

## “Live a Life Worthy of Your Calling”

### *Using Your Gifts to Bless Others and Grow God’s Kingdom (4:7-16)*

He has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ.<sup>8</sup> That is why the Scriptures say, “When he ascended to the heights, he led a crowd of captives and gave gifts to his people.”<sup>9</sup> Notice that it says “he ascended.” This clearly means that Christ also descended to our lowly world.<sup>10</sup> And the same one who descended is the one who ascended higher than all the heavens, so that he might fill the entire universe with himself.

<sup>11</sup> Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers.<sup>12</sup> **Their responsibility is to equip God’s people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.**<sup>13</sup> This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God’s Son **that we will be mature in the Lord**, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

<sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won’t be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.<sup>15</sup> Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.<sup>16</sup> **He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.**

### The Fallacy of Clergy & Laity

- **All believers are part of the “Royal Priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9)**
  - Roman Catholicism has priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and popes
  - Protestant churches have “Lead Pastors” and “First Ladies”
  - This human system distorts and annuls the New Testament perspective of the functional nature of each part of the body of Christ (instead, a hierarchy of titles and position)
    - This confuses Christians that real Kingdom work happens at church, by those with credentials, and systematic, academic training...
    - **As a result, it robs disciples of belief in their role’s significance (1 Cor. 12:7, 12-26)**
      - ◆ Most become spectators and consumers...

### **This Lie Continues to Create Gaping Holes in the Church’s Effectiveness & Crushing Loads for the Few**

#### Romans 12:6-8

In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly...

#### 1 Peter 4:10-11

...Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

## What's At Stake?

- **Individual Spiritual Maturity**
- **Protection from the World's Storms of Distraction & Deceit**
- **The Presence of Christ on Earth through Us**
- **The Health of the Entire Church**

“As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

## What's Your Role? What Part Do You Play?

- **Regular Presence**
- **Regular Exercising of Your Gift(s)**
- **Rejection of Consumer/Spectator Posture**

*A New Season for Church of the Chimes...*