

ICE BREAKER

What's a great gift you either received or one you gave, and what made it great?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What part of the message was most encouraging to you? What part do you find challenging?
2. What did You notice about God in the passage? What did you notice about yourself and other people in it?

GOSPEL EXCHANGE (REDEMPITIVE WORK)

Jesus asks us to give Him our burdens (Matthew 11:28-29), whatever they may be (a lie we have believed about God or ourselves, our hurt or negative emotions, or even our concerns for loved ones), so He can carry them for us and give us His peace (wholeness and completeness) in exchange.

What do you want to exchange with Jesus today?

What is the burden? "Lord Jesus, I give you my..."

What's His gift? "Lord Jesus, I receive your..."

ACTION QUESTIONS

1. What is one step of obedience you can take this week, based on what you've learned today? *(NOTE – You might consider stopping and prayerfully asking God to answer this question for you, taking 30-45 seconds to listen in silence for an answer, then write it down.)*
2. During the coming week, who is someone with whom you can share what you learned today? *(NOTE – Consider repeating the same step with this question as the previous question.)*



Sermon Study - Conversation Guide

November 19, 2023

"Giving Our Spirit to Jesus"

Ephesians 4:7-13

This guide is a discipleship tool for personal reflection, family and group discussion, and for Table Talk on Sundays @10:40 am and 12:15 pm on the Lowell Patio

Coastal Community Church
mycoastal.org

NOTES: Giving Our Spirit to Jesus (Eph. 4:7-13) Pastor Andy Rock

Last week we talked about living in the tension of unity with God and one another. Tension isn't bad. It's us working on our unity—sacrificing for one another with our time, money, and energy so we don't love halfway. Paul's message to the church about our relationships with Jesus and each other continues as he emphasizes: God is the best giver.

4:7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. 8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people."

Jesus gives us gifts. That's grace. We get what we don't deserve. Jesus took the captives, which was us, and set us free at His expense. Jesus, who ascended to the throne of heaven, is giving us gift after gift.

Jesus gives us forgiveness when we don't deserve it, love that we could never earn, favor we couldn't pretend to qualify for, energy when we're exhausted, hope when all seems hopeless, and the list goes on. Paul then explains something extraordinary about God as the best giver ever.

4:9 (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? 10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

Jesus was in Heaven before He descended to us. His descent was for our sake, for our salvation, so that we could be united to Him. Jesus ascended to Heaven after the resurrection. He did that for us too. From His throne, Jesus works all things for our good.

I am now completely free to give like Jesus gives, with every ounce of energy and resource I have, so people see God's love for them is real.

4:11 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service...

Our gifts are for each other. Some of us blaze new trails as apostles. Some speak God's truth in love as prophets. Some love so powerfully as evangelists, we're drawn closer to Jesus. Some show us the way through the maze of life as teachers. Pastors reveal, in their vulnerability, God's love to us in our deepest needs and greatest triumphs. Why?

4:12 ...so that the body of Christ may be built up 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Jesus gives each of us our gifts so that our faith in Jesus grows, so we know Jesus more, and become mature, and become the image of Jesus. We need each other. We are called to build each other up, not tear each other down. Would you let Jesus build you up? Then pray with me...

Jesus, forgive me for tearing others down. Forgive me for tearing myself down. I need You, Jesus. Thank You for the people who build me up. I receive them as a gift. I choose to build them up. I take back my purpose, my love, my generosity, my humility, and my faith.

4:14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

Why is Paul concerned about being tossed about by others? Because it's what happened to him. There are those who can lead us astray. That's why we need friends who will love us and tell us the truth. Paul only became Paul because other people loved Paul to life.

4:15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

What's the tool? It's love. Speak the truth in love. Build each other up in love. Give from love. Love is patient. Love is kind. Love keeps no records of wrongs. Everyone gets lost. Jesus is an expert at finding slaves in hell and bringing them with Him to heaven. That's why we're together. It's only because of Jesus.

GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDELINES: Tips for great conversation

- We aren't here to teach/fix each other, but to share our experiences.
- Show respect by listening to one another, asking clarifying questions.
- If you're quick to share, allow space and time for others to speak up.
- If you're slow to speak, your experience is valuable so please share.