

The Glorious Giver of Grace

Living the Life – Part 3

Ephesians 3:7-10

06/10/2018

**Our triumphant Lord gives gifts to the members of His Church
out of the spoils of His victory.**

I. In order to foster unity and growth, Christ sovereignly gives a diversity of gifts to members of His church. (v. 7)

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. (Romans 12:3-8)

Yet I have written you quite boldly on some points to remind you of them again, because of the grace God gave me to be a minister of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles. He gave me the priestly duty of proclaiming the gospel of God, so that the Gentiles might become an offering acceptable to God, sanctified by the Holy Spirit. Therefore I glory in Christ Jesus in my service to God. (Romans 15:15-17)

James, Cephas and John, those esteemed as pillars, gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship when they recognized the grace given to me. They agreed that we should go to the Gentiles, and they to the circumcised. (Galatians 2:9)

Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you... I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. (Ephesians 3:2, 7)

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10)

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them—yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. (1 Corinthians 15:10)

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:10)

II. As predicted, Christ gives gifts in remembrance of His victory at the cross. (v. 8)

When you ascended on high,
you took many captives;
you received gifts from people,
even from the rebellious—
that you, LORD God, might dwell there. (Psalms 68:18)

Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior,
who daily bears our burdens.
Our God is a God who saves;
from the Sovereign LORD comes escape from death. (Psalms 68:19-20)

Aware that his disciples were grumbling about this, Jesus said to them, “Does this offend you? Then what if you see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before! (John 6:61-62)

Jesus said, “Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet ascended to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them, ‘I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.’” (John 20:17)

When he had led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, he lifted up his hands and blessed them. While he was blessing them, he left them and was taken up into heaven. (Luke 24:50-51)

After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven.” (Acts 1:9-11)

Having suffered, he will reflect on his work, he will be satisfied when he understands what he has done. “My servant will acquit many, for he carried their sins. So I will assign him a portion with the multitudes, he will divide the spoils of victory with the powerful [numerous], because he willingly submitted to death and was numbered with the rebels, when he lifted up the sin of many and intervened on behalf of the rebels.” (Isaiah 53:11-12 NET)

If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!” (Luke 11:13)

To the one who is victorious, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I was victorious and sat down with my Father on his throne. (Revelation 3:21)

“I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

III. Christ condescended to become human... (v. 9)

Now what I am commanding you today is not too difficult for you or beyond your reach. It is not up in heaven, so that you have to ask, “Who will ascend into heaven to get it and proclaim it to us so we may obey it?” (Deuteronomy 30:11-12)

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. (John 1:14a)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² He was with God in the beginning. ³ Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. (John 1:1-4)

We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth. (John 1:14b)

Who, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:6-7)

But we do see Jesus, who was made lower than the angels for a little while, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. (Hebrews 2:9)

Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might break the power of him who holds the power of death—that is, the devil— and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham’s descendants. For this reason he had to be made like them, fully human in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted. (Hebrews 2:14-18)

Beyond all question, the mystery from which true godliness springs is great:

He appeared in the flesh,
was vindicated by the Spirit,

was seen by angels,
was preached among the nations,
was believed on in the world,
was taken up in glory. (1 Timothy 3:16)

IV. In order that He might be exalted over all. (v. 10)

The God of our ancestors raised Jesus from the dead—whom you killed by hanging him on a cross. God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might bring Israel to repentance and forgive their sins. We are witnesses of these things, and so is the Holy Spirit, whom God has given to those who obey him.” (Acts 5:30-32)

And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy. (Colossians 1:18)

For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and in Christ you have been brought to fullness. He is the head over every power and authority. (Colossians 2:9-10)

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (Ephesians 1:18-23)

Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to empathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are—yet he did not sin. Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:14-16)

Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father. (Philippians 2:9-11)

Then I looked and heard the voice of many angels, numbering thousands upon thousands, and ten thousand times ten thousand. They encircled the throne and the living creatures and the elders. In a loud voice they were saying:

“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain,
to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength
and honor and glory and praise!”

Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, saying:

“To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb
be praise and honor and glory and power,
for ever and ever!”

The four living creatures said, “Amen,” and the elders fell down and worshiped. (Revelation 5:12-14)