



GIFTED WITH PURPOSE

Called To This | 9.13.26

Libin Abraham

(The following text is automatically generated and has not been edited)

Libin Abraham 0:00

Usually, in any case, when we think of the word gifted, we are thinking of people who are exceptional in their talent. We're thinking of visible, celebrated people who are exceptional in their talent. So think about some gifted athletes. Likely, you're thinking of people like Steph Curry or Simone Biles or our very own David Bla, who grew up in this ministry, who is now the offensive coordinator for the Washington Commanders. Go David, we love you, man. You're probably not thinking about the backup Lawden Snapper from Jacksonville Jaguars, though I'm sure he's very talented. If you're thinking about gifted musicians, maybe you're thinking Brandon Lake or Taylor Swift or Stevie Wonder or Caleb Willis-that's what I often think about. Not your cousin that knows four chords on a on a keyboard or or guitar. Though that's probably all you need to get by. If I told you to think about gifted actors, you're thinking about Denzel Washington or Meryl Streep, not the person who shows up halfway through the credits as concerned pedestrian number two. She's still waiting for her big break. If I told you to think about gifted Christians, you're thinking about public figures like Billy Graham or Mother Teresa or maybe somebody on our staff, Levin Abraham. Maybe based on how good the sermon is. Maybe you might think that, because the idea of gifted equals exceptional talent has kind of crept into the church. So in our mind, there's this sense of like, if there's one group of people who are gifted, they're talented, they're visible upfront stage leaders. They got a book deal. They can gather a crowd, and there's that gifted group of Christians, and then there's everybody else. There are the ordinary ones that just show up and receive and watch. But in the New Testament, there are no two categories of Christians. There aren't some who are gifted and then the everybody else Christians. No, no, no. Any person who belongs to Jesus has received the Holy Spirit of God, and the moment the Spirit comes to live inside of you, He brings into your life the power, the presence, and the person of Jesus. You are a gifted believer. So today the message is simple. I want to get into your core that every Christian is spiritually gifted. Can we say this together? Every Christian is spiritually gifted. If you are a follower of Jesus, God has given you supernatural spiritual gifts inside of you. Today we're wrapping up a series we've been in called called to this, and we've been looking at the kind of people the gospel shapes us to be as a church and as individuals. These are our core ethics that drive how we live in the world, how we show up in our workplace, how we show up in our neighborhoods, how we show up to church, how we show up to one another. How is it that we live. So week one, we looked at how we are compelled by love. Paul said in First Corinthians 15 that we are so convinced that one died for all and was risen that we are compelled by His love to bring this good news to all people compelled by love. Second of all, we looked at this last week that we have unity in diversity. God is doing something extraordinary and bringing the nations, and the goal isn't diversity. The goal is unity. It's oneness. It's us becoming one body in the name of Jesus. Today, we're going to look at the second, the third, and fourth, which is we are gifted with purpose and we are sent on mission. We are spiritually, supernaturally gifted with purpose. Our anchoring text has been from Ephesians chapter four, where Paul begins chapter four by saying, "I urge you, brothers and sisters, to live, to walk worthy of the gospel that you are called to. To live worthy of the gospel of your calling, it does not mean that we earn our calling, that we earn the grace of God. But what it means is that in our life, our life corresponds to our calling, that our life makes sense with the grace that God has given to us.

Libin Abraham 4:17

And last week we looked at this invitation to be those who keep the unity of the Spirit and see Frazzle beautifully walked us through what it means to to keep the bond of peace in the Holy Spirit. Notice everything that in the first section of Ephesians four that Paul says we already have in common that we are one body, we have one Spirit, we have one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father. That's a pretty good list right there. So, for all of the reasons the world will say should pull people apart, all of the causes for division and hostility and and differentiating people. This is a far greater list of

what keeps the church together: one baptism, one faith, one Lord, one God, one body. This sustains the church of Jesus in highly divisive and hostile world. So Paul has made it clear: here is the reason for your unity and oneness. Now he shifts in verse seven. After addressing one body, now Paul addresses every single person in that body. He speaks to each and every one of us. So look at verse seven with me. Now grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. So he's addressed the body, and now he speaks to each one of us. He says, "Grace was given to each one of us. We are united in the Lord, but that unity does not remove our individuality, because with being a part of the one body, still comes a unique function we have in the body. So what Paul is saying is, we have a shared calling, but we have unique gifts. God personally has gifted you. That's why you're not just like the person sitting next to you. You're not just like any other Christian, no, no, no. God has uniquely, personally wired you and gifted you by Himself, one body, but each person having received grace according to the measure of Christ. Usually, when we think about grace, what we mean is grace that saves us, and that is true. Grace. We are saved by the grace of God. Usually, when we think about grace, we're thinking about the forgiveness of sins we have received because of the cross of Jesus, and that is true. We are forgiven by grace. Usually, we think about grace, and we mean the acceptance we have, the belonging we have in the family of God, and all of that is true. But when you look at the heart of the New Testament, grace does not just save us. Grace actually enables us. Grace doesn't just save us. Grace is what enables us. Grace strengthens you. Grace gives you supernatural enablement in that moment, in that extraordinary or ordinary moment. Sometimes grace strengthens you. Grace shows up at 530 when you're on I 35 and you just want to end it all because of traffic. Supernatural grace is given to you, and it is grace that strengthens you to serve one another. So notice, Paul says in Ephesians four seven, each person has received grace. The word for grace in the Greek is charis, charis. But did you know that the word for spiritual gifts? One of the two words that are that are used for spiritual gifts is charisma or charismata. It literally means gift of grace or gifts of grace. So yes, we are saved by the grace of God, but then God enables us through our life by supernatural gifts, by charisma, by these gifts of grace. So every believer, once we come into the kingdom, you are not left empty-handed. No, no, no! God has given you special, personal gifts of grace for your strengthening, for your ministry, for your enablement. God has given you supernatural gifts of grace. Now we believe here of entry that the gifts of God, that the supernatural, spiritual gifts of God, did not cease at the last apostle's death in the first century, we don't believe that the spiritual gifts of God are no longer available to the church because the canon, the scriptures have been completed. No, no, we believe that the Holy Spirit of God is still pouring out gifts upon His church. That the same Spirit that was operating in the first century is operating today, and he has gifts for the church, amen.

Libin Abraham 9:03

And the reason why he has gifts for the church is simple: we need them. We need his supernatural enablement. We need his grace. We need power from on high. We cannot do this on our own. We need gifts of grace. So hear me: the world is obsessed with talent. If you want to be famous, you become talented. You you get famous based on your talent. The world is built on talent, but God does not build His church on talent. God builds His church on gifts. He uses supernatural, divine gifts to strengthen and equip the church. I told our team this morning before we came out to lead you in worship. Say your talents are great, but what we need today are not talents. We need supernatural gifts from the Holy Spirit. That is the secret to the church. These incredible grace gifts that we have been. Given, and it's because the work that Jesus has called us to is far too great for us to do in our own ability. We cannot accomplish Jesus's work in our generation and in our world because our talent, or personality, or strategy, or budget. If we do, the total sum of what we do will be the sum of our human strength. Rather, God's design for the church is that the sum of our work is not our human strength, but it's supernatural strength from God. And I'm not interested in being in a church or leading a church where we do what we can do. No, no, I want to be a part of a story where God does only what He can do that. The glory goes to him, and people look at the story of our church, and they would say, "Look what God did-not the pastor, not any of our gifts, but look what He did. Amen. Don't you want to live that story? So God gives grace to every church, to every believer, every Christian, because talent isn't gonna what's gonna be it's not gonna be what what takes us forward. It's gonna be these supernatural grace gifts that the Holy Spirit disperses within the church of God. The New Testament gives us at least three amazing lists of these grace gifts. Romans 12, I'm sorry, First Corinthians 12 will list them as these. These are grace gifts, supernatural, spiritual gifts that God gives to the body: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, tongues, interpretation, helping, leadership. And by the way, all these gifts are listed in the same passage, which means they all have the same invitation for all of us. It's not like there's gifts of leadership today, but prophecy has gone away with, or tongues is no more, because Paul said, "Man, these are the gifts of the Spirit that are given to the church. Notice the gifts that are listed in Romans 12: prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, giving, leadership, mercy. Sometimes in our little minds we kind of prioritize one gift above all, but these are all equally beautiful, needed gifts in the body of Christ. And in Ephesians four, Paul will list the gift given to the church: apostles, evangelists, pastors, prophets, teachers-not one person has all of these gifts,

but God, as He wills, distributes them to each person, and we need in the body of Christ every believer to exercise their grace gifts. Growing up, I used to think that spiritual gifts were to make me look spiritually impressive, that I would be more respected or have more influence or leadership roles because I had more gifts. None of us deserve gifts, but gifts are an expression of God's generosity. Gifts are given based on your mission and based on your calling, and I've said this before, and I still believe this: that if I was pastoring a church in Northern Africa or Eastern Asia, I might have a different set of gifts then there than I would here, because gifts are always connected to the assignment on your life, to the season you're in, to the ministry God has called us to. So every person has been equipped and empowered with spiritual gifts that come from the Holy Spirit. They are gifts of grace. Notice what it takes, what it took, for God to give us these gifts.

Libin Abraham 13:35

Back to Ephesians four, Paul has just said, every person has received grace according to the measure of Christ, now he says in verse eight, for it says when he ascended on high, he took the captives captive, he gave gifts to the people. But what does he ascended mean? Except that he also descended to the lower parts of the earth. The one who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens to fill all things. So here Paul reaches all the way back to Psalm 68 to describe the victorious reign and rule of Jesus, and Paul is saying Jesus descended to the depths of human brokenness and sin, maybe even to Hades itself. But then he didn't stay there; he ascended. Yes, he was crucified. Yes, he was buried. But three days later, he rose from the grave, defeating death, sin, and the grave, and then he ascended above all the heavens. He ascended to sit at the right hand of the Father. But as he ascended, what he what did he do? He gave gifts to the people. I love this imagery that as Jesus ascended to the Father, he made. A priority to pour out the Holy Spirit and to fill the church with gifts. Jesus didn't just die and rise from the grave just to save you and to forgive you of your sins. No, no, He took captives captive. He took reigns of the cosmos. He is risen with all authority and power, and what does he do with this power? He gives the church gifts. He gives you supernatural grace and abilities and and spiritual talents for his glory and for his praise. He chose not to leave the church empty-handed, but to fill the church. Jesus said. I'm not going to leave you as orphans. I'm going to send another. I'm going to send an advocate. And when the Spirit comes to you, He's going to empower you to be my witnesses. Your gift is significant. Your gift is necessary because your gift was costly. He died, rose from the grave. He descended and then ascended so that he could fill you with himself. He could fill you with spiritual, supernatural gifts. Why does this matter? Remember what Paul said earlier in Ephesians two, verse eight to ten. Paul would write a few chapters earlier, for you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift, not from works, so that no one can boast. So the first and greatest gift is salvation, saved by grace through faith alone. We're not saved by works; we're saved by grace. But then he says, "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for what? Say with me: good works, not saved by works, but saved for good works. Our identity is that we are workmanship. Our purpose is the good works. Next verse that He has prepared ahead of time for us to do. We're not just in a waiting room until heaven. He descended, he ascended, gave the church gifts, so that you and I could participate in the good works He has prepared ahead of time. Let me ask you: Is that good work only for the pastors, no, no, no. It's for anyone and everyone who has been saved by grace through faith. If you are His workmanship, His masterpiece, then you have good work to do. When you look around the world, there is brokenness, there is sin, there is chaos, there is tragedy, but that does not cause us to like sit in our homes and sit in our chairs, wondering what God's going to do. It actually moves us. Perhaps there's good work available. Our friends in Cuba would say every crisis is fuel for the gospel, because when we see the deterioration of society and chaos around us-it actually causes us to ask ourselves: Is there a good work, a beautiful work, a redemptive work that I am invited into? And friends, can I just tell you, we cannot abdicate or or relegate good work to the government or to some other organizations. No, no, the church is those who are called to be salt and light, to join God in the good works He's prepared ahead of time for us to do, Amen. We're the ones who've been invited, but we cannot do the good works in our own goodness.

Libin Abraham 18:32

We need spiritual, supernatural gifts from God, so that we don't show up in our own talent, or ability, or experiences, or resources-not we show up fully equipped for the good work, which God has given us to do. So every believer has been given gifts, grace gifts, that Jesus ascended to the heavens to give you grace gifts. So every person, every Christian, has gifts. Second of all, Paul would teach us here that spiritual gifts are for service. Spiritual gifts are not to make you feel great about yourself. They're not for self recognition. They're not for like setting, okay, who's greatest in the church. Spiritual gifts are all for service. Look down at verse 11 to 13, and He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers to do what? To equip the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ'

fullness. So God gave gifts to the church, leaders, apostles, prophets. His teachers, so that the entire body will be equipped for ministry; that the whole body will be built up until we've reached the full maturity of Christ, and we ain't there yet. We have Christ in us, but daily we are growing into the maturity measured by the stature of Christ's fullness, but the way that happens is, is when the whole body, all the saints, every member of the body sees themselves as active participants of ministry. One of the great dangers in a church like ours, who have staff and who have programs, is that we can professionalize all the ministry. All ministry is done by the trained people, by those who've gone to seminary, by those who get paid by the church. But friends, that is not the design of the church. The role of pastors and leaders and staff is to equip the body, is to equip every saint for the ministry God has called you into. I had a pastor friend who would often say like this that he quit ministry the day he became a pastor because now his primary purpose was to equip the body for ministry, to equip the members to see the body of Christ equipped and released for ministry. So ministry is not what the staff does while the congregation watches, ministry is what the whole body does when every person is equipped and released. We are part of ministry. We have been called to exercise our grace gifts, to stir up the gifts of God to not let it lay dormant, to not put it on the on the top shelf and never use it. Recognizing the grace gift that God has given us, and to use it to serve and minister to people around us. Look at how Peter explicitly says this in First Peter chapter four, verse 10. He says, "Just as each one, again, everyone, each one has received a gift. Use it to serve others as good stewards of the varied grace of God. That word "varied" means different colors. Everyone's got a different color of grace. Grace shows up in all kinds of forms and shapes. But whatever grace you've got, whatever gift you've been given. Serve others with it. Steward it. Don't sit on it. Steward the grace of God. If anyone speaks, don't speak based on your mere talent. Let it be as one who speaks God's words. If anyone serves, don't just do it in your human strength or ability. No, let it be from the strength God provides, if anyone, so that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ in everything. I want you to think about like this: whatever grace gift you have, there's a person who's going to experience grace through that gift. There is a someone, there is an individual, or a group of people who are directly connected to the grace gift you're given, because that's going to be the moment, the way they experience grace. So, for example, if you've been given the gift of mercy, there's someone who needs to experience the grace of God through compassion, through you. If you've been given the gift of wisdom, there's someone who is confused about life who needs clarity through you using the gift of wisdom that God has given you.

Libin Abraham 23:32

If you've been given the gift of encouragement, there's somebody in our body or somebody that you will meet who is just one conversation away from giving up, and they need your gift of encouragement. If you've been given the gift of generosity, you have provision. You have something in you that somebody deeply needs. They're in need of. If you've been given the gift of leadership, there is a group of people who need direction. They need to experience grace as you can express grace to them. If you've been given the gift of hospitality, someone needs to feel seen and that they belong. But it can only happen as you set the table for them. Whatever grace gift God has given you, there's somebody on the other side, who will be a recipient of grace because of how grace has been gifted in you? So spiritual gifts they may be in you, but they're not merely for you. They're meant to be stewarded, not hoarded. They're not meant to be stirred up and used for someone who deeply needs it, just imagine what it would look like if every person at Bintree recognized, "Man, I've got a grace gift that somebody needs. It causes you to ask different questions. The question is that, man. Did I like the sermon or not? Was the music my style, or did the church do what I needed them to do? Now the question is, when I show up to a setting like this, when I partake of the body life of the local church, what is the grace gift that I'm bringing? How am I going to encourage somebody? How will I seek to build someone up. How is God going to channel the grace gift into me to bless somebody? Now you begin to look for people, man. Who could I bless today? Who could I encourage? Who could I give some mercy to? Who could I be hospitable to? Now we begin to think and see ourselves as contributors, not containers of grace, but conduits of grace that we receive this grace, and we want this grace to overflow to somebody. And friends, I see this happening so amazingly here. I've had Sundays where I've seen a couple who was sitting in their seat by themselves crying, and somebody three rows behind them never met them before. They'll walk up to them and say, "Hey, I don't know you don't know me, but can I just pray for you? Can I just pray with you? I see that you're struggling. I see that God's doing something. Can I just lift you up in prayer? And I begin to see the countenance of that person change because they're receiving the ministry of grace not from a pastor or staff member, but from somebody who just simply noticed them. Somebody showed up to our 50th anniversary. They were on their way out. They said, "Yeah, this was an interesting Sunday to come. We're on our way out, but we thought we'd grab some pizza on the way out. And the person who met them said, "Can I just can I hear your story? They spent 45 minutes talking and conversing, and they've been back every three Sundays since then because someone took them time to see them, tell them their story, hear their story, invite them to their small group, connect them with people. What is that? That's the grace of hospitality that makes people feel seen and known.

Stace and I, we go to a supper club once a month, and with four couples in our group, and every week we take turns on who's hosting. And let me just tell you, after a long week or a long month, you come into a supper club and someone has prepared a table for you. That's not a loud gift, but that gift of hospitality eases your heart. It brings joy to your soul. Every person has a spiritual gift that is deeply needed for somebody in the body. You have one. Just think about this today, right now. We are experiencing the cumulative effect of hundreds of people who've used their spiritual gifts just for us. Somebody was up here cleaning last night to make sure this environment was ready. People opened the door for you. Somebody made coffee for you because you know you got to have some caffeine, especially at the 9 a.m.

Libin Abraham 27:50

Someone right now is serving children. Hundreds of people are in the back serving children, not because they're talented, but because they're gifted and they're passionate about the next generation. Someone fold a sermon notes. Someone turn the lights on. Can we just thank God for the many, many gifts of grace that we are enjoying and delighting in? Hundreds of grace gifts dispersed to the body, and they are meant to serve one another. Here's our third thing that Paul would teach us: Every gift is necessary. Every gift is necessary. Sometimes your gift may feel small, but friend, it is not insignificant. Every gift is needed in the body of Christ. Some people have upfront gifts to teach or to lead or to sing. Other people have behind-the-scenes gifts, but whatever your grace gift looks like, they are absolutely needed in the body of Christ. Notice how Paul finishes this section in verse 16. From Him, the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building itself up in love by the proper working of each individual part. Every supporting ligament matters. We're all fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, just like in your human body. There are some parts that are more seen and more visible, but there are other parts that are just needed, just as much needed, that are not as seen. So I was thinking this week, man, I have not thanked God for my pinky toe. Like no one's ever complimented me on my pinky toe. No one's ever seen my pinky toe. I don't think. But I was like, man, if I wake up in the middle of the night because my toddler is crying and I hit my pinky toe against the coffee table. I feel it then, maybe thinking some words that I'm not allowed to say out loud. There's some who think, man, I'm not needed, but the moment you are missing, the whole body suffers for it. The moment you don't use your gift, so you put your gift on the shelf. We all suffer for it. May not be visible, but it's incredibly needed. And I say, research what is the purpose of a pinky toe? And there's actually a lot of purpose to it. You couldn't you couldn't have your side to side balance, equal weight distribution to the outside of your legs and feet if it were not for your pinkie throw. You need it. What keeps you running and keeping you from falling is actually some of the hidden parts of your body. We need to grow to appreciate not just the gifts you see on the stage or up front, but the quiet faithfulness of brothers and sisters who show up to pray or to intercede? Who give in secret? Who encourage? Who write a note of hospitality, or kindness, or encouragement? Every gift is absolutely critical in the body of Christ. Can tell you how many times I've shown up on a Monday to the office, and you know by Monday morning you're second guessing everything you taught about on Sunday. But then you get a word of encouragement. I know it's simply a handwritten letter. Just means the world. It fires you up for the next week. Hear a kind word, or to hear somebody praying for you, just to get a text out of the blue, man. Thinking about you praying, they're not loud because spiritual gifts don't have to be loud. Some of you have thought to yourself, "Man, when Jesus was handing out the gifts, He left me out. I don't have any gifts, but spiritual gifts don't have to be loud. They don't have to be upfront. They don't have to be boisterous. There are so many hidden grace gifts that are absolutely needed in the body of Christ, friend. You have them. God has given necessary, needed gifts to women and men in the church. He's given beautiful gifts to the young and to the old, to mature believers and to those who are brand new in their faith. God has given beautiful grace gifts to those in our special needs families and communities. Beautiful ways of expressing the fullness of Jesus that we would be lacking if it were not for them. Every person carries a grace gift.

Libin Abraham 32:08

Imagine what it would be if we were a church who did not underestimate the grace gift, but we recognized, man, Jesus descended; he ascended so that he could fill my life, fill me with a unique spiritual, supernatural gift that somebody needs. We are the healthiest we will ever be as a church when every member of our church is activated in their grace gift. Don't you agree? We need every gift of grace in this body. If you're wondering about your grace gift, your spiritual gift, I'm going to give you some questions to consider. And also, by the way, in the seat back in front of you, if you go to a link tree, scan that code. There's a whole spiritual gift assessment you can take to identify, based on who you are, how you're gifted and wired the spiritual gift that God has given you, but here are some questions to consider as you think about your grace gift. First of all, what needs constantly move your heart? What is the need in the body? What is the need in the world that you just had to hear about it once? You just had to see it once, and immediately you're compelled to respond. No one has to like

cheerlead you on. No, it is connected to a passion, a want to. It tugs at your heart, and you cannot shake it off. There is a need you feel so connected to that could lead you to your spiritual gift. Second of all, where have other believers affirmed you. They have seen the fruit. They have seen what it does to people. You feel affirmed in the gifts that God has given you. Third of all, where does your spiritual, where does your service produce spiritual fruit? Maybe you thought it was just an ordinary conversation, just an ordinary moment, but that one moment led to moments. It led to a meal. It led to a defining moment in somebody's life. You thought you were just stepping into this ordinary moment, but God used that to bear spiritual fruit, and you begin to see the life of a person change because you walked in the grace gift that God had given you. What kind of ministry brings life to others and joy to you. Your walking in spiritual gifts is supposed to be fun, not dreaded. You will enjoy when you walk in the gifts that God has given you. So if you don't love kids, you don't have to serve in kids ministry. That's supposed to be a dread. Sometimes we may need you to, but enjoy the gifts of God in you. This last week, Stacy and Avery they started serving in special needs together, and it was like one of Avery's first times to be in a serving role. She just turned 10. Let me tell you, she came home feeling alive. I'm thinking, I'm never taking you on a trip or Disney. You're just going to serve more because she came alive like alive. The next day, she said, "Mama, I wish it was yesterday at 6p.m. so that we could be driving to the church to serve in special needs ministry. So much joy because she was serving, and this little boy that she was serving that night, that last Thursday night, he said to her at the end of the time together, said, 'Can you just write your name down so that I don't forget who you are? Because I've loved being with you. So she gave her, she gave him her name tag. Then his parents sent us a picture where he put that name tag on his bedroom door, so he could never forget the little girl who served him that night. Your spiritual gifts, they bring life to others and joy to you. This is when life gets really fun. This is when your spiritual life becomes abundant. When you walk out the gifts of God in your life, and others are blessed by it, and you experience the joy of God. Here's a fifth question to consider: Where is there a need that you already feel equipped to meet? Like you're chopping up the bit, man. I have that word that that somebody needs. I have someone in my life that I can bless because of how God has gifted you with. So think about those questions just in your student notes and wonder.

Libin Abraham 36:19

Maybe let those questions lead you to the gifts that God has given you. So we are a church who are compelled by love, united in our diversity, gifted with purpose. And here's the fourth one: we are a people sent on mission. I already know you're looking at your clock and you're thinking, "Man, I hope he doesn't take the same amount of time to describe the last one because there's a football game that's about to start. I won't. Not going to spend a whole message on this because the next three weeks we're going to talk about what it looks like for our church to be sent on mission. What it looks like for every single one of us to be sent on missions. I'm not going to give you one sermon. I'm going to give you three. That's all I got you. Got you three sermons. Next Sunday we're going to look at what it looks like for us to be sent on mission in a city, in neighborhoods, in a region that is growing with Muslim population. What does it look like for us to be missionally engaged with the heart of God? And that's the sermon that some of you have been asking me. When is it going to be next Sunday? Me and my friend Renoe, we're going to teach and and look at what does it look like in a growing Muslim population, really any religious diversity, for us to be sent on mission. The second week, in in three weeks from now, or in the second week week after next, we will have our annual mission Sunday, and it'll be an amazing day of celebrating the stories of what God is doing through our church, especially in some of the darkest places on the earth. We're going to celebrate 25 years of what we call ADP, our ministry, to one of the most unreached people groups in India, and we'll have some of our partners there to talk about what it looks like for us to be a church sent on mission to the to the darkest places on the earth. In the week after that, the third week, we will talk about unique ways that God has called us locally, and we have an exciting new partnership that we can't tell you more about. About how we are engaged locally in the DFW area to see the kingdom of God coming and arriving on earth as it is in heaven. So the next three weeks is going to be about what it looks like to be a people, to be a church sent on mission. But I want to end our time by looking at this vision that Paul gives us in Ephesians 410. This call to live on mission. Paul says in Ephesians 410, the one who descended is also the one who ascended far above all the heavens to do what? To fill all things. Can you say that with me? To fill all things, so Jesus seated at the right hand of the Father. He has one mission: to fill all things. That's what Jesus is doing, filling all things with His presence. So the reason why Jesus fills the church with gifts is so that he could fill the world with his presence. There is not a square inch on the earth that God does not want to fill with Himself. There is not a heart alive on the planet that God does not want to fill with His love and His grace. There is not a coworker you have, or a neighbor you have, or a village around the world that he does not want to fill. The purpose of God filling the church is not first to look at us and say, "Look how great we are. No, no, no. It is to join God on His mission to fill all things. Paul actually said this exact same thing back in Ephesians one when he talked about Christ rising from the grave and receiving all authority and power, and the Father placing Him as head over the church, which is His body,

the fullness of the One who fills all things in every way. This is what God is inviting us into-to be a people who step into places. And relationships, where we feel all things in every way.

Libin Abraham 40:05

So this week, hear me: you will find yourself in conversations that I'm not in. Don't speed down me, but recognize you've been sent. God's Spirit lives in you. Jesus said in John 20:21, as the Father has sent me, I'm sending you. You will be in places, boardrooms, or hospital rooms, or some place where the staff are not at. But guess who's there? You are, and you carry the gifts of God. You carry grace gifts, and God's purpose is to fill that person's life, to fill that environment with the gifts of God. You're called there. You're sent there on mission to fill everything with His presence. So, as we pray, here are some questions I want to ask you to consider: What grace gift has Jesus given you? It may not be like the person next to you, but God has given you a grace gift, and the sooner we realize that and walk in it, the more good works we're equipped to do. Second of all, who needs that grace from you? Who needs that word of encouragement? Think of the person who needs the grace gift God's given you. Think of the person who is wounded or sick or mentally just depressed. Who needs a word of encouragement? Think of a person who feels lonely, unseen. Who needs your gift of kindness and mercy? Who needs the grace gift you possess? And lastly, where is Jesus asking you to begin? Maybe it's to serve in one of our areas of ministry here. Maybe it's outside of the walls. But we are healthiest when every grace gift is released for the good of others. So would you stand with me on your feet as we close in prayer? Here's what I want to ask you to do: just open your arms with me, just palms up. It's a posture of receiving. Today, what the world needs is not the talent of the church, but it's the gifts of God-spiritual gifts, supernatural gifts. So I want to pray over us that those gifts would be stirred up from deep within, and that even right now, God would begin to fill you. Maybe if He's calling you to a new assignment or a new mission field, that He would pour out on your life spiritual gifts, grace gifts. So, Father, we stand today as Your church, Your body. We need the gifts of God. We desire them. We ask, O God, that You would stir up gifts of leadership and mercy and teaching and hospitality and administration-all of the gifts that they will be active in our church and through our church, that you would fill our city, fill our neighborhoods with a people who are fully equipped. I thank you, God, that you did not leave us empty-handed, but you descended and then ascended, so that you could fill the church, and through your church fill the world, filling all things in every way with the presence and glory of Jesus. I know there's somebody here today, God, who has yet to receive the first and greatest gift of salvation today by grace, may they receive this free gift. That for God so loved them that He would go to a Roman cross and die a criminal's death and rise from the grave, so that their sins would be forgiven. Forgiven, it's a grace we cannot earn. So today, God, would you save somebody under the sound of my voice? Draw them to the feet of Jesus at the cross, and for all of us, God, as we enter our world this week, as we step into places and people and moments, may we recognize that we have been gifted for the moment, we've been called and shaped for such a moment as this. So use us through the gifts of God given to us. We love you, Jesus, and all this. In the name of Christ, we pray. And the church said aloud, "Amen, amen, amen. Can we thank God for the gifts, the varied gifts of grace He's given to each and every one of you?