



CANYON HILLS

COMMUNITY CHURCH

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The Gifts of Jesus to the Church

Koby Orr

Well good morning everyone my name is Koby I'm one of the Pastors here, and I'm going to start our time off today by going off script, which is always a bit of a dangerous move for me. But I just wanted to tell you what a blessing it has been to be out this morning worshipping with all of you hearing all of you sing. I think one of the most common things, common complaints that I hear about the church just nationwide is that the people don't sing, and we don't fit that mold. And that is an awesome thing to be sitting in the front of the room and hearing all of your voices singing and reminding yourselves of what is true but, also recognizing that there are so many people sitting in this room that need to be reminded of what is true, and that is a role you have filled out beautifully. So hear me say, thank you for doing that it really is a blessing to get to worship with you today.

I'm going to ask you to get your Bibles open to Ephesians Chapter 4. I'm really excited about today's message last week. If you remember Pastor Steve taught a message titled "The Anchors of Our Unity" and we spent that time looking at the things that we believe the core values that we share, that unite us together as the Body of Christ. But today, as we look at Ephesians Paul is going to shift our attention from that which we share the unity to the things that make us unique. The special giftings that we've been given that make us the functioning body of Christ. The truth is that every person sitting in this room has been given gifts.

But it's really easy to believe the lie in a church this size, in a room this size, that there isn't a place for your gifts to serve in this place, that the mission is being accomplished without you and I'm hoping that as we look at Ephesians 4 that that lie will be exposed and we will be given a renewed drive and passion to fulfill the mission that the Lord has set out for us as the church.

So, with that if your Bibles open, I would love for you to stand to your feet, out of respect for God's Word, going to read together Ephesians Chapter 4 beginning in verse 7. "But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ gift. Therefore, it says, when he ascended on high, he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men. (In saying "He ascended", what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, of the earth? He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attained to the unity of 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."

Father, I am grateful for your word and we are grateful for your truth. Father, I pray that we would not take lightly the privilege that it is for us to come together into this place, to sing your praises, to bring our prayers to you, and now to look unashamedly and without fear into your word. God I pray for the people you've drawn into this place, for the people who have come in that are ready that are prepared mentally. Lord, I pray that this would be an encouraging time for any people who have walked into this place Lord, who are heavy hearted or hurting or Lord who just plain don't want to be here. I pray that you would use these next thirty-five minutes to stir their hearts and their attentions and their affections towards you. God you have promised that you will bring to completion the work that you've begun in every single one of us, and God today is part of that process and pray that we would see that work happened today. In Jesus name we pray amen, you can have a seat.

Getting right to it point number one for today is this as we look at this passage, we have all been given gifts by Jesus. We have all been given gifts by Jesus, verse 7 "but Grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift". Our passage today begins by leveling the playing field for all of us sitting in this room here today. Paul is essentially saying look if you are a Christian, if you bear the name of Christ, then you have been given grace and gifts by Jesus. Now the grace that is being talked about here is the Gospel, and the gospel is the simple, yet profound message that the son of God stepped off of his throne, came to the earth lived the perfect life that you and I could never live, but the justice of God demanded that he die the death that we deserved, and when he rose again three days later, he secured a hope and a freedom for eternal life for all that would put their trust in him. This is the message of the Gospel and if you are sitting here today and you are a follower of Jesus and you are thankful for that truth, I need to hear you say amen, amen. Now each and every week we also know there are people sitting here who do not yet have a relationship with Jesus and you need to know that the Gospel is God's free gift that is made available to you today. And at the end of our time together there's going to be an opportunity to respond to that and I hope that today you will do exactly that.

But the grace of God does not end there. The grace of Jesus does not end there. Not only are we given this gift of eternal grace, Jesus has also given to each individual believer gifts to build up, edify and expand his church. This gift is both God's grace that saves us, and his gift that empowers us to fulfill the calling that is placed on our lives. He gives us the gifts that we need to be the people that he has called us to be, and to do the things that he has called us to do, so we are each given grace and gifts. Paul then makes a point and versus 8 to 10, which for times sake we don't have time to really get into. But he essentially makes this case the person who is most qualified to give these gifts is Jesus. Who better qualified than the one who descended from heaven, fulfilled his God given mission, and then as he ascended back to heaven he led a host of captives, those captives are you and I who were once slaves to our sin but are now free in Christ. The point is that Jesus is the head of the church. He has earned this title and he has deserved this title, and in his infinite wisdom he has determined to gift each and every one of us with the grace that will save us and the gifts that we need to carry out the directives that he has placed on our lives.

So that's point number one we have all been given gifts by Jesus. Point number two is this to some gifts to equip the church we have all been given gifts by Jesus to some. The gifts to equip the church look back at verse eleven, "and he gave the apostles the prophets the evangelists the shepherds and teachers to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ." So, while we are all gifted there are some that the Lord has specifically gifted to lead and equip his church, and we see a few of these offices outlined in this passage. Now, the first two offices listed are the apostles and the prophets. And I would contend to stand here today that these two gifts are no longer offices that are available for the church today.

The apostles were the ones who were chosen by Jesus, while Jesus was on the earth. He specifically and personally commissioned these apostles and their role was to lay the foundation of the church to receive the Word of God from the Spirit of God and to write it down for us as the scriptures and then to have that message confirmed through miraculous signs and wonders. The Prophets role was to speak on behalf of God. They would often tell of future events and their words were not necessarily considered to be infallible or inerrant, but they were, and we were encouraged to test the words of the prophets against other prophets and to test them against what scripture had been written in the old testament up to that point.

Saying that I realized that in a church our size and in a room this size, what I may have just said may have started a few fires in the room. And so, I want to just stop and acknowledge this, so you don't blow up my inbox tomorrow. So, here's the deal. There are some that would contend that the office of apostle is actually what the Greek word simply means which is to be a messenger or an ambassador of Christ, in which case you can make the case that all of us are apostles in one way or another.

These same people would also contend, and they can make a compelling argument that the gift of prophecy isn't necessarily speaking on behalf of the Lord a new revelation but is simply the gift of being able to preach the word of God for the people. Hear me say, if you believe these things, I am not going to fight you which is good, because nothing would make this moment more awkward than two of us fighting and me getting beaten in front of a thousand people. These are open handed and Walt's ready to go, he just showed me his fists. These are open handed issues. These are things that we can agree to disagree on.

However, what we do stand on as a church, and the thing that we do need to all agree on, is that we believe that there are no longer people walking around on this earth with the authority to write scripture. We believe that there are no longer people walking around this earth that have the ability to say, "Thus says the Lord", to bring new revelation that would supersede the authority of Scripture. We believe that the Bible is the inherent, infallible word of God, is the completed canon, and the ultimate authority in our life. This is what we will contend for. Okay. Thank you. Whoever that was. We need to address an issue that we have as a church, we abandoned the poor one person that gets excited so here's where I'm going to ask, when someone claps especially, for a good thing we're all going to clap for that good thing. So, let's try that again. As one of the worship guys that's the worst. Like we'll have that moment as "yeah!". We're all a family, these are good things, let's get behind it.

So those are the first two offices which our content in that form have ceased with the apostolic age. But now let's look to the offices that we believe are held today within the church. First, there are evangelists, people with this gift have been equipped to proclaim the Good News of the gospel to unbelievers. These people have been gifted with a passion and an ability to take the gospel to people that have never heard it. Now, for those of us that don't necessarily have that quote-on-quote gift, we aren't off the hook for sharing our faith. But what we are acknowledging is that based on this passage there are people that have been uniquely and specifically gifted with this ability to bring the message of the gospel.

There are also shepherds and teachers. These gifts are best understood to be the same office of leadership within the church. At our church we would include anyone with the title Pastor or Elder. This is someone who functions as a teaching shepherd within the community of our church. Anyone serving in this capacity must display the character, and the humility, and the self-control that has been outlined in 1 Timothy 3 which we don't have time to look at today.

Now I want to take just a moment to brag a little bit on the leadership of Canyon Hills. And I need you to look at me for a moment, because this is going to go very poorly for me if you do not hear the next sentence that comes out of my mouth. Everything I'm about to say I am removing myself from these following

comments. OK. You are getting the unfiltered observations of a man who is looking around at the other men that the Lord has drawn into this place. I remember when I first came on staff here at Canyon Hills, it was almost 10 years ago now the time goes by so incredibly fast, and I would admit that at this point at that point time in my ministry there's probably an unintentional arrogance of who I was. I just kind of assumed I knew what I needed to do, and I just kind of assumed I was qualified for whatever opportunity I was given. When I went into a job interview my assumption was I was going to get that job, not because I was intentionally that arrogant, but that was even worse, it was an assumed arrogance. And I remember when I came on staff the very first all-day Pastor and Elder meeting that I attended, and I can still see it like it was yesterday, I'm sitting at the table and I'm looking around the room at all of the men that the Lord had drawn to lead this church and the thought crossed my mind for the first time, "What am I doing here?" I'm serious. It was it was. "What am I doing here?", as I'm looking around and I'm hearing these men start to speak their passion and their heart for the Lord. I'm hearing them speak about you, their church praying for your well-being and the felt weight that comes with being responsible for the spiritual growth of the people that the Lord had drawn into this place. And in that moment in the presence of these men I did not feel like I deserved to be sitting where I was sitting. I felt like one of these things did not belong and I was fairly confident that thing was me.

You have good godly men prayerfully and fearfully leading you, they are normal sinful, fallible human beings but they have a passionate desire to obediently shepherd you and equip you for the work of the ministry. And that is something we should all be praising God for. Amen. Ephesians 4 tells us that these men are a gift from Jesus to the church. God has given the church the evangelists, the shepherds, and the teachers according to our text for two reasons. First to equip the church and then to build up the church. To equip means to restore what is broken, to make whole, to restore what has been lacking. To build up is to take normal sinful people from being unreal, generate, pagans to fully functional God-honoring, biblically obedient, image bearers of Christ. How's that for a daunting task?

The point here is that our job as pastors, our job as elders, my job as one of your shepherds, is to teach you how to conform to the image of Jesus. And every step along the way I pray that what we pray and what we say will be "do as we say not as we do" because, we are not going to walk this road perfectly by any means. But our job is not to entertain you, coddle you or tickle your ears with truths that will make all of us feel better about ourselves. Our job given as a gift from Jesus, is to exhort you, encourage you confront, you and convict you, with both truth and love.

That is who we are as shepherds are called to be that is who we as the leadership of Canyon Hills are committed to being. We believe that we have been called and gifted by Jesus to serve you the church and that is a weight and responsibility that every single one of us takes incredibly seriously and I hope you hear that loud and clear today. We have all been given gifts by Jesus to some the gift to equip the church.

Point Number 3 is this to some the gifts to be the church. Some have been gifted to lead the church, some have been gifted to be the church. Look back at Verse 11 "and he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds, and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of the ministry, for building up the body of Christ". Did you catch that? Jesus has gifted the church with leadership whose purpose is to equip the saints, the saints. That's all of you, for the work of the ministry. Our job is Church leadership is to equip you the church membership, to be the hands and feet of Jesus in a world that desperately needs him.

Now with that said we have to acknowledge two struggles, two issues that have arisen in the modern church, two changes that we need to make. The first is this, I think that we as Christians have become all too comfortable with compartmentalizing our faith. We view church as that thing we do for one hour a week on Sunday mornings when we all come together in this building and we do what we believe good Christians do. We drop our kids off for childcare. We sing a few songs. We give some of our money we listen to a few words

and then we head back out into our quote-on-quote normal lives, but that is not the church that Ephesians 4 is calling us to today.

No, our job as shepherds is to equip you as the people to be the church seven days a week, 24 hours a day, whether you are in these seats or you are at your place of business, or you are sitting in your home, or you are at your school, or you are hanging out with your friends on a Friday night. We as the church when we see a need our impulse is to be “how can I personally meet this need”, not “who can I get them to or what program can I send them to that would be able to meet their needs”. We as the church, when we see someone in need of the Gospel our impulse should be to share that truth with that person, not point them to a program or a building in which they can receive that same truth that we've been given. It is our job as the church to be the ones praying, serving, sacrificing, confronting, encouraging and loving on this world because the church is not a building it is a people, and we are that people. So, we need to make a turn, we need to see our role as the church become an all encompassing one not a weekend experience.

Second problem is this, we have with today's church model created a culture of consumer Christianity. We have created churches around the nation that are filled with people who ask the question “What can this church do for me?”. We make decisions on where we'll go to church based on “is it the preaching that I like”, is it the music that I like, at the volume that I like, with the kids program that I like, is this church composed of the demographic, is it composed of the racial composition, is it composed of the kinds of people that I would want to spend my time around?” People often choose their church based on how it serves their needs, not based on how they can serve in this sacred space.

But that shouldn't surprise us, because that's naturally who we are. We are by nature consumers and we see this built into us from a very early age. It's been a while since I've shared anything with you all about my kids. But kids are God's gift to serve sermon illustrations. And so as most of you know about three years ago, my wife Halley and I welcome to the world our three year old twins, Piper and Paisley. There should be a picture showing for them. Yes, they're very cute, they look very sweet and I need you to hear me say that they are sweet, they are God's gift especially before I carry on sharing what I'm going to share.

So, my twins at this stage in life, as 3 year old, they are consumers, right? I refer to them as my family of locusts like they just descend on things. That was probably a little bit too far, I should say nicer things. So their attitude towards Halley and I at this point time is that of consumers, right? They see Halley as the one who meets their daily needs. The one who feeds them, clothes them, comforts them, and cuddles them. They see me mostly as a vehicle to get them from wherever they are to wherever she is, like that's always been my role. And so about a month and a half ago my wife went to a baby shower in Spokane, and left me for the first time overnight for like 48 hours with most of my children. And I say most because she very graciously took the oldest and most helpful one with her, and left me with the other three.

And so just a window into Koby's life that 48 hours my function was mostly that of a maid, right? It was questions of “Dad I'm hungry, Dad I'm thirsty, Dad where are my princess shoes, Dad where's my crown, Dad I don't want to go to bed, Dad is it time to wake up, Dad can I sleep with you?” Like it was just this onslaught of question after question it is probably is an exaggeration but it does not feel like an exaggeration in this moment, that most of those two days were spent in the bathroom with my twins. Because they've got bladders about this big and they're short enough that they can't get themselves on the toilet without touching the toilet seat, which means they have to wash their hands, which they cannot be inconvenienced with at this point in time in their life. So, I spent the majority of my time just simply lifting them on and off the toilet for two days and I wasn't doing that, I was in the bathroom with the door locked because I needed five minutes just to clear my head.

So, some of you are parents and you were laughing, some of you are judging me like crazy right now, but just a quick show of hands how many of you are parents OK. If you can look me in the eyes and tell me with integrity in tact that you've never locked yourself in the bathroom so that you can get a few minutes to yourself, you're a pathological liar or b you need to buy me coffee and share your secrets because I don't know what you're doing. So, the full realization that I've spiraled us out of anything meaningful this morning to, try and turn this ship back, that same consumer attitude that my children put on brilliant display is the same attitude that has snuck in to the way that we view church. And that was never meant to be the case.

Our job as shepherds is to equip you; the people to be the church, not to be the church for you. And some of you are killing this, some of you are doing awesome and you need to hear me say that. Do you know that in 2018 we had over 8,500 client visits to our Food Bank, 8,500 client visits. That represents more than 17,000 volunteer hours serving the hungry and the needy in our area. That's amazing. Did you know that in 2018, we sent out 14 global encountered trips filled with more than 200 of you who are willing to put their lives on hold for a few days to take hope and encouragement to places that needed it. Did you know that as of now we have almost 600 people serving in our FIT ministry, who have taken it upon themselves week in and week out to be the face of Jesus from the parking lot to the time that you find your seat in here. 2018, did you know that for the first time, we've always had a life groups waitlist. For people who've wanted to get into community we've always had a shortage of leaders that it prevented them from getting into biblical community for the first time in 2018, enough of you stepped up and into that role of leadership that we no longer have that waitlist. Some of you are doing a killer job and you need to hear me say well done, but we cannot for a second believe the lie that the work is done or that we have all the help that we need to fulfill the mission that the Lord has placed on this church.

The Lord has sovereignly placed you in this place, at this moment, for this time, so that you can be the church both inside and outside of these four walls. We've all been given gifts by Jesus to some the gift to equip the church, to some the gifts to be the church. Point number four answers the question "why?", so that we might be unified and becoming like Christ. This is where the whole thing lands, so we might be unified in becoming like Christ. Verse 13, "until we all attain to the unity of 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". The purpose in all of this, is that we would be made complete in Christ, that our beliefs would be unified, that our knowledge of Jesus would be deepened, and then in our becoming the true church, our individual lives would be transformed completely into the image of Jesus. Because it is only in this confirmation that we truly function as a church the way that God has designed us to function.

Jesus has gifted every single one of us, some he is gifted to lead, some he's gifted to be, all for the purpose of unifying us as we become more like Jesus. So the question becomes "Where do we go from here?", "What do we do with this?".

It's hard to read a passage like this and not believe that we're supposed to act in response to it. That's our hope as a people, as a church, that when we go to the word of God we wouldn't simply read it, but that we would do it. And so some of you here are doing a killer job at this and the message for you today is if you are already serving the church both inside and out may keep on doing what you're doing. Some of you are sitting here today and if you did some honest introspection you would have to admit that at this point you have been more of a church consumer than a church contributor. And so where ever you fall in that spectrum, I would ask you to do two things, here you two next steps. Tomorrow morning when you wake up, I would ask you to pray. And it's two simple prayers, the first prayer is this God how would you have me serve within my church, and by within my church I mean serving at Canyon Hills Community Church. Lord how would you have me serve within the church. We have all been given gifts. We have all been given an opportunity so pray and ask

the Lord to show you how he would have you serve here at the church. This could be FIT, this could be children's, this could be elementary, this could be car care or home care. There are so many options.

Prayer number two where would you have me serve outside the church where would you have me serve outside the church. Paul said in 2 Corinthians 12 that he would gladly spend and be spent for the sake of Christ Church. That supposed to be our attitude towards the rest of the world, that God has placed around us, how can we be poured out for the sake of the Gospel? So, ask the Lord to open your eyes to the needs of the people around you the opportunities that he has provided for you to be the hands and feet of Jesus. And you need to get this God does not need your help. God's in control of everything, he is sovereign, what he has set out to do, he will accomplish. And if you choose to ignore your call, God's going to do it without you with somebody else so it's not a question of whether you are needed by God it's a question of do you want to step into the blessing that comes with obedience to the call of God. He has invited us into this process and to many of us have been content to watch that blessing pass on to somebody else. Would you be willing to step into that blessing?

As I was preparing this message, I heard of a couple in our church that just illustrated all of this beautifully. One of their neighbors' lives across the street from them they found out that their child was diagnosed with cancer. And this couple reached out to the family in our church and they said we know that you are spiritual, they have no affiliation with church or Jesus that we know of, they said we know that your spiritual would you pray for our family? And this couple, being obedient to God the couple said of course we're going to pray for you and they did they prayed. But then they asked the question to themselves, how can we as a church take this opportunity to come around a family that is hurting and show them the love of Jesus? And so they put together a meal train comprised of you, the church, and within a few days had over 20 meals covered for this family. They had gift cards showing up from Panera and Starbucks and Qdoba and gas cards, and activity bags, and snacks for the hospital. This was an awesome opportunity that we the church were then able to step into and show the love of Jesus to people who had never been exposed to that before. These are the opportunities that were supposed to be looking for and the doors that were supposed to be stepping through.

So tomorrow we begin by praying, and then number two is this, serve. Get to it. Once you've prayed the prayer, I believe that the Lord will faithfully answer if we'll stop long enough to listen. If you're looking for a place to serve in the church. The first impressions team, FIT might be the perfect place for you to start. There's a lot of people serving in FIT. We're going to need 50 to 100 more to help us out as we step into this next season of ministry. If you speak fluent Spanish, the food bank needs your help. It's a great place for you to step in if you are handy with tools, I don't know what that's like but I've heard that it's nice, car care and home care. There are awesome opportunities for you to step in and serve and use your gifts. There is a place for you, and we'll be happy to help you find that place if necessary. Church, it's our job to be the church, that Jesus has given us grace and these gifts, and we consider what he has given us what we deserved and the life that he has given us instead. How could we not use our gifts in response? I mean this is meant to all tie in and be a part of our response to the Gospel is it not? When we stop for a moment and consider what it is that we all deserve, that we were destined to an eternity in hell separated from God and that was on us. But God in His great mercy sent Jesus to the earth to die in our place that we can have life hope and purpose. How can we stare at that gift in the face and refuse to turn around and use those gifts to the glory of God and the building of his kingdom?

If you're sitting here today and you have been given the gift to lead the church then let's lead to the glory of God. If you're sitting here today and you've been given gifts to be the church, then let's serve our

church and our community well to the glory of God. Let's move forward with a greater commitment to use the gifts that God has given us to serve him and to love his people, Amen. Let's pray.

Father, thank you for your word and what I believe that your word is living and active that penetrates hearts. And so God I just pray today for soft hearts, as we look to your word as we receive your word, Father I pray that we would be driven to be a people of action that we would move in response to these things. Thank you for the great love that you've shown us the great gift of grace that you have given us. Father, may we be a church who responds to that grace by loving you, loving your church, and loving your people, in Jesus name we pray. Amen

Now before we start zipping things up and getting ready to walk out. Three things, one if you are here today, and you guys are not listening at all, there's still people zipping their stuff up, come on, I got like negative 1 minutes, hang in there with me. If you are here today and you do not have a relationship with Jesus there are people down front here who would love the opportunity to pray with you and share with you what that looks like. If you're here today and due to just the weight of life you need someone to pray with you, they would love that opportunity as well.

Number three it is Sanctity of Human Life Sunday. And we have CareNet here with us today and they are a pro-life clinic that we as a church have supported over the years. They have a mobile unit out in the parking lot that they take in to places that need help that they would love to give you a tour of. And they have a booth out in the lobby where they would love the opportunity to share with you how you can serve. We've been talking about what it means to be the church outside of the church, there may not be a better cause than for the lives that are yet unborn. So please don't leave without stopping by and getting more information on that. Have a great rest of your Sunday we'll see you back here next week.