**Lessons from a Lockdown**

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**Day 44**

**Ephesians 4:7-13**

But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says:

“When he ascended on high,

he took many captives

and gave gifts to his people.”

(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up 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.

***Questions for Personal Reflection:***

1. The scripture says, “grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.” What does this mean? What are the “gifts to his people”? What gift did Jesus give me?
2. What does the scripture mean when it says “Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers”? How do I feel about that?
3. How do Christians equip fellow Christians for works of service? How am I doing this? What are my works of service?
4. How do we build unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God? How am I contributing to this?
5. If maturity is attaining to the whole measure the fullness of Christ, how mature am I? How am I more mature now compared to when this pandemic began?

***Insight:***

Grace has been given to us as Christ apportioned it. Other versions translate this as grace being given to each one of us “according to the measure of Christ’s gift”. Every Christian receives grace in the form of gifts. These gifts may be talents or abilities or roles we have in church. Our gifts come from God, he determines what’s best for us. So we shouldn’t be envious of other people’s gifts (“Why can’t I sing like she can?”) or be prideful about our gifts (“I’m the best leader in my ministry.”) We don’t deserve our gifts as we could not possibly earn them. We can develop and grow in our gifts but it is still God who enables us to do so.

Leadership or the ministry we have been given to serve in, is a gift from God. Furthermore, leadership or ministry is not just a gift given for our benefit. It is a gift given for the benefit of the church. Therefore, leadership is not a status but simply a way to serve the church. We don’t have to reach a certain level of “awesomeness” to be a leader. All we need is a heart to serve. So leaders aren’t necessarily those who have titles. Leaders are those who serve. Are you a leader?

Leadership, in all its forms, is crucial in the church. The Bible is filled with examples which teach us that godly leadership is necessary for God’s people to do his will. Let us therefore pray that all our leaders be godly. Let’s pray for more spiritual leaders to rise up and serve. Let’s pray that we grow in our own leadership so we can serve people better.

While there are different ways to lead, the goal is the same – to equip God’s people for works of service. So whether we are preaching the sermon, leading songs, ushering people to their seats, teaching the children or encouraging our brothers and sisters, we are all helping people be equipped when we have our Sunday Services or devotionals. To equip is to prepare people, we help them get ready to serve God. To equip people also means giving people what they need. What do people need to perform works of service? First, they need inspiration. People need the right motivation to do what God calls them to do. Second, they need direction. People need to know what God wants them to do. Third, they need correction. People need to know if they are doing something wrong or what they can improve.

Works of service are necessary so that the church may be built up, which results in unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God. We build towards unity. We have “one faith” but unity in the faith is something we need to work on. Thus, church growth is not just about growing in numbers but it is more about everyone growing in faith and knowledge of God. We can’t just be focused on multiplying disciples. We need to be intentional about maturing disciples. A growing church is a mature church, one that is attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Are we focused on having a Christ-like church? In what ways does our church need to be more Christ-like? What are we doing to contribute to a Christ-like church?

The lockdown is a perfect time to grow in our gift of leadership.