

Gifts of grace (Quality: good)

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Preacher: Delves, Stanley (1897-1978)

- [0 : 00] I will speak this morning from the fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, reading the seventh and eighth verses.
- The fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, the seventh and eighth verses. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
- Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men.
- The fourth chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, the seventh and eighth verses. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
- Wherefore he saith, when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men.
- [1 : 24] My friends, all grace is in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- As he is exalted at the Father's right hand, the glorious head of his body, the Church.
- May all grace is in the person of Jesus Christ. And it is according to the will and purpose of God the Father that it should be so.
- The Father so appointed it, that all grace, for all the purposes of grace, should be so.
- Should be first in the head, before ever it should be communicated to the body, the Church.
- [2 : 33] And so it is written, that it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell. That is, of course, all fullness of life and grace.
- And we may understand that in these two ways. That first of all, there's all fullness of grace in Jesus Christ for himself.
- As the blessed person that he is, for himself. I don't mean, it would not be correct for me to say, for himself, with regard to his divine nature as a son of God.
- Because it was necessarily so that all grace should always have dwelt in the divine nature of Jesus Christ.
- But I'm speaking of what writers on these matters call the complex person of Christ. That is, the person of Christ in which divinity and humanity is combined.
- [4 : 03] That all grace is given to Jesus Christ for himself. And that is why Jesus Christ is the eminently and perfectly gracious person that he is.
- Now, Jesus Christ is eminently and perfectly gracious person in every respect. In every respect with regard to his humanity.
- He is very gracious. He is full of grace. Grace is given to Jesus Christ that he should be eminently and perfectly gracious person.
- And then secondly, all grace is given to Jesus Christ to impart from his fullness to others.
- And the others are first, all that God gave to him in the eternal covenant of grace. All that he died to save.

- [5 : 17] And all who are brought to seek to him for grace, being conscious of their deep need of it. And that nothing but grace can meet their need.
- And being convinced that there is grace in Jesus Christ to meet it. There is grace in Jesus Christ for them. There is grace for every seeking soul in Jesus Christ.
- Be you assured of that. There really is. If there is in your heart a seeking for Christ arising from a sense of need of grace and a real desire for it.
- There is grace in Jesus Christ. There is grace in Jesus Christ for you. And this grace in Jesus Christ is communicated.
- All the grace there is in every gracious person anywhere in the world. Be that in a lesser or in a greater measure, all that grace came from Jesus Christ.
- [6 : 44] And there is no doubt, of course, that this grace is given in different measures. Although I don't think this is exactly the meaning of this verse, nor the way I'm going to bring it out if the Lord helps me.
- But still it seems to come within it. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. That is, we have just as much measure of grace as Jesus Christ has given to us.
- Be it little or be it more. And there is no question but what to some, a greater measure of grace is given by Jesus Christ than to others.
- But mark you this. Whatever measure of grace has been given to us, the measure of the gift of Christ, it can be increased.
- And that's a comfort to some of us. And an encouragement to pray. He giveth more grace yet. He giveth more grace.
- [7 : 54] There are some with whom it may be a question as far as we can judge, though we mustn't judge about this very much.
- But still, they have grace, but it's not very deep and not very evident, but still they have it. Well, my friends, it is only like a grain of mustard seed.
- It can grow. The Lord can give more grace. Oh, I pray, I wish he would give more grace to me. Grace is given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
- Grace is given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.
- He gives grace for our salvation and our sanctification. In other words, he gives grace to make us gracious Christians.
- [9 : 19] And for that matter, of course, there are no ungracious Christians. Although there may be many who bear that name and claim that designation.
- But there are no ungracious Christians. If a person isn't gracious, he's no Christian. And if he is gracious in his spirit, he's a Christian at heart.
- The Lord gives grace for salvation and for sanctification. And for all the spiritual needs that we feel.
- For we do have many feelings of need with regard to our spiritual condition. Feelings of need that we know nothing can meet but grace.
- Especially the Lord gives grace to his children to make them more like himself. And the most gracious Christian is the most Christ-like Christian.
- [10 : 29] For the grace of God has been given to him in a great measure. The gift of Christ's grace has been very great to those who are most like him.
- And nothing can make us like him. But his grace. In fact, it is grace in the hearts of the Lord's people that it is his very likeness in them.

In this time state. His likeness in them, in the world to come, will be glory. But in this time state, it's grace.

And so as I commence this morning, I commend the grace of Jesus Christ to your consideration. To your prayers.

And to your appreciation. I want a higher esteem for grace in our hearts. And a more constant cleaving to the principle of it.

[11 : 36] And I want to see more of grace in us all. Then there's another reason and purpose for which the Lord gives grace.

Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. And that is grace to serve him. Grace to fill whatever sphere of labour and usefulness and ministry that the Lord appoints to us to fill.

And that is, as I understand my text in its connection. And it is always safest to understand a scripture in its context.

Is the real purpose of this word. Unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

What that gift of Christ is, I must come to set before you. But for the moment, I just put it that way. Whatever sphere in the ministry of the gospel.

[12 : 57] And that's not limited to preaching mind. Whatever sphere in the ministry of the gospel. The Lord gives grace according to that need.

Unto every one of us. The us there seems to more especially apply to those who are engaged in the Lord's service.

And especially in the ministry of the word. And to fill those offices and positions that the apostle goes on to set forth.

He gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers. Now, they were gifts.

Gifts of Jesus Christ. And according to the gift was the grace given to them to fill that sphere appointed to them.

[14 : 06] For instance, in the chapter before the fourth chapter, I noticed the apostle said, Whereof I was made a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given. You see, this grace given.

That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. In other words, Paul would say, The Lord gave me grace to make me a Christian.

And then he gave me grace to make me a preacher. Grace to preach, you see. Is this grace given that I should preach?

For if the Lord calls any man to preach, In whatever degree and sphere of the ministry, He will give him grace with regard to that.

[15 : 20] For a graceless ministry is a useless ministry. And any sphere in the church of God that's filled by anyone, To whom it has not been given grace to fill it, They fill that to no purpose whatever.

They're more an encumbrance and a hell. They stand in the way. They hinder. Unless the Lord has given grace. If the Lord has given grace, Then, How useful, How profitable, Under his blessing, Are all these different spheres of usefulness, In the cause of God, And of the gospel.

Now, It is with regard especially to the ministry, That these words apply.

And this seventh verse, Unto every one of us is given grace, According to the measure of the gift of Christ.

And then he gave gifts unto men. So you see there is the gift, And there are gifts. Now, By the gift, I understand not of course the gift of Jesus Christ, Although he is himself, The unspeakable gift of God.

[16 : 56] But I take it to mean, The gift of the ministry, As a standing, Ordinance and appointment, In the church of God, On earth, All through this dispensation.

The Lord Jesus Christ, As a head of the church, Has given a ministry, To his church. A ministry. A ministry, To feed them, To guide them, To instruct them, And to be a means, Of blessing, To their hearts.

And my friends, What blessing, The gospel ministry, Has been a means of, No one can imagine, What a blessing, The gospel ministry, Has been, All down through, The ages, Since the Lord, First sent the apostles, Out to preach.

Numberous blessings, Numberous blessings, Have come by, The ministry of the gospel, Not that, The ministry of the gospel, Is exclusive, In this sense, That no blessing, Has ever come to anyone, Except through the ministry, That would be, Far too, Limiting, A matter.

But take it, All in all, I don't question, To say, That the ministry, Has been the greatest, Means of blessing, In the world, Since the days, Of Jesus Christ, And that's the gift, The gift, Of a gospel ministry, But then again, There are the gifts, The gifts, That Christ, Gives unto men, Well this seems, Fairly clear, To understand, If the ministry, Is the gift, Then ministers, Are the gifts, For, The ministry, Of the gospel, Cannot possibly, Be maintained, From one generation, To another, Except by gospel ministers, As the apostle, Puts it, Very simply,

[19 : 21] And very plainly, In the epistle, To the Romans, How shall they believe, On him, Of whom they have not heard, And how shall they hear, Without a preacher, And how shall they preach, Except they be sent, As it is written, How beautiful, How beautiful, Upon the mountains, Are the feet of him, That publisheth glad tidings, That publisheth peace, The glad tidings, Is the gospel, And the peace, Is the blessing of it, They are the gifts, And, Of these gifts, The apostle, Goes on later, To speak, He gave some apostles, They were gifts, And some prophets, They were gifts, And some evangelists, They were gifts, And some pastors, They were gifts,

And teachers, They were gifts, Now here are the gifts, Gifts to men, That the teaching, And preaching of the word, Should be maintained, I must come to that presently, But, For a moment, I would just, Ask your attention to this, That, These gifts, The gift of the ministry, And the gift, Of ministers, Comes from Jesus Christ, As he is exalted, And ascended on high, Wherefore he said, It is a quotation, From one of the sounds, Wherefore he said, When he ascended up on high, He led captivity captive, And gave gifts, Unto men, For all gifts,

Come from, The ascended saviour, Who ascended up, On high, If Jesus Christ, Were not where he is, There'd be no gospel, There'd be no ministry, And there'd be no ministers, And everyone would be, In absolute ignorance, Ignorance, And darkness, With regard to, Spiritual, And holy things, But now the apostle, Having mentioned that, That, Jesus Christ, Is ascended up on high, That he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men, Takes what might seem to be, Rather, A surprising turn, And I'm not going to, Confine myself, To any one verse, In this passage, It is so interwoven, He takes, A rather surprising turn,

Having mentioned, That, All gifts, Come from, The ascended saviour, He said, Now that he ascended, What is it, But that he also, Descended first, Into the lower parts, Of the earth, He that descended, Is the same also, That ascended up, Far above all heavens, That he might fill, All things, That's what I want, To bear on, This morning, What time is left to me, Now that he ascended, What is it, But that he descended first, But now, A thoughtful reader, Of this scripture, Might say, What need was there, For that to be introduced, That he descended first, Into the lower parts, Of the earth, Well,

There's a very deep, Truth, And much instruction, In this, For our, Minds, To, Ponder over, And our hearts, To, Feed upon, For one thing, The apostle, Intends, To set before us, This, That in order, That there should be, A ministry of the gospel, And the gospel, To preach, The Lord Jesus Christ, First descended, Into the lower parts, Of the earth, And laid the foundations, Of the gospel ministry there, In the lower parts, Of the earth, Before he ascended, On high, To give gifts, To men to preach, He descended, He descended, First, First, To lay the foundations,

[24 : 30] Of the gospel, In this, World, Now that he ascended, What is it, But that he also, Descended, First, The apostle, The apostle doesn't, The apostle doesn't, Simply mean, That to ascend, He must first, Descend, Although that was, True enough, The Lord Jesus Christ, Could not have ascended, If he had not, First descended, For as the eternal, Son of God, One with the Father, Equal in glory, And majesty, And power, With the Father, From before the foundation, Of the world, Entirely one with the Father, To what could he ascend?

There was no higher, There was no higher state, To which he could ascend, He was already, God over all, Blessed forevermore, He could not ascend, He must first descend, Before he can ascend, But that's not the meaning, That's not the point, He descended first, Into the lower parts, Of the earth, Let us trace this out, Very briefly this morning again, May faith in our hearts, Follow our dear Redeemer, Through his descending, And his ascending, He descended first, Into the lower parts, Of the earth, Well, To begin with, He descended, Into our nature, He was divine, Descended,

Into humanity, He descended, Into our nature, For the son of God, To become a man, A real man, Was a great dissension, Was a great condescension, There's nothing comparable, To this, There are various ways, In which people, May be said to descend, For instance, Suppose, Someone, Wealthy, Or royal, And accustomed, To state, And honor, Were to lay it all aside, And go to live, In the slummiest part, Of the country, If he were to exchange, His robes, For rags, And his table, For hunger, And his court, For an alley, Suppose it, Which is a possible supposition,

That a man, Should descend, From the highest, Degree of, In life, To the lowest, Well, That would be a dissension, He would descend, But then, He would be the same person, He wouldn't have descended, Into a lower nature, Suppose an angel, Descended, To be, Born into our nature, Still that wouldn't be, The same, Because, An angel is a creature, And we're creatures, It would only be a descending, Of a creature, From a higher, Degree, And level of creation, To a lower, I would only be a descending, Of a creature, From one, Condition, To a lower condition, But now, The Lord Jesus Christ, Descended, Into our very nature,

He was the Son of God, Divinely the Son of God, Descended to be a man, And if we could, Appreciate, Which we really cannot, The great difference, Between, Humanity, In our nature, And divinity, In the nature, Of God, And of Jesus Christ, It would seem, Almost incredible to us, That one, Who was essentially, Divine, Should descend, To be essentially, Human, He descended, Into our nature, And that is, And always will be, The great mystery, Of godliness, A mystery to be believed, And as far as the truth of it, Is concerned,

[29 : 35] To be understood, But with regard, To the nature, And the means of it, Not so, Great, Is the mystery, Of godliness, God was manifest, In the flesh, He descended, He descended, But then, He descended, Into the lower parts, Of the earth, First, Being found, In fashion as a man, As Paul describes, As Paul describes, This descending, So beautifully, To the Philippians, Who being, The form of god, Thought it not robbery, To be equal with god, But made himself, Of no reputation, And was found, In fashion, As a man, And he humbled himself, And became, Obedient unto death, Even the death, Of the cross, Of the cross,

And the death, Of the cross, Was the most shameful, And the most painful, And the most degrading, Form of death, It was possible, For him to die, There could be, There could be no, There could be no, More shameful, Shame, There could be no, More painful, Pain, There could be no, More degrading, Degradation, Than to be crucified, And he humbled himself, And he descended, To that, He descended, Not only to die, But he descended, To bear, The death, Of the cross, But then it says, He descended, Into the lower parts, Of the earth, Now I think, There's no question, About that, Though various,

Things have been said, About what that means, I think it means, The grave, Now the grave, Is the lowest parts, Of the earth, It belongs, To the dead, No one will sink, With regard to that, Body at least, Any lower, Than the grave, The grave, Is the lowest, Place for us all, The very lowest, And, He, Descended, Into the lowest, Parts of the earth, He descended, Into the tomb, As the apostle, Writing to the Corinthians, And his words, And his words, Are better than mine, Because they're inspired, When he would declare, In brief, The gospel, He said, It's this, That Christ died, For our sins, According to the scriptures, And that he was buried, You see, And that he was buried, That was the lowest,

Depth of all, He was buried, And the third day, He rose again, From the dead, Well now, What does all this mean, It means this, As I've said, He descended, Into the lower, Parts, Of the earth, To lay the foundation, Of the gospel, And its ministry, That's the truth of it, The ministry, And the gospel, Rises out of the cross, And the tomb, Of Jesus Christ, For think what he did, When he descended, Into the lower, Parts of the earth, First of all, He atoned for sin, And without an atonement, Sin would be upon us, Forever and forever, Believe it brethren,

Lay it to heart, Nothing but an atonement, Can take sin away from us, And dissolve it, In the sight of God, Into nothing, Only an atonement, Jesus Christ, Has made an atonement, For sin, In the lower parts, Of the earth, Here, On this hour, Whatever may be, Existed, Or thought, Or supposed, About other planets, I don't know, But here, On this hour, The redeemer, Came to die, Here the son of God, Shed his blood, This earth of ours, Received it, As it flowed, From his deep wounds, And bleeding side, Our earth, Received, Received the blood, Of Jesus, Here he died, Here on our earth, Here the son of God,

[34 : 39] Poured out his precious, His blessed soul, Unto death, Here he was buried, Here he was buried, And he descended, To the lower parts, Of the earth, To reconcile us, To God, By the blood, Of his cross, Man, Man, Is estranged, By sin, From God, Alienated, There is a state, Between them, Of distance, Enmity, On the part, Of man, Anger, On the part, Of God, And they can, Never come together, Be friends, Until there's, A reconciliation, And man, Cannot make it, Jesus Christ, Has reconciled us, To God, Who believed, By the death, Of his cross, That put away, The enmity, That slew it,

If I may say so, Jesus Christ, By his blood, Slew the enmity, And, By his precious, Blood, He slays it, In our hearts too, No enmity, Will live in your heart, Brethren, No enmity, Can live, If the blood, Of Jesus Christ, And his, Love, And his, Grace, Is made effectual, In your soul, No enmity, Can survive it, It will kill it, It will, Kill it, Now, He descended, To reconcile, Us to God, And he descended, This end, That he might open, For us, A fountain, To cleanse us, From all our stain, Nothing, Nothing, Can ever cleanse,

Our souls, But the blood, Of Jesus, You and I, We are stained, With sinful thoughts, And imaginations, And feelings, And what not, All that is sinful, All that is sinful, Stains us, And you could never, Wash yourself, Clear of it, Job learned that lesson, Long ago, He said, Though I washed myself, With snow water, And make myself, Never so clean, That is in my sight, They would plunge me, Into the ditch, They would give me, A deeper sense, Of sin, Than I ever had, Before I thought, I'd cleanse myself, From it, But Jesus, Precious blood, Cleanses, From all sin, Doubt it not, And reconciles, The soul to God, From every folly, Every fault,

Or why should you, Live and die, Any of you, At enmity with God, And defiled with sin, And carries awful filth, Into eternity with you, When there's a fountain, That can purge you, Wash you, And make you, Whiter than snow, He descended first, First, Into the lower parts, Of the earth, And he that descended, Is the same also, That ascended, Far above all heavens, That he might fill, All things, If you would take my counsel, You would seek to know more, Of Jesus Christ, In your heart, And that the Holy Spirit, Would reveal, In you, And apply with power,

In your soul, The efficacy, Of the Saviour's, Precious name, And love, And blood, And the Lord, Bless this, My very inadequate, Though I feel, Really sincere, About this, My very inadequate, Test the money, To the gospel, Again this morning, I hope that, In your beautiful, Again this morning, Of the spoken, For the gospel, Within the poise, Here, And the people, Again this morning, ■■■■, Precious name, For the gospel, Because of the gospel, Again this morning, Thank you.