

UNDERSTANDING & EXERCISING YOUR

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

CCCH Small Group Bible Study



LEARNER GUIDE

Now concerning Spiritual gifts,
brethren, I do not want you to
be ignorant...

**THE
MANIFESTATION
OF THE SPIRIT IS
GIVEN TO EACH
ONE (OF US)
FOR THE PROFIT
OF ALL...**

1 Corinthians 12:1,7

CONTENT

Welcome–	Understanding And Exercising Your Spiritual Gifts	5
	Book List.....	7
	Spiritual Gifts: Scripture References.....	8
	Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts - Worksheet.....	10
Session 1–	The Gifts of God	12
Session 2–	The Giver	22
Session 3–	The Reason	34
Session 4–	The Foundational Gifts	46
Session 5–	The Misunderstood Gifts	64
Session 6–	The Controversial Gifts	74
Session 7–	The Body	88
Session 8–	The Way	102
Session 9–	The Power	112

WELCOME

UNDERSTANDING AND EXERCISING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS



1 Corinthians 12:1,7

¹Now concerning Spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant...

⁷the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one (*of us*) for the profit of all...

The aim of this study is to:

- Provide a Biblical Understanding of what the Spiritual gifts are, and what they are not
- Help the individual believer to prayerfully discover their Spiritual gift(s)
- Identify and acknowledge the Spiritual gifts of others in their Christian Community
- Encourage us all to effectively serve in the Body of Christ
- Bringing greater glory to God

Ephesians 4:1-6

Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ²**with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love**, ³being diligent to **keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you also were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all.

Prior to going on to explain the source and purpose of the Spiritual gifts later in **Ephesians 4**, Paul, inspired by the Holy Spirit, calls us to be humble, love one another, and have unity. Why do you believe God would want to stress these things prior to explaining the Gifts?

Later in **Ephesian 4:11**, Paul calls out the specific Spiritual gifts of *apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers*. These will be explained in detail in the sessions on the gifts, but collectively they are given to guide the body of Christ in using their Gifts.

What does Paul say is the purpose of these gifts at the beginning of verse 12?

Why do you think it is important to understand the Spiritual gifts?

The focus of our ten-week study will be to:

- Provide a solid biblical understanding of the Spiritual gifts
- To better understand the Holy Spirit and His purpose in giving the gifts
- See the interconnectedness of the gifts

To best benefit from this study, please note the following:

- There are 9 Teaching Sessions (following this one), each divided into 4 teaching segments.
- 8 different Pastors and Bible Teachers were selected to demonstrate the different ways the Spirit can manifest the gifts.
- This Learners Guide provides an opportunity to engage personally with the Holy Spirit during the week leading up to each session's teaching.
- You'll be asked to spend time studying and then meditating on the word each week with a goal of better understanding the work God created for us to walk in.
- We pray that throughout the study we would be looking for, and acknowledging, the Spiritual gifts in other Christians as we interact with them (whether or not they are participating in this study).

We'd also like to note that:

- The intent of our study has been to "rightly divide the word of God" concerning Spiritual gifts
- We are not presenting this information from the perspective of any particular denomination or religious tradition
- We only wish to present what the Word says, interpreted through the power of the Holy Spirit by Spiritual Gifted Bible teachers
- In spaces where the Word is unclear, we are comfortable with it being unclear as we continue to pray for God to give us greater understanding through further the study of His Word
- We believe that God is the same yesterday, today and forever, therefor in His sovereignty, can offer any gift, to anyone whom He chooses, in any dispensation of time.
- There are a lot of reasonable Spiritual gifts "tests" available online. After prayer and discussion with the teachers and pastors, we've opted not to use one in conjunction with this teaching.
- Should you choose to use one to better understand your own Spiritual gifts, we do not in any way believe it would be wrong to do so, but would simply suggest that you consider your results in light of scripture, with discernment.

Some of the foundational points that we revisit throughout this study include:

- Every Christian is granted at least one (1) Spiritual Gift at Salvation.
- That gift can only be used in the power and at the discretion of the Holy Spirit.
- Gifts can be abused, or lie dormant for a season of time, but are ultimately irrevocable.
- Believers and unbelievers may have varied talents, but Spiritual Gift are distinct from talents.
- Spiritual gifts are only for believers in the Lord, Jesus Christ.
- The purpose of Spiritual Gift is to glorify God and to edify the church.

Book List

Here is a list of books that we recommend as supplements to this study to better understand the Spiritual gifts:

Living Water	Chuck Smith	The Word for Today
Foundations of Pentecostal Theology	Duffield/Van Cleave	Creation House
Concerning Spiritual Gifts	Donald Gee	Gospel Pub House
The Spiritual Gifts	Chuck Missler	Koinonis House
Tragedy in the Church: The Missing Gifts	A.W. Tozer	Wingspread

Our prayer for you, as you go through this study with your Small Group, is that you would ultimately help one another discover your Spiritual Gift and use them in service, to the Glory of God.

Questions for Group Discussion (Welcome Session)

Does anyone in the group know for sure what their Spiritual Gift is?

What have you learned previously about Spiritual gifts?

Why is it important to study the Spiritual gifts?

Has anyone here ever had someone tell you what they think your Spiritual gift are?

Pray that God would begin to reveal the Gifts and encourage us in their discovery.

Spiritual Gifts: Scripture References

The following scriptures are the primary sources used in preparation for this study and can be used throughout the study to complete the worksheet on the next page.

Romans 12:4-8

⁴For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; ⁷or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Corinthians 12:1-10

¹Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:

²You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. ³Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. ⁷But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

¹²For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13

¹¹And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

1 Peter 4:10-11

¹⁰As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts - Worksheet

Use this worksheet to identify what you believe might be your Spiritual gifts. Write what you know about each of the gifts (even if it is little, or nothing). Record the gift(s) you believe you may have at the bottom.

GIFTS	NOTES
Service (<i>Ministry / Helps</i>)	
Teaching	
Encouragement (<i>Exhortation</i>)	
Giving	
Leadership (<i>Government/Administration</i>)	
Mercy	
Pastor (<i>Pastor/Teacher ~ Shepherd</i>)	
Helps	
Speaking	
Faith	
Evangelist	
Discernment (<i>Discerning Spirits</i>)	
<i>(Word of)</i> Knowledge	
<i>("Different Kinds of")</i> Tongues	
Interpreting of Tongues	
<i>(Gifts of)</i> Healings	
<i>(Working of)</i> Miracles	
<i>(Word of)</i> Wisdom	
Apostle	
Prophet	
Gifts I may have	

SESSION 1



THE GIFTS OF GOD

The Holy Spirit is the source of a Christian's abilities to serve and Glorify God. He grants gifts, talents, and abilities from His own power at the discretion of the Godhead. He does this to conform believers to the likeness of Christ and empower His people to do His work in this world. Understanding the three distinct outpourings of the Spirit can give a better understanding of the Holy Spirit and His will for our lives.

The Heart of the Message: To seek to better understand the Holy Spirit in the context of: Salvation, the Fruit of the Spirit, and the proper use of Spiritual gifts.

Key Points of this Weeks Study:

- God saves, sanctifies, and empowers us to do His will
- Salvation is the Gift of God
- The Fruit of the Spirit is – Christ manifesting Himself through us
- God-given talents are not Spiritual gifts
- All true believers are given at least 1 gift
- They are given to us for the sake of others
- They are irrevocable (but can be abused or dormant)

Day 1 - The Gift of God is Salvation

To have a comprehensive understanding of the Holy Spirit and the gifts that He gives, there is terrific value in understanding the differences and similarities between the gift of salvation and the Spiritual gifts. They are both initiated, designed, and distributed by God without any work or worthiness on the part of the believer receiving them.

They differ in nature and timing. A person receives the gift of salvation by placing their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. In that moment, the Holy Spirit seals them for eternity in Heaven. The gift of salvation relates to the forgiveness of sins and redemption. Subsequent to this, the Bible tells us the Christ gives that believer one (or more) Spiritual gifts to empower the believer to serve Him in the body.

Romans 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Wages: payment, compensation

Gift: something that is freely given on account of kindness (not obligation)

2 Corinthians 9:15

Thanks be to God for His indescribable gift!

Indescribable: inexpressible, beyond words, beyond all telling

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Why do you think Paul was specific to state that being saved by grace, through faith is "the gift of God" as opposed to a gift of God?

When you receive a gift, do you feel a need to give a gift in return?

Salvation is THE Gift of God
Without THE Gift, there can be no Spiritual gifts *(plural)*

The Spiritual Gifts

In the same way that salvation can never be earned or deserved, the giving of Spiritual gifts is also not based on any human merit, but on God's mercy. So, like salvation, one should not boast in their Spiritual gifting but should remain humble.

Ephesians 4:7

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

"...to each one" – this tells us that every believer is included, there are no exclusions when it comes to spiritual gifts. No one accidentally gets passed over.

"...grace was given" – this also tells us we don't receive gifts based upon our own good works. We don't deserve anything from God and yet we get not only salvation but spiritual gifts as well.

Spiritual gifts are not awarded but graciously given – can't earn it, can't pay for it

In the same way that salvation can never be earned or deserved, the giving of Spiritual gifts is also not based on any human merit, but on God's mercy. So, like salvation, one should not boast in their Spiritual gifting but should remain humble.

Do you believe you have a Spiritual gift?

If you gave someone you love a gift that you think they would really enjoy, how would you feel if they hid it away and never used it?

Do you have a sense of what your Spiritual gift is, or would you say this idea is new to you?

Day 2 - Distinguishing the Fruit of the Spirit from the Gifts of The Spirit

If we don't have the empowering and indwelling of the Holy Spirit that comes from salvation, we cannot be empowered by the Holy Spirit to bear fruit or exercise our gifts.

When Jesus was preparing to leave His disciples to ultimately return to Heaven, what did He say in **John 16:7** that He would do when he "departs"?

Galatians 5:22-23

²² But *the fruit of the Spirit is* love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,
²³ gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

At the moment of conversion, the Holy Spirit comes to indwell the believer and begins His work to produce the Fruit of the Spirit.

God is actively working to produce increasing amounts of Fruit in all of His people. They should be increasing throughout their lifetime as they walk with Christ.

Fruit of the Spirit – God's supernatural "general" work, that He is doing in every believer, to make them more like Christ

Spiritual Gifts – God's supernatural "specific" work, that He desires to do through individual believers, to serve His body and build up the church.

1 Corinthians 12:11

But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

According to **1 Corinthians 12:29-30**, what do Paul's rhetorical questions suggest about whether every believer has all of the Spiritual gift?

All the Fruits of the Spirit are being developed in every believer, why do you suppose the Holy Spirit wouldn't give every believer all of the Spiritual gifts as well?

Supernatural Works of the Holy Spirit

Both the *Fruit of the Spirit* and the *Spiritual Gifts* are supernaturally produced by the Spirit in the life of the believer. As a Christian submits to God and His headship in their lives, they will bear fruit and be empowered to exercise their Spiritual Gifts. Though there are similarities, there are significant differences. Not all gifts are given to all believers. They are also different *in their aim*:

Fruit of the Spirit – The Holy Spirit making each of us more like Christ

Spiritual Gifts – The Holy Spirit using individuals to build up and strengthen His body, the Church

Having reviewed the distinctions over the last few days, how would you describe the similarities and differences between the Fruit of the Spirit and the Spiritual gifts?

The Holy Spirit – Working Through All Believers

It is not uncommon for Christians to confuse the Fruit of the Spirit and the Spiritual gifts. There are many similarities between the two, but they are distinctly different. As mentioned in the previous section, understanding that the Gift of God is eternal life is the key to understanding the Fruit of the Spirit.

Have you ever confused the concepts of the Fruit of the Spirit and the Spiritual Gifts?

What role would you say the Fruit of the Spirit has on your day-to-day life?

Day 3 - Equipping the Saints for Ministry

Spiritual gifts are given for the work of ministry and the edifying of the body. Some mistakenly believe that because they have been successful in an area prior to salvation, that they must be Spiritual gifted in that area. In His sovereignty, God does sometimes do that, but more often He does not. This is because *Spiritual gifts are foremost for the equipping and edifying of the Church*. Spiritual gifts are always to be exercised in the mindset of *servicing others in the body*.

Ephesians 4:11-12

¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² *for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,*

Equipping: to make one fit for some purpose, to make adequate, a preparation or training that *fully qualifies* (this Greek word is used only once in the Bible – suggesting “*to put right*,” as in the context of setting broken bones or mending nets.

Ministry: service, work done that benefits another

Edifying: to build up, to strengthen and make more able

What does **1 Corinthians 14:12** say about the reason the readers should “seek to excel” since they are so passionate (zealous) for the Spiritual gifts?

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11

⁴ There are *diversities* of gifts, but *the same Spirit*. ⁵ There are *differences* of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶ And there are *diversities* of activities, but it is the same God who **works** all in all. ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of *all*:

¹¹ But one and the same Spirit **works** all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

Work: To implement or function; to carry into effect

In the verses above, Paul speaks a lot about the diversity and differences regarding the gifts. What does he say about what is the same?

The gifts of the Spirit are not a power to be mastered – rather The Holy Spirit is a Person to be obeyed For the Profit of All

In Romans 12:6-8, Paul is explaining how the gifts are to be used. He leads into an explanation in verse 6 in stressing that we should "use them". Why is it important to use the gift God gives us?

Talents are Not Gifts

Talents can be nurtured and developed over time. One can decide and invest in a skill to improve their talent, or to gain new ones. The ability to do this ultimately comes from God as well, and they certainly could be used to glorify God but, are distinct from the Spiritual gifts. The gifts represent the supernatural ability to do something that you could not do on your own.

What does Jesus say at the end of John 15:5 that applies about our ability to do eternal things in our own flesh?

1 Peter 4:10-12

¹⁰ As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

When a person uses a talent, they can do so to their own glory. Why do you suppose God's word stresses that the gifts are intended to Glorify God only?

Romans 11:29 says "the gifts and calling of God are irrevocable." Why do you suppose God would not take away a Spiritual gift that was being neglected?

**THE GIFTS ARE...
FOR ONE ANOTHER THROUGH THE ABILITY THAT
GOD SUPPLIES FOR GOD'S GLORY**

Day 4 - Serving Leads to a Deeper Knowledge of Christ

Spiritual gifts are not primarily given for the benefit of the individual that exercises them. They are intended to result in increasing Spiritual maturity for others in the Church. If one becomes disconnected from the body, they cannot grow. If we are cut off from the branch (Jesus), we cannot bear fruit.

Ephesians 4:13

...till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

"When the gifted offices work right and the saints are properly equipped, Christian maturity increases and there is greater intimacy in the experience of God."

- David Guzik

In the following familiar passages on Spiritual gifts, what metaphor does God use to explain the interconnectedness of the gifts and why He gives them

Romans 12:4-5 / 1 Corinthians 12:22 / Ephesians 4:12

What happens when a Christian does not serve in this context?

Spiritual Gifts are for the Benefit of the Body

Serving the Lord will result in the servant and the body becoming more like Christ. It helps both to come to a greater knowledge of, and deeper love for, Jesus. Service leads to knowledge, knowledge to maturity, and maturity to intimacy.

"The overarching principle concerning the gifts of the Spirit is this: the true gifts of the Holy Spirit, when manifested in a scriptural and correct way, will always focus people's hearts on Jesus Christ... The scriptural exercise of the gifts will always give you a fresh vision of Jesus Christ and His glory, causing you to fall in love with Him, and be drawn to Him all over again."

- Chuck Smith

Ephesians 3:17-19

¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Pray that God will give you a greater intimacy with His Holy Spirit as We Study the Gifts

Question to Consider Prior to Group Discussion

Why do you think there is confusion among many Christians about the Fruit of the Spirit versus the Spiritual gifts?

Questions for Group Discussion

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you from the teaching this week that has lingered with you?

What are the Spiritual gifts for?

What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the Church?

How does a neglected Spiritual gift get "activated" in the life of a believer?

Why do you think the Church should be especially discerning when it come to making a distinction between natural talents and Spiritual gifts?

SESSION 2



THE GIVER

The Holy Spirit engages intimately with Christians throughout their lifetime, leading them to salvation in Christ, convicting of sin, sealing them for Heaven, and empowering them to do His will in this world. A better understanding of the distinct roles of the Holy Spirit is foundational to understanding the Spiritual gifts.

The Heart of the Message: God is the source of all “good and perfect gifts” and they are used at only at His discretion, and through the power of His Holy Spirit.

Key Points:

- God wants close fellowship with us through our obedience and service to Him
- The empowering of the Holy Spirit is distinct from the indwelling (“The Baptism of the Holy Spirit”)
- “Para” – with you – coming alongside
- “En” – in you – the indwelling of the Spirit (seal)
- “Epi” – upon (over) – the overflow

Day 1 - God the Spirit

It is vital that Christians understand that the Holy Spirit is the source, the giver, of the Spiritual gifts. To understand the gifts, a solid understanding of the giver of the gifts is essential. The original Greek word for "Helper" referred to in **John 14:16** references someone that comes alongside or comes to someone's aid. In other versions, it is translated as Comforter or Counselor. These are all words describing roles the Holy Spirit fills in the life of believers.

1 Corinthians 12:1

Now concerning Spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant.

James 1:17

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

John 14:16-17, 26

¹⁶And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that **He may abide with you forever**— ¹⁷the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. ... ²⁶But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

The Helper – The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit manifests the power of the Godhead on the Earth. He has been active since the creation of the world. But, when Jesus promised that "another Helper" would come, it did represent a new way God intended to relate to His people. There are several Old Testament examples of the Holy Spirit "coming upon" a person in power, but it was not until Jesus' sacrifice that the Holy Spirit would come to indwell a believer when they place their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior and abide with them forever.

What does Acts 1:8 say will happen when the Holy Spirit "comes upon" Jesus' disciples?

The Holy Spirit is a Person – with Intelligence, a Will, and a Personality

The Person of the Holy Spirit

Many false religions suggest that the Holy Spirit is an essence or a force, but the scripture makes it clear that He is a person, with an intelligence and has emotions.

What does **1 Corinthians 2:10-11** say about the intellect of the Holy Spirit and what He chooses to reveal?

What does **Acts 16:6-7** say about what the Holy Spirit did as an expression of His will?

What does **Ephesians 4:30** say about the emotions of the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is God – the Third Person of the Trinity

The Holy Spirit is alive and active. It is clearly established in scripture that *the Holy Spirit is God*. In the very beginning, in **Genesis 1:2** we see Him “hovering over the face of the waters”. Throughout the Bible, we see descriptions of the Holy Spirit possessing attributes that alone belong to God. The Holy Spirit is a co-equal part of the Trinity as demonstrated in:

The equality of the Holy Spirit is clear in **Matthew 28:19** where Jesus mentions the equal parts of the Trinity. In His Great Commission in what does He say we should do as we are making disciples?

(Consider researching the concept of “baptism” in this context to see if it might mean more than the act of immersing them in water sacramentally.)

***“What comes into our minds when we think about God
is the most important thing about us.”***

– AW Tozer

The Holy Spirit – Source of the gifts

The *Spiritual gifts come directly from God Himself* – the Holy Spirit who lives within them. They are not something an individual can conjure up or manufacture in themselves. They are *a GIFT*, given by God. If someone has an incorrect view, or a small view, of the Holy Spirit of God, they will be unable to have a correct view of the Spiritual gifts.

What does **1 Corinthians 12:11** tell us at the end of the verse regarding why the Spirit distributes the gifts to each person individually?

What is the Holy Spirit's role in our lives?

Seek out the Holy Spirit – as Person, and as God

Day 2 - The Baptism with the Holy Spirit | The Baptism of the Holy Spirit

There are two distinct *baptisms* referenced in the bible. Both presume saving faith in Jesus happens first.

Luke 3:16

John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Baptism with Water

The most understood is the sacrament of water baptism. Upon making a profession of faith in Jesus, after salvation, a Christian demonstrates their repentance by participating in water baptism as a sign of obedience – identifying themselves with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Water baptism is a choice initiated by the believer

The Baptism of/with The Holy Spirit

The Holy Spirit comes along side those who will be saved, leading, and guiding them to Jesus. At salvation, He indwells the believer, convicting them of their sin and sealing them with a promise to deliver them to the Father in Heaven in His perfect timing. But the Holy Spirit also comes upon a believer in power to empower them to practically do God's will in this world. This coming upon is referred to as the Baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Luke 24:49

Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry <wait> in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

John 20:21-22

²¹ So Jesus said to them again, "Peace to you! As the Father has sent Me, I also send you." ²² And when He had said this, He breathed on *them*, and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit..."

Acts 1:8

But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

In the context of these scriptures, it's clear that there is a difference between the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which occurs at salvation, and the Baptism of the Holy Spirit, which clearly comes later. It further suggests that the power comes later, in God's timing, as He wills.

In **Hebrews 13:5**, God says He will never "leave you nor forsake you". In **John 15:5**, Jesus says "apart from me you can do nothing". How can we reconcile the God will never leave us, but we can be apart from Him?

“Para” – with you – The Coming Alongside

John 14:15-18

¹⁵ “If you love Me, keep My commandments. ¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide **with you** (GRK: “para”) forever— ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you (GRK: “para”) <currently> and will be in you (GRK: “en”) <in the future>. ¹⁸ I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

“Another” – GRK: **Allos** – of the same kind as

“Helper” – GRK: **para k letos** – one called along side

“With” – GRK: **para** – alongside

Can you think of a time that the Holy Spirit came along side you to guide or protect you before you were saved?

Do you recall the season of time, before you were saved, that the Spirit began to convict you of your sin?

Is there a more recent example of a time the Holy Spirit has led you out of danger, or away from temptation as a believer?

Day 3 - "En" - in - The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

Matthew 14:

²⁹ So He said, "Come." And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus. ³⁰ But when he saw that the wind was boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink he cried out, saying, "Lord, save me!"

Like Peter, if we take our eyes off of Jesus, if we take our focus off of God, we can be tempted to be afraid. Every day we must refocus our mind on things from above, not on those of the earth.

Colossians 3:1-2

¹ If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. ² Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. ³ For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God.

Remembering God's attributes can help us maintain this focus. Review some of the attributes of God and write your thoughts below:

God is:

- Infinite
 - Perfect
 - Holy
 - Just
 - Omnipotent (all powerful)
 - Omniscient (all knowing)
 - Omnipresent (in all places)
 - Triune (3 in one)
-
-

John 14:16-17

¹⁶ And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever—¹⁷ the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and **will be in you.**

"In" (you) – GRK: En – the Holy Spirit is going to come in to us or what we call the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

When a person repents and places their faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work at the cross for their sins, the Holy Spirit enters into (GRK: en) them and seals them for eternal life in Heaven. This is what it means to be born-again. The Holy Spirit comes into the believer granting them new life. They are a new creation.

How do you react when you take the time to meditate on the fact that, if you have saving faith in Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit of God lives inside of you – never to depart from you or forsake you?

Born of the Spirit

Titus 3:4-7

⁴ But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, ⁵ not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of *regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit*, ⁶ whom He **poured out on us abundantly** through Jesus Christ our Savior, ⁷ that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

In the familiar passage in John 3:1-6, what does Jesus tell Nicodemus in verse 5 is the result of not being “born... of the Spirit”?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 uses the Greek term “en” in reference to the Christian’s body being a “*temple of the Holy Spirit*”. How does it impact your behavior and confidence knowing this?

Regarding the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, what does **Romans 8:15-16** say about being children of God? (What does this mean to you?)

What do **Ephesians 1:13-14**, **2 Corinthians 1:22** and **Ephesians 4:30** say about the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?

What does **Romans 8:26-27** say the Holy Spirit in us is doing when we don’t know how to talk to God?

Day 4 - "Epi" – coming upon - The Overflow

The "coming upon" and "indwelling" of the Holy Spirit are Separate and Distinct

In the following Old Testament passages, how does the Holy Spirit interact with God's people?
(Judges 15:12-14 / Exodus 31:1-4 / 1 Samuel 16:13)

Did the individuals in these passages have the ability to do those things in their own power?

What does David ask of God in **Psalm 51:11**?

Acts 1:4-6,8

⁴And being assembled together with *them*, He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, "which," *He said*, "you have heard from Me; ⁵for *John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.*" ⁶Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" ... ⁸But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you (GRK: epi); and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."

Acts 2:1-4

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. ²And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting. ³Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and *one* sat upon each of them. ⁴And they were all filled (GRK: epi) with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Since there are other references to people being "filled with the Holy Spirit", who don't speak in tongues afterward – what does this say about the result of the filling in different circumstances?

The Holy Spirit Fell Upon Them

Acts 8:16

¹⁶For as yet *He had fallen upon (GRK: epi) none of them*. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷Then they laid hands on them, and *they received the Holy Spirit*.

In other places in the New Testament, like **Acts 10:44-48**, the Holy Spirit comes upon people without the laying on of hands. Do you believe laying on hands is significant to receiving the power of the Spirit?

In Order to Be baptized by the Holy Spirit, One Must be a born again.

Baptism with the Holy Spirit comes at the time of His choosing. First He *comes along side (GRK: para)* a person to lead them to faith in Jesus. A Christian then *receives a Spiritual gift, through the indwelling (GRK: en) of the Holy Spirit*. ***To exercise a Spiritual gift, the Holy Spirit must come upon (GRK: epi) them*** in His power,

In the same way the power came in the Old Testament and would depart from the individual, *the Holy Spirit, in the context of the Spiritual gifts, empowers the Christian to do the will of the Lord only in the way, and at the time of His choosing*. The difference, in light of the New Testament, is that ***the Holy Spirit may withhold His power from the individual, but will never withdraw the promise of His presence***.

Deuteronomy 31:6

Be strong and of good courage, do not fear nor be afraid of them; for the Lord your God, He is the One who goes with you. *He will not leave you nor forsake you.*"

Hebrews 13:5b-6

^{5b}For He Himself has said, "*I will never leave you nor forsake you.*" ⁶So we may boldly say:

"The Lord is my helper;

I will not fear.

What can man do to me?"

What confidence does it give you to know that they Lord will never leave you?

Baptism By Immersion versus Baptism of the Holy Spirit

Acts 10:44-48a

⁴⁴ While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon (GRK: epi) all those who heard the word. ⁴⁵ And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. ⁴⁶ For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, ⁴⁷ "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?" ⁴⁸ And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord.

In this case, water baptism came after the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Do you believe there is a significant difference in which order they takes place?

Acts 19:1-6

¹ And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples ² he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?"
So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."
³ And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?"
So they said, "Into John's baptism."
⁴ Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."
⁵ When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶ And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them (GRK: epi), and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Do you think that if someone were to repent of their sins, confess with their mouth, and believe in Jesus, that they could be indwelt with the Holy Spirit without understanding the concept of the Trinity?

Since there are other references to the Holy Spirit coming upon believers outside of the laying on of hands, what does this tell us about what is necessary to receive the power of the Spirit?

Question to Consider Prior to Group Discussion

Based on what you studied previously and what we learned today, what are the 3 roles the Holy Spirit plays in "the Baptism of the Holy Spirit"?

Para – with you (coming alongside):

"En" - in – (in you):

"Epi" – coming upon – (the overflow)

Questions for Group Discussion

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you from the teaching this week that has lingered with you?

When do we receive our Spiritual gift?

What must happen in order for a person to exercise a Spiritual gift?

How can we invest in a closer relationship with the Person of the Holy Spirit?

SESSION 3



THE REASON

When trying to discern why God makes the decisions He's made throughout the span of creation, we can only hope to begin to understand considering what He has revealed to us in His word. The scripture is clear that He created us to do good, and that He alone provides us the power to practically do His will. He does not want us to be ignorant of what He created us to do, and He is willing and capable of revealing His will.

The Heart of the Message: God's will is to sanctify all who believe in Him. He's inviting believers to be separated from the world and to pursue being more like Him, serving the body in community with others.

Key Points:

- God created us to do good works in this world
- The gifts of God provide the power to do His will in this world
- God does not want us to be ignorant of the Spiritual gifts
- He holds us accountable for what He's given

Day 1 - Created for Good Works

As Christians, we seek to know God as our Creator and Savior, and why He created us. A common response would be “to know Him and to glorify Him forever”. But within that purpose it also becomes apparent that God created us to do good works in this world.

Ephesians 2:10,

For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

“Workmanship: – GRK: poema – the root of the English word “poem” – suggests a creative work of artistic expression.

Paul explains this truth well in his letter to the Ephesians in chapter 2. He writes about how we are made alive as believers in Christ. How God, because of His grace, gives us salvation as a gift. Believing in the work of Jesus on the cross and his resurrection is simply receiving that gift of eternal life.

What is the likely reason that God wants us to participate in the work he is doing in the world?

In line with the concept of the Christ being the “Cornerstone”, what does **1 Peter 2:4-5** say about what God has chosen us to be as a community of believers?

We are Created FOR His work

By God’s grace we are created in, and being transformed further into, the image of Christ. That is, we are regenerated and renewed by the Holy Spirit, being sanctified and made new. Though our lives remain “on the canvas”, God has seen the finished portrait. He knows each of our lives down to the number of hairs on our head at any given moment and knows where we need His greatest attention. Everything in our lives has a purpose. *God doesn’t need us but chooses to use us in performing His will*. He chooses to invite us into His work – building His house, His community, His family.

Do you feel like the work you do in service to God is an expression of His creativity?

What are "Good Works"?

Good works are a demonstration of our desire to love and follow Christ. They are actions and words of moral character that are right before God. Being *good* means they are *useful or profitable to God*. ***It is the Holy Spirit working in and through us to glorify Him that constitutes good works.*** They can be done at any given moment. Paul is explaining to the Colossians that we have an opportunity to glorify God in all that we do, if we have God's perspective and an intent to follow him.

Colossians 3:17

And *whatever you do* in word or deed, ***do all in the name of the Lord Jesus***, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

What types of things can we do in the name of the Lord in our regular day-to-day lives that can bring him glory?

In light of **1 Corinthians 10:31**, what does it practically mean to "glorify God" in all that you do?

We Need to Walk in Them

A Christian aims to follow in Jesus' footsteps, loving like He did, being increasingly like him in how we think and act and what we say.

Ephesians 2:10b

... *good works*, which God prepared beforehand that ***we should walk in them***.

Walk: to move into, or toward a person or place

A Christian "walk" can also be used to describe a person's spiritual life or progress. When a believer asks you "how is your walk?", it's not usually your physical walk, but your life with Christ.

- Is it growing?
- How is God working in you?
- Is your life and behavior ordered around walking in His perfect will?

God has planned and provides countless opportunities to step into good works. To walk in relationship with Jesus toward that person or circumstance. Walking in them is a work, a responsibility that we choose or intend to do

Serving Others & Serving With Others

How does **Philippians 2:12-13** apply to you and your relationship with your Christian community?

What has God prepared for your community to walk in together?

Why has he put you together?

What purpose does God have for you in partnership with those in your community?

What is His will for how your community will engage the world around you?

We don't do God's work alone, but together as a family in one big masterpiece. To walk in these good works, we need to be led by the Holy Spirit and not our flesh, and we don't walk alone. He walks with us. **We need to receive inspiration and gifts from the Holy Spirit to walk in all God has for us to do together.**

"God's word, makes God's people, ready for God's work."

Day 2 - He Desires That You Know Your Gift

Many Christians, have no idea what their Spiritual gifts are. Some may even be indifferent to knowing. But God desires us to know our Spiritual gifts. We have evidence of this in that He gave us a list of them in His inspired Word. Logically, if we were not supposed to know or it was impossible to know, then the gifts would not be recorded for us in God's Word.

2 Timothy 3:16 is a very commonly referenced verse regarding the usefulness of the bible. What does **verse 17** give as the reason for using scripture for these things?

Romans 12:6a

^{6a} Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, ***let us use them...***

'Let us use them' is italicized because it is implied based on the language. The New American Standard says, "each of us is to exercise them accordingly".

While it is possible to use Spiritual gifts without having studied and understood them, what are some potential benefits of knowing your gift(s)?

What does **1 Peter 4:10** tell us about our responsibility for our gift?

What does it mean to be a "good steward" of your Spiritual gift?

Before someone can discover their Spiritual gift, there must be dedication to understanding it. One of the lists of Gifts is found in Romans 12. Paul starts that section by saying:

Romans 12:1

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, **that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God**, which is your reasonable service.

It most cases, in order to discover and understand our gifts, we need to start serving. We need to first be dedicated to God. In that dedication, we should begin serving God's people. And *in that process, there will be a discovery of the Spiritual gifts.*

Day 3 - He Sustains Us in the Work

The awesome truth is that God himself walks with us and sustains us. He helps us know His will and obey it. He not only sustains our physical needs, like our homes, our finances and our bodies; but He is also the sustainer of our soul, our spirit and ultimately our faith in Jesus until He delivers us to the Father in the end. Further, He also helps us persevere in the work He has called us to do.

Hebrews 12:1-3

¹ Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ For **consider Him** who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.

How does remembering the service and sacrifices of Jesus help you to endure when you are tempted to grow weary or become discouraged in your walk?

He Sustains Us: By Remembering His Word

Hebrews Chapter 11 provides us with the examples of the faith of Noah, Abraham, Moses, David, and many more who fulfilled the work of God in their lives. They chose to trust in God's promises – His Word spoken to them, and to endure in faith. Likewise, we can look back at how He has spoken and worked in our lives. We can be personally confident in God's Word and embrace His awesome promises to sustain us.

What three things does **Isaiah 41:10** say God will do for us, so we don't have to be afraid or distressed (dismayed)?

To embrace His help, we need to constantly saturate our lives and minds with the Scriptures and prayer, both individually and in community with others in the body. We can discipline our minds to establish a habit of doing whatever we have to, to remember God's Word daily. Through this, He strengthens our faith and sustains us through His word.

In which Christian disciplines are you doing well, and in which ones do you need to improve on?

He Sustains Us: By Removing Distractions

Hebrews 12:1-2a

1 Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, 2 looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...

We must avoid obvious sin or time wasters in our lives to refine our focus on the good works God has prepared for us to walk in. But we must also be discerning to only walk in what God calls us to – to be led by the Holy Spirit so that we do not carry weights or burdens that God did not intend for us. We have a very real enemy that doesn't want us to be useful in the Hands of God. So, he distracts us, even with seemingly good things, to overload and weigh us down in an attempt to get us to give up or stop following after God.

What "good things" are filling up your time that God might be asking you to give up, so that you can focus on serving Him more effectively?

Sin can easily trip us and inhibit our growth and sanctification. So, we must remain watchful and focused on what's eternal and what God has called us to do. Thankfully God watches over our steps and our falls.

What does **Psalm 37:23-24** tell us about how God responds if a man falls short of doing good?

Our faith will be tested at different steps and seasons by distractions of this world. To persevere in the face of hardship, we must forsake any hindrance behind and look to Jesus alone.

In what ways has your faith been tested by distractions of this world in this season of your life?

He Sustains Us: Through Recommitting to Jesus Daily

We look to Jesus as our example, as our Lord, and as the Sovereign author and finisher of our faith. He has already authored our story. We must decide whether we are aligning ourselves with His perspective on our lives or trying to go our own direction. We should certainly look to Him when we are weary or when spiritual warfare comes.

What does **Philippians 1:6** say about how we should react to knowing more about the work God has created for us to do?

What does **Philippians 10:24-25** say about the work God has planned for the community of believers you are a part of?

How does being part of a community of other believers “stir up love and good works?”

Part of staying the course as Christians is dependent on our participation in the body of Christ through the exercising of Spiritual gifts. Satan is constantly seeking to distract and detour us from God’s path. Those who try to live out their Christianity alone will be more likely to give up in the face of temptation, discouragement, or trials.

Others benefit from the gifts, service and faith of their community. God uses their strength and encouragement to sustain one another in the work. We should make efforts to fill our lives with relationships centered on Jesus Christ, encouraging one another to look to Him as our example.

How should a Christian respond if they are seeking community with other believers, but in God’s providence He does not connect them with others in that way?

We must daily recommit our lives in submission to Jesus. And as we do, God works in us and sustains us in this life until we see Him in eternity.

Well done, good and faithful servant!

Day 4 - He Holds Us Accountable for Our Calling

1 Peter 4:10

As **each one has received a gift**, minister it to one another, as **good stewards** of the manifold grace of God.

Steward: Manager, Overseer (Idea of managing someone else's things, not your own.)

As **stewards of the grace of God**, we have a responsibility to care for and manage something that belongs to someone else. In this case, concerning **Spiritual gifts**.

1. The Holy Spirit gave **Spiritual gifts** for them *to be used*. He gave them to specific individuals for them to be exercised and practiced, not to boast about or ignore, but to **minister to one another**.
2. In the exercising of the **gifts**, we have been given a **stewardship** within the body of Christ. We are responsible to be good **stewards** the gift – for the edification of the body, not for ourselves.

We are stewards of the gift itself, but also have a stewardship within the body of Christ where we are to exercise that gift. The **gift** was given **to each believer** by the Holy Spirit, and the **gift** was given **to the church** by the Holy Spirit **through the believer** to which it was given. Disregarding our Spiritual gifts makes us guilty of being bad stewards. Both of the gift itself, and poorly stewarding God's church as well.

What does **Luke 12:48** suggest about what God expects in response to what He's given?

What does **1 Corinthians 4:2** say that God expects of us?

What does **1 Timothy 4:14** warn us about the gift in us?

Based on what you know about the character of God, how do you believe He responds to those that neglect the Spiritual gift(s) He's given them?

Be Careful Not to Neglect the Gift

1 Corinthians 3:13–15

¹³ ...**each one's work will become clear**; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and **the fire will test each one's work**, of what sort it is. ¹⁴ If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If anyone's work is burned, **he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved**, yet so as through fire.

Everything done in God's power and for His glory will survive. Anything **neglected**, done for selfish reasons, or with selfish motives and in the flesh will be burned up.

What are examples of things you believe will endure?

By contrast, what examples of work do you believe will "burn"?

Question to Consider Prior to Group Discussion

Our works cannot earn us salvation. In light of what we've studied this week, why is it important that we participate in the "good works, which God prepared... for us to walk in"? (Ephesians 2:10)

Questions for Group Discussion

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you from the teaching this week that has lingered with you?

Biblically speaking, what is the consequence of not doing the work God gifted us to do?

Why did Jesus have to die in order for the Holy Spirit to come?

In these first few weeks of the study, what new things have you learned about the Holy Spirit?

Has God started to reveal anyone's Spiritual gift since starting this study?

SESSION 4



THE FOUNDATIONAL GIFTS

Our mission in this study is to understand the Spiritual gifts, not so we can have greater knowledge, but so that we can effectively serve God in practical ministry to the body. We should be prayerfully encouraging others to understand their gifts to serve together in the work God created us to do.

Key Points:

- As we gain a greater understanding of the gifts, we can pray for God to help reveal our gift(s) and help us to see them in others.
- Starting today – we should begin acknowledging the evidence of potential gifts we see in others in our Christian Community.

“Foundational Gifts”, for the purposes of this study are ones that represent the ones most commonly held gifts and the ones that provide the foundation of service in the body of Christ. By way of reminder, a Christian may have more than one Spiritual gift, and it is very appropriate to “desire the greater gifts.

This section covers the gifts of:

- Serving
- Giving
- Encouraging
- Wisdom
- Faith
- Mercy
- Speaking
- Leadership
- Pastor
- Teacher

Serving (Ministry/Helps)

Romans 12:7:

"...or **ministry**, *let us use it in our ministering*; he who teaches, in teaching;"

"Minister" or "Service" – GRK: Dia-Con-lah (our word **Deacon**)

- To be attendance (as a servant),
- To render aid, or service.
- Service, ministering.
- Especially of those who execute the commands of others.

Some would see it as the same as **"Helps"**, as in:

1 Corinthians 12:28

And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, **helps**, administrations, and various kinds of tongues.

Throughout your experience as a Christian, what has been your understanding of who should do the primary ministry or practical service in the Church body?

How would you explain the difference between being having the Spiritual Gift of "service" versus the general responsibility Christians have to bear one another's burdens and love their neighbors?

The Grace of God

God's character of love and His grace causes Him to condescend to us. This is why He came to earth in the body of a man and became a servant to all. Service to others is not legalistic or manipulative when love and relationship are at the root. This type of service is willing, and joyful.

God created the Earth and everything in it, and it was "very good." Prior to sin corrupting the creation, He commissioned Adam & Eve to tend and keep the garden. When God called the Levites to be His ministers, He stated that instead of land or a material inheritance, that He Himself would be their inheritance.

Work, or service, are not a result of sin. Serving is a natural response to love and true relationship. Some struggle with believing that **Service** isn't as impactful or meaningful as some of the other gifts, but those with this Spiritual gift certainly, genuinely, represent the heart of Jesus.

What does **Philippians 2:5-8** say about how Jesus responded to His role as a servant?

How would you recognize if you have the gift of service?

Giving

Romans 12:8

"...he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness."

"Gives" - GRK: Meta-Did-Ah-Me

- "To give over, share or to impart.
- To share a thing with anyone"

Being created in His image, God is our model for our expression for giving.

What does **John 3:16** famously say God did in response to loving the world?

2 Corinthians 9:12-15 summarizes the fruit that results from a “a cheerful giver”. What does **verse 15** say about where the thanks should be directed?

Those That Have the Gift of Giving

Those that have the gift of giving *strategically use their time, energy, and talents to effectively meet the practical needs of the body of Christ*. While a wealthy person could be included with those that have this gift, the supernatural ability to manage these things well and the fruit that results from them characterize this Spiritual gift. The actual dollar amount is not the primary indicator, but the fruit that results from it.

God doesn't want or need our money. Giving is an outgrowth of love, and something all Christians are called to do. Those with the Spiritual gift of giving will furtherer likely see ways to strategically meet the needs of others ministering in their gifts.

What does **Matthew 6:1-4** say about how we should give?

How does **verse 4** say God will respond to those that give with the right motives?

How does **2 Corinthians 9:6-7** say we should give?

Matthew 10:17-22 tells the familiar story of the rich young ruler whom Jesus called out for treasuring his wealth more than the things of heaven. He called him to love God more than his wealth. When our heart belongs to God, we will give all to him.

What is the distinction between general Christian generosity and the Spiritual gift of Giving?

Encouraging (Exhortation)

Romans 12:8:

...he who **exhorts**, *in exhortation*; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness."

"Exhorts" ~ GRK: par-ak-al-eh'-o

- To call near, i.e., invite, invoke (by imploration, or consolation)
- Beseech, call for, (*be of good*) comfort,
- Desire, (give) exhort(-ation),
- To entreat; to urge (often as prayer)
- In Greek writings ~ to call to one's side, call for, summon; to address, speak to (call to call on), which may be done in the way of exhortation, entreaty, comfort, instruction, etc.;"

"People with the gift of exhortation encourage and urge us to put into action the things we know we should be doing. With most people, the problem isn't knowing what they should do; it's doing it. We humans seem to need someone else to urge and compel us to appropriate action."

– **Chuck Smith**

Most people do not naturally have an encouraging spirit. This gift is in effect when we gather in church and exhort one another. We must be around others that can encourage us, and that we can be an encouragement to. We need to encourage, and be encouraged by, others morality and be exposed to the wisdom and council of others in community. This is the function for the Spiritual gift of encouragement.

Can you think of a time when you needed encouragement, and God supernaturally intervened through a brother or sister in Christ?

Biblical Examples of Exhortation

Some believers are isolated from the body of Christ for reasons of health, physical distance or otherwise and may not have the ability to connect in-person with others in local community. They should prayerfully attempt to connect through other means, online, via phone, or otherwise. And those in the local body should be looking for ways to encourage those that are disconnected from the body.

God used imperfect people throughout the bible to encourage others:

Joshua "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." **Joshua 24:15b**

Solomon ²⁰ My son, give attention to my words;
Incline your ear to my sayings.
²¹ Do not let them depart from your eyes;
Keep them in the midst of your heart;
²² For they are life to those who find them,
And health to all their flesh. **Proverbs 4:20-22**

What exhortations did the following scriptures provide, both to believers in their time, and to us now in reading them:

Ephesians 4:1 _____

James 2:20 _____

Jude 3 _____

Has there been a time in your Christian walk that you desperately needed encouragement and God provided someone to come along side you and help you through it?

3 Foundation Points to Revisit in Recognizing the Spiritual Gifts:

1. A spiritual gift is not a skill or a talent that can be taught or developed

1 Corinthians 12:7

⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

- The spiritual gifts are Gods supernatural work, in and through us as He comes upon us, and they are for the profit or benefit of His Church.
- They are used to edify and build up the Church, the body of Christ, and each born again believer has been given at least one gift, if not multiple.

2. Spiritual Gifts are not something we choose.

1 Corinthians 12:11

¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

- The Holy Spirit gives and uses the gifts in us, as HE Desires, in His Sovereignty. He chooses, when, where, and how to use the gifts. (For example, we don't get to choose the gift of Prophecy and start trying to proclaim the future because we feel like it.)
- As we walk in the Spirit and yield to His Will, God will give us opportunity to exercise these gifts, but we must walk in obedience and faith to use them. God will not express a gift through an unwilling servant.

3. God distributed these gifts in His sovereignty to love and serve one another. He desires and expects us to use them as we surrender our lives to Him.

Romans 12:6a

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them:

- We are told not to be ignorant about the gifts, but to seek to know them and exercise them.

If you do not know your gift(s), pause now, and pray to ask God to reveal them to you. He is more than capable to reveal them to us as we seek and ask.

***** You can revisit the worksheet on page 10 *****

Wisdom (the Word of Wisdom*)

1 Corinthians 12:8a

for to one is given the **word of wisdom** *through the Spirit*

*A note about a word of wisdom is that it is different than a "Word of Knowledge" which will be talked about later in the study.

"Knowledge is the accumulation of fact; wisdom is the proper application of the fact."

– **Chuck Smith**

Knowledge is acquiring information or facts about a specific thing or subject. Distinctly, wisdom is the ability to apply that knowledge correctly and in the right time. It has been said that a smart man will learn from his mistakes, but a wise man can learn from the mistakes of others.

There is a difference, though, between man's wisdom and God's wisdom. Man's wisdom is self-seeking, boastful, often causes confusion or division and does not consider God.

What does **James 3:17** say about God's wisdom in comparison?

True Wisdom can only Come from God, because **He is Wisdom**. He has all knowledge and all understanding.

The spiritual gift of a **Word of Wisdom** is given:

- to a believer
- from the Holy Spirit
- for a specific purpose
- in a time of need for another believer or for the church

It goes beyond a person's understanding, natural ability to reason, their personal experience or intellectual capacity to come up with a solution. It is from the Holy Spirit and produces a solution that could have only come from God and can be confirmed when the sharing of the wisdom brings glory to God and/or strengthens the body of Christ as a result.

"This is the unique ability to speak forth the wisdom of God, especially in an important situation."

– **David Guzik**

Examples of the Word of Wisdom

A word of Wisdom is used to solve problems that do not have a logical answer, settle peoples differences and/or brings unity to the church.

What was the result of the wisdom God provided the disciples in **Acts 6:1-7**?

(Consider how it also provoked other Spiritual gifts)

In **verse 3**, what was the criteria listed for the seven men selected?

Jesus exemplifies the Spiritual gift of wisdom in **Mark 12:13-16** where He shared God's wisdom in a situation that man's wisdom had caused division and strife, even among believing religious people of the era. The wisdom He shared about paying taxes to Caesar provoked the believers hearing Him *(and those reading the scriptures in the years since)* to reconsider their understanding of God and their service to Him.

What examples can you provide for when you've witnessed God speak wisdom through a person that could have only come from God?

Faith

1 Corinthians 12:9a ...to another *faith by the same Spirit*

There is a distinction between Saving Faith and *the Spiritual gift of Faith*, but both are given to us by God. All believers have been given saving faith by God, the faith that leads to salvation and the forgiveness of sin. But not all believers are given the spiritual gift of faith

The *gift of faith is the unique, supernatural ability to trust God against all circumstances*. It is a faith to stand and act on the *promises* and **power of God to build up His Church**. The gift of faith is not to blindly jump off a cliff and expect God to give you wings. It's not reckless, but a deep, spiritual dependence to follow God even when it doesn't make earthly sense.

Have you personally stepped out in faith to do a great thing God called you to do that did not make earthly sense? (Or have you been encouraged by someone who has?)

How did that act of faith glorify God and/or impact the Church?

Many missionaries and church planters have left their jobs, their families, and their country to start a church in some remote area because God had led them there. One specific man who had been given the gift of faith was J. Hudson Taylor who founded the China Inland Mission in the late 1800's, by the time of his death thousands of missionaries had gone to China. He said:

"All God's giants have been weak men who did great things for God because they reckoned on God being with them."

- J. Hudson Taylor

Peter walked on water in an act of faith – overriding his own logic and reason because he had unwavering supernatural confidence that God had empowered him to do so. (**Matthew 14:28-31**),

What happened when Peter took his eyes off of Jesus?

Reminder - Faith Without Love is Nothing

1 Corinthians 13:2

² And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and *though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, **but have not love, I am nothing.***

Mercy

Romans 12:6,8

"Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them... Let He who shows mercy, [do it] with cheerfulness."

Mercy: Compassion or forgiveness given when punishment is warranted
 To treat an offender better than they deserve
 Willing to overlook injury
 Compassion towards a person in distress

"Mercy is simply, not getting what you deserve."

Mercy is often contrasted with Justice. We all deserve Justice. We deserve hell because of our sins, but God in His Mercy and grace sent His Son to die in our place. We receive mercy from God with every breath that we take, with every second we live. God is mercy.

The gift of Mercy is critical. We see this Spiritual gift in use when the Holy Spirit gives a believer the ability to forgive, or care for someone, with a cheerful heart. Especially when that person does not deserve it. It is not done out of obligation or begrudgingly. It is done out through the love and compassion of the Lord.

Can you think of a time when you have seen someone love a difficult person that might otherwise seem unlovable?

The Spiritual Gift of Mercy is also used to comfort those in a time of need or being distraught. To show mercy and kindness to those who have lost a loved one, to those who are sick and afflicted, or are reaping the consequences of bad decisions.

Can you think of time when you felt the love of God through another person who helped you get through a difficult season of life?

The person with this Gift becomes the hands and feet of Jesus to communicate Gods love for them when all feels lost.

Speaking

1 Peter 4:10-11

¹⁰ As each one has received a **gift**, *minister it to one another, as good **stewards** of the **manifold** grace of God.* ¹¹ If *anyone **speaks**, let him speak as **the oracles of God**.* If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

"Gift" – GRK: Charis-mata

- the word used here by Peter is the only other one besides Paul to use it
- a "Grace Gift"
- a gift given out of God's grace – an endowment

"Stewards" – GRK: Oi-kom-omos

- entrusted to one's care

"Manifold"

- various in character
- different, diverse

As in Variegation:

- the appearance of different colors as in a plant's leaves, flowers, stems, or fruit, giving it a striped, speckled, or patchy look.
- In reference to the process of making something more diverse in color.

For example: you can add variegation to a musical note by changing its pitch and tone; or to a painting of the ocean to make it look more realistic.

"Speak" = GRK: Lah-Lay-Oh

- "to talk, i.e. utter words:
- preach, say, speak (after), talk, tell, utter."

"The Oracles of God" = in reference to the written Word of God.

"Speaking" gifts typically manifest in more of a category of gifts. They are generally used in partnership with other gifts, rather than as an individual gift. Those with this gift use it in service to the body in circumstances that require speaking on behalf of the Lord or His Church. Use of this Spiritual gift must always be done in agreement with and be supported by scripture.

The speaking gift is most often used in conjunction with gifts which will be covered in detail in other sessions, including Evangelists, Prophets, Teachers, Exhorters (Encouragers) and Shepherds. By way of example, a man may have the Spiritual gift of Pastor and be called to shepherd and care for a flock but does not necessarily have the Spiritual gift of Speaking. They are separate gifts.

Leadership (Governments/Administration)

Romans 12:8:

...he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who **leads**, with **diligence**; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Other words used to describe this gift are "Governments" and "Administration".

I Corinthians 12:28

"God hath set some in the church ... [gifts of] governments." (KJV)

"Leads" – GRK: Proi-is-tay-mee

- to set or place before; to set over
- to be over, to superintend, preside over, rule over
- to run a thing or preside over it

"Diligence" – GRK: Spoo-Day

- To do with speed; haste
- earnestness, diligence: universally, earnestness in accomplishing
- promoting, or striving after anything"

"For a society to exist there must be rules, and people who establish and enforce those rules. A society without rules quickly degenerates into a state of anarchy and chaos. People begin living as savages, every person for himself, doing whatever is right in his own eyes."

– Chuck Smith

God has ordained and set up leadership in institutions, such as the home, the family, the government (**Gen. 8-9**), and the church. A local church needs gifted leaders and administrators over the various ministries of the Church.

In **Luke 22:24-26**, Jesus compares the how Spirit-led leaders should differ from the leaders of the world. What does He say about who will be the greatest leaders in His church?

What does the end of **verse 27** say that Jesus did in this situation to demonstrate this type of leadership?

A Spiritually Gifted Leader

A Spiritually gifted leader has a supernatural endowment by the Holy Spirit to build up the body. They must have the right heart to serve others and exhort when necessary. As modern language has changed, and various denominations and church movements have used terms in different ways over time, the original terms for leaders in the church have become confused. Terms like deacon and bishop, and to a lesser extent pastor and overseer have changed in our culture from their original intent.

For this study, those terms, in their originally language, represented leadership roles God intended to use to build His church. As such, the Holy Spirit would prepare someone for this role by providing them with the Spiritual gift of leadership, as He would be the one necessary to empower them to do the work He called them to do.

1 Timothy 3:1-7 lists the qualification of a Christian leader. How might God be glorified and the church be edified if we used that list to prepare people for leadership as we pray for God to give the Spiritual gift of leadership to the body?

Do you suppose this scripture is more often used to prepare people for ministry, or to check someone's qualifications for leadership?

Teacher / Pastor-Teacher

Romans 12:6–8

6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; 7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; **he who teaches, in teaching**; 8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

The Gift of Teaching

Going to college or seminary and being well versed in theology does not necessarily align with the gift of teaching. Being an experienced teacher by vocation, a great orator, or influential public speaker does not confirm the gift either. The gift of teaching is the ability to explain God's truth to people, clearly and accurately in a way that those hearing it can receive it and apply it to their life.

It goes beyond the academic and influential and demonstrates the ability to teach and minister to the hearts and minds of the church by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is another Spiritual gift that is often used with in partnership with other gifts, such as a word of wisdom, a word of knowledge, and the gift of pastor.

Can you think of an example of a time when a bible teacher taught on a passage from the bible that you were familiar with, but the Holy Spirit used their teaching to change your understanding of God or His word?

The Pastor Teacher

Ephesians 4:11–12

¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some **pastors and teachers**, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

The ancient Greek clearly describes one office with two descriptive titles. Not everyone who has the gift of teaching has the gift of pastor, or are called to be pastors, but every pastor must have the gift of teaching and be able to teach*. The role of the pastor is to shepherd the flock or church God has given them. This distinctly requires that they lead them and teach them about the character, attributes, and the Word of God.

**Please note that teaching can take many forms and while it is not typical, a Pastor Teacher does not necessarily have the gift of Speaking, though in most cases they will.*

Stewarding the Gift

1 Peter 4:10-11

¹⁰ As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹ If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Steward: a person who has been entrusted with someone else's property to manage it.

We should remember that being good stewards of God's grace means having we don't need to manufacture the results ourselves. Knowing that He is the source of any fruit that comes from our efforts helps us to be free to seek to use our gifts to the glory of God and to the edification of His Church.

What does **1 Peter 4:11b** say about the where our ability to minister to people in His name comes from?

"Once you accept yourself as a distributor of God's riches and not a manufacturer, you will experience a wonderful new freedom and joy in service."

– Warren Wiersbe

When the disciples fed the 5000 in **Matthew 14:16-21**, Jesus told them to do the practical ministry of "giving them something to eat". What was their role in the miracle?

Question to Consider Prior to Group Discussion

How can we know the difference between being used by the Holy Spirit and spiritually maturing to become more like Christ? (How do I know it's a Spiritual gift, and not just part of being a Christian?)

Questions for Group Discussion

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you from the teaching this week that has lingered with you?

Why is it important to understand what the bible says about the various Spiritual gifts, even if you don't have it?

What is the best way to ask God for "greater gifts"?

In the context of this study, what can we be doing if we don't know our Spiritual gifts yet?

What can a person do to confirm whether they have a gift they think they might have?

SESSION 5



THE MISUNDERSTOOD GIFTS

Through the history of the Church, some of the Spiritual gifts have caused controversy through being increasingly misinterpreted, resulting in entire schools of wrong doctrine being developed, sometimes even leading to new denominations being formed.

The Heart of the Message: Deeper investigation of these gifts can provide greater clarity, helping us to rightly understand them when determining what our gifts might be and a better equipping use to understand potential doctrinally inaccuracies.

Key Points:

- Some Spiritual gifts can be misunderstood or divisive
- We must build a solid foundation for understanding the gifts in the context of the Word
- Staying true to scripture helps us maintain unity in the Spirit
- It is possible and sometimes necessary to respectfully disagree

In terms of this study, the “Misunderstood Gifts” are the ones that Christians don’t generally understand well, and often don’t talk about much, because they don’t understand them. Or, they are misinterpreted by a denomination for a specific church, but they don’t typically disagree withing their church.

The Misunderstood Gifts include:

- Speaking in Tongues
- Interpreting Tongues
- Word of Knowledge
- Discernment / Discerning Spirits
- Evangelist

Day 1 - Speaking in Tongues / Interpreting Tongues / Prayer Tongues

Speaking in tongues is one of the most controversial of the Spiritual gifts, not just now, but when Paul wrote to the Corinthians in the first century well. As he wrote them regarding the Spiritual gifts, he separates out the gift of Tongues because many were interrupting their study time by speaking in tongues inappropriately. He wanted them to have a proper understanding of the gifts so they could have orderly services and properly honor God with a focus on edifying the whole body as opposed to the individual.

An Important Note – “prayer tongues” are not listed as a Spiritual gift. It is possible to have a prayer language, and this will be addressed in the study, but it does not fit the biblical criteria for a Spiritual gift.

1 Corinthians 12:27-30

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. ²⁸ And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, ***varieties of tongues***.

²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? ³⁰ Do all have gifts of healings? ***Do all speak with tongues?*** *Do all interpret?*

The Greek construction of verses 29-30, demand a response of “no”, making it clear that not all will speak in tongues.

Some claim that everyone can speak in tongues, and even claim to be able to teach people to speak in tongues. Based on **1 Corinthians 12:29-30**, what does Paul teach about this?

The entire chapter of **1 Corinthians 14** is about the “varieties of tongues” Paul first references in *1 Corinthians 12:28*. Reference this chapter regarding the following questions:

According to **verse 1** and **verse 5**, how would you respond to a doctrinal claim that “the gift of tongues the greatest of the Spiritual gifts”?

We’ve established that one of the *purposes of the Spiritual gifts is edify the church*. What does **verses 4** suggest about personal use of tongues?

The Benefit of Tongues

Verse 5 goes on to make the distinction between the *personal prayer tongue* and *gift of speaking in tongues* by introducing the related gift of *interpreting tongues* mentioned in *1 Corinthians 12:10, 29* and elsewhere. What is the result of the combination of these gifts that is mentioned at **the end of verse 5**?

Verses 6-19 go on to further explain the difference between person use of tongues and the gift of tongues for edification. What does **verse 17** say about the impact of the personal use of tongues on the others in the body?

The Purpose of the Spiritual Gift of Speaking in Tongues

1 Corinthians 14:22

Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but **to unbelievers**; but prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe.

In Acts 2:1-13, the tongues referenced were known languages to the people at that time and in that region of the world, but were unknown to those speaking them. These is no clear indication that At the end of **Acts 2:11**, what type of things did the witnesses say that they were proclaiming?

Have you ever been in a service where someone spoke in tongues?

If so, was there someone to interpret it?

Day 2 - The Word of Knowledge

An Introduction

1 Corinthians 12:4-8

⁴ There are <various kinds> of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶ And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all things - in all. ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another **the word of knowledge** through the same Spirit...

As it is with many of the Spiritual gifts, the word of knowledge is widely misunderstood. Every gift of the Spirit is consistent with, and never contrary to the Word of God. This is essential to understanding the way that the gifts operate, especially when it comes to the word of knowledge.

Some will claim to speak "words of the Lord" that don't align with Scripture. God will never contradict Himself. He is not the author of confusion, and so when people claim to speak a "word" that is contrary to His divine revelation (the Bible) – it causes confusion. He cannot contradict Himself.

Have you had an experience where someone told you that God had a message for you?

The Word of Knowledge is NOT

There are some who misrepresent the word of knowledge and manipulate an audience with general statements like "*Someone here tonight has back pain. God is going to heal you!*" It is extremely likely that someone present does have some sort of back pain.

If an individual they selected doesn't have that issue, they'll use spiritual language to "go-fish" their way into another scenario until they get one that sticks. When people are not spiritually mature or they are not familiar with scripture, they can be deceived by someone to believe they speak for God. Another potentially problematic abuse of the word of knowledge can come when people say "God told me to tell you..." They then proceed to share something inconsistent with scripture or the character of God. It is problematic to think of the word of knowledge in this way. When people believe that they can speak on behalf of God, to declare His will independent of the word of God, it **proves that they do not believe in the sufficiency of scripture.**

God can use others to encourage us in specific ways that are directly applicable to the situation we're in, but we must understand what the Bible has to say about how this should be done.

God Cannot Contradict Himself or His Word

Do you have an experience where someone told you *God spoke to their heart* about something that contradicted what you know about God and His word?

"The word of knowledge is not a vast reservoir that you can tap into anytime you want. The Spirit does this only at special times and for special occasions."

- Chuck Smith

What the Word of Knowledge IS

Have you ever experienced a moment where God used you to speak into the life of someone in a specific way, even though you didn't fully know what was going on in their life? Or has someone done that for you?

The Holy Spirit can prompt a believer to share a Scripture, a word of hope, or a prayer with a friend without knowing anything specific about their situation. The Spirit will use this to provide specific encouragement for a challenge they are facing. Often the response is *"I really needed that. How did you know?"* or *"How'd you know to pray for that?"*

The word of knowledge is "... information given to us supernaturally. It's a divine impartation of knowledge concerning a person or situation that could not come through natural processes. It's something that flashes into your mind which God prompts you to say".

-Chuck Smith

This word of knowledge can come in the form encouragement to a fellow believer or be a loving rebuke to one walking in sin. **The word of knowledge is when we, usually unknowingly, speak into someone's life the exact thing that they needed to hear.**

Supernatural Revelation

In **Acts 5:1-11**, we don't have any reason to believe that Peter's knowledge of this situation came through any natural means. How did the Holy Spirit ultimately use this revelation at the end of **verse 11** for the glory of God and to edify the Church?

Day 3 - Discernment / Discerning Spirits

The gift of discernment is much needed in the church considering how much deception is in the world today. ***This is the special ability to discern between the Spirit of Truth (the Holy Spirit) and the spirit of error.*** With the lies of the world expanding into lies from the pulpit and from other representing themselves as speaking for God, discernment a need part of the body.

1 Corinthians 12:7-10a

⁷ But *the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:* ⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another ***discerning of spirits***

As Christians, we should all possess some amount of discernment. The more time we spend with the Lord and in His word, the more we become like Christ, including growing in discernment.

What does **Philippians 1:9** suggest about general discernment?

What does the writer of **Hebrews 5:12-14** say in his rebuke that spiritually mature believers should be able to discern (at the end of verse 14)?

Satan does not always oppose God openly. We need those with the gift of discernment to help us determine whether *works done in God's name are done in the Spirit of God or a spirit of the enemy*. There is clearly an antichrist mentioned in scripture, but it also mentions many who are generally "anti-Christ", including the mention of *antichrist spirits*.

What does **1 Timothy 4:1** say will cause some to depart from the faith?

In **1 John 4:1**, what does he say we should do regarding the spirits and where they may have come from?

Beyond Human Ability

We have a human ability to be discerning. Beyond that, the person with the gift of discernment is empowered by the Holy Spirit to go beyond that human ability – to perceive another person’s nature, or motive and discern the influence of spirit on them.

In **Acts 8:18-23**, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Peter perceived Simon’s motives in asking for the power of the Holy Spirit. What does the second part of verse 21 say about what Peter saw in his heart?

Have you ever had an experience where you knew, without a doubt, that someone claiming to represent Jesus was deceiving people when others were fooled?

Day 4 - Evangelist

Ephesians 4:11-13

¹¹And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, **some evangelists**, and some pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

“Ev-angel-ist” – GRK: euggelistes – a messenger; one who proclaims good tidings

- The tense of the word indicates a **role/position/office** in the Church that exists for the purpose of edifying the body of Christ (*as all gifts do*).

An evangelist is someone who proclaims good tidings / the good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

An evangelist proclaims that we were once separated from God because of our sin; but Christ came, died on the cross for our sin, and rose again to be our Mediator and propitiation; making a way for us to be justified and reconciled to God! An evangelist is one who is *divinely set apart and gifted by the Spirit* to preach the good news of Christ’s salvation!

Example: In **Acts 21:8**, Luke refers to Philip as “the evangelist” Unlike others who hosted churches in their home, there is no reference to Philip being connected with a home fellowship.

Unlike the Spiritual gift and office of being a pastor, where one oversees and shepherds a group of saints, evangelists don't typically have their own specific "flock" but will invest their gift in proclaiming the Gospel to various audiences, often from region to region. Often, the Spirit uses the evangelist to invite a believer into the body, and then commissions them to the local church where the pastor takes over in disciples them.

Did God use the work of an evangelist in your salvation? (or someone you know?)

Do you personally know anyone that you believe may have the gift of evangelism?

Evangelists have been called by God to share the Gospel in an exceptional way, which results in mass amounts of souls being won for Christ. When they preach the Gospel, people realize their need for Jesus as Savior and respond by giving their lives to Him.

"Although all Christians doubtless perform this sacred task, there are some who are called and endowed by the Holy Spirit for this work"

– **New Bible Dictionary**

Do the Work of an Evangelist

What does Paul tell Timothy in **2 Timothy 4:5** about evangelism?

What does this tell those of us that do not have the gift of evangelism about our responsibility to the gospel?

Question to Consider Prior to Group Discussion

Does anyone here have a “prayer language” the privately use with God, or has anyone spoken in tongues in a way consistent with what we learned from scripture today?

Questions for Group Discussion

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you from the teaching this week that has lingered with you?

If you’ve shared a word of knowledge one time, is that evidence that you have the gift?

How should we respond when someone says “God told me...” ?

How can we talk to someone who believes they have a gift that is not listed in scripture?

SESSION 6



THE CONTROVERSIAL GIFTS

Some Spiritual gifts cause major division and controversy, to the point of breaking unity because of false doctrine. Since God is unchangeable, there is no biblical indication that any of the gifts have ceased to be given. God is sovereign over which gifts He gives, to whom, at what time. Even once a gift is given, the Holy Spirit is still sovereign over the use of the gift.

The Heart of the Message: Even when it is difficult, we must dig into the scriptures to search out the deep things of what the word alone says about Spiritual gifts. We must never allow ourselves to believe a doctrine not supported by scripture. It is dangerous to do so

Key Points:

- God can and still does give all of the gifts when He believes it is warranted
- The meaning of words changes over time, and we must rely on the inspired Word of God and the Spirit of Truth alone to find our answers
- God can heal, perform miracles, and reveal truth on His own, or use a Spiritually gifted individual to do build up His church and bring Himself the glory He is worthy of

The “Controversial Gifts” are ones that can be overtly misrepresented and are among the least common of the gifts. Those can go as far as deceptions that include concepts that can be used to dangerously mislead people into having wrong ideas of who God is. They are scriptural, and are definitely included in the gifts available for the Holy Spirit to give to a believer, but we must use discernment and stick very close to scripture to understand them. They are:

- Prophecy
- Miracles
- Healing
- Apostles

Day 1 - The New Testament Gift of Prophecy

The gift of *prophecy does not grant someone the ability to predict future events* like a fortune teller. In the Old Testament, prophecy was used to remind the Israelites of who God is, and to let them know that what was coming was from God and for their good. *Prophets spoke only the word of the Lord*, with the intent of provoking the people back to fellowship with God. If a prophet said something that wasn't confirmed by God, the people were instructed to stone them to death.

"The gift of prophecy is forth-telling, not fortune telling."

Romans 12:6-8

⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if **prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;**

1 Corinthians 12:7-11

⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if **prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;** ⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all: ⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another **prophecy**, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

1 Corinthians 14:3-4

³ But he who prophesies **speaks edification and exhortation and comfort** to men. ⁴ He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies **edifies the church.**

Acts 13:1-5 mentions a group of men that were ministering together just after the birth of the Church. What does **verse 1** say their roles were in the body?

What does **verse 5** say they did when they arrived in Salamis?

Prophecy in Light of the Sufficiency of Scripture

The role of prophecy did not change with the coming of the Holy Spirit, but the *manifestation* of the gift in the New Testament *is different*. Because the writing of the New Testament closed the scripture, and the Bible is sufficient for all things, God does not ask people to speak new revelations for Him *independent of scripture*. Paul's and John's epistles include prophetic events of the future, but after the closing of the scripture, this was no longer necessary.

What does **Hebrews 1:1-2** say about the difference between how God used Old Testament Prophets versus how God speaks to us now?

*The Spiritual gift of prophecy is the supernatural ability **to use scripture**, at the right time, to the right audience, **to proclaim God's revealed truth (the Bible) into a situation in a way that encourages and comforts believers** and provoke unbelievers to repent. Prophecy declares that God is in control, and He know the end from the beginning. It can include the declaration of future events, but only those that have already been revealed in scripture.*

What does **Ephesians 4:11-13** say is *the collective role* of those that are called to exercise the Spiritual gifts of "apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers"?

"Prophet" – GRK: pro-phetes – one who speaks forth, openly / to speak, before; an advocate

It is important to also note that there is a difference between the gift of prophet/prophecy and the unique office that permitted the prophetic works of the New Testament. There are a few examples in the New Testament, from prior to the closing of scripture, that include prophecies of new revelation.

The Prophets in the New Testament

Some examples include:

- Simeon was told by the Holy Spirit that he would not die before the Messiah came (**Luke 2:25-27**)
- Paul's explanation of the end times (**2 Thes. 2:7-12**)
- The Book of the Revelation – to John (**Revelation**)

“(Modern) Prophets, (are ones) who speak forth words from God in complete consistency with the foundation of the Old and New Testaments. Sometimes they speak in a predictive sense, but not necessarily so, and they are always subject to the discernment and judgment of the church leadership (1 Corinthians 14:29). As with the apostles, modern prophets do not speak in the same authority as the first century prophets who brought God’s foundational word (Ephesians 2:20).

- David Guzik

“There are no indications in the New Testament that this is the function of the prophets in the church – to be her guides in the sense that they guided Israel of old by a system of inquiring of the Lord.”

“It can be affirmed that there is not one single instance of prophecy being deliberately resorted to for guidance in the New Testament. This is very significant, and it marks with sufficient clearness a big difference in the scope of the gift in its dispensation compared with the Old.”

-Donald Gee

“Keep in mind that members of the Corinthian church did not sit in service with Bibles on their laps. The New Testament was being written, and the Old Testament scrolls were expensive and not available to most believers. God spoke to His people directly through the prophets., and the message was sometimes given in a tongue. The three gifts of knowledge, prophecy and tongues work together to convey truth to people.”

-Warren Wiersbe

The Operation of the Gifts

1 Corinthians 14:29-33

²⁹ Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. ³⁰ But if *anything* is revealed to another who sits by, let the first keep silent. ³¹ For you can all prophesy one by one, ***that all may learn, and all may be encouraged***. ³² And the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. ³³ For God is not *the author* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

In the context of this scripture, in **verse 29**, does this suggest that they are giving insight into personal future events?

In **verse 31**, what does it say is the reason they are “prophesying”?

Day 2 - The Working of Miracles

1 Corinthians 12:10

...*to another the **working of miracles***, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

To explore this gift more thoroughly, we must differentiate that *only God can perform the miraculous*. Even in a case where a group of Christians might collectively pray for God to intervene, should He grant that request – it is still exclusively God performing the miracle. In the case of the “working of miracles” as a Spiritual gift, the Holy Spirit engages with the believer, working through that person to do the work as His instrument of His will.

“Miracle” – GRK: Dunamis – strength, power, ability.

- Contextually: Something clearly out of the ordinary, a clear demonstration of God’s power. A supernatural intervention.

“Working” – GRK: En-Erg-Ay-Mah - To work, effect, operate, or activate.

Miracles, Signs & Wonders – Point back to the truths of God.

“Sign” – GRK: Say-my-on – an appeal to the intellect

“Wonder” – GRK: Teras – an appeal to the imagination

“You might say a miracle is something that is humanly impossible but divinely simple. Difficulty must always be measured by the capacity of the agents doing the work. When God is the agent doing the work, talk of difficulty is absurd.” – **Chuck Smith**

The world may argue that miracles are impossible because they violate the laws of nature. They dismiss that the *universe coming into existence from nothingness, order coming from chaos, and life coming from non-life is innately miraculous*. As Christians, if we accept the miracle of **Genesis 1:1**, then anything potentially miraculous reasonable.

“If we admit God, must we admit Miracle? Indeed, indeed, you have no security against it. That is the bargain.” – **C. S. Lewis**

What does **Luke 1:37** say that God is capable of?

“Clusters” of Miracles

Throughout the scope of Scripture, miracles are often clustered around times of special revelation, when there would be a change in the way God would interact with His people, or times when He chose specific individuals to proclaim Him in extraordinary ways.

- Moses at the time of the Exodus
- Elijah & Elisha when the divided kingdom was falling into apostasy
- The miracles of Jesus and the Apostles

Many miracles also happened in the book of Acts. These events take place over thirty years. Even with the relative frequency of those miracles compared with the time since. On average, a miracle only happened once every two years.

Prior to this study, what was your perception of how often miracles happened in the history of the Bible?

Jesus, as the embodiment of all the Spiritual gifts, had the ability to work miracles (though only in submission to the Father). He granted that ability to a few, like Peter and Paul in the New Testament, but the gift of working of miracles is very rare.

How would the world respond if someone was found to reliably perform miracles? (Do you believe God would be glorified, or the individual?)

God certainly can still give this gift in His providence. If God wants to move in this way, He will be glorified. A miracle is a direct, supernatural intervention, where God seemingly suspends natural laws to bring about an extraordinary event.

In the context of edification, and just after encouraging us not to “despise prophecies”, what does **1 Thessalonians 5:21** say we should do?

We must be on guard against anyone who might falsely claim the ability to do this. How might we be able to discern a “false miracle”?

Supernatural Faith

The gift of the miracles and healing operate together. It requires a supernatural level of special faith to be able say "be healed".

By way of reminder, what does **1 Corinthians 13:1-3** tell us is the motivation for all of the gift?

Day 3 - Healing: Miraculous Healings of God and the Spiritual Gift of Healing

1 Corinthians 12:7-9

⁷ *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:* ⁸ for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another **gifts of healings by the same Spirit,**

God designed the human body to heal itself in many regards. But the gift of healing is a supernatural event that takes place, whereby God uses an individual, through the exercising of the faith given by the Holy Spirit to make a person immediately well.

When Peter exercised the Spiritual gift of healing in **Acts 3:1-8**, what does verse 6 suggest about the source of the healing?

What does Peter say about this healing in **Acts 3:16**?

In another example of a person that had never walked before, Paul healed a man in **Acts 14:8-10**. What does **verse 9** say about the man?

Have you ever known someone supernaturally healed through the Spiritual gift of another person? (Distinct from God healing someone as a result of prayer?)

Healing Ministries

There are many that claim to have the gift of healing, and even churches and organizations that host "healing ministries" and offer to teach others how to do miraculous healings. This is in direct contradiction to what scripture says about the Holy Spirit's role in the Spiritual gifts.

By way of reminder, what does **1 Corinthians 12:11** say about the distribution of the gift?

The Holy Spirit gives this gift precisely to whom He will, but to the same extent, He is the one doing the work through the believer as a willing vessel. No gift can be used outside of the direct influence of the Holy Spirit, even for those that otherwise possess the gift.

Paul clearly demonstrated, many times, that He had the Spiritual gift of healing. What does **2 Timothy 4:20** say about his friend Trophimus?

Why do you suppose Paul did not heal him?

God, in His omnipotence, does not always choose to heal. He has a purpose for some to suffer and to face trials. We must trust Him to rightly decide whether to heal or to grow our faith through the difficulty.

John 16:33

These things I have spoken to you, that in Me you may have peace. In the world you *will* have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world."

Day 4 - The Gift of Apostle

Ephesians 4:11-12

¹¹ *And He Himself gave **some to be apostles**, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ*

"Apostle" – GRK: Apo-stolos - A Sent One; a delegate, a messenger.

- If a Greek mother sent her son to get groceries from the Agora, he would be her "apostle". (In that she "sent him" as a delegate to do the work she wished him to do.)

Categories of Apostolic Ministry

Many are called and sent out in the name of the Lord to do His work. Instead of presuming that every use of the term "apostle" refers to the same intent, we must look further into discerning the differences in the way God uses the ones He calls apostle.

Jesus – Sent by the Father

Hebrews 3:1-2a

¹Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider **the Apostle and High Priest of our confession**, Christ Jesus, ²who was faithful to Him who appointed Him...

What does **John 20:21** say about the apostolic role of Jesus and how it relates to His disciples?

The 12 Apostles of Christ – Specifically Commissioned by Jesus

Matthew 10:2

"Now the names of the twelve apostles are these: first, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew his brother; James the son of Zebedee, and John his brother..."

What special role does Jesus give the twelve in **Matthew 19:28**?

What does **Revelation 21:14** say about the foundations of the New Jerusalem?

Replacing an Apostle

Prior to the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, in **Acts 1:21-26**, the Bible records the process the twelve original apostles used to choose who would be "*chosen to take part in this ministry and apostleship from which Judas by transgression fell...*". Later, after the Holy Spirit came to indwell believers, in **Acts 12**, when Harod kills the apostle James (the brother of John), there is no indication that they replaced him.

Paul – a Unique Apostolic Role

Galatians 1:1

Paul, ***an apostle*** (*not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father who raised Him from the dead*), ² and all the brethren who are with me,

Characteristics of Paul's apostleship

- Equal to the other apostles (2 Cor. 11:5)
- Born "out of due time" (1 Cor. 15:8)
- Granted the "right hand of fellowship" by the other apostles (Gal. 2:9)
- Consider himself "not worthy to be called an apostle" (1 Cor. 15:9)

Apostles of the Church – the Spiritual Gift

Ephesians 4:11-13

¹¹And He Himself gave some to be ***apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers***, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³*till we all come to the unity of the faith* and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

The five gifts mentioned in Paul's introduction of the gifts to the Ephesians are specifically aimed at establishing the Church through equipping the saints and building up the body. It goes on to say that they do this until "we all come to the unity of the faith". Scripture gives us better insights into understanding them in this context.

New Testament References to "apostles"

- The apostle Barnabus (Acts 14:14)
- Titus and 2 other messengers (apostles = "sent ones") of the churches (2 Cor. 8:23)
- Paul "sends out" Epaphroditus to Philippi to help establish the church there (Phil. 2:25)
- Andronicus and Junia, while not apostles, were of note to ones that were (Rom. 16:7)

What does **Ephesians 2:19-20** say is the foundation for those being established in the household of God?

Sending Out Missionaries

In keeping with the principle of apostles being those that are “sent out” or “sent ones”, a great modern example of the gift of apostleship are missionaries responding to the call of the Holy Spirit, being sent to establish the Church in new areas or in new ways.

What does **Ephesians 3:5-6** say about what the Holy Spirit reveals through his apostles and prophets?

What other things might the Holy Spirit do to establish new ministries through those with the gift of apostleship?

Beware of False Apostles!

2 Corinthians 11:4-6 (NKJV)

⁴For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or *if* you receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted—you may well put up with it!

⁵*For I consider that I am not at all inferior to the **most eminent apostles**.* ⁶Even though *I am* untrained in speech, yet *I am* not in knowledge. But we have ^[b]been thoroughly manifested among you in all things.

2 Corinthians 11:4-6 (NLT)

⁴You happily put up with whatever anyone tells you, even if they preach a different Jesus than the one we preach, or a different kind of Spirit than the one you received, or a different kind of gospel than the one you believed.

⁵*But I don't consider myself inferior in any way to these **“super apostles”*** who teach such things. ⁶I may be unskilled as a speaker, but I'm not lacking in knowledge. We have made this clear to you in every possible way.

In giving council to the Corinthian church, Paul gives several warnings, to not be deceived by what he sarcastically calls “most eminent apostles” (or translated more simply “super-apostles”). **2 Corinthians 11 & 12:11-13** give us biblical foundations for how to evaluate and respond false apostles in the modern church.

Characteristics of False Apostles

- Unduly Ties Faith to Giving
- Distorts the Bible
- Overemphasizes experience over scripture
- Claim they represent Jesus directly
- Are Controlling
- Blames everything on spiritual warfare
- Represent That They Alone Hold the Secrets of Deliverance
- Direct the Focus to Themselves, Not the Lord or Scripture
- Don't tend to have unity with other believers
- Grant one another lofty titles
- Consolidates Power Rather Than Empowering Others

Question to Consider Prior to Group Discussion

Explain each of the following roles associate with the Spiritual gifts:

Teacher

Pastor

Evangelist

Prophet

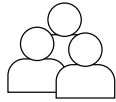
Apostle

Questions for Group Discussion

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you in the study this week that has lingered with you?

How can we speak the truth in love to one who has a different perspective on the gifts?

SESSION 7



THE BODY

A theme the Bible regularly revisits is that of us being “the Body of Christ”. In order for a body to be healthy and function properly, each of its parts must perform their own role and work together for the greater good. This is clearly true in the Church as well. We must understand what God created us to do through understanding our own Spiritual gifts. And we must also dedicate ourselves to helping the other parts of the Body be effective as well, by partnering with them under the headship of Christ.

The Heart of the Message: The desire of the Body of Christ is to cultivate a culture of service where we are all glorifying God, by serving Him together in the way He created us to do so.

Key Points:

- We should be looking for evidence of Spiritual Gifts in others in our community
- We must remember to serve in love
- We must be united in faith and service
- Unity results in growth and love

Day 1 - Acknowledging Other's Gifts

While we may be using our Spiritual gifts to some extent as believers, we are often unable to see them in ourselves. It has been relative uncommon, but we should try to actively acknowledge one another's gifts. Every time we gather as believers, the gifts are in operation, even unknowingly.

When we gather, our pastor is clearly using his gift of teaching, but many others throughout the ministry are using theirs as well, contributing to a healthy Church body. There are thousands of people throughout the Church, across the world, attending services in a unified communal setting where God is using the gifts through us, and those *gifts are "for the edification of all"*.

Romans 12:3-8

³ For I say, through **the grace given to me**, to everyone who is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, but **all the members do not have the same function**, ⁵ so we, *being many*, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another.

⁶ **Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them:** if prophecy, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, *let us use it* in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

As we have been learning about the Spiritual gifts through this study, have you recognized what might be a Spiritual gift in someone else? (*Did you tell them?*) (*Why or why not?*)

What is likely to be the result of that conversation?

Wisely Affirming the Gifts

When recognizing the gifts in others, it is important to be wise about how we do so. We should not openly *declare to someone* that they have a certain gift of the Spirit. This can lead people in a direction God didn't call them to. It would be better to recognize what you see the Lord doing through them and encourage them to seek Him in prayer for confirmation. This is certain to be edifying to them.

As we've addressed previously in the study, every believer in Jesus Christ has at least one Spiritual gift, but statistically few know their own gifts. Do you know yours?

***** Refer to the Spiritual Gifts Worksheet on page 10 *****

Often the Lord will use other saints to help confirm a gift that a believer is unsure about. Having the confidence to know one's gift, and to know how to use it, can bring a person significantly closer to God, and others in the body, ultimately resulting in greater god to God through our "reasonable service".

What exhortation did Paul give Timothy in **1 Timothy 4:14**?

What impact do you think it had on Timothy to be reminded of the confirmation from the elders that is mentioned at the end of the verse?

***Creating a culture where we are acknowledging the gifts in others
will inspire confidence in our fellow members of the body.***

Day 2 - The Greatest of These is Love

We are Nothing Without Love

The famous “love chapter” of the Bible, often used in weddings, comes in **1 Corinthians 13**. Paul inserts this entire chapter about the importance of love into the middle of discussing the Spiritual gifts throughout chapters 12 and 14. He wrote it primarily with the intent of correcting the church’s motives and heart behind using the gifts.

What does Paul say in **1 Corinthians 12:31** after admonishing them to desire the best gifts as he transitions to talking about the importance of love in our serve to one another?

What do you think is the eternal benefit of serving God without love?

1 Corinthians 13:1-2

¹ *Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, **but have not love**, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. ² And **though I have the gift of prophecy**, and understand all mysteries and **all knowledge**, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, **but have not love, I am nothing.***

As Paul transitions back to discuss the Spiritual gifts in Chapter 14, in a very familiar verse, *what does he say in **1 Corinthians 13:13** are the things we should “abide in”?* (GRK: “**perfectly remain in**”?)

The Holy Spirit is the source of love, so it is not surprising that is essential to the exercising of the gifts He gives.

Galatians 5:22

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness, self-control. Against such there is no law.

1 Peter 4:8 - And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins."

"Fervent" – GRK: ektene – stretched out; as in an athlete reaching out to win an event

- to have more intentional, more earnest love for one another

1 John 4:8–11 - ⁸ He who does not love does not know God, for **God is love**. ⁹ In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

The proof that we love God, is that we love one another. God is not only the source of love, but He is love, so the only way we can know love is by knowing God.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

⁴ Love suffers long and is kind; love does not envy; love does not parade itself, is not puffed up; ⁵ does not behave rudely, does not seek its own, is not provoked, thinks no evil; ⁶ does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in the truth; ⁷ bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. ⁸ Love never fails. But whether *there are* prophecies, they will fail; whether *there are* tongues, they will cease; whether *there is* knowledge, it will vanish away.

"Love" – GRK: Agape

Agape ... "is a love that loves without changing. It is a self-giving love that gives without demanding or expecting repayment. It is love so great that it can be given to the unlovable or unappealing. It is love that loves even when it is rejected. Agape love gives and loves because it wants to; it does not demand or expect repayment from the love given. It gives because it loves; it does not love in order to receive.

– David Guzik

Serving in Love

We must serve in our Spiritual gifts in love, without expecting to be repaid, and without expecting to be acknowledged by others. We must serve in love – only to the glory of God. This will enable us to edify one another. When love is our motivation, love for God and love for His Church, we will be emboldened to use the gifts. We will overcome our fears and esteem others the way God would have us to do so.

What is the new commandment Jesus gives His disciples in **John 13:34-35**?

What had Jesus done just prior to saying this (from the context of **John 13:5,14**)?

The Church is Built on Love

Ephesians 4:11-12,15-16

*¹¹ And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹² for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. ...¹⁵ but, **speaking the truth in love**, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head — *Christ* — ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, **causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.***

When we operate in the Spiritual gifts, love will come out of us. The body will be built up and result in growth. Not only growth in people coming to Christ through seeing our love for one another, but growth in the depth the church through edifying, encouraging, and loving one another to the glory of God.

How do people respond when they are welcomed into a loving environment where people are helping each other with joy?

Does this idea change your perspective participating in and serving in a community of other believers?

Day 3 - Spiritual Gifts in Community

When we join together as the Body of Christ, we are united in the Holy Spirit. Ministry is the reasonable result. It doesn't need to be forced or manufactured. It is a natural overflow of the power of the Holy Spirit through His people. Resulting in joy, sadness, laughter, prayer for the hurting, friendships forming, and love given.

When God's People Gather in God's House Ministry Happens

The Spiritual gifts work in this same way. When we are walking in the Spirit, the gifts of the Spirit are active, whether we are aware of it or not. In this context, it is important to remember that our Spiritual gifts were not given to us for ourselves. The gifts we've been given are for the benefit of others.

1 Peter 4:10

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

- Every believer has been given a Spiritual gift
- The gifts are to be used to minister to others
- Exercising the gifts for others is a requirement of being a good steward of God's grace

1 Corinthians 12:4-7

⁴ There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶ And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

⁷ But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

"The manifestation of the Spirit": the tangible, physical revealing of the work of the Spirit

According to these verses, how does the Holy Spirit reveal Himself to the church?

"For the Profit of all": for the benefit of the whole community; for all of God's people

How do others practically benefit from you using your Spiritual gift(s)?

We've visited **Ephesians 4:11-12** throughout the study. According to these verses, can you exercise your Spiritual gift independent of other Christians?

Do you have to go to church to be a Christian?

"If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together."
– African Proverb

God Himself exists in a triune community and has designed us operate together in community as well. When we gather, we stir each other up, and certainly one of the ways we do that is through serving together in the gifts of the Spirit.

Hebrews 10:24–25

²⁴ And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, ²⁵ not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.

If we don't "assemble ourselves together", can we still encourage one another to love Christ better? Can we still do works that glorify Him?

Is there a difference between "forsaking the assembling... together" and being in a situation that you can't practically connect with other believers (i.e. - illness, distance, disability)?

Gathering Together – to Edify each other.

We must remind ourselves of the importance of gathering together with other believers. The gifts attest to how important it is to do so. God literally gave gifts so we can edify one another as we gather in His name. If we ignore His call to gather together, how can we edify, and how can we be edified? To do so would be to sin against Him.

Day 4 - Serving Together Leads to Unity

When are born again and we abide in Christ, we are immersed into His Body. And through the indwelling of the Spirit, He is in us. Through our love for Christ, we have unity.

Galatians 2:20

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

We are never more unified with Christ, than when we are serving in the Body. If Christ is the Head, and we are separated from Him, our spirit will wither and die in relation to our spiritual walk.

John 13:34-35

³⁴A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."

Philippians 2:5-8

⁵Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, ⁷but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, *and* coming in the likeness of men. ⁸And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.

Unity Through Diversity

In 1 Corinthians, as Paul lays out the Spiritual gifts, we see the revelation of the trinity. The Same Spirit (the Holy Spirit), the Same Lord (speaking of Jesus) and the Same God (the Father).

1 Corinthians 12:4-7

⁴There are **diversities** of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵There are **differences** of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶And there are **diversities** of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. ⁷But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

3 Manifestations – 3 Persons – One God

- Diversities of Gifts
- Diversities of Ministries
- Differences of Activity

As the body comes together, it is God who is the Source, it is God who Administers the gifts, and it is God who gives them Power.

God Does the Work

What does **Philippians 2:12-13** say God does through you "for His good pleasure"?

What happens when He does that?

When we come to the saving grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and place our faith in Him for the forgiveness of our sins, the Holy Spirit comes into us, regenerates us, and indwells.

What does **1 Corinthians 6:19-20** say about your body?

Who do you belong to and how did He obtain you?

How should we respond?

Different Members – One Body

Though there are differences in the **gifts**, the **ministries**, and the **activities** – **there is Unity**. Because it is the same God who works them all of them in us.

When we don't have unity in the Body of Christ, what is the likely cause?

Ephesians 4:1-6

¹ I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, ² with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, **bearing with one another in love**, ³ **endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace**. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all...

- **"Bearing"** – GRK: **anachomeno** – to tolerate; to hold up; to bear with *each other in love*
- **"Endeavoring"** – GRK: **spoudazontes** – to make haste; to be diligent; to be intentional to *keep the unity*

At salvation, Jesus takes away the consequence of our sin but does not remove our sin nature. In this world, we will still commit sins, against our Lord and against others. We continue to need the grace of God. And, in our call to be like Him, we must "bear with one another in love". We endure trials together, show grace, extend mercy, have patience, and actively love one another with the love of Christ.

Colossians 3:12-14 tells us how God would have us represent Him. What does it say we must do "even as Christ" did?

We need to remain intentional about maintaining unity in the Church. We should regularly ask the Lord to bring unity through the power of His Holy Spirit. This includes ensuring that we maintain unity with Jesus. We are never closer to Him, or more like Him than when we are exercising our Spiritual gifts.

What does it feel like when we lack unity, and the body becomes disconnected?

What can we do to restore fellowship?

3 Things We Can Do to Have a Closer Relationship with God

There are three things we can do to have a closer, more intimate relationship with God.

- When we read His word, we give the Lord an opportunity to speak to us.
- When we pray, we can respond to God in fellowship.
- Serving in a local body allows us to intimately engage with the Holy Spirit in a deeper relationship through exercising our faith and overcoming our fear.

This is the work of sanctification, the practical act of being transformed to be more like Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit (**2 Cor. 3:18**).

How does being closer to God bring us closer to each other?

How does serving together in the body bring us closer to God?

Question to Consider Prior to Group Discussion

How would you reassure someone here that might be tempted to be concerned that they still haven't discovered their Spiritual Gift?

Questions for Group Discussion

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you from the teaching this week that has lingered with you?

What has God been revealing to you about serving in the body during this study?

What is the difference in our focus in "loving our neighbors" versus serving in love in the body of Christ?

How can you serve "the Body of Christ" outside of the local church? (When should you do that?)

What does unity look like when Christians disagree?

SESSION 8



THE WAY

God wants us to understand what He created us to do, and He encourages us to grow in our understanding of the Spiritual gifts. The Word also suggests that we can ask for more and greater gifts from God. To discover our gifts and discern what the will of God is for us to exercise them, we can study, pray, and seek wise council.

The Heart of the Message: We can pray for God to reveal our Spiritual Gifts to us, so that we can use them in His strength and we can grow them so we can have a greater impact on the Kingdom.

Key Points:

- We should study the word and pray for God to reveal our gift(s)
- We can ask mature brothers and sisters what Gifts they believe we might have
- We should be asking for a baptism of the Holy Spirit
- We can ask God for “greater gifts”

Day 1 - Knowing and Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts

Ephesians 4:7

But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

1 Peter 4:10

As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

As we've covered previously, God has given each one of His children a Spiritual gift that is to be used for the edifying of the saints. We should not let the enemy discourage us if we don't know what our gift is because we know from **1 Corinthians 12:1** that God does not want us to be ignorant of our Spiritual gifts, so we can confidently trust that God will reveal it to us if we seek to know it.

***** Refer to the Spiritual Gifts Worksheet on page 6 *****

++ See book list on page 3 for additional resources to learn about the Spiritual gifts ++

Based on what God has revealed to you, what do you believe your gift(s) might be?

Has God confirmed this for you? If so, how?

Meditate on What God Has Done

As we seek to understand our Spiritual Gifts, we can meditate on how God has used us in the past in light of what we have learned through this study. We should consider the fruit that came from those efforts and what God has done in and through us. We can boldly pray for God to reveal our gifts to us. And ask Him to give us opportunities to use our gifts so we might recognize them in action.

Has anyone shared with you that they believe you might have a specific gift?

Has anyone encouraged you by telling you that they were blessed by something that God did through you?

Have you had these conversations with others?

As a word of precaution, we should be careful about telling someone you believe they have a specific gift. We can misinterpret things and lead people astray. God should be the One to provide clarity on the gift through prayer, confirmation in the word and through the evidence of the fruit of their service. Instead, we should recognize the work you see God doing and suggest that they might pray and seek the Lord regarding whether they have the gift.

Who are some people you can encourage this week by sharing with them what you've seen God do through them?

Day 2 - Neglecting the Spiritual Gifts

We have seen throughout this study that Paul used the metaphor of the body in all three passages on the gifts of the Spirit (**Romans 12, Ephesians 4, & 1 Corinthians 12**). Specifically, in **1 Corinthians 12:15-17**, Paul expands the metaphor and says that different spiritual gifts are like different parts of the body. (Eyes, ears, hands, and feet.) *If we **neglect our spiritual gifts**, we are **not fulfilling** our God-given role in the body of Christ, and therefore the body will suffer as a result.*

It is Possible to Neglect Your Spiritual Gift

1 Timothy 4:14

*Do not **neglect the gift that is in you**, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.*

"Gift" – GRK: **charismatos** – a "grace gift"; a gift of undeserved favor

- **Present – Active – Imperative** – Paul is not warning him not to neglect this gift in the future, but to stop neglecting it in the present!

Though spiritual gifts are sovereignly given and empowered by the Holy Spirit, we are responsible to exercise them in faith. In the passage above, Timothy had been neglecting his gift. Knowing this, Paul is exhorting Timothy in order to provoke him to get back on track.

Have been given a chance to use your Spiritual gift but have neglected it and need to be provoked to move forward?

The Consequence of Neglecting Your Spiritual Gift

When Paul writes again in **2 Timothy 1:6**, it seems Timothy may not have taken the advice Paul provided above. He must remind his young friend to “stir up the gift of God”.

2 Timothy 1:6

Therefore *I remind you to **stir up the gift** of God which is in you* through the laying on of my hands.

*“The word translated ‘**stir up**’ occurs only here in the New Testament and means literally ‘**to stir into flame**.’ Anyone who has a fireplace knows that a fire needs attention. After the first flames diminish, the logs or coals need to be stirred up so that air can get to them and the flames leap up again.”*

– John Phillips

Stoking the Flame of the Spirit

Would you say you are more on the side of Timothy, allowing the power of your gift to die out like a campfire, or would you say the Holy Spirit has stoked a flame inside of you and is giving you the power to serve Him well.

God has given each of us the power and unique gifting to edify and build one another up in love. The whole Church suffers when the gifts are left dormant.

We are called to be obedient and trust God. The Holy Spirit directs the results. **2 Corinthians 5:10** says that, *at the judgment seat of Christ, we will “receive what is due...” based on what?*

“It is a serious error to neglect one’s Spiritual Gift. The consequences of the error will be revealed at the judgment seat of Christ where all ministry will be evaluated by One who knows all of the factors involved.”

– John Phillips

We must not neglect our spiritual gifts for the sake of the body, and eternity where we will be judged based on our faithfulness. If we are tempted to do so, we can ask God to give us a desire to serve him and the power to move forward in obedience.

Can you prayerfully think of someone that is neglecting their Spiritual gifts, that you can encourage?

Take some time to pray for that person and reach out to them right now.

Day 3 - Does God Give More Gifts?

We've established that every believer has at least one gift, but it is not uncommon to have more than one. Over time, God may reveal additional gifts and will produce greater fruit as we exercise our gifts well. We can also ask for them and should seek to excel at doing them.

Based on what we've learned about the gift of prophecy, why do you think God would inspire Paul to specifically encourage them to desire that gift?

1 Corinthians 14:1

Pursue love, and ***desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.***

1 Corinthians 14:12

Even so you, since *you are zealous* for spiritual gifts, *let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel.*

Much of the first letter to the Corinthian church was about proper use of the Spiritual gifts. Like us, they needed guidance to walk in them properly. Also, like many of us, they misunderstood some of the gifts (most notably, tongues). Paul did not condemn them for their zeal, but instead encouraged them to understand them well and make sure their motives were right. In **1 Corinthians 12:31**, Paul says again that they should desire the gifts, but ends the chapter by saying there is a "more excellent way" and goes on to explain serving in love is more important than the actual gift.

Do you feel confident in being able to ask God for more and greater Spiritual gifts? (Why or why not?)

We should certainly be content with a single Spiritual gift, but we should also seek and pray that He would give us more gifts according to His will.

What does **Luke 11:11–13** about what God wants to give to those who ask?

Asking Rightly

What does **James 4:2–3**, about why we don't have what we might want from God?

When we do ask, what does **verse 3** give as the reason God would say "no" to our requests?

Like the Corinthians in their zeal for the gifts, we must make sure that we are desiring more gifts for the right reasons. If we're asking from a place of pride, to glorify ourselves, God will reject that request. If we are asking for more or greater gifts to be further used by Him to love and serve others and to bring Him greater glory, He will likely say yes.

Do you believe you are in a place in your life where it makes sense to ask God for more and greater gifts?

What would you hold you back from asking God to bless you with more gift to greater be able to serve Him?

Day 4 - Desiring the Greater Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:31

But earnestly desire the best gifts. And yet I show you a more excellent way.

“Desire” – GRK: Zeloo (Zay- Lo) – Be Zealous for, Strive for

As we are seeking to know our gifts and potentially obtain more or greater spiritual gifts, we recall that our purpose is to use them out of a spirit of love and a desire to see the Church edified.

In summary of 1 Corinthians 12, the saints in Corinth were mistreating each other and boasting in their spirituality. According to **1 Corinthians 1:7** they “*came short in no gift*” in that they were aware of and attempting to use the gifts, but the warning of chapter 13 shows that they lacked in love.

In summary of what we covered in session 7:

- Paul says tongues without love is just noise
- Prophecy, knowledge, and faith without love is as good as nothing
- Giving, ministry, and help helps without love is unprofitable

Based on what you know about God, how does He respond to service that lacks love for Him and does not properly demonstrate His love for people?

If you had a chance to give counsel to someone that was struggling with “losing their first love” in ministry, what advice would you give? What truths from scripture would you share?

***This is a good warning and reminder for us!
Our spiritual gifts are primarily for the body of Christ and not ourselves.***

Desire Something Better

Transitioning back to **1 Corinthians 14**, the Corinthian Church meetings became an opportunity for everyone to speak in tongues and show off what spiritual gifts they had. So, Paul commands order in the church, and tells them to **desire the greater gifts**.

1 Corinthians 14:4-5

⁴ He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. ⁵ I wish you all spoke with tongues, but even more that you prophesied; for he who prophesies is greater than he who speaks with tongues, unless indeed he interprets, that the church may receive edification.

In this case, why does Paul say that prophesying is better?

What does **1 Corinthians 14:12** say they should focus on "since they are so zealous for Spiritual

Later in **verse 19**, why does Paul say, "he'd rather speak five words with... understanding" than "ten thousand words in another language"?

Paul's point is that the **Greater Gifts are those that serve and build up the church rather than those that benefit self**. But he does not discount the potential for other gifts.

1 Corinthians 14:39

Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues.

We should look to find out where the Greatest Good can be done for the Greatest Group of people in our local body and ask the Holy Spirit for the Greatest Gift the fill that need. The greatest gifts in the Church are not inherently more valuable. They are those that will do the greatest good for the greatest group.

Which gift(s) would fill the greatest need right now in our community?

Question to Consider Prior to Group Discussion

How would you come alongside a brother or sister in love to tell them that they might be better off serving in a way that aligns better with their Spiritual gift?"

Questions for Group Discussion

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you from the teaching this week that has lingered with you?

If you see fruit from someone's service that might be better used in another ministry, how could you tell them?

What is a Biblically appropriate way to test to see whether you have a Spiritual gift?

How and when should we come alongside someone in love and encourage them "not to grow weary in doing good"?

What should you do if the fire you once had for serving is dwindling?

SESSION 9



THE POWER

As we progress towards the fruitful exercising of our Spiritual gifts, we must immerse ourselves into service to the body of Christ. While we may not yet have clarity on the depths of our gifting, it is clear that we should be participating in the body and trusting God to reveal truth and produce fruit. There is no risk in doing so, and only potential benefit to the believer and to the Body of Christ.

The Heart of the Message: In order to really discover your spiritual gift, you must begin serving in community with other believers. God reveals His purpose through service.

Key Points:

- Continue to pray to understand, and have opportunity to use our Spiritual Gifts
- Meditate on the passion God's given you for His people
- Start serving and God will lead you to the next thing
- While you are serving, look for others' Spiritual Gifts and edify them

As we enter into the final week of our study, if you have not done so already, please start making plans to serve in the Body of Christ. Invite others in your Small Group community to do this will you and look for the fruitfulness from that service. Continue to pray that God would reveal the purpose that He prepared you for before time began.

Day 1 - Consider Your Calling

As we have invested in learning the Spiritual gifts and the context for how and when to use them, we now come to the point where, if we are not doing so already, we should seek to exercise our gift in ministry.

I Corinthians

But the *manifestation of the Spirit is given **to each one for the profit of all:***

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship, *created in Christ Jesus for good works*, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

To discover what our gifts are and how God would have us to use them, ***we must spend time alone with God in prayer and meditation on His word.***

How does **Matthew 6:33** say God will respond if we seek the good of His Kingdom?

When we pray to understand God's will, we must do so in the context of Scripture. What does **Romans 12:2** say happens when we allow God's Word to "renew our minds"?

Psalm 119:105

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.

If we want to know God's will, His calling, and how to best serve in our Spiritual gifts, our path is to continue to ask Him to reveal Himself through prayer and seek his response in His word and through service with others in the Body. Psalm 25 provides an example of how we can pray:

Psalm 25:4-5

⁴ Show me Your ways, O Lord; teach me Your paths. ⁵ Lead me in Your truth and teach me, For You are the God of my salvation; on You I wait all the day.

Write a prayer to God asking Him for wisdom regarding exercising your Spiritual gift.

***** Refer to the Spiritual Gifts Worksheet on page 10 *****

As we step out and start serving in search of “our calling,” we can overcomplicate things in our flesh, but **God’s will for our lives is revealed in Scripture.**

Ephesians 4:1-6

I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

- We should remain humble
- We should seek unity

Ephesians 4:11-13

¹¹And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

- We should be looking for ways to edify others
- We should be looking for what we can do to be a benefit to the body

Once we see where the Lord is calling, we will have a better understanding of what gifts He has given to accomplish that calling. Pray, meditate on the gifts, seek His will in His Word.

As you have been seeking Him in this study, how has God begun to answer the following questions: Lord, what are you calling me to do in service to You?

What are the Spiritual gifts you’ve given me to do this?

How do you want me to use those gifts to accomplish Your will?

Day 2 - What Passion Has God Given You?

As we consider our calling and giftings, we must never sit idle. While we seek Him in prayer, we must be active in serving. Waiting on the Lord is so often misunderstood and there are some believers who miss out on the blessing of serving using the excuse of “*waiting on the Lord*”.

The way that God leads is step by step. He guides in an “*as you go*” kind of way. As we plan our ways, He directs our steps *but without the planning there can be no directing*.

Can you recall a time that you missed out on a blessing because you didn’t act on an invitation from God?

When it comes to serving, if we are uncertain about what God would have us do, the worst thing we can do – is to do nothing. It is better to get going and be redirected than to do nothing. The main purpose of spiritual gifts is for them to be used whether we have identified them or not.

In the parable in **Matthew 25:14-30**, what did Jesus call the man who buried his talent instead of investing it in **verse 26**?

Regardless of the amount that resulted, what did Jesus say about the ones the invested in **verses 21 & 23**?

God does not count on us for the result, and He does not expect perfection. He expects us to pursue Him, to follow Him, to serve Him. He brings the increase, whether it be talents, or the investment of our Spiritual gifts. Both come from God! We must never miss the giver looking for the gift.

Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things shall be added to you.

How do can we “seek for the kingdom of God and His righteousness” in the context of discovering and using our Spiritual Gifts?

God is not a God of confusion but of peace. He wants us to seek Him with our whole hearts, and He isn't hiding from us.

What does **Psalm 37:4-5** say about whether we should be worried about figuring out our Spiritual gift?

What can we do to actively make the Lord our greatest joy in life?

What does **Matthew 10:38-39** say about those that give their lives taking up their cross and giving their life for Jesus' sake?

Intimacy with God is our goal, not what we can do for Him.

In **1 Corinthians 12**, the church there was focus on the gifts because they had lost sight of the Giver of the gifts. If we make Jesus our delight, we will never be disappointed. God is a good Father, and He knows how to give good gifts to His children – which is not to leave them uncertain and insecure.

Ephesians 5:15-17

¹⁵ See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be unwise, *but understand what the will of the Lord is.*

Paul tells us that we are to understand what the will of the Lord is because the will of the Lord is something we can understand. We should expect to know His will because He declares it in His word and the Spirit of Truth indwells us personally. To not understand it is to be unwise, to be a fool.

Only a fool lives their life without knowing what His Creator & Redeemer's plan is for them.

Psalm 84:10-11

¹⁰ For a day in Your courts *is* better than a thousand. I would rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God Than dwell in the tents of wickedness. ¹¹ For the Lord God *is* a sun and shield; The Lord will give grace and glory; *No good thing will He withhold from those who walk uprightly.*

Better is One Day in Your Courts

What has been your perspective on serving the Lord? Can you say that one day serving God is better than a thousand doing something else?

What should our ultimate focus be according to the end of verse 11 above?

Whether we know our specific giftings or not, we are to do all that we do unto Him. Everything for His glory and not our own. **When we make the Lord our passion, then He will make us passionate for what He has called us to do.**

What does **Philippians 2:12b-13** say is our role for working out what God has worked in us?

What is God's role in this?

Day 3 - Finding a Place to Serve

I Peter

As each one has received a gift, *minister it to one another*, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen

We mentioned previously, we don't need to know the name of a Spiritual gift to have one or serve in it. **Start serving and God will lead us to the next thing.** As we serve the Lord will be working His gifts through us. More important that knowing our gifts, we are commanded to be involved in what God is doing.

What does **Hebrews 13:15-17** say are the sacrifices that God is pleased with?

What instruction does Paul give in **1 Thessalonians 5:11**, which many of us are likely doing?

You don't need to know a hammer is called a hammer in order to use it.

Unless God has barred us from doing so, we should all get involved in *service alongside other believers*. Christianity is not meant to be a spectator sport. The Lord didn't give gifts for us to learn all we can to never exercise what we have learned.

Luke 12:42-48

⁴² And the Lord said, "Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom *his master will make ruler over his household*, to give them their portion of food in due season? ⁴³ *Blessed is that servant whom his master will find so doing when he comes.* ⁴⁴ Truly, I say to you that *he will make him ruler over all that he has.* ⁴⁵ But if that servant says in his heart, 'My master is delaying his coming,' and begins to beat the male and female servants, and to eat and drink and be drunk, ⁴⁶ the master of that servant will come on a day when he is not looking for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in two and appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. ⁴⁷ And that servant who knew his master's will, and did not prepare himself or do according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. ⁴⁸ But he who did not know, yet committed things deserving of stripes, shall be beaten with few. *For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.*

Motives for Serving

Have you previously considered serving the Body of Christ a commandment or that the gift you were given carries a requirement that you use it? Why or why not?

Do you think it can be uncomfortable for a bible teacher to tell the congregation that God holds them accountable for serving in the body? Why or why not?

Romans 12:6-8

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

We were given gifts with the expectation that we would use them. As a perfect Father, God does not give a gift that He would have you put on a shelf and look and talk about. He wants you to use it and enjoy it.

The writer of Hebrews offers us a prayer we would echo:

Hebrews 13:20-21

²⁰ Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, ²¹ make you complete in every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever. Amen.

Take a few minutes to meditate on this prayer and write down how it applies to your situation.

Day 4 - Let God Reveal Your Gift

God doesn't save us and take us home that very moment because there is work that He has for us to do here on Earth. There are lives He has for us to impact. This is how He gets glory from our lives. *And the spiritual gifts that He gives enable us to fulfil that work.* After Jesus ascended into Heaven, He sent the Holy Spirit to empower His people to be able to build his Church.

John 15:8,16

⁸ By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

¹⁶ You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

Bearing fruit is a mark of a disciple. There are good things are coming from our lives, for eternal good. God desires that the fruit that comes from our service would remain, that it would an eternal effect.

This always been His plan. Our job isn't to make up our own good things to do but to abide in Him, walk with Him and to serve where He wants us. *Afterall, we didn't choose Him. We didn't find Him. He found us. He chose us. And He appointed us.*

Appointed: to assign a duty or responsibility to, to put in a new position

Have you ever considered that the day you ultimately called on the name of Jesus in salvation had always been His plan, and that He has Spiritual fruit planned for you to bear? In light of this Spiritual Gifts study, what do you think of it now?

Psalm 37:23

²³ The steps of a *good* man are ordered by the Lord, And He delights in his way.

Ordered: established, prepared

Does knowing that your steps are ordered by the Lord take the pressure off of figuring out your Spiritual gift?

God Orders our Steps

Joshua had the promise that God had ordered his steps leading Him into the promised land (**Joshua 1:3**). Did he know in advance how God was going to give him the victory?

What did Joshua know?

What do you know about the eternal results of walking in the gifts God has given you?

If we are abiding in Christ, then we will be right where we're supposed to be, doing what we're supposed to be doing. We don't have to worry about what gifts we have, and we don't have to conjure up our own works to do for the Lord. Our job is to walk in what He lays out.

What then does it mean to abide in Christ?

What will be the result if we do?

The Lord rewards with responsibility with opportunities. If we are faithful with the little, He knows we can be faithful with greater. As we serve the Lord in this way, He will give us more responsibility and more opportunities within His kingdom. Through that process, we won't have to guess what He has divinely enabled us to do through the Spiritual gifts. The fruit will be evident.

How should we in the Church respond to living in a culture that that is increasingly afraid of responsibility?

It is not great ability He is looking for, but dependability. He's looking for Faithfulness!

Matthew 25:21

²¹ His lord said to him, 'Well *done*, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

Galatians 6:9

⁹ And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.

*Only one life twill soon be past,
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

CT Studd

(British missionary to China)

Question to Consider Prior to Group Discussion

If you invited someone to serve with you and they said, "that's not my Spiritual gift," how would you respond?

Questions for Group Discussion

What did the Holy Spirit reveal to you from the teaching this week that has lingered with you?

If you think you know what your Spiritual gift is, how should you use that information?

How should your passion affect your service?

**“NOW CONCERNING SPIRITUAL GIFTS, BRETHREN,
I DO NOT WANT YOU TO BE IGNORANT...**

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one [of us] for the profit of all.*”

1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-7

**THE PASTORS AND BIBLE TEACHERS
AT CALVARY CHAPEL CHINO HILLS PRESENT
A COMPREHENSIVE STUDY AIMED AT:**

- Providing a Biblical understanding of what the Spiritual gifts are – and what they are not
- Helping you prayerfully discover your Spiritual Gifts
- Identifying and acknowledging the Spiritual gifts of others in your Christian community
- Encouraging us all to effectively serve in the Body of Christ
- Bringing greater glory to God

