

## **SERIES: 'WALK WORTHY' - -12/29/24 (#8)**

### **PASTOR ROB**

- **PASTOR ROB: "Love Christmas"....the anticipation....almost as good as actually opening the presents! The message for today, as we study Eph 4 is: "JESUS GIVES GOOD GIFTS"! Again, the anticipation of knowing that Jesus gives each one of us, as His children, a good gift(s).**
- **Remember, Ephesians is Paul's letter to Ephesus...NOT a book....so it is meant to be read in its entirety at one time...not what we now classify as 'chapters'. Having said that, there is a definitive shift between the first 3 chapters and the 2nd. In the 1st part, unity (Jews and Gentiles) and grace were focal points.**
- **The 2nd part, *because* of this unity and grace....turns toward the 'call' to "WALK WORTHY" (and later, how to do that). BUT we are not walking worthy in order to get to heaven... rather, by Grace, through faith, we are saved thereby instilling our desire/capacity to "WALK WORTHY". So, *having been first saved by Grace, the result is 'Walking Worthy'.***
- **This passage is all about Jesus' gift....GRACE. Grace is about salvation surely....but we see Grace (and related gifts), as well and abundantly, in our routine lives.**

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**Eph 4: 1-16- - I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, (with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, (3) eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (4) There is one body and one Spirit-just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call- - (5) one Lord, one faith, one baptism, (6) one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (7) But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. (8) Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high He led a host of captives, and He gave gifts to men." (9) (In saying "He ascended," what does it mean but that He had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? (10) He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) (11) And He gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and the teachers, (12) to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, (13) until we all attain to the unity the faith and of the knowledge of the son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, (14) so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. (15) Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, (16) from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.**

- Paul was uniquely gifted to play his role in God's plan of unity as it relates to the Gentiles.....ie. he was both a Jew *and* a Roman citizen.....so he received, by God, a special grace to accomplish his task of unification.
- V-7 - -Whether to Paul...or to us....THESE GIFTS FROM JESUS ARE NOT RANDOM (uses White elephant metaphor)...THEY ARE SPECIFIC, CUSTOMIZED AND PROFOUND IN ACCORD WITH THE ROLE EACH OF US HAVE IN GOD'S PLAN.
- V-8- - Is a quote from Psalm 68: 18...about a King returning with gifts.....
- V-9- - See references to ascending/descending....this is *not* related to the Apostles Creed and descension into hell; rather, descending refers to Jesus coming to this earth...to us. The Incarnation.....He loves us much He's willing to leave heaven and become a baby in this suffering world....THE GOD OF THE UNIVERSE BECAME MAN...WHAT A GIFT!
- This was a reflection of His love as well as His Kingly nature. This greatest gift is reflective/ symbolic in the Magi's 'kingly' gift-giving to the Baby Jesus (who came some material time *after* Jesus' birth).
- V-11-12 gives examples of these gifts (apostleship, prophesying (applying Scripture to life), evangelizing ( reminding about salvation- -'by Grace through faith'), pastoring (shepherding day-by-day)....these happen to be leadership gifts...but there are many gifts.....what gifts has He given you? See 1Cor 12: (especially 1-12) and Romans 12: (especially 4-8).
- We grow in our gifts....whatever they are....it is a journey. Think about your strengths AND the things that bring you joy. Where they coincide is your 'sweet spot'.....WHERE IS YOUR 'SWEET SPOT'!?!
- THESE GIFTS ARE PROFOUND....THEY HAVE A PURPOSE.....GIVING YOU YOUR PURPOSE. AND- -THESE GIFTS ARE MEANT TO EQUIP OTHERS! Important to note: these custom-made gifts are already in you (your DNA)....they need to grow/ flourish.....you, though, need to open your gift(s) and sharpen them.
- Key ingredients in their growth:.....LOVE+GRACE+TRUTH+TIME....all these in combination, are essential.
- Our Church- -not resting on laurels- - looks forward to 2025 with great anticipation...with all of us opening and using our gifts in a cohesive, collective effort.....producing a vibrant, active 'custom-made' Church!

## **WORSHIP JESUS BY RECEIVING/USING YOUR GIFTS**

**\*\*FOR HIS GLORY\*\***

