**A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS: THE WEALTH AND WALK OF A BELIEVER**

Walking In Unity – Part III”

**Intro:** The last 2 weeks we have looked at Paul’s instruction concerning the unity that we, as believers, have in Christ and how we must go about maintaining it. What we’ve learned so far is that if we are going to have a unity in the church we must first share commonality in **doctrine** and we must walk in the **Spirit** (demonstrating humility, gentleness and patience)in our relationships with fellow-believers. These principles are critical if we are to keep conflicts to a minimum and then deal Biblically with conflicts that do arise. However, when discussing unity we must never think that true unity is achieved merely through the absence of conflict.

Definition of “unity” – the quality or state of not being **multiple**; continuity with respect to **purpose** or **action**.

**The Gifts of Unity (Eph. 4:7-11)**

Unity is not **uniformity**!

**THE PRINCIPLES OF GIFTS**

* We are not to be **ignorant** concerning spiritual gifts (I Cor. 12:1)

*1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.*

* These gifts are a result of God’s **grace** and are freely given, never **earned**. (Eph. 4:7)

*Ephesians 4:7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.*

* These gifts are for the purpose of **serving** other believers in the body of Christ. (I Pet. 4:10)

*1 Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

Spiritual gifts are God-given abilities to serve the local church/other believers in such a way that Christ is **glorified** and believers are **edified**.

*1 Corinthians 12:18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.*

**3 lists of gifts found in the Bible (Rom. 12; I Cor 12; Eph. 4)**

“Cessationism” – some of the gifts mentioned in the N.T. have **ceased**.

“Non-Cessationsim” – all of the gifts mentioned in the N.T. **continue** today.

* Prophecy: The supernatural ability to authoritatively **proclaim** God’s truth to others.
* Teaching: The supernatural ability to **comprehend**, order and communicate Biblical truth.
* Exhortation: The supernatural ability to **encourage**, comfort and challenge others in their walk.
* Helps/Ministry: The supernatural ability to **assist** others in ministry.
* Giving: The supernatural ability to **wisely** **invest** resources in God’s mission for maximum impact.
* Administration: The supernatural ability to organize, direct and **lead** others in ministry.
* Mercy: The supernatural ability to discern and show **compassion** toward the needs of others.
* Evangelism: The supernatural ability to communicate the **gospel** effectively.
* Discovering your spiritual gift(s) typically involves 3 processes.
* Do an inventory of your **natural** abilities and **passions**.
* Get **involved** in ministries/service areas that match them.
* Seek **honest** **confirmation** from mature believers.
* Though we might not be gifted in a particular category, we are **still** **responsible** to minister in the area of that gift.
* I may not have the gift of prophecy, but I am still to authoritatively proclaim God’s truth. (Eph. 4:15)

*Eph 4:15*

*15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:*

* I may not have the gift of teaching, but I am still to be active in teaching others. (Col. 3:16; Mt. 28:19-20; II Tim. 2:2)

*2 Tim 2:2*

*2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

* I may not have the gift of exhortation, but I am still to be actively encouraging others. (Heb. 10:24-25)

*Heb 10:24-25*

*24 And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:*

*25 Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*

* I may not have the gift of helps, but I am to love others by serving them. (Gal. 5:13)

*Gal 5:13*

*13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.*

* I may not have the gift of giving, but I am to give generously as the Lord has prospered me. (II Cor. 9:7)

*2 Cor 9:7*

*7 Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.*

* I may not have the gift of administration, but I am to lead those God has placed within my care. (Eph. 6:4; Titus 2:3-4)

*Eph 6:4*

*4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.*

Titus 2:3-4

3 The aged women likewise, that they be in behaviour as becometh holiness, not false accusers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things;

4 That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children,

* I may not have the gift of mercy, but I am not exempt from assisting others in times of need. (Gal. 6:2)

*Gal 6:2*

*2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*

* I may not have the gift of evangelism, but I am to regularly share the gospel. (Mt. 28:19-20)

*Matt 28:19-20*

*19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:*

*20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

* Though 2 people may have the same gift, their **ministries** and their **fruit** may be very different. (I Cor. 12:5-6)

*1 Corinthians 12:5 And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.*

*6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.*

* No one person has **every** gift. (I Cor. 12:27-31)

*1 Corinthians 12:27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.*

*28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.*

*29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?*

*30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?*

*31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.*

* The local church body is to **represent Christ**, the possessor of all of these gifts. (I Cor. 12:12)

*1 Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.*

* We will give an **accounting** of the **stewardship** of our gift(s). (I Pet. 4:10)

*1 Peter 4:10 As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.*

*1 Cor 4:2*

*2 Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.*

**HINDRANCES TO GOOD STEWARDSHIP OF YOUR GIFT(S)**

1. Being a poor steward of your **time**.
2. Possessing a “**someone else will do it**” mentality.
3. **Fear** of the unkown/ **failure**.
4. Not **prioritizing** the Body of Christ.
5. Viewing your gift(s) as a means to position, power or popularity.
6. Possessing a **spectator** vs. **participant** mentality

**Spectator** – **Sit**, **Soak**, **Sour**

**Participant** – **Sit**, **Soak**, **Serve**