**Round Top Church Christian Fellowship**

**Sermon**

**God’s Specific Creation**

 **Ephesians 4:11- 16**

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October 17th In the Year of Our Lord - (Anno Domini A.D.) 2021

(Unless otherwise noted, NAS is quoted – New American Standard Bible)

**4:11** And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers,

**4:12** for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

 We are blessed to be created in the image of the *living* God our Creator. Paul declares what God can do and is doing in each Believer. God assigns us unique and individual gifts, abilities and personal traits. We are all gifted in different ways with not any two being exactly alike. In Paul’s letter to the Believers in Corinth, he explains God’s design and intent for each of us.

**1 Corinthians** **12:6** There are **varieties of effects**, but the same God who works all things in all persons.

**12:11** But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as **He wills.**

**1 Cor. 7:7** Yet I wish that all men were even as I myself am. However, **each man has his own gift from God**, one in this manner, and another in that.

**2 Corinthians 10:13** But we will not boast beyond our measure, but within the measure of the sphere **which God apportioned to us** as a measure, to reach even as far as you.

**Hebrews 2:4** God also testifying with them, both by signs and wonders and by various miracles and by gifts of the Holy Spirit **according to His own will.**

**I liken God’s gift-specificity** to how He designed our DNA which identifies us as human beings with not any two being exactly alike. Scientists tell us that our DNA is made of four main components (nucleotides) they refer to as ATCG (adenine, thymine, cytosine, guanine). I know they have their reasons for the order of the letters. However, I looked at these four letters and decided to rearrange the letters in order for me to remember them. So, how about “GACT”. I see “God-ACT”. I think this is fitting, because there is not any naturalistic explanation or understanding of how to manufacture DNA or RNA and order it correctly to create life or sustain life. Scientists can see ongoing processing of the DNA/RNA but are at a loss to duplicate the process due to the millions of times a minute they take place. Even if all the material was manmade, it would still have to be in the correct order and delivered in just the right timing for life to be created or perpetuated. Dr. James Tour reports the mathematical probabilities taking place inside our cells.

Example: Of the 3000 Proteins present in a yeast cell, there are 1079 billion combination interactions.

 See Dr. James Tour <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4sP1E1Jd_Y>

**So, we are all individually unique!**

 It is mathematically impossible for life to ‘happen’ by an evolutionary random, undirected, meaningless and purposeless process (RUMP). . . given the time from what many scientists call the Big Bang event. The scientific accepted age of the universe is about 14 billion years (+/- 40 billion years). The earth is estimated to be about 4.5 billion years (+/- 50 billion years). At the time Darwin published his Origin of Species (1859 A.D.), the scientific community believed the universe was static – meaning that it had always been there. It was in the 1920’s that the astronomer Edwin Hubble observed planets and stars moving away from each other at a constant rate by their trail of “red-shift” light. Thus, he determined that the universe is constantly expanding. Scientists then could trace the constant expansion backwards to determine when all the matter in the universe was gathered at one point. This is how they calculate the age of the universe.

Prior to Hubble’s discovery, evolutionists had projected many more billions of years for life to have evolved than allowed by turning the astronomical clock back to the Big Bang. Needless to say, the evolutionists have no credible response. They continue to ‘make things up’ like the preposterous idea of multiple universes or that life was seeded to earth. At this point, they will say anything to avoid acknowledging that there is a God-Creator behind everything we see.

**God is The Specific Creator**

 So, God designed the universe and our bodies with unique specificity. This includes our individual spiritual gifting. With this understanding, we need to respect that others will not be like us. We need to appreciate how God made us all different. Thank goodness we are not all clones of each other. I find that the diversity is interesting - in that when we come together under Faith in God, we can accomplish great things combining our individual gifts. We are all stronger as a family coming together to witness God and to face the challenges in this fallen world. Paul writes, for God, to the saints in Corinth explaining how God uniquely created all of us to work together.

**1 Corinthians 12:4-7**

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.

 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord.

 6 There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.

 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

 In verses 8-13, Paul lists a number of gifts: word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, healing, effecting of miracles, prophecy, distinguishing of spirits, tongues, interpretation of tongues, all through the same Spirit – The Spirit of God.

Paul is clear that all these spiritual gifts are given by God’s Spirit who works all these things, distributing to each one individually **just as He wills (v.11).** There is not any “name it-claim-it” gift for anyone. Some will say that if we ask anything is Jesus’ name, He will give it to us. However, John 5:14, read in context - specifically declares that *if we ask for anything* ***according to His will.***We can see the destructive abuse of the “name-it-claim-it” ministries on T.V. Seems like the ones mostly benefiting from the “name-it-claim-it” nonsense are the leaders of these multi-million-dollar cults.

As Paul writes to the saints in Corinth, he teaches that the body (assembly) is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. This places the proper focus upon Christ and not serving with our gifts to glorify anyone or anything else.

**Goals of Spiritual Gifts**

Paul then explains the goals of God’s spiritual gifts working in us. All these gifts are directed at **unifying** us together under God’s faith. In this work, we mature in our **knowledge** of the Son of God (Jesus Christ). We are called to grow to a spiritual maturity belonging to God. There is not any goal of one person being triumphant over another with spiritual gifts.

**Ephesians 4:13** until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

**What other goals do the use of Spiritual gifts bring us?**

**Ephesians 4:14-16**

**14** As a result, we are no longer to be children,

**tossed here and there by waves**

**and carried about by every wind of doctrine**,

by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming;

 **15** but **speaking the truth in love,**

we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head,

even Christ,

 **16** from whom the whole body,

being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies,

according to the proper working of each individual part,

causes the growth of the body for the building up of **itself in love.**

 God has the goal of unifying us all under His umbrella of love. **We speak the truth in love**. This is an overriding statement. God tells us love is patient, kind, not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; love does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. And love never fails. (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

To accomplish this unity with love, God asks us to avail ourselves to use His spiritual gifts. God’s plan grows us as individuals and grows the Church. However, there is a warning in these passages of Scripture not to be **tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine**, **by** **the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.** If the Church or individuals succumb to these calamities, there is chaos, death and destruction.

I have often said that the world has rarely witnessed Biblical Christianity. There have been political and cultural motives behind many religious movements that always place their agenda on top of the mission and Word of God. This is why the pivotal event of the incarnation was the world-changing event in history. The world witnessed that God incarnated Himself as Jesus Christ to visibly carry-out His love for us by going to the Cross in our place to pay the price for our sin (John 3:16), incorporated within the mission of the incarnation that God/Jesus taught constantly. This was to correct misunderstandings and bring clarity to God’s call to salvation. We see this in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5) when Jesus says several times that “*You have heard the ancients were told*. . . But I say to you” – then Jesus would give the corrected teaching (Matthew 5:21-22; 27-28; 31-32; 33,34; 38-39;43-44).

**We have the same misunderstanding today**. Even though God came as Jesus and personally corrected the record, fallen humanity continues to corrupt His teachings. Remember that we are called to speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15). Our motives are not from ourselves but stem from the love of God at work in our hearts.

Throughout history, corrupt people have spoken about God and His teachings but not in love. They had political and economic motives. They had personal egotistical pride motives to control others for personal gain. Corrupt people (leaders) have used their position in society and knowledge to control others in manipulations of their time and resources. These people ruled by fear which is contrary to who God is. There is no fear in the love of God (1 John 4:8, 18).

The most blatant reality of fallen man’s craftiness and deceitfulness was and is carried-out by the state-church. Joining their masquerade is the modern-day movement of secular humanism who have highjacked the name of Christianity to carry-out their sinful worldview beliefs. In my opinion, here are three of the most destructive false teachings.

**1. The State-Church and its officers are the mediator between God and people**.

The historic State-Church, in Europe, claimed that its head is the Vicar of Christ on planet earth who controls God’s meritorious forgiveness. Reading the Bible, there is not any Scripture to support this claimed position. In fact, the contrary is stated.

 **1 Timothy 2:5** For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

All the Scriptures that I have been presented to assign a person to be head of the earthly church were grossly taken out-of-context and/or partially quoted. We also note that many groups who broke from the State-Church during the Reformation (1372- today) simply put themselves as the new mediator between God and people. John Calvin did this with his theocracy in Geneva. The political protectors of Martin Luther did this in Germany. The Anglican Church of England was formed and simply took the place of the Roman Bishop’s state-church. When the Pilgrims came to the new world, it was their way or the highway. Most geographical locations in the new world were segmented by some form of state-sponsored and managed church. It was not until Pennsylvania (William Penn -1681 Charter from King Charles of England) was formed that there was real religious freedom not tethered to state authorities. When a church is tethered to the state, the church is a mediator between God and people.

**2. Meritorious Works will save you**.

 Whether it be water-baptism or pilgrimages, just one Scripture quote defeats the teaching that one or a number of meritorious works can save you and/or assist you in keeping your salvation.

**Ephesians 2:8-10**

 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as 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 so that we would walk in them.

 Here is another passage of Scripture often misquoted as. . . *work out your salvation with fear and trembling.* What does it really say *. . .for it is God who is at work in you.*

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. **(Philippians 2:12-13)**

This passage is directed at believers who Paul wants to assure that God is at work in their lives. It is God who gives them the power to overcome and mature towards Jesus’ example of the person He modeled during His incarnation.

 Many more passages of Scripture teach that by faith alone we are saved - that is justified. . . made to be in right-standing to God. **Romans 4, Hebrews chapters 9,10,11** are very declarative that a heart-felt surrender to God by faith is the point of salvation and that works of law/traditions will not justify a person to God. It is the circumcised heart that surrenders to God (Deuteronomy 30:6, Ezekiel 36, Acts 2:37) that God approves.

**3. In the name of God’s love. . . all sin is overlooked and allowed.**

 We all know that in Western society the traditional biblical family unit has been relegated to the sideline by the selfish “me-first” secularists. In the name of love and compassion, all intimate relationships are deemed okay. Even if children are involved, their God-given rights are overshadowed by perverted adults. This is seen in a few cases in elementary schools where children are presented with transgender lifestyles.

**Isaiah 5:20** Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil; Who substitute darkness for light and light for darkness; Who substitute bitter for sweet and sweet for bitter!

**Proverbs 17:15** He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous, Both of them alike are an abomination to the LORD.

**2 Peter 2:1** But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will also be false teachers among you, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves.

 Jesus taught that those who loved Him followed His commandments.

**John 14:15** "If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

**John 14:21** "He who has My commandments and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him."

**John 14:24**  "He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine, but the Father's who sent Me.

**1 John 5:1** Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him. **2** By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments.  **3** For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments; and His commandments are not burdensome. **4** For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is the victory that has overcome the world-- our faith. **5** Who is the one who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

**AMEN**