

EPHESIANS

12. THE WHY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS EPHESIANS 4:7-16

In Ephesians 4 Paul will talk about the spiritual “people” gifts of Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, Pastors/Shepherds, and Teachers (APEST). Paul picks these gifts here (because there are more gifts in other books of the Bible) for a purpose, that purpose is to help us see Jesus better.

- ♦ **Why are each of the APEST gifts necessary?**
- ♦ **Have you ever taken a spiritual gifts test? If so, what were the results?**

The giftings that God gives are meant to teach us to love and serve one another, to build each other up. Learning to serve one another is hard for us because we are constantly taught to serve our own personal wants and desires. Advertising today has started to obscure the line between desires into necessities.

- ♦ **What was once a desire that is now seen as a necessity?**
- ♦ **How has this consumer mentality infected the church itself?**
- ♦ **Why is it important for the gifts that God gives to steer us back to Himself?**

Paul, in speaking about us being a family over the last few weeks, is on a collision course with the consumer mentality; this is why Paul keeps reminding us that the church is a body. A body has various parts, and those parts are not just committed to each other – they are *knitted* to each other. That is how we are to be as the body of Christ, as the church.

Read Ephesians 4:7-16.

- ♦ **What words stand out to you in these verses?**

David Martin Lloyd Jones once said, “How do I explain the fact that I feel more of a unity with somebody utterly different than me culturally, utterly different socially, utterly different racially, utterly different, than I do with my own kind who don’t share Christ with me? How do you explain that?”

DISCUSSION NOTES

- ♦ **How do you explain that?**

When a King vanquished his foes, he would take all of his people back to His kingdom, sit on His throne, and proclaim victory. We are told that Jesus conquered the cross and death and resurrection; He who came is exalted in glory. When a king came back from a victory, he would throw a party and give gifts. This is exactly what God is doing in the Church. He gives gifts, abilities, and the people around us to build up each other in Christ.

- ♦ **Apostle** – This simply means that some people have a gifting/ministry to start a pioneering work (or a church planter).
- ♦ **Prophet** – Someone with a gift of prophecy helps people take their focus off themselves and put it onto God.
- ♦ **Evangelist** – These are people who love to talk about Jesus to people who are not Christians.
- ♦ **Shepherds (Pastors)** – Pastors love people, they counsel, care, and love Christians.
- ♦ **Teacher** – These are people who want others to know the Bible and can help them understand it better.

We need them ALL if the church is to function and be healthy.

- ♦ **What gifts have you seen leaders display at Element?**
- ♦ **What gifts have you seen one another display in your Gospel Community?**
- ♦ **Which gifts do you have (and are there any gifts you wish you had instead)?**
- ♦ **How can you work together with others in your community for the glory of God?**

Jesus was a **Prophet** (spoke on behalf of the father), an **Apostle** (came and planted the church), an **Evangelist** (seeks and saves the lost), a **Teacher** (He was a rabbi who taught the scriptures), and a **Pastor** (He cared for those in need and called Himself shepherd). He was all of them, not just one.