

THE GIFTS of the HOLY SPIRIT

INTRO: Question: What are you doing, who are you helping when you are at your best and enjoying it the most? God's Word tells us we are not to be *ignorant* about *spiritual gifts* (1 Cor. 12:1). Stats. . . They are critical to the spiritual life of every Christian and the spiritual health of every church. MacArthur: "No local congregation will be what it could be, what Jesus prayed it should be, what the Holy Spirit gifted and empowered it to be until it understands spiritual gifts." *Four* New Testament passages address this subject (1 Cor. 12; Rom. 12; Eph. 4; 1 Pet. 4 = 50 verses):

I. DEFINITION: "What are spiritual gifts?"

- A. They are **NOT** the same as:
 - 1. The *gift* of the person of the Holy Spirit – person vs. ability.
 - 2. The *fruit* of the Holy Spirit – about character.
 - 3. *Natural* talents or abilities – Everyone has (art, music, sports, etc.) Gifts are super-natural.
 - 4. A *ministry* - Where we use our gifts to serve
- B. Spiritual gifts are *sovereignly-given abilities graciously bestowed upon every believer at salvation to enable her/him to serve others with ease, effectiveness and excitement within the church, the Body of Christ.*

II. SOURCE: "Who gives the gifts?" 1 Cor. 12:18 says they come from the *Father*. Eph. 4:7 says they come from the *Son*. 1 Cor. 12:11 says they come from the *Holy Spirit*. The gifts are assigned by God and are the product of His grace. We cannot earn or deserve them. They are the result of the finished work of Christ (Eph. 4:7-8).

III. RECIPIENTS: "Who gets gifts?" (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:7, 11; Eph. 4:7; 1 Pet. 4:10)

- A. Gifts are given *only* to believers (all 4 passages)
- B. They probably come at the time of *salvation* when we receive the person of the Holy Spirit
- C. Gifts are given to *every* Christian (all 4 passages)
- D. Gifts are *irrevocably* given (Rom. 11:29)

IV. PURPOSES: "What are they for?"

- A. They are for the *common good* of the body (1 Cor. 12:7)

- B. They should *build up* the body (Eph. 4:12). The gifts function like the human body. We function as the Body of Christ. Principles of Body Life (1 Cor. 12:12-27). . .
- C. They should be used to *serve others* (1 Pet. 4:10; 1 Cor. 12:7; Eph. 4:12).

V. DIVISIONS: "How can they be divided?"

- A. There are differing kinds of gifts (1 Cor. 12:4, 12, 14; 1 Pet. 4:10). Colors on a palate.
- B. There are *speaking* gifts and *serving* gifts (1 Pet. 4:11).
Speaking gifts (5): Prophecy, Teaching, Knowledge, Wisdom, and Exhortation. Serving Gifts (6): Leadership, Helps, Mercy, Giving, Faith, and Discernment.

VI. DISCOVERY: "How can I know my giftedness?" Look back at definition: "with ease (to me), effectiveness (helping others) and excitement (enjoyable to use)."

- A. EXAMINATION through
 - 1. Assessments (more objective) — JimmyKnott.com
 - 2. Feedback (more subjective) answers: "What am I really good at?" Confirmation of others is valuable insight.
- B. SELF-REFLECTION (Questions)
 - 1. What do you do that comes easy and almost effortless to you but seems difficult and complex to others? Others compliment you. Do you keep using in different settings (ex: an event, helping others, etc.)
 - 2. What tasks do you look forward to doing?
 - 3. What tasks energize you as you do them?
 - 4. What are you doing and enjoying when you lose track of time?
- C. SUPPLICATION to God in prayer. Ask Him to reveal your giftedness, using assessments, feedback, self-reflection, etc.
- D. EXPERIMENTATION of using your giftedness. Try serving. Get going.

ILLUS: Who leaves gift unopened?

CONC: As stewards we are *accountable* to God for knowing and using our gifts (1 Pet. 4:10; Matt. 25:14ff; 1 Cor. 4:1-2). We should never *neglect* them (1 Tim. 4:14). Instead, we should *stir them up* (2 Tim. 1:6). So, what are you doing, who are you helping when you are at your best and enjoying it most?