer and a reminder of the importance of being anchored in Christ.

Transcript

Correct? That was in the book of Isaiah. Now, beloved, I almost sense, spiritually, like the spirit of Nehemiah is among us, and Ezra. Those who were privileged by God to see the rebuilding of the natural temple, and all the zeal and the fire that God put in Nehemiah's heart.

And you who have read Nehemiah and Ezra, recognize that the enemy had many ways to turn them from the work that God had put in their heart. And oh, how I covet the testimony of Nehemiah, as he looked at the enemy and said, How shall I cease from continuing this great work that God has called me to do? People were trying to call him aside, they were trying to get fear in his heart, they were trying to get him to doubt that God had called him, they were trying to get him to look at the smallness of the work and the greatness of the enemy, but Nehemiah's heart was determined, because grace was flowing through it, that he was going to trust in the Lord his God. And my friends, beloved, remember that when the enemy comes and tries to throw the fiery dart of fear and discouragement and despondency into your soul, my friends, look to God, and he will give you the strength that you need.

Now, beloved, I want to share with you something that God has placed upon my heart. I appreciate the scriptures that were read, because the Holy Spirit is saying, Come back to God, come back to Jesus

Christ, drink from Him. Now, I want to write, you can turn your Bibles to Ephesians chapter 4, and I'm going to write on the board five words that Ephesians chapter 4 mentions.

And by the help of God's grace, we are going to try this morning, by God's help, to discern and communicate the will of God. You see, the Bible teaches that the Spirit of God moves in the assembly. But Paul had a burden.

Not only did he desire the Spirit of God to move in the assembly, and that the body of Christ would receive from the life of Christ, but then he also willed that there would be prophecy. Now, when Paul said he wanted prophecy, he wasn't necessarily implying the gift of prophecy as identified in 1 Corinthians 14. But to prophesy is to proclaim.

It is to declare. It does suggest the gift of prophecy, that God would move upon a certain person, and they would prophesy by the gift of the Spirit. But there's also the prophecy of declaring the mind of God.

And it's very important that as we assemble together, we give the Holy Spirit preeminence, and let Him impart the very life of Christ, the very grace of Christ, the very resources of Christ into our spirits and into our souls. But also, we give preeminence equally to the prophesying of God's Word, so that we can intelligently understand what the mystical Spirit of God is doing in our midst. You see, God is doing things in our spirits.

How many perceive the Spirit of God moving in your spirit, doing something in your heart, imparting the life of Christ? Now see, alright, many of us, most all of us can lift our hands. But now God is not fully satisfied when the Spirit moves in our spirit only. But He is fully satisfied when not only do we feel that spiritual life flowing through us, but then we intelligently can comprehend by the Word of God what the Spirit is doing, so that the Word and the Spirit agree.

Then our understanding is fruitful. Then our minds can comprehend and the renewing of our mind then occurs. This is what prevents seducing spirits to come into the midst of God's assembly.

This is what prevents doctrines of devils from coming into the assembly. Because just as the Spirit of God moves in our midst and gives us revelation and understanding in our spirits, likewise, if we are not equipped with the knowledge of God's Word, other spirits can slip in. So as our minds are enriched by the knowledge of God's Word that is in agreement with the present move of God's Spirit, then the whole man is ministered to.

You see, God not only wants us to share in the life of Christ spiritually, but He wants us to share in the knowledge of Christ so that we can intelligently communicate one to another what God is doing by His Spirit. You ever meet a believer who says, Oh, there's just something happening inside of me, but I don't know. Well, that's okay.

Sometimes God does that. But ultimately, God wants us to know. You see, this was the great lack in the Corinthian church.

They excelled in spiritual things. They excelled in the moving of the Holy Ghost. But they lacked the knowledge of God.

Now, Ephesians chapter 4. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. Now let's read this section, Ephesians chapter 4. I like to begin reading from verse number 1 in Ephesians chapter 4. What

we're going to discover this morning is precisely adding to what God has already said. What is God saying to the assembly? And my friends, I don't want you to think that God's voice is limited to this assembly because we are just a little part of what the Holy Spirit is doing in the entire body of Christ.

May I suggest this morning with confidence in God and His Word that this indeed is what the Lord is saying throughout the entire body of Christ. He's getting our attention. Ephesians 4. I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called with all longsuffering and meekness, with all loneliness and meekness, with longsuffering forbearing one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men.

Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth. He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens that he might fill all things. Now this verse number 11 is where I wrote down these five words.

Now let's read very carefully. And he gave. Now this is referring to God.

God gave apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors, and some teachers. Now look up here for a second, beloved. The apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher, these are gifts.

These are gifts from God. Now listen carefully. The purpose.

For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Now listen. Verse number 13.

Till. Till. Now there's one small word with great meaning.

Now beloved, here's what the Holy Spirit is saying to us this morning. God has given apostles, prophets, pastors, evangelists, teachers. But listen.

They are means to an end. They are not an end within themselves. Here's what the Holy Spirit is saying.

Come back to the Lord Jesus Christ. Stop following teachers. Stop following pastors.

Stop following apostles. Stop following ministries. Stop following teachings.

Listen. Listen. There is a grievous, grievous fault that has arisen in Christendom, and here's what it is.

The apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, teacher, the ministry, the ministry, the gifted ministry that God has placed in the body of Christ has usurped the place of Jesus Christ and has captivated men unto themselves. Rather than being faithful, humble servants leading the people of God to the feet of Jesus Christ so that the saint can get in tune with the head and grow in relation to Jesus Christ. We have made the gifted ministry an end within itself and have failed to understand God's purpose in placing gifts in the body of Christ.

And right now the Holy Spirit is moving in this hour, in this day, and He is intending to, and indeed will, loose us from looking to the ministry of leadership and bring us back to the headship of Jesus Christ, and in the same breath He's raising up new ministry that will be gifted by God no longer to captivate the flock and bring them to themselves and build private little kingdoms, but bring the flock back to the chief shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ, so that the individual Christian can come into recognition of the Son of God Himself and Herself, thereby grow in the grace and knowledge of God and not become an emotionally dependent person upon a ministry. Now verse number 12. Verse 11, God gave apostles and prophets and evangelists and pastors and teachings for the perfecting of the saints.

Now before we even go on, beloved, I want you to understand that you will never be perfected if you are drinking from a ministry, if you are sitting at the feet of a so-called apostle or prophet or evangelist. Beloved, the way to perfection is the feet of Jesus. It is not becoming a disciple of a certain teaching or a certain movement, being under the mesmerization of a certain ministry.

It is being brought to the feet of Jesus Christ, learning of Him, letting Him captivate your soul. So the first responsibility of the gifted ministry, the new generation that God is rising up, they will have a fire in their hearts, and their fire will be, turn the church back to God. Turn it back to the Savior.

Away with personal followings. Away with gimmicks. Away with trying to get people to follow their ministry and build their ministry and make a name for themselves.

Away with trying to create something that will draw people. Jesus said, If I be lifted up, I will draw all men unto myself. Jesus said, He wants to be lifted up in the eyes of the people.

What is God doing? Why did we sit for one hour? And God is doing something? He is individually searching us out, finding those that will respond, ministering grace, breaking us, weaning us from every influence, from every chain that has captivated us to bring our focus back to His blessed person. May I say that the present day ministry has become an Absalom and has stolen the hearts of God's people from King Jesus. And you who know the story of Absalom, Absalom was the son of David.

David was the king. But Absalom moved with envy in his heart and he met the people, listen, he met the people before they came to the king and stole their hearts. We've been mesmerized by the ministry.

They've stolen our hearts and our King Jesus sits, wondering where we are. A spirit of whoredom, a spirit of jealousy, a spirit of lust, a spirit of ego and selfism has possessed the ministry. Power, popularity, prestige, money, kingdoms, neon lights, my ministry, me, my people, my following, come under my jurisdiction.

Away with such foolishness. I tell you, God is going to tear it down. Now listen, God's not angry at the flock.

He's not angry at the church. He's angry at the spirit that's got a hold of many people and right now he's tearing it down. But what will the result be? The sheep coming back to the shepherd, walking in the light of his knowledge.

Verse number 12, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. Beloved, I don't know about you, but the work of the ministry, the edifying of the body of Christ and the perfecting of the saints can occur in one place and one place alone, at the feet of Jesus, drinking from him. That's it.

Now here's the purpose. Here's the purpose. God has gifted a leadership.

Now we don't believe we throw out leadership. That's not scriptural. But we must put things back in proper place.

Leadership must get lost in Christ and begin to bring people back to Jesus Christ. Now here's the purpose. Here's the goal of God.

Remember we said that this ministry here is a means to an end and not an end within itself? Here's the ultimate purpose in God's heart. And this is going to be realized before we see anything from God really move. It's this coming into reality that moves the heart of God and causes people to begin to receive once again.

Till we all come in the unity of the faith. Listen, beloved. Thank God for teachers and pastors.

Thank God. But here's what you need to be looking for. Here's what you need.

Number one. Unity of faith. Number two.

The knowledge of the Son of God. Knowledge of Jesus. Number three.

Unto a perfect man. Number three. Unto a perfect man.

Now that's individually but corporately as well. And lastly, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. Fullness of Christ.

Here it is, beloved. Here's what the Holy Ghost is doing. Here's why we sat for an hour and our hearts are being stirred because this is what God is doing.

He's weaning us from everything so that we can come into the unity of faith. The unity of faith is that unity, listen closely, that unity which results when our faith is fixed on the Son of God and nothing else but Him. Not on teachings.

On Him. Now number two. To the knowledge of the Son of God.

Now listen closely. You've got to personalize this. This is God's will for you.

Unity of faith. When your faith becomes fixed on the Son of God and my faith and your faith and your faith and your faith, then we come together and there's unity of faith. We're all anchored in Jesus.

That's the beginning. And then what occurs next? The knowledge of the Son of God. Now let me explain to you what this means.

The word knowledge here is epinosis. This is what it means. A full understanding.

A full knowledge. Now listen. This is God's will for your life, beloved.

He doesn't want you to be crippled and dependent on anyone. He has designed that the intent and purpose of your salvation would bring you into a unity of faith with the rest of the body and a knowledge of Jesus. Beloved, this is more than an intellectual knowledge.

This is more than a theological knowledge. This is a knowledge of the Son of God that comes to you by divine illumination that fixes your inner eye upon Jesus so that you can see Him at all times. Mountaintop Valley.

You can see Him. Now, another translation says the recognition of the Son of God. Can you see it? God wants His lambs to recognize Him.

Listen, not necessarily to learn about Him intellectually, because you know as well as I do, we can learn, learn, and learn, but never come to the knowledge of the truth. So God's goal, He's loosing us in order to bring us into the unity of faith, the knowledge of Jesus Christ, the recognition of the Son of God. Listen, does your soul recognize Jesus and see Him and long to be in communion with Him so that you and Him have a blissful relationship? It's what He wants for you.

Thirdly, and we're almost done, Thirdly, we have the perfect man. Now the word perfect there simply means a full age. Let me just read this so I can help you out here.

A perfect man is to complete and to finish the goal or purpose. To be full grown. The image of a fully grown person.

Now listen, being made perfect is what God wants us to realize. And that only comes when we get under the headship of Christ, when we are brought back to the shepherd. We can't be made perfect living off of the apostle, or the prophet, or the evangelist.

They are designed to bring us to Christ, and then Christ gives us manna. Listen, here's what will happen when you come under Christ and your soul is brought back to Him. Unity of faith.

Recognition of the Son of God. Perfect man. Listen, the word is T-E-L-E-L-O-S.

Something like that. Listen, being made perfect in accordance to Ephesians chapter 4 does not suggest the end of growing. It doesn't suggest the end of growing, or having arrived to the fullness of God's grace in your life.

But rather, it suggests the arrival of adulthood, which enables the believer to possess an adult attitude and outlook and view regarding God's purposes and plans. So coming into this perfection is not sinlessness, or coming to the point where you've arrived and you have no longer to go. But it's coming into adulthood, so that your perspective and your goals are the same as God for your life, and also you see the goals that God has for the body of Christ, and you start working toward them.

And lastly, the fullness of Christ simply means coming into the length and the stature of the fullness of God's Spirit working in your life. So what happens, beloved? The transition is made. The entire responsibility of leadership is to bring the flock back to Jesus, and then this incredible miracle occurs.

And then what happens? Individually, people start walking under the leadership of Christ, they start drinking from Him, they start letting Him feed their soul, and then that creates corporate unity. Individual unity is always before corporate unity. And this is what God is doing in our midst.

He's tearing down that which has tried to captivate us so that our souls, once again, come back to Him. And as you read on, Paul says, that we henceforth be no more what? Children, tossed to and fro. Beloved, let's put our anchor in Jesus' boat, and let's let Him become the bread that feeds our soul.

Do you want to be brought back to Him? He's doing it. Amen. Well, it's just about quarter of.

Thanks for being patient. God bless each and every one. If you want to continue to pray for a while here at the altar, by all means do so.

Let's just have a word of prayer, okay? If you have a love offering, you may bring it up here. Just put it right here. Let's just have a word of prayer.

Father, thank You for moving by Your Holy Spirit. Thank You for making known to us, Lord, what You're doing in our spirits, bringing us back to the shepherd. Lord, I pray for every soul here.

May You lead them and bring them to the feet of Jesus, where they'll find the peace and the assurance that they need, where they can become humble servants, serving the body of Christ, drinking from Your fountain, ever growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. We commit the flock into Your hands, for You are able to keep them. For Jesus' sake, amen and amen.

God bless each and every one. We love you. If you're a visitor and you have questions, ask.

Give somebody a hug and tell them that you love them. God bless.

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