MESSAGE OUTLINE



See What It Takes

Ephesians 4:7-13 NKJV

INTRODUCTION
Dub Jackson, the founder of Tokyo Baptist Church, wrote a book titled "Whatever It Takes."

Whatever It Takes means he knows what to do (whatever) and he intends to get the job done (what it takes).

"You have to be ready to go all out. There's no partial commitment to missions. There's no partial commitment to combat. You're either for it or you're not. You either go all out or you don't." –Dub Jackson

Paul begins shifting from how our story began and our foundation, to our destiny → **Ephesians 4:30**

Believers will experience victory and the resurrection. But, those without His Spirit remain "dead in their sins" destined for final judgment.

Paul will teach us what we are to do as a church and what to do with the gift of the Spirit we have been given.

PIVOTING
v.7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

v.7 is Paul's pivot point. God is in us, which comes through Christ as His gift.

Acts 2:33 (NKJV) *Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.*

In Ephesians, the imagery is of the Spirit as a human body growing into a Man–Jesus Christ who is God.

PLUNDER
v.8 ***Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts to men."***

Psalm 68:18a *You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men...*

Thus Paul is equating Yahweh God with Jesus.

Here and many other places, Paul establishes the divinity and equality of Jesus Christ with Yahweh God. This is our one faith and He is our one and only God!

What Paul means by "led captivity captive" is that Jesus arrested the enemies who had been holding His people captive. He takes their valuables, the spoils of war, and gives it to His people.

The enemies: **Ephesians 1:20-21a** *20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion...*

But the context is not understood unless you know the end of the whole verse:
You have ascended on high, You have led captivity captive; You have received gifts among men, Even from the rebellious, ***That the LORD God might dwell there.*** **Psalm 68:18**

Paul, knowing well the Old Testament, understands the connection between God's triumph to Jesus' triumph over the powers of darkness which leads to His Gift—God dwelling with us.

Christ came and gave himself, and then when He left, He gave His Spirit.

How about you? What can you give to His people? (You'll have to pray about this.)

HELL?
vv.9-10, *(Now this, "He ascended"--what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)*

This (vv.9-10) is the gospel! *His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see corruption.* **Acts 2:31b**

Jesus descended into the Greek word Hades (the grave) not the final 'Hell' of judgment reserved for Satan.

He went to the grave, the lower parts of the earth, then ascended into the heavenly realm of the Father.

Jesus is physically ruling in the heavens, but His Spirit, power, and authority is manifested here: ***In YOU!***

Are you walking worthy of that calling and willing to do whatever it takes? Set your mind on things above.

When you are concerned about the things down here, you are not concerned with eternal things up there.

When you put your mind into *whatever it takes* mode, it is actually quite liberating. Because putting on that attitude puts off everything else. Because you know what you need to do—whatever it takes.

Bring your living sacrifice to the altar. Serve the King and serve His people, with His attitude.

Transition
v.7 says he gave a measure of Christ's **gift.** This is singular. But v.8 says he gave **gifts** to men.

The gifts we receive are for the edification of the body you are a part of.

PROVIDING
vv.11-12, *And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.*

When God issues a calling, He provides the tools.

The Apostles (Acts 14:14, 1 Thessalonians 1:1, Romans 16:7)
Called to be sent out and bring the gospel to a place outside of the reach of a church: a missionary.

The Prophets (1 Corinthians 14:3, Acts 15:32, Acts 2:18)
Called to encourage pastors, ministers, and His people accurately with God's word. (The Canon is closed!)

The Evangelists
Missionaries are sent out to an unreached area. Evangelists pull people into a church already there.
For TBC, that means internationalized Japanese and internationals.

The Pastor-Teachers
Teach the Word of God, lead worship, organize activity, and build the body up in Christlikeness.
Which means to help them utilize their gifts for ministry in love.

These four terms mentioned in v.11 are often called offices.

The Ministering Saints
This is the body. This is what we call the priesthood of believers. They are there really to help the ministry of the pastor-teachers of the church. For the needs they see of the church.

Do you think we believers lack faith? Because this whole time, Paul has been talking to believers.

POSSIBILITIES
v.13 ***...till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.***

Paul knew the Ephesians needed to work together on this. He hoped and prayed that they would grow in their faith and in the understanding of who and what the Lord had done for them, so that, through their maturity they could flourish as a church.

However, later we find out that the Ephesian church started to burn-out. As it says about Ephesus in **Revelation 2:4 (NKJV):** "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love."

What happened to them? In Revelation, Jesus acknowledged their hard work and resilience. He acknowledged that they righteously hated evil and outcasted false teachers. But Jesus had a major issue with them: He didn't see the same love they used to have.

They were operating out of duty, and forgot their first love.

Many scholars debate what their first love was. But it doesn't actually specify.

What do you think it is? What did the church forget?

There is one verse in the letter to the Ephesians that Paul talks about *their love.* This is what it says:
Ephesians 1:15, *Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and* ***your love: for all the saints***

If faith is only head knowledge is a church that forgets its first love, which is His body—that is each other.

Jesus teaches us that greater love has no one higher than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends. That is the clearest example of Christlikeness. It is how to love like Christ.

What Paul sees as the fullness of Christ, doesn't stay in here [head], but by what comes out of here [heart].

It's not about what's in here [head], but by what comes out of here [heart].

CONCLUSION

Exhortation
Abraham, called the LORD as Jehovah Jirah. Meaning the Lord God Who Provides.

John 14:16–18: Jesus says, "I will pray to the Father, and He will give you another Helper... I will not leave you as orphans; *I will come to you."*

Jesus gave all He could: Himself. He responded to the call saying, "Not my will, but Yours be done."

Because He was willing to do *whatever it takes.*

Are you willing to answer the call and give yourself? Trust Him. He will provide. **Just believe.**

Invitation
Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life. What must you do to be saved? **Just believe.**

Jesse Cesario
Tokyo Baptist Church
January 3-4, 2025

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