



Men's Discipleship Class – Week 15

January 24, 2019

Verses:

Psalm 139:13-16

Jeremiah 1:4-5

Ephesians 4:11-13

1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Romans 10:17

1 Corinthians 13:2

Romans 12:4-8

You are going to retire from one of these. You are going to retire from this, but you do not ever retire from family. You certainly do not retire from this. Now. You are going to see parenting at some point which we will talk about when we get there in a couple of weeks. You are going to leave this but not these other two. Go to Psalm 139. That is the first place we are going to start today. Go to Psalm 139, and we will then go from there to Jeremiah 1. Hit the middle or what used to be the middle until they came up with these massive study Bibles. When I was a kid, seriously, they taught us how to find books in the Bible. In the old days if you did not have a study Bible, you could go one fourth and find Kings, half way to find Psalms, and three fourths to find Matthew. You had a way to work through. With these new study Bibles, you have no hope. Now listen to verse 13.

*13*For you formed my inward parts;
you knitted me together in my mother's womb.
*14*I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works;
my soul knows it very well.
*15*My frame was not hidden from you,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

He starts out saying that he has given you or created you. Whatever you are today, he did. So in other words and generally, this will reference your talents. This is going to reference probably the things that are going to affect your career. He is going to weave you in a certain way at birth. He is going to give you certain abilities that will enable you to live out the career or secular calling. We will walk through a couple of things to get to what I really want to say. He is going to walk you through a secular calling based on what he has given you at birth. This is one of the problems with parenting. We want our kids to be what we think they should be or what we are gifted at. I

remember my dad was an electrical engineer. He told me that his name is on the moon. There is no way to check that, but that is what he told me. He was a really smart, brilliant guy. As a matter of fact, my wife and I were playing my parents Trivial Pursuit one time in Florida. He started. They went around the table and answered all of the questions. He got in the middle and answered that question and won before we rolled one time. He then said we needed to play again. Play? Nobody played. We just watched him answer questions. I did get him when I took him to the baby boomer edition. He did not have a clue about Jethro Tull, so I worked okay there. He was really disappointed in me because I did not have his skill set in math. I remembered when I flunked trigonometry in high school my senior year. It was boring. He told me that no Osborne man had ever failed a math course. I replied that I would have some children and change that. I did. He did not think that was funny. I did not have his skill set. What God gave me was not what he gave him. God is going to give you certain abilities at your birth.

Look in Psalm 139:16.

16 Your eyes saw my unformed substance;
in your book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.

You have talents and you have a set time here for your life. Your days are numbered. You can eat all the health food you want. You can short-circuit your time by being an idiot. If you do everything the way you should, there is a set time for you. He will then bring you home.

Look at Jeremiah. Slide to the right a couple of books over. Jeremiah 1. Listen to what he writes beginning in verse four.

4 Now the word of the LORD came to me, saying,
5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.

So before this, right? Before he gives you talent and before he sets the time for your life, he knew you.

5 "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you were born I consecrated you;
I appointed you a prophet to the nations."

He has a purpose for your life that is obviously connected to your birth. Prior to your birth, he has a purpose. He is going to give you talents at your birth and a set time to live out that purpose. Now, there are times when these things are going to be the same.

Look at Ephesians 4. This is probably not going to reference you. It does reference me. It references Randy. It references some staff in here. Chris is in here. It references us. It may reference your children. It would be a good thing to know. Ephesians 4:11-13.

11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,

There are some people that he gives to the church that both their birth skill and their rebirth skill, which I will show you in a moment, are combined. The purpose and career/role in the church is identical. This is not going to be true for the vast majority of you. For those of us who have that particular calling and in my life, God knit me together in a certain way. He then prepared me for a

purpose of serving the church which is also obviously my career. Now listen to what he says.

11 And he gave the apostles

You have twelve apostles in the New Testament. We do not have time to look at that to include Barnabas and some others. What I want you to understand, I still think sometimes that is available. I shared this in a sermon a few weeks ago. In the 70s, our culture told us to stay in a marriage no matter how bad it is which we embraced as a church. The problem is that we never taught people how to do that. Dobson came along and opened up this whole new curriculum of how to love your wife, how to submit to your husband, and what that all means. I think I look at Dobson as kind of a late century apostle who brought the healing of the family in when nobody had done that. I think there is still a little bit of that going on.

the prophets,

The prophets are guys that speak strongly in the church with power.

the evangelists,

The evangelists are not what you think it is. This refers to missionaries. I grew up with evangelist who were full time called evangelists to preach in churches. You cannot find anywhere in the New Testament where Paul or Timothy pastor in Ephesus and has John Mark come to do a revival. That is nowhere in the Bible. I do not know where we came up with that thing. That is what we do. We do not do it here, because I do not think it is Biblical. I think an evangelist is somebody in this particular context who had the ability to do cross cultural ministry and win people to Christ in an arena that was not his culture. It would be what we would call today our missionaries.

the pastors and teachers,

This is not two distinct things. I do not have time to go into the Greek. It refers to the same person. If a guy is going to be a pastor, he has to be able to teach. If he is going to teach, he has to be able to be a pastor. He has to be able to embrace both of those things. Those are people who have the same career and church calling.

For most of you, this is not going to be. Most of you are going to have a career and then a calling in the church. Let me show you something. Go to 1 Corinthians 12. We are going to quickly walk through this. We are going to start in verse nine. Slide over to 1 Corinthians 12. Actually, we will start in verse four. Now listen to this.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone.

What did we just see in those verses? Trinity. You have the same Trinity you have in Ephesians 1. You have God the Father, God the Son, and God the Spirit.

7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the

interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

Gentleman, you are not going to like today particularly if you are not serving anywhere in this church. Did you listen to what he said? He listed the manifestations. The list is not exhaustive. He is going to list some of those things. He says to each one is given a manifestation of the spirit. We have talents given to us at our birth. At our rebirth in Christ, we are given gifts of the Holy Spirit. I have certain things given to me at birth that enable me to live out my career. At my rebirth, I am given certain gifts that enable me to serve inside the church. I am going to retire here. I will never retire from the church. That has no time limit on it. This will. This does not. I have a responsibility to utilize my particular gift in the church.

Listen to what he says. He lists some of these.

8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit

He mentions wisdom and knowledge. We generally have this backwards. I do not think it is a big deal but when the New Testament talks about wisdom that is generally we understand. Generally, we view knowledge as what you know and wisdom is how you apply it. The New Testament reverses that. Wisdom is what you know and knowledge in the New Testament is how to bring that into your life and how to make it practical. There is a responsibility God has given people. Some people have wisdom to understand and unlock the scripture. Other people he has given the ability to apply that scripture. I think generally a pastor ought to have both these if he is really going to teach and to be affective. I do not think you can be a complete teacher unless you have the capacity to have these two gifts. Both are critical. The danger point is when the church does not utilize both. I was on a conference call with someone we will call Bob. He is the head of one of our agencies in the Southern Baptist Convention. On this conference call with several young pastors, one young pastor talked about the fact there was a same sex couple attending the church who were not believers. The couple felt comfortable in attending. He asked the question about them going on a mission trip and wondered what to do. This particular entity head in our convention who is really a smart guy with a great deal of wisdom, Bob, said to them to take them and show ministry and love to them. He obviously has no knowledge. When it was over, I did not want the young pastor to get into trouble. I called him up on the phone. I introduced myself as another pastor who was on the conference call and told him that advice was the most brain dead thing I had ever heard. I told him that I do not take lost people on mission trips to win lost people to Christ. I told them I did not care if they were lesbian or not. I do not take anybody who does not know Jesus on a mission trip to win people to Jesus. That is insane. Also, if you take two lesbians, you will have a deacon's meeting when you get back. They are not going to be happy with you nor should they be. We had a guy on the call who had a lot of wisdom but did not have a lot of knowledge. That was dangerous to those young guys on the call. The Bible says you have to have both in the church.

9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,

That is an interesting concept. You cannot be saved without faith. Romans 10:17.

17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ.

You are given the ability to hear. I do think what happens is you have the ability to see that things can be done in the power of God that nobody else has. For example, 1 Corinthians 13:2 has the

church being spoken to and God calling out Paul and Barnabas. They become missionaries. They become evangelists and go into the world. Now, you have to understand based on 1 Corinthians 2 that it talks about the fact that the gospel is to the Jew a stumbling block and to the Gentile stupidity. It is. They are going to go into a Roman, Gentile city. They are going to say to them that there is a Savior of the world. Really? Well, how much money did he have? He did not have anything. What kind of property did he have? He did not even have a house. Any books he wrote? No. Did he do anything extraordinary? Yes, he did a bunch of miracles. Oh. How many people did he heal? Well, thousands. So how many follow him? About five hundred. You tell me a bunch of the people for which he did miracles somehow did not see enough in him to follow him? Yes, that would be the case. They think they can go into a world that is going to look at a Jewish peasant and somehow convince them in the power of the Holy Spirit to believe in Jesus Christ. You cannot do that unless you have the gift of faith. I think that is precisely what you have here. I do not think it is saving faith. I do think it is the ability to look beyond what can be done to what God can do. I think certain people are gifted with that. We had a guy here named Monty Hunt. He was one of our worship ministers here for a long time. Before I got here, the former pastor was having some struggles. The church was in decline. Monty had this gift. He came to the church and told them it was time to do an Easter pageant. The church thought he was kidding. Monty pushed them into it, and it became one of the most powerful things we still do today as a church. Monty's faith moved us in that direction. I remember being in staff meeting one day when Monty looked at me and said we needed to do a Christmas Eve service. I did not have faith, so my response was that people would have to be brain dead to come on Christmas Eve because normal people want to be home with their family. Well. We do a Christmas Eve service which shows you how much I know. Obviously, I do not have faith. Monty does. There are some of you God gives it to.

Look at Ephesians 1:9-10.

[9to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.](#)

This is where Baptist really hate it. Most Bible churches are going to take the miracles and the healing as what they call sign gifts of the apostolic era that they are gone. I have a little trouble with that simply because if they are listed in the same list and the others are not sign gifts, I do not know how you say these are signed gifts. I will tell you a couple of things. I believe there are still people who have that ability. The difficulty with the ability is you do not get to use it when you want to use it. Remember Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 said he had a physical deformity. He asked God three times to heal it, and He would not. If you have the gift of healing, you cannot come to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12 and do for him what God would not do himself. I think the gifts are still there. I do not think you just get to use them when you want to use them. I think they have to really happen. Okay? There is a guy named Paul Brand who wrote an amazing book entitled Fearfully and Wonderfully Made. In the book, he talks about the fact that there are some blind people who have been blind from birth who are given their sight back and hate it. You grow up learning how far to put your hand down. When you are blind from birth and you get your sight back, you slam your hand into things because you are not used to that quality of space. You notice that a lot of these people as they would walk around rooms and try to acclimate would close their eyes because they could handle the space more easily. That is a great proof you have really been healed. When Jesus healed people, they were healed completely. When guys are actually healed, they are healed. When you have Benny Hind claiming all of these healings, you do not see this. Let me just tell you that Benny is going to Hell in a handbag. Benny is a complete idiot. There is a

guy who used to be on the Dallas Morning News named Steve Lowe. He does not write there anymore. Benny moved his headquarters to Dallas. Steve Lowe made the statement in the paper one day. I do not remember the amount of the money. It was somewhere around twenty-five to thirty thousand dollars he was going to offer if Benny could show medical proof that one miracle was real. So far, Benny has not brought anyone, because Benny is not a Christian. Benny does not have the gift of healing. Benny is going to be shocked when he dies. When you take your coke and throw it in the hallway and act like you are throwing the Holy Spirit on people, you do not throw God anywhere. It is insane. He does not have the gift of healing. I do believe that gift is still there. Again, the gift is utilized under the direction of the father.

[to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits,](#)

Now. Let me go back to prophecy quickly. We will not turn there, but in Acts 11, there is a point where there is a guy who prophesies a drought. It can mean sometimes a future vision. Generally, when you read the word prophecy in both the Old and New Testament, it is forth telling not foretelling. It is a powerful statement of what you need to be in God instead of telling you what is going to happen in the future. It can, but this is ninety-five percent. When you read the Old Testament in Isaiah and Jeremiah, the vast majority is their repentance before God. They say a few things that are going to happen so that when they happen the people will respond to their forth telling. Prophecy is primarily forth telling. There is a guy who comes into Bryan every year. He gets a room like this. He gets everyone seated. He walks around the room and tells people what they are going to be. He walks around the room telling people who they are going to be. That is a 'No'.

Now, distinguishing spirits. That is not the equivalent of judging somebody's heart. There are people I know that just love to see inside my life. I was sitting with a lady in Israel one time. She was saying something. Finally, I had it. I said something nicely. Even my wife said I was nice so my tone must have been okay. I looked at her and told her that she really did not know me or my heart. She did not really know anything about me except what she had heard me say from the pulpit. You do not know my heart. Please do not act like you do know my heart. Distinguishing of spirits is not the ability to judge somebody's soul. Distinguishing of spirits is though the ability to see where there is danger to the church body and to identify what is dangerous and what is not. For example, my dad's church, Whitesburg Baptist, in Huntsville, Alabama, had this guy come in who kind of set up a Ponzi scheme in the church. He had a lot of people give money promising to double it in twelve months. He kind of set up the Ponzi scheme and then left town. Over one hundred and fifty people in the church lost a ton of their savings. Now, if someone in the church had the ability and the gifting to distinguish spirits, I do not think they see into anyone's heart. I do think they would have had the ability to go to the pastor who like me probably does not have that gift to tell him this was dangerous and this guy needed to be backed off. I do believe there is a gifting in that way to protect the church and to protect even the family.

[to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.](#)

We are not going to get into that. I think the gift of tongues is still legitimate. I would read you one thing. Look at 1 Corinthians 14:22. Look at one thing about tongues. This is the last thing we will say about it. If you have questions, you can call somebody.

[22Thus tongues are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers, while prophecy is a sign not for unbelievers but for believers.](#)

If you want to use tongues, the mission field is where you need to go. It is amazing to me the

international mission board of the Southern Baptist convention will not allow anyone to be a missionary who says they have the gift of tongues. Somehow, in the Southern Baptist convention, we have trouble reading the Bible. Let me tell you with the interpretation of tongues there was a New Orleans professor one time during a big charismatic deal in New Orleans where they were speaking in tongues and interpreting. This professor went down and quoted the Lord's Prayer in Greek. The guy interpreted it, but he was not even close to the Lord's Prayer. Sometimes the people who say they have the gift of interpretation and gift of tongues, do not. It is not a common thing. Now.

Look at verse 11.

11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

Go to Romans 12. I just want to show you one thing and then make a point. Romans 12:4-8.

4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

I do not think these gifts are exhaustive. They may be. I do not think so. The reason I do not is because he mentions different ones here that almost seem to be just acts of service. Some of these are not mentioned in 1 Corinthians. You have a different listing here. I do not know what gifts he gives. I think everybody based on 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 has at least one gift to be used here. How do you know what you have? There are a couple of things you can google online and see spiritual gift inventory. You will get questions that may help you find out what your gifts are. In my own experience, I am terrified in front of people. It still bothers me even here at Central. Probably twice out of the month, I have in my Greek New Testament phrases written down on my fly leaf that I read to be able to get up and preach. I am still terrified. The interesting thing for me is even in that terror once I start in the passage, there is this passion and joy that overrides every bit of my fear. I think for me when I utilize the gifting I believe he has given me, it overwhelms my fear. I think that is one way to know what your gift is. Where does your passion fall inside the church? I think when you find your gift that your passion will overwhelm anything that would have precluded you from using it. We do not have time to go into that today.

1 Corinthians 13 commonly referred to as the love chapter is sandwiched between 12 and 14 which are the gift chapters. If you are going to utilize your gifts correctly, you have to love people and love Jesus. If you have the gift of teaching children, you better love children because they are not going to do anything for you. They are not going to send you a text. There is no four-year-old who will send you an email thanking you for your message Sunday and describe how it changed their life. You will not hear that from a four-year-old. You will have to corral them the entire time. You may have the gifting for teaching, but you better also love them and be able to do it correctly. If not, do not do it. The other thing with love is that it keeps you from being cocky and arrogant over what you have because you understand the gifting is for other people and not for you.

We are going to retire here, but we never retire here. Gentleman, let me put this real straight today. If you have been reborn, you have at least one gift. If all you are doing is coming on Sunday morning and maybe Wednesday night or attend a home group but there is no service here, then you

have missed what God has for you in one-third of your life. I do not know what happened. I began pastoring in 1977. I have watched a total shift. I am not trying to beat anybody up. When I came out in 1977, the idea of church attendance was every Sunday unless you are out on vacation. Today, most people do not join. I am not hyped up about that. For most people, if they come once or twice a month that is considered full on. You have been given a gift. You have a responsibility to serve in an area you have no right from which to retire.

Gentleman, I am not doing this lesson today for you to learn something. I am doing this because you have a responsibility out of this discipleship program on Thursday mornings to find your gift and employ it in the church. If you do not, you are failing as a man. The Bible says you are the head of the home, right? Any women apostles? None. Any women pastors in the New Testament? None. You, gentleman, are the head of the church. If you have been given a gift and do not use it, you fail as a man. I know that is harsh. I am just dealing with the reality of the scripture. Whether you like it or not is not my problem.