

Introduction:

- God is Building: A church (ekklesia) Mt 16:18; A spiritual temple 1 Peter 2:5.
 - It makes a difference who is doing the building.
 - To be a spiritual house: Must have Holy Spirit, culture of the Kingdom, administration of the gifts.
- We are the raw materials that God uses.
 - We each have gifts.
 - Grace - God's ability in me to do the things I can not do in and of myself.
 - Save by grace, healed by grace, delivered by grace, equipped by grace, equipped with grace,
 - All for the purpose of giving away that grace.
- Gifts are what God has given us so that we will: 1. Help each other 1 Cor 12:7; 2. and in harmony care for one another. 1 Cor 12:25; 3. Use them to serve others 1 Peter 4:10
- Today's text. *"So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. **Together, we are his house**, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit." (Ephesians 2:19-22, NLT)*

I. Gifts Are Meant To Be Given Away

- A. The very nature of 'gift' means "Not for me but for you!"
 1. Webster 1828: *"A present; any thing given or bestowed; any thing, the property of which is voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation."*
 2. The very nature of a gift assumes that it is to be given away. A gift not given is not a gift.
 3. I.e. Everyone likes receiving a gift. Especially when you are able to see the heart of the giver.
 4. I.e. Giving gifts is way more satisfying, especially when you see the joy and gratitude in others as they receive.
- B. When a gift is given it communicates.
 1. You were thinking of me! God gave: His Son, His Spirit, Gifts... You have to be thinking of someone to give them a gift.
 2. You have value to me. It is not the cost of the gift but the fact that you were being thought of.
 3. "You are loved." There is no manipulation in this. It is not carnal (of the flesh) it is of the heart.
 - a) At the heart of love is the 'spirit of giving.'
 - b) Isn't it interesting that God would give each of us a spiritual gift that is meant to be given away. God is love and at His heart is the "spirit of giving." Therefore in a community (A house/dwelling place) it should not surprise us that the spirit of giving should be most prevalent.

- c) I.e. All Five love Languages, Gary Chapman, challenge us to give to our spouses, family, others
- C. Fruit of Giving away spiritual gifts...
1. Helping one another. *"A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other."* (1 Corinthians 12:7, NLT) sumpheron - "to be of use, service, or advantage," "to assist," Kittle TDNT
 2. Care for one another. *"This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other."* (1 Corinthians 12:25, NLT) Where a community cares for each other there is harmony. No divisions or schisms.
 3. Serve one another. *"God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another."* (1 Peter 4:10, NLT) Diakoneo - to serve as at a table, a waiter.
 - a) It is what Jesus did at the last supper...washing feet.
 - b) To be great in the Kingdom is to be a servant of all. A spiritual house will have this at its core.

II. Scriptural Commands Concerning the Gifts. Gifts are meant to be given away, so let turn our attention to scriptural commands concerning the gifts. These are your action items!

- A. Don't be ignorant. *"Now, dear brothers and sisters, regarding your question about the special abilities the Spirit gives us. I don't want you to misunderstand this."* (1 Corinthians 12:1, NLT)
1. Paul does not want us to be in a place of 'not knowing' our gifting. On line spiritual gifts survey. Do several of them from different organizations.
 2. Give basic definitions of the gifts. Word of knowledge, Word of Wisdom, Faith, Gifts of healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, tongues and interpretation of tongues.
- B. Desire spiritual gifts.
1. *"Let love be your highest goal! But you should also **desire the special abilities the Spirit gives—especially the ability to prophesy.**"* (1 Corinthians 14:1, NLT) Desire *zealos*, means to be zealous for.
 2. Covet... "lust" after, intense hunger for. *"So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts. But now let me show you a way of life that is best of all."* (1 Corinthians 12:31, NLT)
- C. Stir up the gifts. 2 Tim 1:6 stir up gifts. Fan into flame. To cause to be active again, *"This is why I remind you to **fan into flames** the spiritual gift God gave you when I laid my hands on you."* (2 Timothy 1:6, NLT) I.e. pray in the Spirit, use the gifts...get better at it.
- D. Do not neglect using your gifts. *"Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecy spoken over you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you."* (1 Timothy 4:14, NLT) Remember, a gift not given is not a gift.
- E. Let the gifts manifest. *"But be sure that everything is done properly and in order."* (1 Corinthians 14:40, NLT) Heb 5:14 *"through reason of use."*

1. There is order in the House of God
 2. Motives to have order are:
 - a) A love for people 1 Cor 14:1 *"Let love be your highest goal but desire special abilities the Spirit gives."*
 - b) The desire for edification (building up) to take place. 1 Cor 14:26 *"Well, my brothers and sisters, let's summarize. When you meet together, one will sing, another will teach, another will tell some special revelation God has given, one will speak in tongues, and another will interpret what is said. **But everything that is done must strengthen all of you.**"* (1 Corinthians 14:26, NLT)
 - (1) strengthen/edification - Gr. Oikodomain - the act of building. The desire for the gifts is the act of building. When we are moving in the gifts God has given us. We are allowing Him to build through us because it is His grace (ability) that is in operation according to the measure given to us.
 - (2) The desire for of operation of the gifts is the desire of building others.
- F. To be assembled. *"So now you Gentiles are no longer strangers and foreigners. You are citizens along with all of God's holy people. You are members of God's family. **Together, we are his house**, built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets. And the cornerstone is Christ Jesus himself. We are carefully joined together in him, becoming a holy temple for the Lord. Through him you Gentiles are also being made part of this dwelling where God lives by his Spirit."* (Ephesians 2:19-22, NLT)
1. Together we are His house. vs. "you are "Oikos" - a part of God's dwelling place. Therefore as we are called out we are called to be together.
 2. Foundation of Apostles and Prophets - Apostle and prophets have their sights set on heaven, what God wants, the bringing of heaven to earth.
 3. carefully fitted/assembled/put together/joined. Therefore we are in relationship with each other.
 4. Together we become a 'holy temple' where God lives! Where God dwells. To be a Presence drive church we must not only be worshippers but we must be assembled.

Conclusion:

- DYMI interest?
- God is the Builder/Creator.
 - He wants to build a better you. And he wants to build better others.
 - He is going to work through His church. God works through people.
- He is building a house - a place where people connect, relate and help each other.
- We connect to receive from each other and we connect to give to each other.
- What give and receive is God's ability and that is grace!
- Invitation to become a follow of Christ.