

## **“THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT”**

### ***“Becoming a Spiritual Gift”***

#### **Scripture Reading – I Corinthians, 12:1-11**

*Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. Therefore I tell you that no-one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus be cursed”, and no-one can say, “Jesus is Lord”, except by the Holy Spirit.*

*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.*

*Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.*

***‘To prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.’***

***Ephesians, 4:12-13, NIV***

**This series is based on ‘THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT’.**

According to Scripture, every saved person has, at the time of their conversion, received a birthday gift from God through the Holy Spirit. Only when this gift is discovered, developed, and deployed can the Christian be really fulfilled in his life, ministry, and service. Only when every Christian faithfully deploys their gift will the Body of Christ function effectively and grow.

**You are a gifted child. Did you know that?**

Not only has God given you a gift, but he has also issued you a call to be a living sacrifice. Your gift is to come full circle back into his presence as a gift to him. God has equipped you in a special way for his special purpose at this special time. Therefore, you are to discover that gift (you’ve got at least one), develop it, and deploy it for the glory of the Lord.

#### **EVERYBODY IS SOMEBODY IN HIS BODY**

***‘The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.’***

***I Corinthians, 12:12, NIV***

**We are the Body of Christ; Jesus is the head and we are the members.**

Paul compares the Body of Christ to a human body. Each part has a specific function that is necessary to the body as a whole. The parts are different for a purpose, and in their differences they must work together. The Body of Christ exists to show Jesus and to serve him. We best do that when we are engaged in fulfilling his purpose and being motivated by the Holy Spirit, the Breath of God.



#### **ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

***‘Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.’***

***I Corinthians, 12:1, NIV***

As a part of the Body of Christ: (i) We understand the same truth – we do not remain ignorant of spiritual matters; (ii) We confess the same Lord – Jesus is God; (iii) We depend on the same God – because the Father, Son and Spirit are involved; and, (iv) We minister to the same body – the Church, which is the Body of Christ.



#### **UNWRAPPING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT**

***‘Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God – this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.’***

***Romans, 12:1-2, NIV***

**Paul gives three pointers that will help you unwrap your spiritual gift.**

He begs you, he urges you, in view of God’s mercies, to make a sacrificial presentation as a living sacrifice. You need to undergo a spiritual transformation, a metamorphosis that will enable the mind of Christ to be in you. Finally, if you want to know your spiritual gift, you must think about spiritual matters with a sober consideration.

#### **“BECOMING A SPIRITUAL GIFT”**

**I once heard of a woman who had taken a first aid course.**

She was glad she did because after its completion there was a terrible accident outside her home when a car mounted the pavement and crashed headfirst into a tree. When she went to investigate and help she saw horrific scenes in the car. The driver was bleeding badly and had awful life threatening head injuries. That is when her training took over. She knew instantly that if she sat down and placed her head between her knees, then she would not faint...

**Spiritual gifts are given for the good of the whole church.**

They are not for individual enjoyment, but for corporate employment. The Christians in Corinth especially needed this reminder because they were using their spiritual gifts selfishly to promote themselves and not to prosper the church. When we accept our gifts with humility, then we can use them to promote harmony, and this helps the whole church body.

Nowadays, people seem to engage in MEOLOGY rather than THEOLOGY.

They often seem interested in themselves far more than others. Unfortunately, much of this attitude, that is prevalent in the world, has infiltrated into the church today. Nearly nine-tenths of church members believe that the church exists for them and meeting their needs and their family's needs. However, the purpose of the Body of Christ is to make a difference in the community in which it lives, by showing and being Jesus to those it comes into contact with.

*Rescue the perishing, care for the dying,  
Snatch them in pity from sin and the grave;  
Weep o'er the erring one, lift up the fallen,  
Tell them of Jesus, the mighty to save.*

*Rescue the perishing, care for the dying,  
Jesus is merciful, Jesus will save.*

*Fanny Crosby, SASB 691:1*

***'Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.'***

***I Peter, 4:10-11, NIV***

*'Some people, well aware of their abilities, believe that they have the right to use their abilities as they please. Others feel that they have no special talents at all. Peter addresses both groups in these verses. Everyone has some gifts; find yours and use them. All our abilities should be used in serving others; none are for our own exclusive enjoyment.'*

***"LIFE APPLICATION BIBLE", Study Notes***

**How is God glorified when we use our abilities?**

When we use them as he directs, to help others, they will see Jesus in us and glorify him for the help they have received. Peter may have been thinking of Jesus' words, **"LET YOUR GOOD DEEDS SHINE OUT FOR ALL TO SEE, SO THAT EVERYONE WILL PRAISE YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER"**.

## 1. YOU HAVE A SPIRITUAL GIFT

***'To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.'***

***I Corinthians, 12:7, NIV***

*In I Corinthians, 12:8-11, Paul lists nine specific basic spiritual gifts...*

### THE MESSAGE OF WISDOM

The word translated as 'WISDOM' is the Greek word 'SOPHIA'.

It is defined by Clement of Alexandria as 'THE KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS HUMAN AND DIVINE AND OF THEIR CAUSES'. Aristotle described it as 'STRIVING AFTER THE BEST ENDS AND USING THE BEST MEANS'. This is the highest kind of wisdom. Wisdom is not being smart or

possessing common sense, it is about having an uncommon sense. Wisdom comes not so much from thought as from communion with God. It is the wisdom which knows God.

### THE MESSAGE OF KNOWLEDGE

**'KNOWLEDGE' – the Greek word is 'GNOSIS' – is a much more practical thing.**

It is the knowledge which knows what to do in any given situation. It is the practical application to human life and affairs of wisdom. It does not mean that you know everything rather it is something which is known by divine intuition. In other words, God gives insight.

*Through the spiritual gifts of wisdom and knowledge, Peter was able to confront Ananias and Sapphira when they lied to the Holy Spirit (see Acts, 5:1-11).*

### FAITH

**Paul means more than what we might call ordinary or saving faith.**

It is the faith which really produces results. It is not just the intellectual conviction that a thing is true, but it is the passionate belief in a thing which makes a man spend all that he is and has on it. It is the faith which turns the vision into deeds. The gift of faith has to do with believing God for what he wants to accomplish in the church's ministry; that he will lead and provide.

*God, when the heart is warmest, and the head is clearest,  
Give me to act; to turn the purposes thou formest into fact!*

### GIFTS OF HEALING

**The Early Church lived in a world where healing miracles were common-place.**

If a Jew was ill he was much more likely to go to the Rabbi than to the doctor; and he would most likely be healed. I believe God still heals today – through medicine and in answer to prayer. In **James, 5:14**, there is an instruction that if a man is ill he should go to the elders of the Church so they can anoint him with oil.

*Jesus died to take away our sin and our sickness, and 'BY HIS WOUNDS, WE ARE HEALED' (see Isaiah, 53:5 and I Peter, 2:24).*

### MIRACULOUS POWERS

**Paul lists wonderful deeds of power.**

In the Early Church, miracles were a part of the credentials of God's servants. In fact, miracles, healings, and tongues all belong to what theologians call 'THE SIGN GIFTS' and belonged in a special way to the infancy of the church. The Book of Acts, as well as church history, indicates that these miraculous gifts may have passed off the scene.

### PROPHECY

**It would give better idea of the meaning of this world if we translated it 'PREACHING'.**

We have too long associated prophecy with the foretelling of what was to happen. But at all times prophecy has been far more FORTH-TELLING than FORE-TELLING. The prophet is a

man who lives so close to God that he knows his mind and heart and will, and so can make them known to men. Because of that the prophet's function is twofold: (i) He brings rebuke and warning – telling men that their way of action is not in accordance with the will of God; and, (ii) He brings advice and guidance – seeking to direct men into the ways God wishes them to go.

*Those with this gift speak to strengthen, encourage, and comfort (see I Corinthians, 14:3). They build up, fire up, and hold up those in the Body of Christ.*

## DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN SPIRITS

**Those with this gift are able to spot that which is counterfeit.**

The devil delights in counterfeiting every true work of God but these people have the ability to see the true source of something – whether it is God, man, or Satan – but this does not mean they have the qualification to judge whether someone is saved or not.

*Among the gifts of the Spirit scarcely any one is of greater practical usefulness than the gift of discernment. This gift should be highly valued and frankly sought as being almost indispensable in these critical times. This gift will enable us to distinguish the chaff from the wheat and to divide the manifestations of the flesh from the operations of the Spirit.*

## TONGUES AND INTERPRETATION

**The gift of tongues is a sign to those who do not believe.**

On the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit enabled the believers to speak in languages they had never learned. Later, as Peter preached, the crowd were amazed that they could hear in their own tongue. Note that these are not signs of spirituality.

*The Christians in Corinth were more carnal than most, but they spoke in tongues and considered themselves spiritual. But 'THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT IS LOVE', and Paul dealt with these subjects at length in I Corinthians, ch's 13-14.*

**The picture we get is of a Church vividly alive.**

Things happened. In fact, astonishing things happened. Life was heightened and intensified. There was nothing dull and ordinary about the Early Church. Paul knew that all this vivid, powerful activity was the work of the Holy Spirit who gave each man his gift to use for all.

## **2. YOU ARE A SPIRITUAL GIFT**

***'Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others.'***

***I Peter, 4:10, NIV***

**We need to become a spiritual gift to the Body of Christ.**

God has given his church an enormous responsibility – to make disciples in every nation, which involves preaching, teaching, healing, nurturing, giving, administering, building, and many other tasks. If we had to fulfil this command as individuals, we might as well give up without trying – it would be impossible. But God calls us as members of his Body.

Some of us can do one task; some can do another. Together we can obey God more fully than any of us could alone. It is a human tendency to overestimate what we can do by ourselves and to underestimate what we can do as a group. But as the Body of Christ, we can accomplish more together than we would dream possible working by ourselves.

**We become a spiritual gift to the body of Christ when we become mature.**


***'To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.'***

***Ephesians, 4:12-13, NIV***

 ***The first evidence of spiritual maturity is Christ-likeness.***

Holiness. Being like Jesus in thought, word, and deed.

*'A relationship with God which continually expresses itself in Christ-like living' (F Coutts).*

 ***The second evidence of spiritual maturity is stability.***

The maturing Christian is not tossed about by every religious novelty that comes along.

 ***The third evidence of spiritual maturity is truth joined with love.***

We know how to speak the truth in love. It has well been said that truth without love is brutality, but love without truth is hypocrisy. It is a mark of maturity when we are able to share the truth with our fellow Christians, and do so in love.

 ***The fourth evidence of spiritual maturity is co-operation.***

We realise that, as members of the one Body and a local Body, we belong to each other, we affect each other, and we need each other. Each believer, no matter how insignificant he may appear, has a ministry to other believers. The Body grows as the individual members grow, and they grow as they feed on the Word and minister to each other.

**How can we see the different spiritual gifts in operation?**

Imagine having a dinner party and the host brings out a wonderful desert but as she nears the table, it falls off the tray and on to the floor.

*Listen how people with different gifts would respond...*

PROPHECY

*"That is what happens when you are not careful"*

MERCY

*"Don't feel bad, it could have happened to anyone"*

SERVICE

*"Let me help you clean it up"*

TEACHING

*"The reason it fell was because it was not put on the tray properly. One side was heavier than the other was, so it just slipped off. If it is put in the middle of the tray next time, then it should be alright"*

EXHORTATION

*"Put it on the table before we start dinner and it cannot fall off in front of everyone"*

GIVING

*"I'll go out and buy a new desert"*

ADMINISTRATION

*"Amanda get a mop... Barbara help Christine pick it up... Diana get something else out of the fridge..."*

**"DISCOVER, DEVELOP, AND DEPLOY YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT!"**