

Relevance In The Kingdom Of God

Ephesians 2: 8-10 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,

9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

SYNOPSIS: This message is a work of the Holy Spirit of God. It will be used to bring us to a deeper look into the mysteries of the Wisdom of God. This should lead us to an enlightened understanding of what God wants to do with our lives, our families, our church, our city and our world.

INTRODUCTION:

I started preparation for this message facing a challenge given by The Holy Spirit.

A question took form while I was praying about the future of LSBC Ministries.

The question rose up within me, do you desire relevance in the Kingdom of God?

I was stupid enough to ask the Holy Spirit, is that something I am supposed to be desiring?

His response overwhelmed me.

It went something like this, understand that if you have no relevance in the Kingdom of God, no souls will be saved as a result of LSBC Ministries and no disciples will be produced.

In other words, the church will be sterile.

The first passage of scripture that the Spirit of God has led us to today, is not unfamiliar to the Body of Christ.

The truth that it puts forth, simply stated, is that God did not allow me to be saved by grace so that I could, “be somebody.”

More importantly, we have been empowered by grace to do something.

To learn what it is that the Holy Spirit is going to show us today we have to move to **Romans 12: 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them:** (Not let us sit on them, but use them.)

I want to take a moment to look at two words in this scripture that are linked in ways that stagger the imagination.

Later we will include a third word to drive our point home.

Look with me for a moment at the facts represented in a survey that involved five thousand Christians where the question was posed, what does grace mean to you.

The vast majority (upward of 90%) of answers included Salvation, A free unmerited gift and Forgiveness of sins.

Only 2% of the people surveyed said anything about grace having anything to do with empowerment.

However take a look at **II Corinthians 12: 9 But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."** (Human inability) **Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses,** (Human inability) **so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.**

1. "Grace" (Charis): God's empowerment that gives us the ability to go beyond our natural ability.

Everybody say, thank God for that.

The second word that I want to highlight in **Romans 12: 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them:** (Not let us sit on them, but use them.), is **gifts.**

2. "Gifts", (Charisma): A specific gift of grace that empowers an individual to fulfil what they have been created to do.

People think that I am a decent speaker.

I know this because there is no shortage of people that tell me that, too many for me to dismiss or ignore them.

The list of stories about how God brought this about is too lengthy to cover in this one message.

High School current events class, my wife's grading system and the first few sermons I preached kept me humbled enough to last my entire life.

Now, let's take a close look at a third word to help move us in the direction of today's truth of Relevance in the Kingdom of God

1 Corinthians 4:1 This is how one should regard us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God.

There it is the word "Steward"

3. Steward – One who manages another's property or other affairs.

Is it a stretch to say that we are stewards of God's charisma or gifts.

Charisma, my ability to teach and preach, is it my gift or is it God's gift.

Peter brings all three of these words together in one passage;

1 Peter 4: 10 As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

First, notice that every child of God has been given at least one gift.

Next, notice again that we are not told to sit on it, we are to use it.

We are to use these gifts as good stewards of what has been provided by God.

How? By the grace of God that empowers us to accomplish our mission.

I would be the first person to tell you that there are many, many gifts in the church that are more important than my own.

Most of which cannot be seen.

My gifts just happen to be easier to see.

The bible talks about how the body is made up of many members.

Isn't it easy to understand that toes can't do what a nose can do.

A nose can't do what an elbow can do.

Legs can't do what eyes can do.

Let's visit this leg subject for a moment.

You could say something like my gift is important because it's like the legs of the body's members that carries it around.

I beg to differ.

You may feel like your gift, or gifts are hidden and cannot be seen.

However, you can lose a leg and still live and get around, even live a productive life.

But if your gift is a liver, the body cannot live without it even if it cannot be seen.

Happy is the man or woman who knows their gift and operates in it.

Miserable is the man or woman who tries to operate in somebody else's gift.

The liver gets no attention, but it is one of the most important parts of the body.

No one says, wow, that's a great looking liver you got there.

However the body could not move forward without it.

Now look at *1 Corinthians 4: 2 Moreover, it is required of stewards that they be found faithful.*

There are leadership conferences in this country where the question was posed, what do you think the word faithful means?

I'm going to save us some time and give you the most popular answers.

Steadfast (Consistent), Dependable (Reliable), Loyal (True), Trustworthy, Devoted, Truthful.

These are the top answers.

Never once has anyone ever answered this question like Jesus did.

Jesus answered it with one word, multiplication.

Matthew 25: 14-15 "For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants and entrusted to them his property.

15 To one he gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away.

So, one servant got 5, one servant got 3 and one servant got 1.

The important thing to remember is that they all got some.

Now drop down to vs 19;

19 Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

20 And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.'

21 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

The only thing that subject number one did that revealed to us that they were faithful is that they understood the principal of multiplication being the fruit of faithfulness.

What was one of the first commands given by God to man, was it not be fruitful and multiply?

Let's look at the next guy;

22 And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, 'Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.'

23 His master said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.'

Even though this guy only produced two more than he received, he also received the same reward as the guy who produced 10.

Then we have the third guy.

24 He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed,

25 so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.'

26 But his master answered him, 'You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed?

First we see that this guy did not know the true character of his master.

Secondly, he suffered from fear, and fear causes our gifts to go dormant.

Pay attention to the fact that Jesus did not say, you wicked and slothful (lazy) outsider. He said servant.

In regard to our works, Jesus refers to them as either wicked and lazy or those who multiply as faithful and good.

28 So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents.

Notice that God does not respond like a socialist and divide the gifts evenly amongst all three servants.

He could have given 5 talents to each one so that no one would get their feelings hurt.

Listen carefully, I believe God hates laziness.

God expects us to be fruitful and multiply.

I don't care if your gift is hospitality, serving, maybe you have a gift for taking care of people less fortunate, there are all kinds of gifts and God expects us to multiply them.

That's being faithful.

Now hold on because things are about to get worse.

29 For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away.

30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

So who is given more, those who multiply.

What have we learned recently; God has no problem with abundance in our lives as long as abundance doesn't have you!

Has anybody here ever heard of the Dream Center in Las Angeles?

Pastor Tommy Barnett in Phoenix Arizona started this ministry.

There was a man named Mike who was told by God to give \$100.00 a month to this ministry.

Fifteen years later Mike is giving \$150,000.00 a month to this ministry over and above his tithes.

What are you called to be?

Where do you work?

Is this place an evangelistic territory? You bet it is.

You may not know anything about what your gifts are today.

First you need to be saved.

You have to be a Christian.

Next, come boldly to the throne room of grace and cry out to God for His mercy.

Give your life to God in prayer.

After that, you can start talking to God about your gift or gifts, just remember that they were always, and will always be His gifts and we are His stewards.

Finally, if we want to be counted as faithful, we must be mathematicians that are capable of multiplication.

Relevance In The Kingdom Of God

- 1. "Grace" (Charis): God's empowerment that gives us the ability to go beyond our natural ability.**

2. **“Gifts”, (Charisma): A specific gift of grace that empowers an individual to fulfil what they have been created to do.**
3. **Steward – One who manages another’s property or other affairs.**