

Introduction

Good morning. It's great to see you today. If you have a Bible with you, and I hope that you do, I want to invite you at this time to take it out and open it up. I want to invite you to turn with me to the Book of Ephesians. If you don't have a physical Bible with you but you've got your device, you can use that as well. Also, if you don't have a Bible at all, either on a device or physically, don't worry. Don't get stressed. Right there in that seat tray in front of you, there is a Bible; feel free to use that. If you do not own a Bible yourself, then consider that today our gift to you. We believe that God speaks to us through the Scriptures, and we want you to have your own copy of God's Word so that you can get to know our God in a very personal and real way. He speaks to us through His Bible, and we really are grateful that we get to have that great gift that He gives to us.

If you're new with us today or if you are new to the Bible, let me tell you just a little bit about the Bible real quick. The Bible is divided into two parts: the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament tells us the story of Israel, God's chosen people. And in that story we find out about their need for a Rescuer... for a Redeemer. The New Testament then tells us who that Redeemer is. The New Testament tells us about Jesus. He is the Rescuer; He is the Redeemer. In that story we hear about His birth, His life, His death, and His resurrection. We also find out about people who decide to follow after Jesus, once they discover that He is the Rescuer that God sent for Israel. Those people become the Church. So if you read the New Testament you will not only hear about Jesus but also the Church. Today we are reading from the Book of Ephesians. Ephesians is a letter that was written by one of those Jesus followers in the ancient Church. His name was Paul. He used to kill Christians, then he met Jesus in a very real way, and he became someone who instead, encouraged people to become a Christian instead. Today we are going to read a letter that Paul wrote to a church in the city of Ephesus. Ephesus was located in the current-day country of Turkey. So today, as we're reading from this, you will know that he is talking to a Church in the ancient world.

Let me pray over us, and then we are going to jump right into Ephesians chapter 4. We are going to start reading in verse 7.

"Lord, today there are people here who are hurting, who are broken, who need to be rescued... people who are far from You, people who need to say 'Yes' to You, Lord, who are ready to turn to You. So Father, I pray that today would be that day, and God, that I would preach this sermon as if it was my last, so that people would know the urgency with which they need to hear the message of Jesus Christ. Lord, I pray that we would encounter You in a very real way today, in the same way that Paul did, so that we would want to tell others about You. We pray this and we ask it in the Name of Jesus. Amen."

Ephesians chapter 4, starting in verse 7: *"But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's 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, 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 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, 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. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ, 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."

1. God Gives You Exactly What You Need. (v. 7)

Last week we heard from Pastor Jeremy, at the very end, that God gives many great gifts, but the ultimate gift that He gives is Himself. If you remember from last week, we wrapped up in verses 4 through 6, reading this: *"There is one body and one Spirit —just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all."* We discovered, in reading that, that God gives every single person opportunity to have entrance into a relationship with Him through the gift of Jesus Christ... an incredible and beautiful truth, this thing that we call the "Gospel." In other words, God says, "It doesn't matter your background, it doesn't matter your education level, it doesn't matter your religious preferences in the past... all that matters now is that instead you turn in faith to Jesus Christ. And if you do so... no matter who you are, no matter what you've been, no matter what you've done... you are now received. You are now welcomed into the presence of God through Jesus Christ. He then says that this is something that is available for all. There is one faith, one baptism, one Lord.... one, one, one. But then look at verse 7... *"But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."* In other words, Paul goes from the very general, the very broad, saying, "This is for everyone," and then says "That same gift, therefore, also applies to the specific."

You may remember that movie that came out a few years back called, "My Big Fat Greek Wedding." You may remember the father from that movie had a miracle cure for anything that ailed you... Windex. He carried a bottle around. If you've got a little rash or you've got a little blister, he would suddenly whip this thing out and starts spraying it around. It was the miracle cure in his mind. Now, we all know that's ridiculous; that doesn't work. But this is what Paul is saying... it's that somehow in Jesus Christ, it is something that deals with the very general idea that all of us are equal, that all of us are received, that every single person is welcome at the foot of the cross. But at the same time, verse 7: *"...grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."* In other words, that also Jesus is the miracle cure for whatever it is that ails us.

Here's the truth: Every person in this room is uniquely and specifically broken in very different ways. Each one of us has a way in which we struggle against our flesh so that we do not fall back into old sinful patterns. Perhaps you struggle with anger... maybe you have a history of unfaithfulness... maybe you are greedy. Whatever those struggles are that you have, that you fight against in your life... those are not your reality. Those are symptoms of the reality happening in your heart. Those are sins but those are not the big heart condition. In other words, whatever it is that you struggle with... I want you to hear me on this... those are the things that you can see on the surface... but below that, behind that... there are things happening in your heart, things there that that is the root cause of the reason that you continue to return to a pattern of behavior. And Paul wants you to understand that Jesus is the needed cure for whatever your heart ailment is. That's what he is getting at in verses 9 and 10, whenever he is talking about "ascending and descending." You're wondering what that is. He is talking about "ascending"... this same Jesus who ascended after His resurrection is the same Jesus that "descended"... that walked among us. That was God in flesh that came to rescue us specifically and directly. This same Jesus is the one who came to give us every single way, every single thing that we needed. So the good news of Jesus doesn't only receive all of us, but it also addresses us in our specific need, whatever that is.

So let's take greed for example. Greed, as a sin, is not the heart condition. There is something behind that. People are greedy for different reasons. Some people are greedy because they are afraid. They believe that if they do not amass enough human wealth, then they will not be secure. Consequently, they operate financially from a position of fear. They hold onto everything. They hoard everything. Why? ...Because they are afraid of what might befall them if they do not keep every single thing that passes through their hand. Other individuals are not greedy because they are afraid. Other individuals are greedy because they seek and need status. They believe that if they have a nicer home or the coolest car, or the newest whatever... if they have those things then other individuals will look upon them with more favor. So consequently, there are people who are greedy for one reason or greedy for another reason. There are heart conditions, in other words, behind the very symptom of sin. This is the thing: It is that Jesus addresses both heart conditions. The Gospel of Jesus Christ addresses you if you are afraid. He tells you, "I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. I am with you. You do not need to be afraid." Over and over the Scripture says that. Or the idea of status: Jesus tells us in His Word, over and over, "I have chosen you. I am with you." It's this idea that He has said, "I have picked you. You don't need status from someone else because you are a son... or you are a daughter... of the King. The Gospel of Jesus Christ addresses our needs generally because it goes after our heart conditions specifically. It finds exactly what it is that we need, and it goes after us. This is the thing: For you to grow spiritually, you must find exactly what your heart condition is that you struggle with. Nobody enjoys this.

You see, most of us know the sins that we struggle with. We know that we struggle with anger, we know that we struggle with greed, or we have a history of unfaithfulness... or whatever those things are. What we don't know is the heart condition that lies behind it. Why? ...Because nobody wants to take the time to do that sort of self-examination. That's not fun. That's a place that you have to go that nobody wants to be, but if you want to experience the freedom of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, you must indeed actually press into that. You must find the places in your heart where you are so broken that only Jesus can rescue you. I would tell you that in my own life, I have discovered that one of my heart conditions that I struggle with regularly is a desire to be desired. I want to be wanted. I have found in my life that that desire to be desired... that that want to be wanted... has then manifested itself in a number of different sinful behaviors. But behind almost all of those sinful behaviors is this deeper heart issue of wanting to be wanted. That is why Ephesians 1 is so good for me to read. Ephesians 1 tells me I was chosen before the foundations of the earth... that I was picked... that God Himself... Who better to want me than God Himself? God the Father has chosen me, before the foundations of the world... that's an incredible truth that I need to hear, and I can run back to that whenever I want to engage in sinful behavior that stems from a heart desire to want to be wanted... instead of going down those paths, I can remember that I am wanted by the King of Kings. And that is a healing balm unto itself. This is the thing: It's that that very general idea that we are rescued by God, through Jesus Christ, is also a specific idea. And that specific idea is the idea that God will come after whatever your heart condition is in order to rescue you. It is a tailor-made sort of healing just for you.

2. So You Can Be Exactly What We Need. (vv. 11-13)

So this is the thing that I want you to hear today. I want you to understand that God has come after you, and He has rescued you in a very specific way... so that you might be rescued to do something. You have been rescued in a very specific way so that God might use you. Listen... God gives Jesus to be exactly what you need so that you can then be exactly what we need... what the Church needs. And this is the thing that I want you to see. Look at verses 11 through 13: *"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..."

In my life I have heard this passage taught in a couple of different ways. Way number one that I've heard is the idea that there is something called a five-fold ministry: The apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, teacher... and that every person in the Church has one of those five gifts, and they ought to use them within the Church. Another way that I've heard this taught is that pastors, elders... the leaders of the Church... have these specific gifts, and they are to use them to equip the Body. At different points in my ministry I have bought into both of those approaches to Scripture. But this is the thing that I want you to hear. I don't actually think that either of those approaches are the right one for this particular passage. Instead... this is what I think: I think that there's a better way to read these verses. I think that he is getting at the fact that whenever He rescues us in a very specific way, He also then gets us in a very specific way. You see, Paul is going after that when he tells us back in verse 8 that He gave gifts to men... that He said that He would give us a various gift... This is what happens: Jesus sees the very specific heart need, the very specific broken area in your life, and the Gospel comes and rescues you... comes after you and rescues you in that way. Once He rescues you in a specific way, He also gives you a gift, in a specific way. Most of us read the Scripture and we look at these individuals, and we think of them as super-heros or spiritual giants. Listen to me... No. These individuals are people who received the same Jesus that we are receiving today... the very same Spirit of Jesus is on us.

So when you look at this first one that is listed here, "The apostles." The apostles were people who saw Jesus face-to-face. And they were then people who then took the Gospel to the very ends of the earth because Jesus commanded them to do so. None of us here in this room have seen Jesus face-to-face, but... we do know this. We know that even though we have not seen Jesus face-to-face, we might have that same sort of apostolic ethos, or spirit, within our heart. You know these sorts of people. These are the people that, once they encounter Jesus face-to-face, they will do whatever it takes to take Jesus into a new or fresh or bold way. They will go and cross whatever boundaries or borders so that they can go and make the Gospel move forward. Maybe you are like that. That's a gift given to you by God.

We will look next at the prophets. The prophets in the Old Testament were the people who heard directly from the Spirit of God and then spoke truth... oftentimes that even looked into the future. I think that the prophetic gift today is different. It's not that we're predicting the future, but the prophetic gift today are the people who look into the Word of God, and they do the same thing that the prophets did. The prophets would say this: "If you don't do these things that God is saying, He is going to destroy you." Well, guess what? We can look at the Word of God and people with the prophetic gift can say, "If we don't do these things then God will judge us... or these consequences will befall us." People with the prophetic gift are people who like to confront people... not like in the jerky, worldly way. I'm talking about the people who say, "I can see the truth of God in this, and so now I am going to speak that truth out there to you as well." Then he goes on through the list: evangelists, the people who like to tell the Good News; shepherds, the people without enjoy taking care of one another; teachers, people who speak and teach the Word of God, accurately and effectively.

This is the thing. Paul only lists five gifts here: apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds, and teachers... five great, incredible gifts. But this is the thing that I want you to understand. It's that there are other lists of gifts in other portions of Scripture. In Romans chapter 12, there is a giant list of other gifts. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, another list of more spiritual gifts... Paul is getting at this. Once the Gospel of Jesus Christ has addressed your heart need, and you have been rescued and you've placed your faith in Him, He doesn't

just deliver you in a specific way from your heart struggle. He also gifts you in a specific way. He rescues specifically and then He gifts you... He gives gifts... in a very specific way. Each of us has very different gifts. This is the thing that I want you to see here today... verse 12: *"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..."* The word in verse 12 that is there... the word that is translated in my version as "building"... maybe in your version it's translated as "perfecting." There are a couple of different ways you could translate it. Actually, neither one of those are good translations. The word that's there in Greek is the word "katartismos" which is a medical term which means "to set a broken bone." What that verse really is getting at is that He gave these individuals various gifts so that they might bring healing to the Church... so that they might bring healing to the Church. This is the thing that I want you to hear. Listen... If God gives you a gift, your gift is given so that you might bring healing to the body. You have been gifted so that you can help make the Church healthier. You see, there are broken places within the body of Christ where healing is needed, and you have been gifted by God in a very specific way so that you... not just me, but all individuals. All people have been gifted so that they might use their gift to bring healing into the body of Christ... to set the broken bone. Look at the Church and you go, "There's brokenness there..." or "There's an issue there" or "They really need to fix that..." or "Man, I wish that they would do that that way." That's probably the Holy Spirit giving your mind an opportunity to say "Hey, you; you have the gift. Go handle that." "Get on that; bring healing into that place."

Now here's the thing: Some of us use our gifts on a Sunday morning in a big gathering. Right? I stand up here on Sunday morning, and I get to teach and preach. I am grateful for that opportunity. I love that. We have incredible, gifted musicians and incredibly gifted vocalists, and they use their gifts so that we might be able to see... so that we might be able to experience the goodness of God. But here is the thing I want you to know: It's that even though there are people that use their gifts on a Sunday morning in our children's ministry, on the stage, as a greeter... whatever... the vast majority of churches that we read about in the New Testament never had anything like this. Okay? In fact, I think I can speak authoritatively and say there's not a single church in the Bible that had any sort of gathering place that anything looked like what we experience on a Sunday morning. The vast majority of churches in the New Testament met in a house. I don't know how big the houses were in the ancient world, but probably a dozen... fifteen... maybe twenty... maybe thirty... maybe forty people packed into a house. But there in those places... in those small communities... those were micro expressions of the Church at large. When Paul wrote this letter... the letter of Ephesians to the Church at Ephesus... it was not really the single Church at Ephesus. It was the churches at the city of Ephesus... because the single city Church was made up of a system of churches that met in homes because there was no central gathering place for them to be, in that moment. Those house churches were micro expressions of the Body of Christ. They were cells, if you will, of the larger Body. Today in our church, our Life Groups... those are the equivalent of the New Testament house church. Those are the micro expressions of the Church, of the Body.

What's the point? Here's the point: Some of us today are withholding healing from the Body of Christ. Some of us today are gifted, and we know that we have been gifted by Jesus Christ. The Spirit of Jesus has given us a specific gift and we have chosen, for whatever reason, to take our gift and not share it with the Body. There are broken bones in whatever expression of the Body that are around, and we refuse to give healing. We withhold that. You have heard about individuals who are arrested because they refused to stop and render aid. Many individuals in the Church are rejecting the idea that they are called to give healing to the Church. They refuse to stop and render aid to the Church. They reject the idea of the Good Samaritan who got off of his donkey and rendered aid. They say, "Do you know what? I do not want to get into the

middle of that; I'm too busy. I've got too much going on. I don't want to help in that sort of a way." Here is the thing that I want you to understand. Some of us are in a group or in a Life Group, and we are not using our gifts. Others of us are not in a group, for whatever reason... and we have decided, "I'm not going to join one..." Either one of those things are ways in which we withhold healing from the Body. Some of us come on a Sunday morning and we know... we see ways... that we could use our gift to help heal the Body, but we choose not to do so. You see, the more groups that we have, the more groups that start... and we're starting new groups all the time... they bring more seats at the table... more places for organizers... more places for administrators... more places for teachers... more people who are hosts or have the gift of hospitality. Every time that a new group is started, a new seat is pulled up to the table for individuals to use their gifts so that the Body of Christ might be healed, but many of us choose not to share our gift.

Now here's the funny thing about that. Some of us right now are really uncomfortable. We do not like what we're hearing right now. Why? ...Because the American mindset regarding the Church mirrors business. They think of the Church like a show or a movie or a theme park. "Put a little money in the basket... I've paid for my ticket, and now whatever happens on the stage is a show that is intended to entertain me or to make me feel good about myself." Listen to me... we are not putting on a show here. This is for Jesus Christ. Many people say that and they want to come and they want to listen, and they want to be left alone. I don't know how to break this down for you any clearer than this: My job is not to leave you alone. Let me make it even more plain. I don't work for you... I know you listen to that and you're like... "Wait a minute..." No I don't... because, guess what? If today I get fired from this church, I'm going to keep on preaching. I don't work for you. So the reason that I want you to hear that is this: You need to come to grips not with me... you need to come to grips with what the Word of God has said. If Scripture tells you, "bring healing and render aid to the Body of Christ" and you choose not to do so, your problem is not with the pastor; your problem is with Jesus and His Word. I will not be held accountable for standing before the throne one day and the Lord saying, "Why did you not tell them to do that?" You will be held accountable with how you responded to the Word that you heard. That is your duty: To hear the Word of God and then decide what will you do with this. So, I do not work for you, but I work with you so that we might build a church that is the healthiest church that it can be.

3. So We Can Be Exactly What Jesus Wants (And What The World Needs) (v. 15)

Why? ...Because God heals our specific heart wounds so that then we can use our specific gifts. So, in other words, Jesus is exactly what we need so that you can be exactly what the Church needs. Why? So that the Church can be exactly what Jesus wants and exactly what the world needs. These are the things that we must do... that we have to do. You see, Jesus wants several things for you... for His Church. He begins to list them after this. Begin to look at this. Look at verse 13: "...until we all attain to the unity of the faith..." Jesus wants unity for His Church. "...and of the knowledge of the Son of God..." Jesus wants His Church to know the Son of God. That's the knowledge that Pastor Jeremy was speaking about this past week. Not just head knowledge but it's the knowledge that you have experienced the saving grace of God. He wants us to be mature, to have mature manhood. He wants (verse 14) for us to "... no longer be children..." but to know doctrine, so that whenever faddish doctrines and teachings come about that we won't be tossed back and forth but instead we will hold to the historic Orthodox faith... that we will say, "I am going to stay true to the truths of the Church" ...that we will continue to do that. In verse 15, so that we will "*speak the truth in love...*" In other words, so that we will get to a point where we are not just really good at telling people what we think... I am really good at telling people what I think... but to do so in a way that is loving, that He changes us in that.

And he goes on and on. Why? He tells us all these things about unity and knowledge and not being tossed about and not being children and being mature and speaking the truth in love. Why? Look at the end of verse 15: *"...we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ."* Guys... we are rescued in a specific way and gifted in a specific way so that the Church will look like Jesus. The Church has to look like Jesus. There are plenty of churches in the world that look like great secular organizations. They have incredible administrative kinds of things happening. There are plenty of churches out there that look a lot like a night club. One of my mentors told me this. He said, "Back there in the day, there were some pastors who thought that the Church ought to be a fan club." And then there were other pastors after them who thought that the Church ought to look like a night club. But really what the Church ought to look like is a health club. It's the idea that we ought to be healthy and growing in our knowledge of Jesus Christ. We are not a country club, we are not a fan club, we are not a night club... we are a health club, being healthy and growing up into the Head of Jesus Christ. That is why we gather.

So this is the thing that I want you to understand. When the Church is functioning properly, people look at this group of people and they go, "That looks like Jesus." And that's the goal... that whenever people come in and they experience it, they go, "I experienced Jesus in there today." When we love, they go, "I was loved like Jesus was loved in that place." Whenever they come in and they hear the Word they say, "I heard words today that are not able to be originated from any sort of human heart; instead, those have to be words that came straight from the heart of God... they came straight from the heart of Jesus."

Did you guys watch the debate the other night? We are in the middle of a political season right now. I mean, that debate was crazy, and then they get to the very last question... Did you see the last question? The last question, a guy stood up and said, "Tell me one thing that you respect about one another." Everybody started laughing. Why? ...Because this political campaign has been anything but respectful. Whenever I watched that... when everybody started laughing, but the first thing that came into my head right there... I thought, "That right there is a Kingdom-of-God move, what he just did." Do you know why? ...Because he completely changed the conversation just like that. Listen to me friends... in the middle of a political season, there will be all sorts of people who will attempt to convince you that you must vote for candidate A or candidate B, and if you don't do so then you're selling out and you're really not holding true to your Christian values. Let me just give you a little news flash: Candidate A or candidate B does not care about the Kingdom of God. Jesus Christ alone is the name to be lifted high. Jesus Christ alone is the Name that we ought to be worried about right now. (Clapping) Jesus Christ alone is the thing that we ought to be pursuing. Why does that matter to you? ...Because whenever we come across as a people that are gripped and consumed by fear, we don't sound like a Church that looks like Jesus. Whenever we come across as a Church that is filled with hatred and vitriol, we don't come across as a Church that looks and acts like Jesus. So, God gives you precisely what you need so that you can give the Church precisely what we need so that we can become the Church that Jesus wants and exactly what the world needs because the world will only be changed whenever they see a Church that looks, mirrors, and acts like Jesus Christ.

Do you want to be original today? I mean, everybody wants to be original, right? We watch reality TV shows. We see people who have their unique style... they have their unique approach to life... whatever kind of stuff that Andy Warhol quoted that in the future that everyone will be famous for 15 minutes... Everybody is thinking, "What can I do to get noticed?" I will tell you how to get noticed... Are you ready? Act like Jesus. If you act like Jesus, people will not know what to do with you. They won't know how to categorize you. They won't know how to respond to you because nobody gets tired of seeing someone respond in the way that Jesus would respond. It is the most unique, fresh, and breathtaking approach when someone decides that they will respond to the world in the manner and the way of Jesus and instead reject

the categories that the world attempts to foist upon us each and every day. We will say, "Hey, do you know what? You can keep your categories. I'm sticking with the Kingdom of God. I'm going with the Jesus way." Whenever we do that, do you know what happens? People say, "Wow... I want that." Houston Northwest... our job is not to become the coolest. Our job is not to become the flashiest. Our job is to become the most faithful... the most like Jesus... the most filled with His Spirit. That's what we are supposed to become. And when we do that, people don't know what to do.

Now I want you to think about what you ought to do with that truth. If you are here today and you say, "Hey, do you know what? I have broken places in my heart and in my life." You need to let the Gospel of Jesus, the Good News that God loves you, that He forgave you, that His Son died on the cross... you need to let that heal you today. If you believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son, that He is God in the flesh... that He died for you, that He was resurrected on your behalf... if you believe that, then guess what? You can experience that fullness. You can have that healing because this Word is filled with promises that will bandage whatever your heart wounds are. Others of us... do you know what we need to do? Do you know how we need to respond today? We need to stop withholding our healing gifts from the Body of Christ. I know you don't want to do it. I don't want to do it either. Nobody wants to do it, but we do it because it's beautiful and it's good ...not because it's easy but because it's right. Nothing that's right has ever been easy. We need to decide how God is calling us to respond. Some of us today would say, "Do you know how I need to respond? I need to act in a way that reflects more accurately 'Jesus' to the world. I need people to see His face, and I need to stop being so consumed with attempting to impress others with my ability, with my debonaire charm, with my ability. Instead, I need to say, 'I'm going to just be Jesus to this world.'"

Here in a moment, this is how we are going to respond. We are going to take the Supper together. You see right here in front of me, we've got a table. This Supper is designed to remind us that we are one Body. Did you know this? In the ancient Church oftentimes they took the Supper with one loaf, and everyone broke off a piece from the loaf. Nobody wants to do that today; we're scared of germs. (Laughter) Do you know why they would do that? They would take that and they would break it and say, "This is My Body broken for you," and everyone would break off a piece from one loaf. Why? ...Because they wanted to be reminded "We are one. We are one Body." This is not a concert. This is not a show. This is not a pep talk. This is not a pep rally. This is the holy Body of Christ. Here in a moment when we gather around, we break the bread, and this is what we'll say. We'll say, "As I eat this, I'm in. I am part of the Body."

If you're here today and you say, "You know what? I don't believe this." That's fine. I am glad that you're here. What we want you to do here in a moment when we take this Supper... is just to watch ...just to watch. Because I think that if you watch and you listen, you'll reach a point where you'll say, "Okay... I do believe. I see the way that these people act. I see the way that these people love. I want to be in. I want to be part of that Body."

What I'm going to do right now is I'm going to just pray over us, and then I am going to release you. There are tables that are set up around the room and have the elements on them. I want you to go to those tables and receive them. There are two small cups... one has bread and another one has juice in it. I want you to just come back to your seat and hold onto them and just think about the way that our God wants to rescue, bind your heart wounds, and release you through a healing gift, into the Body.

Let's pray: "Lord Jesus, how good it is to be in Your Body. Lord Jesus, how good it is to be in Your family. God, we're not a business; we're not an organization. We're an army. We're a Body. We're a family. Lord

The Church Is Equipped | Ephesians 4:7-16 | October 16, 2016

By Dr. Steve Bezner. Week 6 in the series "Life Together."

we are used for Your purpose. God, may we turn away from any desire that we have to draw attention to ourselves and Lord, instead, that we use our gifts to bring healing to Your Body. Lord, we pray this in Jesus' Name. Amen."