



Empowering People to Change the World

The Empowered Church

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WORSHIP 1 SONG

- **VIDEO FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS**
- **ANNOUNCEMENTS (LIZ AND I)**

Ephesians 4:7-10

Pray

Ephesians Graphic

“Born for War”

The Empowered Church

A People Who Know Their God-Given Gifting and Walk in It

Ephesians 4:7

1. Christ has gifted every believer.

- Look at people: No child is alike! All have different gifts, talents, and ways of expressing themselves!
- Ex. As a parent, just when you thought you had it all figured out, then came the next!
- An empowered family, an empowered church, expresses itself through the spiritual gifts that come forth from God through individuals.
- Each of us have been given grace from God to do something for the Kingdom of God.
 - Some have more grace than others.
 - All of us are teachers here, but some are teachers for the masses.

- All of us are gifted to prophesy, but some prophesy in larger group settings.
- All of us should be giving of our finances, but some have the gift of big-time giving.
- In God's School, you are ALL in the Gifted Class!
- Ex. We will be launching EmpowerU this fall with Inline Classes in the classroom - live classes to equip you. Online classes will be coming soon.
- Ex. Wholeheart Advance is an advanced training for men...an Intensive!

Verse 8

2. Christ secured your giftings at Calvary.

- Notice my point, "giftings," is plural. I believe in a plurality of gifts in each believer, in each wholehearted disciple.
- Something powerful happened during those three days while Christ was in the grave! Something fundamentally changed between the cross and the resurrection!
- "Led captivity captive" - a military term signifying the triumphal armies of chariots, riding into their towns with the captives of war in tow. Chained to the chariots. The spectators would come out and cheer. Jesus conquered Satan and the demons of hell through the cross!
- All that has conquered you has been "led captive" through the cross of Christ! Sin, this world, and Satan have been all defeated at the cross!
- This is a picture of the defeated enemies losing their riches. God has given us all the gifts through conquering Satan.

Verses 9-10

3. Christ has set you free to walk in your gifting.

- Satan and demons have no hold on you unless you let them!
- This passage has been variously interpreted. I believe that Christ descended into hell, just like the Apostles' Creed reads, "He descended into hell."
- Throughout the Scripture, "lower parts of the earth" speaks of the place of the dead...hades or hell.
- I believe that Christ went to hell and preached there, announcing that the gig was up, proclaiming release to the captives and taking the keys of death from Satan!
- Now listen closely: I'm not saying as some pastors have said, that Christ suffered in hell—no, He came in victorious power!
- 1 Peter 3:18-20
"For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water." NKJV
- Christ went into hell and showed His power and glory to those spirits who had even tempted and opposed Noah during the building of the ark.
- Before the cross, hell was divided into two parts: 1) Hades—those condemned as sinners; and 2) Paradise—those who were the saints in paradise. We see this best in the story of the rich man and Lazarus.

- Christ came into hell and released the saints. Evidence of this is those that rose from the dead when Christ died! These were the saints of old being released from hell's grip.
- I am familiar with other interpretations, and I agree with you, too. The point is that Christ led "captivity captive." We have been set free to use our gifts for the glory of God!
- JESUS ROSE FROM THE GRAVE! THROUGH HIS RESURRECTION YOU ALSO ARE RAISED UP WITH CHRIST!
- The only hindrances to your walking in your calling is what you choose to believe! Will you believe what the Scriptures say about you? Will you believe what Christ did for you at Calvary?

Congregational Prayer: Gather in groups of four.

Lay your hand on the shoulder of the person to your right and pray this prayer,

"Lord, thank You that You have given ____ (person's name) spiritual gifts and talents. Thank You that You secured those gifts and talents by dying on the cross. Thank You that You took all those gifts away from Satan and have given us freedom to discover those gifts.

Now, would You, O Lord, put a bold passionate desire in ____ (person's name) to seek, ask, and go after those gifts. I pray that ____ (person's name) would discover this year their giftings and talents. I pray that any hindrances from one's past, demons, or lack of faith would be broken. May they now walk in the freedom and victory of Jesus in their life! Amen."

Let's move into worship...

COMMISSION OF NEW COMMUNITY GROUP LEADERS

