



gifts of the spirit

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APPLYING OUR LIVES TO THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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Introduction

So, since you first laid eyes on the cover of this little booklet, picked it up, and opened it, you've probably had some thought arise in your mind along the lines of, "Hmm, I wonder what this thing is going to say." Maybe your thoughts were in the form of a statement like, "Spiritual gifts- well, I already know what my spiritual gifts are, so I'll just thumb through until I get to my section and see what else I can learn about them." You could even have approached this book with a kind of surprise and delight: "Wow, spiritual gifts! You know, I've heard people talk about them, but it all sounds so confusing and deep. I don't think I'll *ever* be able to understand it." Then, there is the very distinct possibility that you read the cover and thought, "What in the world *are* spiritual gifts?"

Whatever your thoughts on the subject, this booklet is not the be-all, end-all study of a widely-talked about, but very little known area of life for a child of God. What it *is*, however, is a very straightforward and biblical look at the gifts of the Holy Spirit. We'll look at where they come from, what their purpose is, and how to use them effectively within the context of the local church. Most importantly, we want to establish a right mindset about spiritual gifts and their purpose: glorifying God through others-minded service in the Body.

While you can certainly do this study on your own, it would be best to work through this with another believer who is of the same gender so that you both can benefit from a mutual growth in knowledge and application of the sub-

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ject. Pray, read, write, study, and discuss. This is intended to be a tool for you to use in order to grow to be more like Christ, the One Whom we all are transforming into as we look into the Word of God (2 Corinthians 3:18). Let's get started!

Chapter 1

Keeping the Right Mindset

Let's get one thing straight at the beginning of this booklet: spiritual gifts are about God, not us. Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit as He wills, for His purpose. We receive them the moment we trust in Jesus Christ by faith. While Jesus was still on the Earth, He promised His 11 apostles,

I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; that is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not see Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you and will be in you. (John 14:16-17)

This promise came true, for since His resurrection and ascension, the Holy Spirit has indwelled believers. This took place during an important Jewish feast known as Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4. Notice what took place when the Holy Spirit filled them: they spoke in tongues. Those who heard their speech in verses 5-13 put the focus on the speakers (vv. 7 & 13), but Peter was quick to give the glory to God, and then simultaneously give a convicting Gospel message in verses 14-41. Since this time, we understand that spiritual gifts are from the Holy Spirit, given to believers the moment they put their faith & trust in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior (1 Corinthians 12:7,11).

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From their beginning, the gifts of the Spirit (“spiritual gifts”) have been about God, His glory, His plan, His salvation, and His grace & mercy. We need to remember this while we go through this booklet. Paul reminded the church at Corinth (a church that had the wrong purpose in using their spiritual gifts by glorifying themselves) that everything they had was from God (1 Corinthians 4:6-7). Look also at the entire context of John chapters 13-16. When Jesus promised the presence of the Holy Spirit, He also commanded the 11 apostles to “love one another as I have loved you” (15:12). What kind of love is this? You guessed it, a sacrificial love. Remember, this lengthy teaching from Christ in John all took place hours before He was to go to the cross. It is a love where the needs of others are set as the focal point of service. In our sin, we *need* this sacrificial love, and Christ, being fully God, was willing to extend this love to us. Praise the Lord!

This underlying root for life is the same for us as believers living in the 21st century: love one another by serving sacrificially. The focus is not on me but on others, and by focusing on others and serving them, I must ultimately focus on God and serving Him.

What’s the takeaway? Our spiritual gifts are given to us by the Holy Spirit not to please or exalt ourselves, but to glorify God and serve others in sacrificial love.

Chapter 1

Study Questions

1) Read Ephesians 1:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:11. Whose purpose and will is the focal point of all that God does?

*Discuss: How will this truth impact us in our day to day life?

2) Who is our Helper now that Jesus has ascended into heaven? Where did Jesus promise this Helper would abide? (John 14:16-17)

*Discuss: John 16:7-11 talks about Jesus Christ leaving and the Holy Spirit coming. How would this ultimately be more beneficial for the world?

3) Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-7. Who gives us spiritual gifts?

*Discuss: When do we receive them? How do we know that it occurs at salvation?

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4) *Discuss: Peter's preaching at Pentecost in Acts 2 took the focus off himself & his friends, and put it on God. Why is this important, especially since it was right after the Holy Spirit came to indwell believers? (Think about our study of spiritual gifts)

5) How did Jesus command us to love in John 15:12?

*Discuss: How does this apply to spiritual gifts?

Chapter 2

Get in the Game!

Do you remember what we said at the beginning of chapter 1? “Spiritual gifts are about God, not us.” That’s such an important thing to grasp, and now we’ll look at why.

In an attempt to “find out what my spiritual gifts are,” a lot of people get off on the wrong track and become consumed with this intense desire to get the issue nailed down once and for all. Maybe they try to find out by taking a spiritual gifts test where they answer a list of work or service-related questions that will tally up a bunch of points, which will then tell them what their spiritual gifts are. In some more extreme cases, a person becomes worried sick, thinking that their failure to unearth their spiritual gift means a lifetime of uselessness and purposelessness as a Christian. “Everyone else around me seems to get it- why can’t I?” Fasting, praying, spending hours in a silent stupor, crying out in anguish... They’re failing as children of God! Woe is them!

The problem here is really just a wrong understanding of spiritual gifts. A lot of us as believers think that we can’t serve God effectively apart from knowing what our spiritual gifts are. In truth, an obsessive & over-emphasized infatuation with spiritual gifts is really just self-focus and laziness because we would rather spend the vast amount of our time and energy trying to find out what

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our spiritual gifts are instead of having our heads on a swivel and seeing what ways we can get plugged in at our churches.

I remember attending my first service at a particular church. It was vibrant, the message that day agreed with Scripture, and so I felt like I had been ministered to. The service took place in a hotel room, so they needed to clean up, stack chairs, etc. I wanted to show them my appreciation. I wanted to help, and I wanted to contribute. I remember thinking, “What can I do to minister to them?” Then it hit me- I jumped in alongside of the guys that were moving the most, and I did what they did! I folded and stacked chairs, took banners off walls, and helped break down portable sound equipment.

Now, you’re probably wondering, “What’s the point of this story?” The point is that I did what I could do, what God had equipped me to do. I didn’t pause and reflect, as many do today, and wonder, “Is this my gift to the body?” In short, God presented a need to me- He put it in front of my eyes. A wrong mindset about spiritual gifts is that we can’t serve effectively or efficiently if an opportunity presents itself in a realm outside of what our spiritual gifts are. When I have this mindset- “I can’t serve in this ministry, or in this way, or that way because it’s not one of my spiritual gifts”- I am ultimately focused on myself because I am not allowing God to use me in the way that He wants to in that moment of opportunity.

Romans 12:1-2 has the teaching we need to have engrained into our minds:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and accept-

*able to God, which is your spiritual worship.
Do not be conformed to this world, but be
transformed by the renewal of your mind,
that by testing you may discern what is the
will of God, what is good and acceptable
and perfect.*

We are to be living sacrifices: we are alive, yet we are dead to ourselves (Romans 6:6; Galatians 2:20). These verses show us that serving God is worship, just like singing songs, tithing, and partaking in the Lord's Supper. Our only response in light of our sin, God's forgiveness, and God's eternal plan (Romans chapters 1-11, and Paul's "therefore" in 12:1) is to say, "Here am I, Lord, send me." (Isaiah 6:8). We are also to have our minds renewed by Scripture (Ephesians 4:23), which teaches us how we are to live (Psalm 119:105), and which shows us God's will: what *He* wants us to do. As our inner man becomes more in line with God's holy character (verse 2), our outward acts of service become more pleasing to God because they come from right motives and intentions (verse 1).

The bottom line? Get involved! My mindset needs to be, "Where can I serve? What can I do? Where is God at work? What does He want me to do?"

Chapter 2

Study Questions

1) How do we often get off on the wrong track when it comes to spiritual gifts and trying to find out what ones we have?

2) What's another wrong mindset that we have about spiritual gifts and serving?

3) What does Romans 12:1 say we are to be?

*Discuss: Is it a contradiction to be a living sacrifice? How does that radically impact our lives as Christians?

4) What does Ephesians 4:22-24 command us to do?

*Discuss: Why is it so important to have our minds renewed?

5) Read Isaiah 6:1-8. What is Isaiah's response to seeing God? What does he say?

*Discuss: Write the progression of Isaiah's encounter with God.

6) What is Isaiah's final response to this encounter in verse 8?

*Discuss: What does this teach us about serving God?
What does our response need to be?

Chapter 3

Don't Keep Them to Yourself!

In chapter 2 we looked at the first two verses of Romans 12, which established our response for service. Now we'll continue on to the following verses, 3-6a.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many parts, and the parts do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually parts one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them.

God had granted the apostle Paul spiritual authority, and Paul was quick to point out it was nothing he earned, but rather it was given by grace. “Not think more highly of himself than he ought to think” is humility. Humility must be the mindset of every believer. When we think this way, we use “sober judgment”; we’re thinking rightly. 1 Peter 5:5 also carries the same message of humility, and even promises the exaltation of those who are walking in it.

The important thing we need to see from this passage is that our gifts are to be used within the context of the

local church. God never intended for us to receive spiritual gifts from Him, and then go out on our own to be isolated in the world. What He wants from us is faithfulness and commitment to the Body of Christ, which includes the universal church that is not confined by 4 walls and a roof, as well as the institution known as the local church (an example would be the church of Rome who were the recipients of Paul's letter). We enter into the former through salvation, and we enter into the latter through both salvation and a formal commitment to the body.

As we established before, spiritual gifts are about God, not us. In understanding this, we can see that the place where we exercise these gifts is really important. Paul says in Romans 12:4-5 that the church is like a human body. Your body is made up of different parts and organs, with each one doing what it was made to do, but all operating together as one cohesive unit. In the same way, the church is made up of all kinds of people who have been created, called, and equipped with certain spiritual gifts to do certain spiritual tasks within the unity of the church body. Each person exercising their gifts of the Spirit works to edify (build up) the entire church.

When I teach and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, I am using the gift God gave me. I disclose God's truth, and I compel others (and myself) to obey. When I am sick and someone visits me or prepares a meal for my family, they have shown another gift- mercy. Even if I do not have that particular gift, I have observed and benefited from it, and now I know a little more about how to perform it in my life. We must remember that individually we are members of the body of Christ. Collectively, we make up the whole body. It is doubtful in light of our flesh that any one person will have all the gifts. However, I believe it's possible that a

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person can combine elements of the other gifts as they walk in the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ displayed every one of the gifts in His life. Obedient believers collectively display the love of Christ to the world where we operate in our areas of giftedness.

Utilizing our gifts of the Spirit in the local church is centered on watching out for each other. Jesus is all about this team mindset, which is evident in His prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, in which He made numerous references to unity. Verse 21, for example, says,

...that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.

The world was not going to be a friendly place for followers of Jesus (v. 14), so He knew the importance of looking out for each other as brothers and sisters in Christ. Where does this happen today? It happens in the local church.

We *must* be accountable to the local church by faithfully serving there. When we step away in our high opinion of ourselves, we cut ourselves off from the mutual accountability that is present in the local church body (Hebrews 10:24-25). Paul commanded order and structure for the church at Corinth to follow, not individuals out on their own (1 Corinthians 14:26-40). You can't separate Christ from the church (Ephesians 4:15-16), and to go apart from it is sin (Hebrews 10:26-31). Let's make sure we are walking in fellowship with God by walking in fellowship with the local church as we exercise our spiritual gifts!

Chapter 3

Study Questions

1) Read Romans 12:4-5. What does Paul say the church is like?

*Discuss: Why is this a good comparison/illustration?

2) Read Romans 12:6a. What are spiritual gifts given by?

*Discuss: Why is this answer so important to us? What happens if we overlook it?

3) Read Hebrews 10:24-25. Where are we commanded to be as believers?

*Discuss: Why is this an essential part of being a Christian?

4) What no longer remains for a person if they continue to sin willfully?

*Discuss: Why does the writer of Hebrews write what he does in 10:26-31? (*hint: read verses 24-25 to get the context*)

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5) Read Ephesians 4:15. What is Christ in relation to the church?

*Discuss: Where else in Scripture is this same truth found?

Chapter 4

Natural Ability, or Spiritual Gifting?

Let's not mistake natural ability for spiritual gifts. I have met individuals that are wonderful speakers and story tellers, but they do not have the gift of prophecy or teaching. A person can't say, "Cooking is my spiritual gift." The Holy Spirit can cause our natural abilities to become spiritual gifts, or He may not. It's up to Him, and it's not our place to wrangle with God over what we want our gift to be.

"Well, what's the big deal?" you say. "What difference does it make to distinguish between my natural talents and my spiritual gift(s)?"

That's a good question to ask. Looking back into the Old Testament, God says that He filled certain men with the Spirit in order to accomplish certain tasks in the completion of the tabernacle (Exodus 28:3; 31:3; 35:31). Joshua, the newly-appointed leader of Israel, was said to be "full of the spirit of wisdom" (Deuteronomy 34:9). Samson, the infamous leader of Israel, was given unparalleled physical strength when he was filled the Holy Spirit (Judges 14:5-9, 19; 15:14-17). God also filled the prophet Micah to proclaim a very unpopular message to a rebellious people (Micah 3:8). Similar passages are also found about indi-

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viduals in the New Testament, like in Luke 1:15 (John the Baptist) and 41 (Elisabeth), Acts 2:4 (those in the upper room on the Day of Pentecost), and Acts 6:5 and 7:55 (Stephen).

While we wouldn't say that those people were blessed with spiritual gifts like we know today, we do know that all of these people experienced the empowering of the Holy Spirit to do great things by God and for God. The key characteristic of these people is that they were yielded to God, and they were in the right place to be used by Him. The world puts the emphasis on natural ability. If anyone would have had natural ability as a speaker/orator, it would have been Paul. His life and training as a Pharisee would have no doubt prepared him to give captivating addresses, but in 1 Corinthians 2:1-2 he puts the emphasis on presenting Jesus Christ. His focus was not on being an eloquent orator, but rather a Spirit-filled man that pointed people away from himself. Another example can be found in Luke 10:38-42. We might say that Martha set a good table and that she had ability in the area of hospitality, but she was *not* walking in the Spirit when she tried to manipulate Jesus by asking, "Don't you care?" In Christ, it's all about Him. The Holy Spirit always glorifies Him. Therefore, whatever talent, ability or gift we possess must be used at His prompting for His glory.

All things- whether natural abilities that you have had from birth, or Spirit-endowed gifts which you received the moment you put your faith in Christ to save you- are from God's hand. The gifts of the Spirit which we will look at in the following chapters are what we as a Church would say are a definitive list (as opposed to killing a lion with your bare hands, or declaring new revelatory prophecy to a rebellious people), but the important thing to remember at the conclusion of this section is this: in order to properly

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use our gifts, we must live in a state of no unconfessed sin. We must be willing to yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit to do as He would have us to for the glory of the Lord Jesus Christ. Just because we possess spiritual gifts does not mean we are always walking in the Spirit!

Are you and I yielded to God, even in this very moment? What sin(s) have we been refusing to acknowledge to God and others? How are we getting in the way of God using us fully for His glory?

Chapter 4

Study Questions

1) Read Acts 1:8. When did Jesus promise His followers that they would receive power?

*Discuss: Was a follower of God less effective in their life prior to this event? Why/why not? What can we as present-day believers be thankful to God for?

2) Read Galatians 5:16. What will happen if we walk in the Spirit?

*Discuss: Why is it important to walk in the Spirit?

3) Read Ephesians 5:18. What does Paul say *not* to do and what *to* do instead?

*Discuss: How is control seen here in this verse? How does either one control us?

NATURAL ABILITY, OR SPIRITUAL GIFTING?

4) Read Luke 10:38-42. What does Martha say to try to manipulate Jesus?

Where was Mary, and what was she doing?

What does Jesus say about both Martha and Mary?

*Discuss: What are some ways that we can get so caught up in our responsibilities/tasks/agendas that we forget what's really important?

Chapter 5

Identifying The Gifts of the Spirit

Now that we've laid the groundwork, we're getting into the spiritual gifts themselves! On the next page is a chart that will help us to get a look at what gifts of the Spirit are listed in Scripture, and where they are found.

IDENTIFYING THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

| Romans 12:6-8 | 1 Corinthians 12:7-10 | 1 Corinthians 12:28 | Ephesians 4:11 |
|--|---|--|--------------------------|
| <i>Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us</i> | <i>To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good</i> | <i>God has appointed in the church</i> | <i>And he gave</i> |
| | | apostles | the apostles |
| prophecy | prophecy | prophets | the prophets |
| | | | the evangelists |
| | the ability to distinguish between spirits | | |
| | utterance of wisdom | | |
| teaching | | teachers | the shepherds & teachers |
| | utterance of knowledge | | |
| exhorting | | | |
| | working of miracles | miracles | |
| | gifts of healing | gifts of healing | |
| service | | helping | |
| leading | | administrating | |
| | various kinds of tongues | various kinds of tongues | |
| | interpretation of tongues | | |
| giving | | | |
| | faith | | |
| mercy | | | |

**chart adapted from the ESV Study Bible, pg. 2178*

Phew, seems like a lot, doesn't it? To help us remember what these gifts are, we can see that these gifts are usually put into 3 categories. For our booklet, we'll look at each category in 3 parts:

Part I: Sign Gifts – these were primarily seen in the early foundational years of the church, and are no longer in use today

Part II: Speaking Gifts – this primarily involves the communication of biblical truth

Part III: Serving Gifts – this primarily endows believers with the spiritual ability to practically carry out biblical love

Another way to view these gifts of the Spirit are ones which are temporary, and ones which are permanent. We'll see this more in chapter 6.

Let's take a break and just review what we've learned. We'll start the next chapter looking at the sign gifts of the early church.

Chapter 5

Study Questions

1) Read Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10 & 28-30, and Ephesians 4:11, and write down all the spiritual gifts you find in their appropriate columns. For bonus points, guess which gifts are sign gifts, speaking gifts, and serving gifts.

*Discuss: What gift(s) of the Spirit do you suspect you might have at this point?

Rom. 12:6-8

1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28-30

Eph. 4:11

PART I – SIGN GIFTS

Chapter 6 ***Foundational &*** ***Temporary***

Sign gifts are just what they sound like: they were used as signs to all who witnessed them to validate the message of the early church; they showed the authority which their performers had from God. Acts 5:12-16 shares one such occurrence of this, which resulted in many people coming to Christ (v. 14).

The big controversy today is which gifts are still in use and which ones are not. Some say all are still utilized by God, and others say only some. Below is a list of what the Bible reveals as sign gifts:

Speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28 & 30;
Paul also uses chapter 14 to discuss the proper use of tongues, and also how the gift of prophecy was to be desired more than tongues)

Interpreting tongues (1 Corinthians 12:10 & 30)

Healing (1 Corinthians 12:9 & 28)

Working miracles (1 Corinthians 12:10 & 29)

These temporary gifts were given to confirm the apostles and prophets during the apostolic age. As mentioned above, these temporary gifts were used to affirm God's hand upon His apostles. The New Testament was not complete at that time- it was still being written. 1 Corinthians, for example, was written in 54AD, and is the last book that mentions the sign gifts even though there were several other books in the New Testament that were written after it. Also, 2 Corinthians 12:12 speaks of them in the past tense, indicating that they were in the past and not the present. That being said, God is still in the miracle business, and He could, at any time, grant a believer the ability to do one of these things in some situation which He deems fitting!

Also in controversy today are 2 certain spiritual gifts that came in the form of offices:

Apostles (1 Corinthians 12:28 & 29; Ephesians 4:11)
Prophets (1 Corinthians 12:28 & 29; Ephesians 4:11)

An apostle was a man who met certain criteria revealed in Scripture, which consisted of being personally chosen by Jesus Christ (Matthew 10:1-4; Luke 6:12-16; Acts 9:15-16), being personally taught by Him (Mark 9:31; Luke 11:1; Galatians 1:1,12; 1 Corinthians 15:3), having followed Him from the time of John's baptism (Acts 1:21-11, with the exception of Paul), and being a witness of the resurrected Christ (1 Corinthians 15:5; Acts 9:1-9). Obviously, for any person living today, this would be a pretty hard set of qualifications to reach! So, we know that this office of apostleship is no longer in effect today.

Prophets, on the other hand, need to be distinguished from a person who has the gift of prophecy (1 Co-

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rinthians 12:28-29 & Ephesians 4:11 versus 1 Corinthians 12:10 & 1 Corinthians 14). History points to New Testament prophets as being appointed by God and receiving direct revelation which they spoke (Agabus in Acts 11:28 & 21:11, and Paul in Acts 20:22-23). A prophet would be a person who foretold and predicted future events as they received revelation from God. Since Scripture is complete, new prophecy from God is now past, and the events of the future are found within the Bible (Revelation 22:18-19). In the following chapter we will look at this gift and what it looks like practically as we leave the study on sign gifts and move to the speaking gifts.

Chapter 6

Study Questions

1) Read 1 Corinthians 14:1-5. What spiritual gift did Paul want the church at Corinth to practice?

*Discuss: Why did Paul want people to prophecy even more than he wanted them to speak in tongues?

2) Read Acts 2:1-13. What spiritual gift was manifested on Pentecost?

*Discuss: Who heard the people speak? How did this gift minister to all who heard (see verse 6)? What was their reaction? How did Peter respond to them (read the rest of the chapter)?

3) Read Hebrews 2:3-4. How did God bear witness to the Gospel (“the message of salvation”)?

*Discuss: Since the Holy Spirit distributes gifts as He wills, is it biblical for a Christian to pray for a certain spiritual gift? Why or why not?

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4) What criteria needed to be met for a person to biblically be an apostle?

*Discuss: Why do some religions believe they have true, living apostles today?

5) Read Acts 11:28 & 21:11. What did Agabus predict in these passages? Did they come true?

*Discuss: What do you think would be a requirement for being a prophet? Where else in the Bible can you find verses that lay out these criteria? (*Hint: check the Old Testament*)

6) What is the difference between a prophet and the gift of prophecy?

*Discuss: What does Revelation 22:18-19 say? Where else in the Bible can you find similar passages that talk about new Scripture no longer being written?

PART II – SPEAKING GIFTS

Chapter 7

The Gift of Prophecy

“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith...” (Romans 12:6)

By way of introduction, in Part II we’ll be looking at the following speaking gifts of the Spirit: prophecy, teaching, exhortation, wisdom, knowledge, evangelism, and pastor/shepherd.

Have you ever left a church service or conference really fired up, excited, and thinking to yourself, “Wow, what a great sermon! I feel so energized and motivated by what I just heard!”? If so, you most likely experienced a brother (or sister, for you ladies) in Christ utilizing the speaking gift of prophecy.

The spiritual gift of prophecy is focused on the means of proclaiming the Word of God- we could say that it is the gift of preaching. A person who has this gift of the Spirit is supernaturally equipped to proclaim and compel believers to apply their life to the truth of God’s Word, which is what the Greek work “propheteia” literally means, “to speak forth.” 1 Corinthians 14:3 says that when a person prophesies, they do so “for edification (upbuilding) and ex-

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hortation (encouragement) and consolation (comfort).” This message builds up the listener, and ultimately points to God as the source of this great truth, thus giving God the glory (1 Peter 4:11).

When a person prophesies, they do so upon the authority of God’s Word, not their own opinion or personal reputation. The power of the preacher rests in the power of God’s Word (Romans 1:16-17; 1 Corinthians 14:37). As mentioned before, this message benefits believers, but it also can help unbelievers as well- if God ordains it- by compelling them towards repentance (1 Corinthians 14:24-25). In Romans 12:3, Paul speaks of “the faith.” This means that the preacher must preach in accordance with the doctrine set down by the apostles (see also Jude 1:3). In order for a preacher to do this effectively, they must study to show themselves approved unto God (2 Timothy 2:5). God’s Word alone produces faith (Romans 10:17), and it is the Word that Paul commanded Timothy to preach (2 Timothy 4:2).

How can you tell a good preacher? If his prophecy points to Jesus Christ, he’s hit the nail right on the head (Luke 24:27; John 15:26-27; 16:12-15; Revelation 19:10)! All things begin and end with Christ. What better source of motivation could we have but Him? 2 Corinthians 5:14 says that His love energizes us, gets us fired up, and stirs us up for action, and a good preacher will be very skilled at doing this in the local church.

The bottom line? A person who has the gift of prophecy uses the Word of God as their authority, motivates & encourages believers, and always points others to the Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 7

Study Questions

1) What will a person who has the spiritual gift of prophecy do?

*Discuss: How can those of us who aren't gifted with prophecy sinfully stay on the sidelines?

2) Read Luke 24:13-27. What did Jesus use Moses and the Prophets to do?

*Discuss: Why do people view this as an egotistical, self-centered thing to do? How was Jesus actually doing what was infinitely best for those 2 men?

3) Read 1 Corinthians 14:23-25. What does Paul say will happen when people exercise the gift of prophecy?

*Discuss: Where are some other passages of Scripture where this gift was used and similar results happened?

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4) Read Luke 24:27, John 15:26-27, 16:12-15, and Revelation 19:9-10. Who are we to preach?

*Discuss: Find 3 other passages in the Bible where praise and glory are put on Him as the center & culmination of all things.

5) Read Acts 15:22-32. What were Paul, Barnabas, Judas and Silas sent to Antioch to do? What happened? Did they succeed?

*Discuss: Do a little reading on a few famous preacher from the past (i.e. Charles Spurgeon, George Whitefield, D.L. Moody, Billy Sunday, A.W. Tozer, etc.). Can you find personal evidences that their lives lined up with what they preached? How did God use them?

Chapter 8

The Gift of Teaching

“...the one who teaches, in his teaching...” (Romans 12:7)

Closely on the heels of preaching is the speaking gift of teaching. Teaching is the ability to teach, instruct and impart the truths of God’s Word, which, as we studied above, differs slightly from preaching, which is more focused on motivating. It seems that the Holy Spirit has set up a necessary balance between teaching and preaching. Since Scripture holds that knowledge in and of itself can puff up (1 Corinthians 8:1), knowledge gained must be understood and applied (wisdom). That lends itself to sound preaching, which exhorts the hearer to move. So really, the two gifts go hand-in-hand. The Bible reveals that these two speaking gifts- preaching and teaching- are prerequisites to being an effective pastor (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:7-9; 1 Timothy 4:16). In fact, the original Greek of Ephesians 4:11 list pastors and teachers as a single, hyphenated word: “pastor-teachers.” This office is really one and the same. Biblically, a person with the gift of being a pastor will be someone with the gift of teaching, but a teacher is not necessarily a pastor! To some degree, all Christians should possess the ability to teach in some form.

In addition to this, remember what Christ said to His disciples about teaching in Matthew 28:19-20. What are we supposed to teach people? We are responsible to teach people *to obey* the Word of God, not just present a glorious exposition of Scripture that leaves people in awe. The great-

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est of sermons is only the beginning of what is intended because God is all about obedience (Matthew 7:24-27; John 13:17; James 1:22-27), and a good teacher will present the Word of God in such a way that the hearer will go away with clear & practical commands that they can put into practice in their own life.

The bottom line? Let's be effective disciples of Jesus Christ and help others to not only hear the Truth, but obey it in their lives. Remember, "exposition without application is abortion!"

Chapter 8

Study Questions

1) What is teaching?

*Discuss: Why will teaching be the most effective when it is founded on the Word of God and not our opinion?

2) Read Acts 15:35. What gifts of the Spirit did Paul and Barnabas utilize when they were in Antioch?

*Discuss: How does teaching differ from the gift of prophecy? How is it also much the same? Why might these two gifts be requirements for a pastor?

3) Read Matthew 28:19-20. What commands does Jesus give His disciples?

*Discuss: Why is teaching people to obey harder than only telling them what to do?

4) Read Luke 24:27-35. What did Jesus do with the two men on the road to Emmaus?

*Discuss: Verse 27 tells us what Jesus said, verse 32 reveals us the men's reaction to what Jesus said, and verse

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33-35 shows us what they did. How can you see elements of both teaching & preaching in this whole passage?

5) Read 2 Timothy 2:2. What did Paul command Timothy to do?

*Discuss: How is this verse a great model for how discipleship should work? What are 2 stages of discipleship that you can find in this verse?

Chapter 9

The Gift of Exhortation

“...the one who exhorts, in his exhortation...” (Romans 12:8)

Would you agree that there’s nothing quite like being around a person who has the gift of exhortation? No matter what time of day, no matter what place, no matter what situation- this brother/sister in Christ is just electrifying to be around! Whenever you finish coming into contact with them or spending time with them, deep inside you feel like you could fly, saying, “Boy, that was great! I *love* being around them! What an encouragement, I really needed that- praise the Lord for that individual! I can’t wait to get working!”

Seen in the light of other gifts, we can introduce exhortation by saying that preaching (prophesying) proclaims the Truth and motives us to move; teaching instructs, explains and systematizes the Truth; exhortation encourages the believer to obey the Truth.

Exhortation is the God-given ability to encourage, counsel and comfort others by the use of biblical Truth. As we have heard so many times, it is a command with a focus on the response. The Greek word “parakaleo” means “to exhort (verb),” and its variation “paraklesis (noun),” means “exhortation.” Both these terms literally mean, “one called alongside.” It is enhanced encouragement, in that it always focuses on the response of the believer. In John 14:16, we

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see that the word “paraclete” is one of the names of the Holy Spirit, and is also true of Jesus Christ because He said that the Holy Spirit was “another Helper” (the Greek word for “another” here is “allos,” meaning “another of exactly the same kind and essence”). Just because Jesus Christ Himself isn’t here on Earth doesn’t mean we’ve been short-changed as believers; we’ve got another Comforter/Helper Who is fully God!

The gift of exhortation manifests itself in different ways. At one time, the exhorter is used to persuade a believer to turn from sin. He can then be used to encourage that same brother to continue and maintain that good behavior. The exhorter can also come alongside a weak believer who is going through a trial. Each time, the exhorter is compelling the other towards the godly response that God desires for us to choose.

Now, just because there are some in the Body of Christ that God has richly gifted in this area doesn’t mean that the rest of us get to ride in the back of the bus when it comes to encouraging! Every believer is called upon to exhort in some capacity, as Hebrews 3:13 and 10:24-25 reveal. We *need* this within the local church today because so often we get bogged down in our own tasks & responsibilities, and before we know it, we’re all just a bunch of little entities running around not even giving a second thought to what other brothers/sisters need. Look on the things of others, and encourage someone to get in the game!

Bottom line? We all need to be encouraging each other to be faithful to the ministry that God has called us to, and exhorting one another in love to get going!

Chapter 9

Study Questions

1) What is exhortation?

*Discuss: How does exhortation fit in with the gifts of preaching and teaching?

2) Read John 14:16. What are Jesus and the Holy Spirit?

*Discuss: How does the Holy Spirit's ministry in John 16:8-11 work in tandem with His role as our Helper?

3) Read Hebrews 3:13. How often are believers to encourage one another?

*Discuss: What warning does the writer of Hebrews give at the end of this verse? Why is the ministry of exhortation so important?

4) Read Hebrews 10:24-25. List the key parts of these verses in the order they are given.

*Discuss: What are some reasons why these verses are so important to our lives? What dangerous mentality is being

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addressed here? What are we not supposed to forsake?

5) Read Acts 14:19-22. What happened to Paul in verse 19? What did he do in verse 22?

*Discuss: What mindset does a person with the gift of encouragement have? What would it have been easy for Paul to do at many points throughout his life?

Chapter 10

The Gifts of Wisdom and Knowledge

“For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit...” (1 Corinthians 12:8)

“Wisdom and knowledge?” you ask. “What’s the difference?” I’m so glad you asked! Let’s take a look.

The simple definition of wisdom is “knowledge applied.” Obviously it is impractical to apply what is not understood, so the formula can be enhanced to say, “Knowledge plus understanding plus application equals wisdom.” The gift of wisdom then may best be seen as the ability to exegete a portion of Scripture, pull it apart and show other believers how to apply our lives to it. That’s really what the word “exegesis” is: uncovering and revealing the meaning of something, right down to what the author really intended for his readers to understand. The Bible has one interpretation, and many applications. The spiritual gift of wisdom is on the practical end of exegesis.

Those gifted in wisdom have the ability to see beyond what the natural reveals (James 1:5). In 1 Corinthians 12:8, it is those who are gifted with a “word of wisdom.” This indicates a communicating ability, exactly like Jesus Christ is the Living Word (John 1:1, 14) and is a perfect

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manifestation of the written Word (John 8:28-29). He not only taught others, but also perfectly obeyed it Himself. The one gifted in wisdom thus takes the Word and gets the proper Biblical understanding. He then adds God-given insight- possibly absorbing what other gifted men have written- and clearly communicates it. Men who are pastors and people who are Biblical counselors both possess this gift.

Just an appropriate little side note: in the same way that exhortation is not left up to a certain select few, wisdom is also not for only a 90-year-old person! All believers need to possess wisdom to some extent, which is why Paul himself prayed for the Colossians to be filled with it (Colossians 1:9). Knowing something is not enough; carrying it out is what really matters.

Now we'll look at knowledge. Knowledge is the ability to understand biblical facts, and is the same knowledge that those who have the spiritual gift of wisdom apply their lives to (remember, knowledge precedes wisdom, but is not the be-all, end-all of things!). You could say that they're "book smart" or "academically blessed." In 1 Corinthians 12:8 it is a supernatural knowledge, far beyond a knowledge that most believers have. It is found today in the study of Scripture, guided by the power of the Holy Spirit, and bathed in prayer. People gifted with this may have a high aptitude in biblical languages and the history of that time. Individuals gifted with divine knowledge are first able to comprehend what Scripture says, and then impart it to those around them.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 shows us that what we do must be done in the spirit of love, whether communicating knowledge of the Bible, or wisely living it out. God is more concerned with our motive and reason for doing what we do rather than just simply our doing it. It's a good reminder:

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how are we going about utilizing our gifts of the Spirit? Does the fact that I have the gift of knowledge or wisdom make me feel a slight “edge” over another brother or sister in Christ? As we discussed earlier in chapter 3, just because we have spiritual gifts does not mean that we are always walking in the Spirit!

Let’s keep ourselves in check and compare ourselves to the Word of God, and not others.

Chapter 10

Study Questions

1) What is wisdom?

*Discuss: What will a person with the spiritual gift of wisdom be able to do?

2) What does it mean when we say, “The Bible has one interpretation, and many applications”?

*Discuss: What’s dangerous about telling a person to see what the Bible means “to them”? Why is exegesis so important for walking in wisdom?

3) Read Colossians 1:9. What did Paul pray about for the believers in Colossae?

*Discuss: What does James 1:5 tell us to do if we lack wisdom? How is faith a key component of walking in wisdom?

4) What is knowledge?

*Discuss: 1 Corinthians 8:1 says that knowledge puffs up.

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How? Is knowledge a bad thing? Why or why not?

5) Read Matthew 7:24-27, John 13:17, and James 1:22-25.
What are we supposed to do with knowledge?

*Discuss: Why does Jesus end His Sermon on the Mount the way He does? What was the people's reaction to this (verse 28)?

Chapter 11

The Gift of Evangelism

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists...”
(Ephesians 4:11)

One gift of the Spirit that has been met with some suspicion is evangelism. Whenever we hear the word “evangelist,” most of us immediately think of a plump man from the ‘30’s and ‘40’s in some large tent revival sweating profusely as he pounds a big pulpit and screams about liquor & card playing. We might even think of a man who travels around the countryside in a beat-up station wagon filled with 6 kids, a wife with another child on the way, a well-worn KJV Bible, an accordion, a roof rack, and a large easel & chalk set that he uses out on the street corner. Whatever perceptions we have of an evangelist, usually most of them are both comical and inaccurate.

Ephesians 4:11 reveals that evangelists fall into the same category as apostles, prophets and pastor-teachers. As we discussed earlier, apostles and prophets no longer exist today, so evangelists are ones who have, if you will, stepped into their place to continue spreading the Gospel. An evangelist is simply somebody who presents Jesus Christ where Christ is not known. One example of this is Philip, who was one of the 7 disciples chosen to oversee the food administration to widows (Acts 6:1-6). He later came to be known as “the evangelist” (Acts 21:8) because of his widespread preaching ministry (Acts 8:4-8, 12, 26-40).

The key to Biblically understanding this spiritual gift is looking at how the early church utilized it. An evangelist would go to a place where Christ wasn't named, preach the Gospel and win people to Christ. Then, instead of packing right up and leaving, he stayed there until he had built a church and ordained elders in that city who could take over their leadership of that church. Evangelism is the ability to not only share the Gospel and win people to Christ; it's also the ability to go in to a place and establish/build a church. If there is an area where a church already exists, an evangelist is one who wins people to Jesus Christ, integrates them into the church and is a part of the maturing process.

To see this in action, start in Acts 18:19, the verse which marks Paul's first interaction with the city of Ephesus. He went right into the synagogue and started preaching Jesus Christ. After he left, a man named Apollos came and continued to preach (vv. 24-28). Paul returned to Ephesus in 19:1 and stayed there for 3 years. During this time he helped establish the local church, strengthen it, appointed elders to lead it, developed an expansive evangelistic outreach (verse 9-10) and experienced the great blessing of God (verse 20). His final instruction to them is recorded in Acts 20:17-38, and there is no doubt that he had a powerful impact on the lives of the believers there.

What's the takeaway from this? A person who has the gift of evangelism- they have an intense and passionate zeal for reaching the lost with the Gospel, they are gifted at clearly and accurately presenting the message of the Gospel, and they can establish a local church & strengthen it to where it can stand steadfast under its own leadership- mustn't leave the local church to go out on their own, but instead can win souls to Christ and then integrate them into the local church to nurture them in discipleship. Evangelism is so

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much more than handing someone a Gospel tract; it is a slow, gradual process that takes much time and effort. Thus, evangelism could be considered not just a speaking gift, but a serving gift as well because a true evangelist is in it for the long run!

We as Christians are commanded to share the Gospel, both with our lips and with our lives (Mark 16:15; Matthew 5:16). Evangelism- sharing the Gospel- is not just for a person who has this gift of the Spirit, but is for all of us. Some questions we can all ask ourselves are, “Who was the last person I told about Jesus? How long ago was that? Who is someone that God has placed in my life for me to tell about forgiveness of sins?”

Let’s get out there and let our lights shine! Eternity hangs in the balance!

Chapter 11

Study Questions

1) What is an evangelist?

*Discuss: How is this gift of the Holy Spirit manifested in their life? Describe some ways.

2) Read Acts 8:26-40. What does Philip do in verse 35?

*Discuss: Does sharing Jesus Christ involve only how we live? What makes sharing the Gospel effective (hint: look at what the eunuch was reading/what Philip used in this verse)?

3) Read 2 Timothy 4:5. What does Paul command Timothy to do near the end of the verse?

*Discuss: How do you see the ministry of the local church present here in this immediate context of 2 Timothy 4:1-5?

4) Read Ephesians 4:11. What did Jesus Christ give the local church?

What was the purpose of these offices?

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What was their involvement with the local church?

*Discuss: Why do you think itinerary evangelists like we see today go around from place to place without really being a part of a local church? What's easier/harder to do?

Chapter 12

The Gift of Shepherding

“And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers...” (Ephesians 4:11)

Hopefully at some point in our lives, we’ve all had someone that we could look up to as a mentor. Maybe it was an older man at church who met with you weekly for discipleship, or maybe it was a Christian employer who really helped guide you in your walk at work. She could have been a regular stay-at-home mom who had you over a lot and lovingly talked with you about your role as a godly woman. Quite possibly it was a godly coach who not only showed you how to improve your game on the field, but was deeply concerned with your walk off the field. We’ve all had (we hope) a pastor or pastors who have really invested time in us and helped us mature in the faith, both through their teaching and their day-to-day interaction with us. Virtually all of us can look back through our lives and remember the face, name and experiences that we had with a brother or sister in Christ and say, “Boy, what an impact they had on my life! I will never be the same because of them- praise the Lord!”

The English word found in the Bible as “shepherd” is the Greek word “poimen” (or some similar variation), and is also translated “feed” (John 21:16; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2). Only in Ephesians 4:11 is “poimen” translated “pastors”- every other time, the word “shepherd” or “feed” is used. The main duty of a pastor/shepherd is to

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“oversee/take oversight of” the flock, that is, the local church body (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2). This office of shepherd (what we refer to as being a “pastor”) does just that: they watch over the flock, leading it by personal example (1 Peter 5:3) and feeding it by skillfully preaching & teaching the Word of God (2 Timothy 4:1-4). As we mentioned before, a pastor must be gifted in teaching & preaching in order to fulfill his God-given office. This is why we’ve chosen to put this spiritual gift under the “speaking gifts” section of the booklet- but it could also be included in the “serving gifts” portion as well!

While the office of a pastor and the gift of pastoring (shepherding) can be separated, they are still very much the same (almost *inseparable*, in fact!). Whenever you read about “elders,” “bishops,” “overseers,” and “pastors,” don’t be confused, because they’re all interconnected into the same office. The Bible does give clear qualifications for the office of a bishop (elder/pastor) in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:7-9, and not everybody meets those. However, a person with the gift of shepherding will manifest a spiritual sensitivity that causes them to draw near to others to nourish and protect them, just like a pastor of a church does. Theirs is a mindset like Jesus Christ in Mark 6:34, Who, when He saw the multitudes of people that were wandering aimlessly through life, felt an intense yearning & longing inside; they can’t wait to pour their life into a younger brother or sister in Christ. They sacrifice their time, energy, comfort and personal agendas to see their younger counterpart become more like Jesus. If you want to see who has the gift of shepherding, take a look around you at the person who may not necessarily be in the forefront like the pastor/shepherd of your church, but who is incessantly giving of themselves to encourage, confront, rebuke, build up and guide along another person without giving any thought to themselves.

Ultimately, those who have the gift of shepherding are only a picture of the Chief Shepherd, the Lord Jesus Christ (John 10:11 & 14; 1 Peter 2:25; 5:4), so let's not put our confidence in men, but let's instead praise God for how He is working in them!

Chapter 12

Study Questions

1) Read John 21:16, Acts 20:28, and 1 Peter 5:2. What same word is found in all three verses? (*If you've been using the ESV, grab a KJV or a NKJV for this question)

*Discuss: How does this help us see what the gift of shepherding is?

2) Read John 10:11 & 15. What did Jesus, the Good Shepherd, do for His sheep?

What does a hireling (hired person) do when a wolf comes (verse 12)?

*Discuss: What parallels can you draw between this passage about shepherding and other passages of Scripture like Luke 9:23 and Luke 14:25-27?

3) Read Acts 13:13, Acts 15:36-40, and 2 Timothy 4:11. What did John Mark do in Acts 13:13?

What happened in Acts 15:36-40 when Paul & Barnabas

wanted to go visit churches?

What do we finally learn about John Mark in 2 Timothy 4:11?

*Discuss: How can you see shepherding/pastoring evident in the life of this young man?

4) Read 1 Peter 5:2-3. List the components of a shepherd of believers.

*Discuss: Where are these components present/not present in your own life?

5) Read 1 Peter 5:4. What will a faithful pastor of a church someday receive from Jesus Christ?

*Discuss: What are some ways that you, being on the receiving end of mentoring and guidance, be an encouragement and a blessing to your pastor? How can you make their job easier?

PART III – SERVING GIFTS

Chapter 13

The Gift of Discernment

“...to another the distinguishing of spirits...” (1 Corinthians 12:10)

Hang in there, we're almost finished! It's been a good study so far, hasn't it? Hopefully you've learned just as much from the study & discussion questions at the end of each chapter. It's our passion as writers for you as readers to come away from this time edified and more fully equipped to serve Jesus Christ within the local church.

Under Part III, we'll wrap up this booklet by looking at the following serving gifts: discernment, serving/helping, leading/administration, giving, faith and mercy.

The first gift we're going to look at under serving gifts is the spiritual gift of discernment. The NKJV calls this “discerning of spirits.” Basically, it is God's protection against false doctrine. As Scripture was being written in the early church, it was essential for God to gift certain individuals with the ability to sniff out a counterfeit. Acts 5:3, 8:9-24, and 16:16-18 all show this gift in action as godly men shockingly revealed the unknowable hearts of men.

Discernment is the God-given ability to distinguish Truth from error. It is the ability to spot satanic deception. This gift is still active in the church today because of Satan's continued attempts to counterfeit the truths of God-given Scripture. Every Christian today is called upon to follow the example of the Bereans: discerning and making sure that what is being preached & taught lines up with the Bible. Those gifted with supernatural discernment are spiritual watch dogs; they are able to mark words and pick up on things that most of us wouldn't even have given a second thought to. Their uncanny ability to read, hear or see something and catch any falsehood in it is unparalleled.

This gift could be exercised in many ways: it could be used to reveal demonism in any form; it could be used to reveal false prophets and spiritual phonies. A person with discernment might come to you and say, "You'd better not put that person in such a position. You'd better not have that person come to your church and do this or that, because something's not right." This person can discern one in whom the Holy Spirit is genuinely working, and say, "You know, there's a person really energized by the Spirit of God. I can see it." Lastly, this gift could also be utilized with two Christians arguing with each other, and when they come to a person who has the gift of discernment, that person can determine who's right, who's wrong, and who deserves what!

Before we leave this particular gift, it is important to recognize that this gift can easily deteriorate into a critical, proud and condemning spirit when operated in the flesh. Remember, this gift is more accurately called "discerning/distinguishing of spirits," and this is what makes it a supernatural gift. It may be easy for a theologian to spot a doctrinal error, but what about the *spirit* behind the

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error? If we're not careful, we can turn into people who see a devil behind every bush and garbage can!

The takeaway is this: as Christians we have the mind of Christ, and are able to discern all things (1 Corinthians 2:15-16). Let's glorify the Lord by humbly using our God-given discernment to make wise decisions in our conduct, and not jump to conclusions in prideful haste!

Chapter 13

Study Questions

1) Read Acts 5:1-11. How did Peter manifest his gift of discernment?

*Discuss: What practical life lessons can we learn from this story?

2) Read 1 Corinthians 12:3. What will the Holy Spirit not do? What will the Holy Spirit do instead?

*Discuss: What do we know about God from Malachi 3:6 and Hebrews 13:8? Discuss the connection these 2 verses have with question #2.

3) Read John 8:44. What different thing does this verse tell us about Satan?

*Discuss: Where is the first question recorded in the Bible? What is it? Notice anything ironic about who asked it? Why do you think he did that?

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4) Read 1 Corinthians 14:29. What did Paul command the church at Corinth to do when someone prophesied?

*Discuss: Why is operating these gifts of the Spirit within the context of the local church so important?

5) Read Acts 17:10-11. What did the Bereans do after they eagerly received the Word?

*Discuss: When was the last time we did the same thing they did? What excuses do we give for not doing what they did?

Chapter 14

The Gift of Serving

“...if service, in his serving...” (Romans 12:7)

No matter where you look, this brother/sister in Christ is always involved somehow! Their incessant labor in the church is something that everyone else looks at and thinks, “Man, what a servant! How do they keep going?” If this is the case, you’re probably observing someone who has the spiritual gift of serving.

The word “serve” comes from the Greek word “diakonia,” which is where the word “deacon” comes from. In fact, a man who maintains the office of a deacon will have this spiritual gift (see 1 Timothy 3:8-13, particularly verse 10 where they are to be evaluated before being given this position- their faithfulness in serving will be evident before they are placed in this office). The gift of service is sometimes known as the gift of “helps” or “helping” (1 Corinthians 12:28). Interestingly enough, a different Greek word is used in this verse, and it means “relief”; in turn, the Greek word for “relief” comes from yet another Greek word which means “to take hold of, succor [an old word for “help”], participate.” Seeing these definitions helps us to get a clearer picture of what this gift of the Spirit looks like. A person with this gift is a great team player who looks for people to help and makes their lives easier by supporting them.

Service is best defined as ministry behind the

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scenes- practical assistance. It is being sensitive to & quick to reach out to meet specific, physical needs within the body, a general spirit of humble & joyful helpfulness, and may include specific abilities or training. It might be a person who is involved in many different ministries in the church, or it might be a person who is involved in just one or two areas of service, but who does their job with exceptional thoroughness, efficiency and faithfulness. This person is putting in new windows at the house of a widow from church, and then they're going to the church to put in several hours on the new addition that's being built. Next thing you know, they're helping set up tables, chairs and sound equipment before the big fellowship banquet, and later you overhear them talking to someone in the church about being over first thing in the morning to help them replace the brake pads on their car. Praise the Lord, what a busy little bee!

Even within our church body here at FFC in 2010, we've seen certain men exhibit this spiritual gift by sacrificially putting in long hours at Pastor Frank & Ashley Snyder's new home on East Ave in Akron. In addition to carrying their own load of responsibilities at home and at work, these guys were the first ones to get the ball rolling on the project that ended up to be a great blessing to both Pastor Frank & Ashley (because they virtually got a new house) and to the local body (because the renovation provided an excellent means for other people in the church to get involved serving).

What can we learn from this? Those who have the gift of serving/helps are essential to the local church because of their supernatural willingness to do menial but nonetheless important tasks. As Christians we are commanded to serve within the local church by serving one another (Galatians 5:13); we can't be uninvolved and claim

that we'll be ineffective or- worse- don't need to serve because we don't have this particular gift of the Spirit. Get in the game and get busy!

Chapter 14

Study Questions

1) Read Acts 6:1-4. What was the problem that arose?

What very important responsibility did the 12 apostles have (hint: see verses 2 & 4)?

What responsibility did they give to other disciples?

*Discuss: How do we see the roles of elders/pastors and deacons revealed in this passage?

2) What is the gift of service/helps?

*Discuss: What are some specific ways that you can see this gift in action?

3) Read Acts 20:35. What does Paul we must do by working hard?

*Discuss: What is it more of a blessing to give than to receive?

4) Read Galatians 5:13. What are we supposed to do with our freedom?

*Discuss: Can you love someone without serving them? Why/why not? Why is serving in love such an important thing to do (hint: see 1 Corinthians 13:1-3)?

5) Read Matthew 8:14. What did Peter's mother-in-law do when Jesus healed her?

*Discuss: What are some other examples from Scripture of people serving?

Chapter 15

The Gift of Leading

“...he who leads, with diligence...” (Romans 12:8)

Everybody seems to talk about being a leader, but yet there are so few who actually do it (and do it well!) What does this gift of the Spirit look like?

“Lead” means “to stand before, preside, maintain, be over, be a protector or guardian.” Elders and deacons both are to be leaders not just in the church, but in their own homes (1 Timothy 3:4, 12). In Romans 12:8 and 1 Corinthians 12:28, “lead” and “administrating” both refer to the same gift, but use different words: “administrating” is from a Greek word that has to do with piloting/steering a ship (or, in our modern day, a plane). It is directorship, governing the local church like the captain at the helm directs a vessel through the water. So, having the gift of leading/administrating is having the God-given ability to oversee any area of responsibility like an alert watchman, and also directing & motivating others towards a goal/destination.

A person who is gifted in this is a person who is zealous, fired up and chomping at the bit to get into action. Man, have they got a great idea & vision in their minds—there’s no stopping them from doing everything possible to seeing that mission accomplished! Romans 12:8 presents this inseparable aspect of leadership when it says to lead “with zeal” (some translations say “with diligence”). If you’re doing this study and you’re in your late teens or

older, you can almost always identify the leaders of tomorrow by looking at the little tykes bouncing off the walls and driving everybody nuts in Junior Church... Having energy, passion, excitement and a really hard time sitting still are telltale signs that someone a little unusual is coming up through the ranks!

This diligence also means that leadership/administration will be consistent, and will not be let up at any point in time. Overseeing something means that our eyes never leave the thing we're overseeing. The gift of administration is basically the gift of running things! A leader doesn't wait for other people to come to them with ideas or instructions on what he should do; a leader is one who is going to people telling them his/her ideas and getting other people involved making those ideas a reality.

The bottom line? Don't just wait for someone to come to you and tell you what to do. Take the initiative, see where God is working, notice an area that has a need, and then do something about it! By doing this, we're fulfilling our calling as Christians (Titus 2:14), and that's something to be zealous about.

Chapter 15

Study Questions

1) Define “lead” and “administrating.”

*Discuss: What do these words mean practically? How will they show up?

2) Read 1 Timothy 3:4 & 12. What will elders and deacons do?

*Discuss: Is it possible for someone to have the spiritual gift of leadership but not be an elder/deacon? Why or why not?

3) Read Romans 12:8. What does it say to lead with?

*Discuss: What does this word mean practically? How will it show up?

4) Read Deuteronomy 12:8 and Judges 17:6. What do we as sinful people naturally do?

*Discuss: Why are leaders so important?

5) Read 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, 1 Timothy 5:17, and Hebrews 13:7 & 17. What do these 4 verses tell us to do to those who lead us?

*Discuss: Is being a leader a tough position? Why or why not? Who is a leader in your life that you can help support and make their job easier?

Chapter 16

The Gift of Giving

“...he who gives, with liberality...” (Romans 12:8)

All of us as Christians are commanded to give financially (Malachi 3:8-10; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7), and there's no way around that fact. The best thing about this is that we are commanded not just to give, but to give joyfully because it's a great privilege to do so. What ever we have purposed to give to the Lord is between us and Him; knowing that we are to give generously frees us from feeling like we're really giving a lot, or that we're going above and beyond what God expects from us. Let's face it, we can never give enough back to God!

Now, this is all just speaking “hypothetically,” of course (none of us have ever done this before...), but if we *were* to sinfully compare our giving to other people within the church, we *might* find ourselves slightly ahead of the rest of the pack (as I said before, this could never happen to us). However, when a person with the spiritual gift of giving enters the picture, our tidy sum that we put in the offering plate now looks pretty meager and pitiful, or those 10 people that we helped materially throughout the year seems like a drop in the bucket when we find out that another person has helped 3 times that many people over the course of a year, or our thoughtful gift to another brother or sister in Christ is now dwarfed by a much bigger donation that somebody else has given. Why? Simply because a person who has this gift is someone who has committed all their

earthly possessions to the Lord as they support the work of the ministry, and come alongside those in need. Basically, it is sacrificially giving money, food, clothing, shelter and any other possessions to anywhere it is needed. The Greek word for “give” in Romans 12:8 is more intense and greater than the regular Greek word often used in the rest of the New Testament: this word means “to super give!”

The definition of “liberality” means to give with freedom & generosity, and not giving with selfish/self-praising motives. People gifted in giving have taken to heart Christ’s words of Matthew 6:2 and don’t give hypocritically because they recognize that their giving is seen by God. Their thoughts are consumed by giving for a single purpose, for the glory of the Lord, for the joy of giving, and for obedience to Christ- nothing else is on their mind. There is no thought, “Well, I better keep a little back for myself, I don’t want to get carried away,” or “Boy, I hope someone is looking so they will see my thoughtfulness and generosity.” These are pretty convicting realizations for all of us to come to! You could say that this person gives without even batting an eye, or without even taking account of it (Matthew 6:3).

You say, “How do I know I have the gift?” If your heart is prompted to do it, if you feel the moving of the Spirit of God to do it- to be generous, and to give over and above- then it’s that alone that can identify that gift. When you do it, you sense an overwhelming joy and response of having invested in the eternal kingdom of God. Certainly all of us need to be doing more than we’re doing, but some people are uniquely gifted by God. It’s obviously nothing that’s naturally inside of us, so both givers and super givers get to give Him the glory.

So what’s the takeaway? Don’t leave the giving

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within the church to those who are spiritually gifted; do your part to uphold the ministry of the church by obeying the Lord with your tithes & offerings. When the Holy Spirit convicts you of impure motives for giving, confess them and God will forgive & grant you repentance (1 John 1:9), and then- and only then- you can give in such a way that is truly pleasing to Him.

Chapter 16

Study Questions

1) What has a person who has the spiritual gift of giving committed to the Lord?

*Discuss: Think of your top 3 most treasured possessions and write them down. Then, list out how you are using those things to further the kingdom of God?

2) What does Matthew 6:19-21 tell us not to do, and then what to do?

*Discuss: Think of something you used to own that got broken, stolen or lost. What was your reaction? What would your reaction tell you about the joy & happiness you found in that thing? What about times that you've said, "I don't know what I would do without (*some possession*)- I would *die* without it!?" Is that really a true statement?

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3) Read Acts 2:44-45 and 4:32-35. What did the early church do to take care of each other?

*Discuss: What's the bad rap on Christians and the church today when it comes to money or things? How would a testimony like that of the early church impact the world? Does the answer to question 3 not apply anymore, or did God revoke it?

4) Read 2 Corinthians 8:1-5. What was the state of the Macedonian churches in verse 2?

What did the churches of Macedonia do in verse 4?

What did they give in verse 5?

*Discuss: How do these 3 things all equal into the equation of giving? How can we as prosperous, materially-abundant people learn practical lessons from this example that took place almost 2,000 years ago?

5) Read 2 Corinthians 9:6. What does this verse say will happen to a person who sows bountifully?

*Discuss: Does the answer to the question mean in this life or the next? Before the Lord, ask yourself, "Do I usually view this verse as temporal or eternal?" If temporal, what verses in Scripture can you find to renew your mind?

Chapter 17

The Gift of Faith

“...to another faith by the same Spirit...” (1 Corinthians 12:9)

Wasn't it George Michael who sang, “I gotta have faith”?

Well, George Michael or not, a person with the spiritual gift of faith isn't going to be telling themselves this because they have been supernaturally gifted by God to trust Him unwaveringly. They do it without a shred of doubt, regardless of the circumstances. The world could be caving in around them, and they could turn to the people nearby and say, “Cheer up, everybody, at least the sun is shining- God's in control!” To this person, obstacles are only challenges to be overcome through prayer, perseverance and faith in God; they don't make mountains out of molehills, and they don't despair when the mountains aren't molehills. They see each and every situation as an opportunity for God's sovereignty and omnipotence (all-powerfulness) to be made manifest. Their creed is, “God can do whatever He wants, and He will do something- it may be by using me now, it may be by using me later, it may be by using others, it may be by leading us to pray for an extended period of time, or it may be by making us wait. However He has planned to do it, He'll do it!”

Missionaries are gifted in this area. History tells of Hudson Taylor who went to China with no material possessions to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and who gained

many converts for God by preaching throughout the countryside. His gifting of faith was a strong belief that God was capable of doing the extraordinary. He was once quoted as saying, “Many Christians estimate difficulty in the light of their own resources, and thus they attempt very little and they always fail. All giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on His power and presence to be with them.” This unwavering trust in God also led him to once say, “I am in great straits for funds. I am happy about it. The Lord may take away all our troublesome people through it and give us true-hearted ones instead.” Taylor knew that the foxhole people would be ones who had their focus on eternity and not on the present circumstances.

Another missionary named George Mueller started building orphanages in England during the early 1800’s. Throughout the course of his life, he never asked one person for a single penny, but when he died in 1898 after 64 years of ministry, he had received the modern-day equivalent of \$150 million, and there were over 18,000 children who passed through the orphanage doors. There are accounts of how all the children would be inside the dining hall waiting to be served lunch that Mueller & his staff simply didn’t have. He would pray, and all of a sudden a knock would come at the front door from a milkman whose wagon had suffered a broken axle just outside the orphanage. There was no way for the milkman to keep the milk from spoiling, so it was all unloaded, brought inside to the children, and lunch was served. Other times, the local baker would arrive with loads of freshly baked bread just in time for dinner, or someone would donate a piece of furniture that Mueller needed, or an anonymous gift of money would come in to provide for a need that he had. The constant practice in his life was to go to God in prayer over whatever he had need for, and the result was almost unbelievable!

Just in case you're starting to get worried at this point in the chapter by thinking, "Am I even saved? I don't have faith like this," the gift of faith is far beyond the faith which God has granted us as believers when we trusted Christ for salvation. All faith is a gift from God (Romans 12:3; Ephesians 2:8), and for us to be saved, God makes it clear that it's not the amount of faith that a person has, but the Object of their faith: Jesus Christ (Psalm 27:1; Isaiah 12:2). The person who is gifted in faith will manifest it far beyond what most Christians practice (sadly!), and it will usually be through the means of a strong prayer life. In this life, we are often faced with many situations that seem incorrect or inappropriate for the life of a believer. God's sovereignty in these things is seen in Psalm 135:6:

Whatever the LORD pleases, He does, in heaven and on earth, in the seas and all deeps.

In this plan and purpose that He established before time began, He gave us the mechanism of prayer. He commands us, invites us and compels us to pray to Him. He does not *need* prayer any more than He needs help. God gave us prayer as the avenue of communication between creation and Creator to display His glory and show man how much He cares about us. So, in that sense, prayers lifted in faith "activate" God (James 5:16-18). Find an effective prayer warrior, and you have most likely found a person who has the spiritual gift of faith.

In conclusion, a quote from George Mueller:

"I live in the spirit of prayer. I pray as I walk about, when I lie down and when I rise up. And the answers are always coming.

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Thousands and tens of thousands of times have my prayers been answered. When once I am persuaded that a thing is right and for the glory of God, I go on praying for it until the answer comes. George Mueller never gives up!”

What about us? Have we taken up the shield of faith against worry and plots of Satan by first bowing on our knees to pray and then getting to work? Let’s get to it and live this life of faith that God has commanded us to!

Chapter 17

Study Questions

1) Give a definition of the spiritual gift of faith. How will it show up in the person who has it?

*Discuss: Has there ever been a time when you've seen God do something incredible through you as He granted you the faith to believe in Him during the seemingly impossible? How can you encourage other people with that (without putting the focus on yourself)?

2) Read Acts 27:13-26. What happened on the voyage? How does the passage describe it?

How does Paul exercise great faith in verses 22-25?

What did Paul know prior to this whole event that kept him steady in his faith towards God? (hint: see verses 23-25)

*Discuss: What is the constant struggle in putting our faith in God? What are obstacles that we have to overcome? Why is it that we often sin by worrying or fearing the worst?

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3) Read James 5:16. What 2 things does the righteous man do in the first part of the verse?

Read James 5:17-18. Who was Elijah? What are some incredible things that God did through this man of faith? Read them and write them down (hint: start in 1 Kings 17).

*Discuss: Since the word “effective” means “energized,” what are some things in your life or in the lives of others around you that you are wearied over? What can you do to be energized? Take time right now, and start praying for them today!

4) Read Hebrews 11:6. What does this verse say about faith? What 2 things must a person believe?

*Discuss: Hebrews 11 is called “The Hall of Faith” because of all the men & women of God who walked in it. Do some brief research on a famous missionary or person in full time ministry, and write down (on another piece of paper, if necessary) some incredible events that God did in their lives as they continued to trust in Him.

Chapter 18

The Gift of Mercy

“...he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness...” (Romans 12:8)

Have you ever played mercy? You know the game, sometimes people call it “pea-knuckles,” it’s the one where you and someone else interlock fingers, count to 3, and then try to twist and bend each others arms into painfully awkward shapes until it becomes too much for someone, and they cry out, “Mercy!” Now, if you are merciful, you’ll loosen your grip and let their arms come back down to their normal position at the sides of their body; if you’re a cruel and heartless monster, you’ll usually emit some kind of evil laugh and press down even harder until they either collapse onto the floor in agony, or they resort to striking at you with a well-placed kick. Come to think of it, maybe that’s why the game is sometimes called “submission.”

Whatever the name of the game, we see a picture in it (yes, perhaps a twisted and sadistic picture, but a picture nonetheless...) of mercy. The spiritual gift of mercy is an abundance of compassion and empathy for those in misery and distress. It carries the joint idea of actively demonstrating sympathy for someone else and of having the necessary resources to successfully comfort and strengthen that person. It is the God-given ability to demonstrate God’s love through acts of kindness, which we also know as “compassion”: caring enough to act. This gift manifests itself by caring for the poor and less fortunate people that generally go unnoticed by everyone else. A person with this

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gift may work in soup kitchens, rescue missions, prisons, rehab centers, job placement programs, hospitals or elderly retirement homes. Oftentimes this person will be one who goes to visit people after they have been in an accident or after they have suffered the loss of a relative, and will be adept at seeing very practical & thoughtful ways of meeting specific needs within the hurting person's life (i.e. providing meals, cleaning their home, babysitting their children, doing yard work, etc.). Anytime that someone here within the body at FFC is going through a difficult or tough time, the people who are gifted with mercy are the first ones on the scene serving, as well as getting other people to serve with them.

Romans 12:8 shows us that the mindset of a person with this gift is one that is free of a sense of duty; they do not serve grudgingly. Their attitude is what makes their service such a blessing! The Greek word for "cheerfulness" is "hilaros," which we know as "hilarious" in English. It means "merry, prompt and willing"- they're joyfully serving immediately when the need presents itself because they want to. This mercy comes naturally to them through the power and leading of the Holy Spirit, and thus He gets the glory. Nothing delights this person more than to minister to a person who is hurting.

What's the takeaway? This spiritual gift that is possessed by some does not give the rest of us the right to sit back and do nothing. Basic acts of kindness must be part of the lifestyle of every believer, even if it's a kind word and a caring hand on the shoulder (James 2:15-16). Who's hurting? Who's calling for help? Let's get our heads in the game and see who we can be merciful to.

Chapter 18

Study Questions

1) What is compassion? How does it relate to the spiritual gift of mercy?

*Discuss: Think of some examples of this gift that you have seen carried out by a person/people you know, and write them down. How can you encourage those people to keep going?

2) Read Romans 12:8. How is mercy to be carried out? What does that mean practically? What will acts of mercy be free from?

*Discuss: Why is God so concerned with our motives for doing what we do? (hint: see 1 Corinthians 13:1-3; 2 Corinthians 9:7)

3) Read James 2:15-16. What needs to happen as a result of seeing physical needs?

*Discuss: What do you think God's view of unfulfilled intentions are? What does God really desire from His people? (see also Matthew 21:28-31 for further discussion)

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4) Read Luke 4:18-19. What was Jesus anointed & sent to do?

*Discuss: What are some other examples from Jesus' earthly ministry where He showed mercy to people? What are some important principles that can be learned from these examples to which we can apply our lives?

5) Read Proverbs 14:31. How do we insult God our Maker? How do we honor Him?

*Discuss: Matthew 25:31-46 reveals the judgment of the nations when Christ returns to set up His Millennial Kingdom on Earth after the Great Tribulation. While the basis of judgment is faith in Christ, how does this faith manifest itself? Who are these works ultimately done to? Why are verses 40 & 45 important to this passage? How can we sinfully view ministry opportunities to brothers & sisters in Christ as beneath us?

Chapter 19

Ending on the Right Note

Well, that's it- we're done! Hopefully by now you've experienced the illumination of the Holy Spirit to see what the spiritual gifts are and how they are carried out practically within the church body.

At this point you could be thinking a multitude of different things: "Boy, I can't wait to get busy to find out what my spiritual gift is!" "This study leaves me more perplexed than ever! Informed, yes, but still perplexed!" "I never knew what the gifts of the Spirit are, and now I do." "I used to think differently about this spiritual gift, but now I've learned something else about it that has helped me to have the right Biblical perspective." "I wonder who I can share this study with." Of course, you could be thinking *none* of these thoughts, and maybe you're wondering what you're going to be eating for lunch, or when you should call your friend about the plans you made this weekend!

To end on the right note, there is one thought that should be addressed above all the others, and it is this: "These spiritual gifts seem pretty cut and dried, so much so that I can nail down what gift(s) I have in my life, and it'll be clear and defined, and then I'll know exactly where I can serve and where I can't serve in the church." The "danger" of doing a study like this where the gifts are individually set forth, examined and clarified is that a person can oversimplify them and develop a number of unbiblical mindsets, such as:

“Well, if I don't do it somebody else with the gift will.”

This thought gives excuses to people who really don't want to be involved to step out of serving while thinking that somebody else will step in to fill the gap. What we need to understand is that there's nobody put together like they are; there's no two of us alike. If I don't do it, then it won't be done the way God would have chosen originally to do it. No doubt He'll stick something in the empty space, but I'll forfeit the blessing of serving, and God's purpose in its truest and purest sense has to be passed on to another person who wouldn't initially be His choice.

“I'm having a terrible time defining my gift. I don't seem to fit into any one.” When the gifts are oversimplified, things can get confusing. People will usually end up saying, “I sometimes think I have a little of this, and then I think I have a little of this, and I just don't know what my gift is.” The best answer for this person is what John MacArthur often tells people: “Don't worry about it. Your gift is what you are, that's all.” It resists a label. As we said just previously, every person is uniquely different- while these spiritual gifts seem like they come in separate colors that can be painted on a canvas individually, the reality is that each of us comes as a bunch of colors mixed together, with different degrees of different gifts, as in Romans 12:3 (“...each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.”) and 1 Corinthians 12:4-5 (“Now there are varieties of gifts...there are varieties of service...there are varieties of activities...”). Each of us may excel in one particular gift, but we also may have manifestations & elements of other gifts of the Spirit as well.

“Well, that's not my gift, I can't do that.” Sometimes an opportunity to minister is presented, but the re-

sponse is a rationalization: “Well, that’s not my gift. I’d certainly like to help but, you see, I have the gift of showing mercy, and I’m certainly not going to teach anybody anything or exhort anybody.” No, no, no! As we’ve just said, we each are gifted by the Spirit in a particular way, but that in no way prevents us from or makes us ineffective at serving in other ways. A person with the gift of teaching can easily jump in alongside somebody with the gift of mercy to dig a trench at a construction project just as well as a person with the gift of service can share the Gospel on a street corner alongside someone with the gift of evangelism. We can’t get locked in to certain gifts, combinations and categories at the expense of just doing what God has presented for us to do.

“I’m completely confident that my gift is _____ because somebody once affirmed that in me.” What is meant by this point is that self-deception in this is possible. Some people get locked in on a gift they think they have (and they don’t have it), and they’ll say, “Well, I’ve got that gift. Once I taught something and somebody said, ‘Boy, that was really good!’ so, that’s my gift.” Now this doesn’t mean that we can’t assuredly know what our gifts are, and it doesn’t mean that other people can’t tell us that. In fact, the local church is *the* place where such a thing should happen. The warning here is not to oversimplify the gifts to the extent that we line ourselves up with several characteristics of a gift and then claim that as our own. As believers, our spiritual gift(s) will be made evident to us in the local church as we serve the body. Usually we don’t understand it; it’s just a whole lot of components that come together, and then it all comes out in what we do. When we’re walking in the Spirit, we see it and

we don't need to define it.

Since these gifts are of the Spirit, believers can sometimes get caught with their heads in the clouds rather than in their Bibles. We need to be careful here! The Church is the Body of Christ, with Christ Himself as the Head. Since Jesus Christ exhibited these gifts in His flesh while on Earth, believers must strive to do the same in their own lives.

Over and over, Paul made it clear that the gifts are given by the grace poured out by the Holy Spirit, Who is the essence of Jesus Christ never leaving nor forsaking His own (Hebrews 13:5). Every believer must make it a point to walk in the gifts God has provided. There are no second-class citizens in His kingdom. In reality, Christ created us as one body in Him, with many members and diverse functions. Our ministry today must reflect what His ministry was when He walked this Earth that He created.

For further reference, here are some great books & resources that can be consulted. Some of these were used to prepare this booklet, and they are included as well. As a word of caution, please refrain from going down the common road of doing a spiritual gifts test. There are a lot of them out there. Do this study yourself or with another person (or group of people), and let the Holy Spirit of God teach you as He illuminates your mind. Trust Him!

Books

Leckie, E. *What the Bible Teaches—Ephesians*. John Ritchie LTD, 1983

MacArthur, John. *Charismatic Chaos*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.

MacArthur, John. *The Body Dynamic*. Wheaton: Victor Books, 1996.

- MacArthur, John. *The Pillars of Christian Character*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 1998.
- Stallan, F.E. *What the Bible Teaches—Romans*. John Ritchie LTD, 1998
- ESV Study Bible*. Wheaton: Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers, 2008.
- The King James Study Bible*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1988.

Commentaries

- MacArthur, John. *Romans 9-16*. Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1994
- MacArthur, John. *1 Corinthians*. Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1984
- MacArthur, John. *Ephesians*. Chicago: Moody Bible Institute, 1986

Sermons

John MacArthur's sermons on spiritual gifts can be found on the Grace to You website (www.gty.org). On the home page, click on the "Resources" tab on the right-hand side, then click "Bible Book Studies" in the column on the left-hand side, and then choose the appropriate book of the Bible. In particular, check out these ones:

Romans, Volume 8

Ministry of Spiritual Gifts, Part 1

(Romans 12:3-5) Sept. 16, 1984

Ministry of Spiritual Gifts, Part 2

(Romans 12:6-7) Sept. 23, 1984

Ministry of Spiritual Gifts, Part 3

(Romans 12:8) Oct. 7, 1984

1 Corinthians, Volume 4

Concerning Spiritual Gifts, Part 1

(1 Corinthians 12:1) May 23, 1976

All sermons down to the end of the page

1 Corinthians, Volume 5

The Temporary Sign Gifts, Part 3

(1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30) Aug. 8, 1976

Spirit Baptism

(1 Corinthians 12:12-13) Sept. 12, 1976

One Body, Many Gifts, Part 1

(1 Corinthians 12:12-28) Oct. 3, 1976

One Body, Many Gifts, Part 2

(1 Corinthians 12:15-31) Oct. 10, 1976

Ephesians, Volume 3

The Gifts of Christ to His Church

(Ephesians 4:7-11) Aug. 20, 1978

Building the Body of Christ, Part 1

(Ephesians 4:11) Aug. 27, 1978

FFC Resources

In addition to studying the gifts of the Spirit, other resources for helping us grow as disciples in Jesus Christ can be found elsewhere. The FFC Resource Center is a great place to find similar pamphlets dealing with issues such as:

Daughters of the King: A Biblical Apologetic on the Role of Women

- A biblical look at how women are to live in this anti-biblical world, this study (and the companion study “Young Daughters of the King”) looks at specific, practical ways to be pleasing to God as a helper, mother, and homekeeper.

Young Daughters of the King: What Does the Bible Say to Young Women?

- This study is similar to “Daughters of the King”

with a focus for how young women can please God by submitting to their fathers and training for their future role as a helper, mother, and homekeeper.

Deliberate Godly Friendships: Stop, Look, and Then Listen

- How to pick godly friends and be a godly friend is the focus of this pamphlet, which gives guidelines for evaluating friendships in light of the Word of God.

Garbage In, Garbage Out

- The lie of the world is that secret sins of lust and pornography aren't hurting anyone. The truth, however, is that they are hurting the person who is caught in them! See the hope of Jesus Christ by going through this study.

How Can I Know God's Will?

- Knowing what God's will is can seem like an overwhelming thing to figure out. This booklet is designed to help us see just what God's will really is, and how we can obey it in our day to day lives.

Iron Sharpens Iron

- The importance of having an accountability partner cannot be underemphasized. This pamphlet helps us know what accountability looks like for believers within the local church.

Teaching Our Children What the Bible Says About Sex

- Even though some of us aren't parents, we can all benefit from taking a biblical look at sex. We need to know what the Bible says and be living in obedience before we can teach it to someone else!

Tenacious Training: Seven Steps Toward Discipleship

- The nuts and bolts of being a follower of Jesus Christ are explored in this study. While new followers of Christ are encouraged to learn these aspects, even long-time believers will grow from seeing what God commands of us!

Walking in Wisdom

- Need wisdom? Want to find it? Study Proverbs! This pamphlet goes through the entire book and practically teaches ways to walk in wisdom. You might be surprised by what you find!

While going through these studies, perhaps God will reveal a deeper need for Biblical Counseling. At FFC, God has blessed us with the opportunity to serve as a Biblical Counseling Center, where the hope of Jesus Christ is always found through obedience to His Word. Here counselors can help you get from where you are to where you know you need to be. Call the Counseling Office at 716-759-0591 to set up an appointment.

May God bless you as we continue to serve Him together through joyful Spirit-enabled obedience!

Notes

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