



Sermon – June 9, 2019
Chris Osborne

Verses Covered

Ephesians 4:11 - 12

So we are in Ephesians 4. We looked a couple of weeks ago at a quote from the Old Testament. And the last part of the quote that is in the New Testament is He gave gifts to men. Now that is precisely what we're going to look at beginning in verse 11 and 12. We're going to walk through those two verses. And really entire section is a unit, but we're going to have to subdivide it so that we understand exactly what it says. So here we go. Ephesians 4:11. Listen.

¹¹He gave on the one hand apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor, teachers for the

Now most of your translations are going to say equipping of the saints.

so there can be a work of ministry, so the body of Christ can be built up.

Now, so here we go. He gave, now there are two types of gifts He gives to the church. He gives to every individual in the church a, boy I lost it there, he gives every individual in the church a particular spiritual gift. He does that with everybody. If you're a born again believer, you have been given a particular gift. You're given talents at birth and spiritual gifts at rebirth. You're given at least one, maybe more. But you are given a gift to be used in this body.

Now then the other thing He does is He gives people to lead the church who are gifts to the church. That would mean I'm your gift. You can't exchange it. It's not like a Christmas deal. Some of you churches are blessed with different kinds of gifts. So I'm yours and I'm sorry for that. Now staff; they're going to be gifts to you. So He gives two types of things. Now He defines these in unique ways. And I don't think they're exhaustive, but He gives you a couple of examples. He says, number one, apostles. You say, "We're done with those." Well me back up for just a second there. Now there are the twelve, right. We know that. We know that Judas died. He killed himself. And so Peter, instead of waiting on the Holy Spirit, which Jesus told them to do, Peter being Peter said, "We've got to replace him. We've got to replace him." So they cast lots, got a guy whose name you never hear again. Then you have a guy who wrote 13 books in the New Testament who says, "I'm an apostle born out of due time." So pretty surely Paul's the 12th. So

you have twelve apostles. Like you have twelve tribes, you have twelve apostles. God's worked that situation out. Now when you read the New Testament though, that's correct, when you read the New Testament there are other people called apostles. James, the Lord's brother, is called an apostle. Barnabas is called an apostle. There are others in the New Testament. It's almost probably they could not have seen Jesus that are called apostles. Now we do know, let me walk through this whole thing here, we've got plenty of time. We do know that when the twelfth man of the apostles died, and that would be John. Probably around 95/96 A.D. Paul wrote all his letters in the 50's. So virtually everything's written early except John. John dies. When he dies, he's the last of the twelve that dies. An interesting either coincidence or divine correlation occurs, you've got a ton of miracles in that first century. You find them throughout the New Testament, particularly in the book of Acts. So you've got a ton of miracles. But an interesting occurs, at the end of the first century, you have the New Testament complete inside the church. We know they knew what it was because Peter makes the statement about Paul's letters being scripture. So they knew what it was. They had it intact. They had the 27 books. They weren't determined by a council in the 4th century. They were determined way before that. So they got that. An interesting thing occurs. About that time, and I do not believe in cessationism. I do not believe the gifts are done. I don't believe miracles are over. I don't believe any of that. But the quantity of miracles pretty much dies out when the last apostle dies. As a matter of fact, we know two of his guys, Papias and Polycarp, two of his big guys. We have no record of either one of them performing a miracle. And yet they saw John do it. So there is this correlation and it really makes sense with that Jesus said. There was a poor man who died and a rich man who died. Rich man who died went to hell, the poor man went to heaven. The rich man looked up, saw him, and asked for some water on his scorched tongue. The response was, "Can't do that. There's a great gulf." So the rich man in hell said, "Can you send somebody because I have some brothers left down there. Can you send somebody to tell them?" And the response from heaven was, "No." And then this unbelievable statement, to me one of the top five most profound statements in the entire word of God. They have Moses and the prophets. If they don't believe those, they will not believe even if someone rose from the dead. So if you don't believe what the scripture says, we can have somebody bust straight from hell into this room. It's not going to affect you one bit if this book doesn't affect you. So the reason you have kind of a diminishing of miraculous gifts with the arrival of the word is Jesus wants people to understand He's created the word to get the truth out into the world. Not through miracles, but through the truth. So there is a moment there.

Now but I still think, so I'm going to the convention this afternoon. You're not going to tell anybody at the convention what I'm about to say. I'm, it's OK, I do think there are still some apostolic ministries left. Now before you shoot me, I think because you have other apostles in the New Testament and so I don't think this is necessarily a totally forgotten gift. Let me give a classic example what I think we're talking about. The church embraced the culture's idea of marriage in the 50's and 60's and really kind of probably early 70's. We totally agree with the culture which was this. You stay in your marriage no matter what. That was our mantra. That's all I heard. So that when I grew up, if somebody was divorced, well they violated the scripture. So I grew up with that understanding. But one thing that we were never taught was what really is the purpose of marriage until James Dobson came along. I think he's apostolic in the sense that he's the first guy to come along with empirical studies, I'm just saying, empirical studies that showed that women talk more than men. It's all I'm saying. If you have a problem, James Dobson, 1-894-275-1211. Now but what he did was he began to teach us how to build a home, not just stay in a

home. And his ministry took off. And I think there's a real sense in which there's an apostolic connection there that he became a man whose ministry healed millions of homes. So I think there, it's rare, but I think there's still men, women who've come, men who've come to a place where their ministry is simply beyond anybody else's because God's addressing a particular situation in the area. Which is what He did here. They only had the Old Testament so He used the twelve to address what the New Testament, the truth of the new covenant. So I think apostolic might still be in some ways here.

Second thing he says. Prophets. I don't know what it is with us. It's like we never read the Bible. The charismatics, I love Charismatics, please don't go out here and say, "He hates Charismatics." I don't hate Charismatics. I worry about Baptists way more than I marry, marry, worry about Charismatics. But there's a new movement in the, Charismatic movement, which is really exactly what happened in the 70's which is in excess based on that word. There are prayer meetings now, even in this town, where there are, quote, prophets coming in. They're getting in the room. They're slaying people in the spirit. Let me tell you that is not biblical. You say, "Well now wait a minute. They fell back when Jesus, when they came to get Jesus." Yeah, they did. They were coming to turn Him over to the Jews. They fell back and they still turned Him over to the Jews. So slaying the Spirit really didn't have a good effect on you. So there is no such thing as slaying in the Spirit. These guys are slaying people in the Spirit. That is not biblical. And their whole ministry is to prophesy something future about your life. Let me just tell you. When a guy gets in a room and there's 40 people in there and he says, "Got a word from God. Someone in here at some point is going to get a promotion. OK. Someone in here tonight is going to brush their teeth." I mean you can get just crazy here. When you read the Old Testament, I will defy you to go home, read Isaiah, read Jeremiah, read Joel, read Hosea, read Amos. There is some prophesy foretelling in those things. But 90% of what they do, and here's what a prophet's job is, now listen. Because we're going to get stung a little here. But just hang with me. A prophet's job was God would give him the ability to see an issue that needed to be addressed and would maybe make a foreknowledge statement so that if it wasn't addressed, they would know it should have been. Now that's the role of a prophet. It was forth telling. Not foretelling. His job was to come in and say, "Look, here's an issue. We've got a problem." When you look at the church at Corinth, I think the reason that church was so messed up, is the prophets were not doing their job properly. If you, if you were a prophet and you had the gift and you're in a church, and again, I'm just, I'm not going to apologize for this. If you're in a church that has a contemporary and a traditional worship service, you violated the second chapter of Ephesians. Because it says that the Jew and the Gentile are bound together through the blood of Jesus Christ. There isn't anything in the universe more precious, more valuable, more rich than the blood of Jesus Christ. And if that binds us together, how dare we split apart because we can't sing four songs for 20 minutes. What in the world is wrong with us? The prophets job would be to step into that church and to say, "Wait a minute. The Bible says God put us together and if you put Jew and Gentile together, there's no reason old and young can't be together and sing the same stuff about Jesus as long as it's true." Without the prophets, sometimes the churches are not corrected. Job of a prophet is not to tell you whether or not you're going to marry Wilhemina tomorrow. The job of a prophet is to correct your life in a powerful way. It's a preaching really of repentance with instruction. So second gift He gives to the church are people whose job is kindly to do it, but to step in and go, "We should have two worship services. We should have one because the blood of Jesus binds us together and we can't split up in a contemporary and traditional because it violates that." That's their job.

Thirdly, evangelists. Oh my. I'm embarrassed when I look back. But I did the same thing in my first couple churches. Because all I've known is Southern Baptist tradition, right. So I get out in my first couple churches and I did exactly this. I viewed evangelists as a guy who would travel from church to church and preach and bring revival. Now the problem is when you come to the Bible, it's not in there. You don't have Timothy going to Antioch and preaching. That's not what you have. An evangelist in the scripture is not a guy that preaches the gospel in a different church and brings revival. No, no, no, no, no. An evangelist in scripture is a missionary. He's the guy that's able to cross cultural lines and take the gospel into cultures that are not his own. Now I teach out of the country once or twice a year. And I've learned this much about myself. I don't have that calling. Because when I get into these other cultures, I love the people but I'm just confessing my carnality here, after about six days, I need a cheeseburger. I got to come home. I can't stay there. I'm not a cross-cultural guy. I sat at breakfast with a young couple. He grew up in this church. He and his wife, they are called to missions. We're financing them, \$40,000 a year, because their ministry is absolutely called by God. We felt that as deacons and they have this absolute passion to cross-culture. That is the calling of evangelists. It is a missionary. It is not what we've deemed as revivals. Let me just tell you how silly that is. Spring revival and Fall revival, right. All Baptist churches have a Spring revival and Fall revival. So what we do in the Spring, what would we do? We'd set our date for the revival, March 8th through 15th. We'd set our date. We'd have cottage prayer meetings and we'd tell our people, right, let's pray. So what were we doing as a church? We were coming to the Creator of the universe and saying, "Listen, God. We figured out when we need revival. And you need to do something about it March 8th through the 15th." We're laughing but that's what we did. Every southern Baptist church twice a year we had these revivals and cottage prayer meetings. And we'd tell God here's what you need to do. Here's our timeframe. Thanks for it. Have a great day, God. Thank You very much. That's pretty much what we did. I shouldn't tell this story. But it's a summer attendance. So Peg and I are flying out to convention today and a couple years ago we were at the convention. So I didn't know any church in town where we were. So I went down to the COSBE: Conference of Southern Baptist Evangelists. And I went down there and I sat in the back. And this guy gets up and starts preaching and he starts blistering men like me. Started blistering us saying, "These guys are ungodly and unholy and don't believe the scripture who do not let us come in and preach revival." Evangelists is not what we deemed it to be. It is not the goofiness that we've created. It is a person called by God to step out of his arena and bring the gospel in a culture no one else would be comfortable with. But God has given him the ability to do that. That's the third thing.

Fourth thing. You're going to have to trust me on this. It's not two distinct things: pastors and teachers. The Greek is extremely expressive. The Greek has a particular grammar rule and it's employed here that the shepherd and the teacher are the same thing. So you have apostles, evangelists, prophets, and then shepherds/teachers. There's this combo. It's one position that holds two ideas. So if you've got a guy that can't shepherd people, but can teach, he's not called here. If you've got a guy that can teach, but can't shepherd, he's not called here. So when a funeral occurs, and I do it, I've got to be able to do two things. I've got to be able to pull the scripture into the lives of these people and teach them what their facing. And then personally shepherd them through that. If I don't do both those things, then I am not a called pastor. He has to be able to do both. And I see men that can do one and can't do the other and that is simply non-biblical. So we have to be able to take both.

Now so there they are. OK. Maybe not exhaustive, but there they are. Now look at this. Why did He give them there? For, nearly every translation you've got is going to say, equipping. Does anybody have any other translation by the way: for the equipping of the saints? Anybody have any other translation? I'm sorry? Prepare. Oh that's really better. Anything else? Perfecting's not bad. The reason I'm telling you this is the Greek word's an unusual word. Number one, you're already equipped. You're a born again believer, God equipped you with some spiritual gift. You're already equipped. The Greek word here was a used word throughout the New Testament, it was used in the first century. If you have a fishing net and it had a hole in it, you would pull the net up and you would *katartizo* the hole. The Greek word here. You would fix, you would mend, the hole. That's why preparation's not a bad translation because you're mending the hole so that they can do a work of ministry. But the job, my job, everybody else's job that's called to be a gift to the church, our job is to do what we can to mend the holes. And here's the deal. Every one of us in this room has got a hole. Every one of us is messed up somewhere. The church is not a cathedral. It is a hospital full of people that need to be mended. We have all got issues. Now let's be clear here, the people outside these doors can't do that. I don't care how much psychology they've got. I don't care how much sociology. I don't care how smart they are; people cannot be mended outside of Jesus Christ. Let me tell you why. If you go to a secular establishment today of schooling, they will tell you two things that are totally contradictory. You go to science class and they will tell you that you have evolved. Which means, by the way, that you are a product, you're here as a product of two things: time and luck. That's what you are. If you have a Creator, you're not time and luck. You have a definitive direction of design by a being who has made you a particular way for a particular purpose. And if He's there, then the end is with Him or not with Him depending on what you do with His Son.

Now the second thing they'll say is, but you need to feel good about yourself. If evolution is completely true and there is no Creator and we're a product of time and change or luck, then listen, you can't feel good about yourself because you have no purpose for being here, you have no value in and of yourself, and when you come to the end, you are going into oblivion. However, if there is a Creator, and I rebel and He loved me enough to send His Son to die on the cross so He can get me back so He can restore my value because it doesn't matter what happens in your life. Whether your business fails, whether your health fails, whether your life fails, that cross proves His love for you no matter what. And then when I do come to the end He comes, gets me, and takes me home. I have immense value in a created designed universe. I have no value and yet the world's out there trying to get people value when they've stripped it from them by telling them they haven't been created. No, no, no, no, no. We're a hospital and our job is to mend the net so we understand we are immensely valuable. Not because we can throw a football better than somebody else or we're the valedictorian or we're smarter or we're more gifted, but simply because we've been redeemed by the blood of the Lamb and there's nothing more valuable than that. So our job is to help mend you. Why? Look at this.

[for a work of ministry.](#)

Now every one of you has a spiritual gift in him or her. Every one of you. Man, woman, child that's born again has a spiritual gift. Your job is to use that in ministry. Our job is to mend you in a way that you're capable of stepping out in that ministry. If a prophet does his job correctly,

he would have gone to the Corinthian church and said to them during the Lord's supper, "Hey! You rich people are getting drunk and not sharing with the poor people and God's going to deal with you if you don't fix this." He would have gone to that church and said, "You guys are split and divided over the personality of preachers instead of the content of the gospel." So we have a responsibility to employ ministry. One of the things I love the most about this church is when push comes to shove, that is exactly what happens here. When we did the Walk For Remembrance of Israel and the Holocaust a few weeks back, we were in one end of Reed and he said, "Those of you from Central Baptist we appreciate you being here." Three-fourths of the crowd was from Central. Because one thing I love about this church, I saw it at Sports Camp this week. We had to turn away volunteers. One thing I love about this church, when there is seen a need for ministry, we do it. And that is exactly what your call is. So let me just tell you. Now I will excuse one group. We have some moms who literally have four kids under the age of 5. You have your ministry right there. You have no time to pray. You have no time to read the Bible. You have no time to breathe. You're checked out and we are glorious with that. So sometimes there are times when you don't do that. I remember I had a couple come to me several years ago and visited the church and sat down. And I knew them. I knew the pastor. I knew they went to another church and they said, "Look, we've had an issue in our church. We just want to come. We don't want to get involved. We don't want to do ministry. We just want to heal for a little bit." I said, "Listen, that's perfectly fine. You come in here, you sit down, you relax, you heal. Because I just, and you can go back to that church in a few months. Just heal." There are times, I get that, but on the whole for most of us, whatever gift we have, if you're not using it in this body, you are failing to achieve its purpose in your life. Why do we do that? Preparation of the saints for work of ministry. Look at this.

for the edification of the building up of the body of Christ.

Now listen, last thing. If I do my job well and the staff does their job well, then you should step out with your gift, use it in ministry, and the end of your ministry will be that this church, the body of Christ, becomes, now listen, listen, becomes your identity. Nothing else. Your identity is rooted in being part of the body of Christ. Nothing else. We are the visible demonstration of what He did invisibly in our heart through the blood of Jesus Christ and the arrival of the Holy Spirit. And so our job is to take our spiritual gifts, be healed enough that we can use them in a way that at the end of the day as we minister to each other, we stand up and we become a people who are identified as belonging to Jesus Christ. Nothing else. Been in College Station 32 years. I love being here. I love Aggies. I love all the stuff. But if people know you more as an Aggie than as a Christian, then you have not been built up into the body of Christ. That is the purpose of all this so that we will demonstrate to the world who Jesus Christ is.

Father, thank You for Your blood, Your Son's blood on the cross, Your choice as a result the arrival of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Father, thank You for what You've done and thank You for the people in this room that weekly live out their ministry and their gifts. And Father, let us become a church whose identity is not in Aggieland, but in the heartbeat of Jesus. Drive that to where we are. In His name I ask that.