**November 5, 2017 “The Measure of Christ’s gift” Ephesians 4:7-11**

If most people were to be asked to name some of the most descriptive verses in the Word of God to describe what God has done for the Church they would probably quote John 3:16 & 17. “For God so love the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him, should not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world but that the world might be saved through Him.” Or they would quote Romans 8:1, “There is now therefore no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus”.

However, very few, would ever point to our passage today and state that it is one the foremost explanations of what God has done for the all who believe in Him as Lord and only Savior. Those that believe in Him as only Lord and Savior are referred to as the Church in the N.T. and in the book of Ephesians those believers are referred to as “the body of Christ.” (Ephesians 4:15-16)

Contained within every New Testament book, is a portion that is dedicated to what God has done for us. Romans chapter 8 is an example. The first three chapters in Ephesians is another. Colossians chapter 1 is another. Our passage today is following that same realm of thought and so today as we go through it, please listen attentively, take notes and re-listen to this message as often as you need to on the Internet after Al has posted it to our website.

1. Grace was given
   1. Overarching theme of the Word of God
      1. Is what God has done for fallen man
   2. Grace was given
      1. John 3:16
      2. God gave Himself to sinful mankind
         1. That is why we can honestly say to God

“Why me Lord, what have I ever done

To deserve even one

Of the pleasures I've known

Tell me Lord, what did I ever do

That was worth loving you

Or the kindness you've shown.” (Kris Kristofferson)

* 1. Self-giving
     1. Is that the pattern of much of the Church today?
        1. “I’m believing God for a \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_”
        2. “You’ve got to position yourself to be blessed by God”
     2. We are all too often ready to point out the sliver in our brothers’ life
        1. And just as willing to do nothing to help them
  2. The heart of Christianity is God donating Himself to mankind

1. The measure of Christ’s gift
   1. There are three aspects of Christ’s gift
      1. To individual believers
      2. His right to give gifts
      3. His gifts to the Church
   2. To the individual
      1. There is no such thing as an “ungifted believer”
         1. Romans 12:4-8
         2. I Corinthians 12:1-11
         3. I Peter 4:8-10
      2. I would also add there is not just one gift for each believer
         1. I Corinthians 12:11
            1. I’m not called to teach
            2. Then why did God give you children?
            3. I’m called to preach and teach
            4. You’re not called to show hospitality or to give?
      3. Why has God given us gifts?
         1. Christianity is not a spectator sport
         2. Jesus Christ meant for you to be involved in the body
2. Christ’s right to give gifts
   1. Vs 8 from Psalm 68
      1. Idea of God as conqueror
         1. First… God always wins
            1. Two things a conqueror always brought with him

Spoils of war

Captives… his own whom he set free

Abraham… Chedorloamer

David at Ziklag

* 1. Vs 8-10
     1. Picture of the cross
        1. Jesus died bodily on the cross
        2. He was buried for three days
        3. Where did His spirt go?
           1. I Peter 3:18-19
     2. Hades and Sheol
        1. Hebrew names
           1. Sheol… grave
           2. Hades… place of torment

Luke 16:19-24

Rich man was in Hades

Place of torment

Lazarus in Abraham’s bosom

Place of bliss

* 1. Vs 19
     1. Made proclamation
        1. To whom?
           1. Luke 16:20-22
           2. Colossians 2:13-15
     2. Two aspects for us to learn about the cross
        1. Jesus died to save us from our sins
        2. Jesus died to enable us to serve Him in the power of the Holy Spirit who distributes His gifts to all of us

1. What are the gifts he gave to the Church?
   1. Colossians2:11-12