

## Stand Firm: Week 9

### Ephesians 4:7-16

April 9, 2023

**Quick review where we have been.** Called as a Christian and Called as God's Church. Saved, Elected, Forgiveness, Grace thru Faith, Christ as our Cornerstone.

Descended and Ascended  
Gifted each person  
Equipping of the saints  
For the work of ministry  
For the edifying of the body of Christ  
Unity  
Fullness of Christ  
No longer children tossed to and fro and carried away by doctrine  
Trickery of men  
Cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting

The Bible says, "*When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive*"—that is, he turned tables on the devil. You see, the devil had this entire world in his grasp. He had captured the world and he was called by the Lord Jesus Christ "the prince of this world." But Jesus Christ, speaking of His burial and resurrection, said, "*Now shall the prince of this world be cast out.*" (John 12:31) And the Bible says that Jesus "*through death [destroyed] him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*" (Hebrews 2:14) And so, you see, on the cross and in the empty tomb, the Lord Jesus Christ led captivity captive. Satan was captivity, but Jesus captured him. And Satan, who had been doing all of the damage; and Satan, who looked like he was in the driver's seat; Satan, who looked like he was the monarch, suddenly becomes the slave. And Jesus, who looked like He was defeated, is suddenly, gloriously the resurrected, glorious Christ. And, you see, this is what He did: "Jesus led captivity captive, and He gave gifts unto men." (Ephesians 4:8) Do you know what is really the illustration that Paul is using? Paul used illustrations that people could understand. And remember that at this time the Roman Empire was ruling the world. And when a Roman general would go off to a battle, here's what he would do. This Roman general, when he would win the battle, would come back to Rome, the eternal city, and he would ride through the arch of triumph in a great victorious display called the *triumphus* or the *triumph*. And he would have all the people that he'd conquered there—representatives, perhaps kings and princess—chained to his chariot wheels. And they would be drug along, chained to his chariot wheels. And he would have wagonloads of bootie and the spoils of the battle to give to people that he wanted to give to—things that he'd brought back. That is, he had been off to the foreign land; he had won the victory, and now he is leading captivity captive. He's coming back glorious. That's exactly what Paul is talking about here in this passage of Scripture.<sup>1</sup>

What did our Lord do at Calvary?<sup>2</sup>

#### Jesus Spoiled the Devil at Calvary.

First of all, He spoiled him. The word *spoiled* is a Greek word, *ekduo*. Literally, He stripped him. To be endued means to be clothed. *Ekduo* means He stripped Satan. All of Satan's authority, and all of Satan's regalia, and all of Satan's pride—at the cross, Jesus stripped him. That's the first thing He did: He spoiled him.

#### Jesus Shamed the Devil at Calvary.

The second thing He did: He shamed him. For Colossians 2:15 says, "*He made a shew of them openly.*" (Colossians 2:15) I tell you, dear friends, Satan has been put to shame by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

#### Jesus Subdued the Devil at Calvary.

The third thing He did: He subdued him. Satan has been stripped, shamed, and subdued. For the Bible says He triumphed over Satan. (Colossians 2:15) That's what Colossians 2, verse 15, speaks of. And here you find the Lord Jesus Christ riding into glory. Can't you imagine the angels cheered when Jesus ascended with Satan chained to His chariot wheels? And here's the Lord Jesus Christ, who has gone down into the regions of death and hell and has gotten for us the victory. And "*he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive.*" (Ephesians 4:8)

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<sup>1</sup> Adrian Rogers

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

**Our sin became His sin at Calvary.**

Calvary wasn't about death per se, but about life

**Therefore, Jesus death and Resurrection wasn't the end but the beginning. He defeated Satan, He gave us life so that we might be set free, abide in Him and then "do the ministry." (Him thru us.)**

**Paul list certain gifts in this passage:**

- **Apostles and Prophets – Jude 1:3 and building on the foundation since then.**
- **Evangelists – glad tidings (Good News)**

**This is an office of the Church if you will, but also all of us, we bring people into the body.**

- **Pastors and Teachers**

If the apostles and the prophets laid the foundation, and the evangelists bring in the stones, it's the job of the pastor to shape them and fit them into the building until the entire building is framed up. That's his job.

How many of you in this room are ministers?

***We're not saved to sit but saved to serve*** – we find out how God has gifted us and jump on it, and we're saved by grace and we serve by grace. God has given every one of us a grace gift!

Now we can't all serve alike. These gifts are measured out by the resurrected Christ, but oh, how wonderful it would be if we were to understand that Christianity is not a spectator's sport! We don't just come on Sunday to watch the 'pros perform'. Do you know how somebody has described American football? Twenty-two men down on the field desperately in need of rest, and twenty-two thousand people up in the stands desperately in need of exercise. That's like in the church, isn't it? Oh, wouldn't it be glorious, wouldn't it be wonderful, if we could learn to appropriate the gifts of the risen Christ?

**The Goals That Direct the Gifts.**

*"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."* (Ephesians 4:13) Now, the words *till* and *unto* tell us that we're going in the direction. *Till* means "till we get there." *Unto* means, you see, He's aiming somewhere. Paul's saying, "Now, these gifts have been given, and these guides have been given, to get us somewhere until something happens, unto a particular thing."

You see, the gifts are not given for enjoyment; they're given for employment. God, when He filled you with the Spirit, didn't fill you with the Spirit so you could blow the whistle, but to get on down the track.

**Unity – 4:13 – different gifts but unified**

**Maturity – 4:13 – not sinless but mature**

**Conformity – to His likeness and image**

**Different gifts but unified**

**Why? Not tossed to and fro.**

**Instability** - Easily distracted and quick to falter - Toddlers

**Indiscernibility** - Ephesians 4:14

**The Marks of a Growing Christian**

The Tongue Test

The Throne Test

**Prayer Focus:**

**Have I received the victory that the Lord purchased for me?**

**Am I walking in that victory?**

**Am I on the sidelines or am I in the game?**