

“The Essentials Of Our Faith”

Session XXX

May 22, 2011

“The Church”:

The “Body” and “Bride” Of Jesus Christ!

Part Six: “The Spiritual Gifts Of The Body”

Introduction:

- A. The Church was given “birth” by the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, Acts 2:1-4.
 - 1. He began to place every Believer into Jesus Christ – into His “Body”, I Cor. 12:13.
 - 2. He began to permanently “indwell” every member of Christ’s Body, I Cor. 6:19.
 - 3. He began to “seal” every Believer as a “pledge of our inheritance”, Eph. 1:13-14.
- B. The Church is being “built” by Jesus Christ in this Dispensation, Matt. 16:18.
 - 1. He is building the Church according to His sovereign “plan”, Eph. 1:11; 3:11.
 - 2. He is building the Church upon His personal “authority”, Matt. 28:18-20.
 - 3. He is building the Church upon the faithfulness of individual Believers using the “gifts” of His Spirit – spiritual enablement for personal ministry, I Cor. 12:1, 4-7, 11.

General Observations:

A. Every Christian has a **New Nature!**

"Therefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature;

the old things passed away; behold, new things have come." II Cor. 5:17

- 1. The “new creature” genuinely **loves God!**
 - We love Him because He loved us first. Our love is always a “response” to His love. (II Cor. 5:14; I John 4:10,19)
- 2. The “new creature” gets deep meaning out of **sharing** the love of Christ with other people! It is a “**new**” motivation!
 - We no longer live for ourselves, but for Him. (II Cor. 5:15)

B. Every Christian has received the **Indwelling of the Holy Spirit!**

"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you,

whom you have from God, and that you are not your own." I Cor 6:19

- 1. The indwelling Holy Spirit **motivates** the Christian to **show** love “for” Christ.
(Rom. 8:15)
- 2. The indwelling Holy Spirit **motivates** the Christian to **show** love “for” other people.
(I Cor. 12:7)

I. Christians Have A Spiritual Enablement For Service To Christ.

*--“A **spiritual gift** is a ‘God-given’ ability for service.” --Charles Ryrie*

A. Every Christian Has A "Spiritual Gift".

“But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”

I Cor. 12:7

B. What Is A "Spiritual Gift"?

“ . . . the manifestation of the Spirit . . . ” (12:7)

C. What Is The Purpose Of "Spiritual Gifts"?

“ . . . for the common good. ” (12:7)

D. Who Decides Which "Spiritual Gift" A Christian Receives?

*“But one and the same Spirit works all these things,
distributing to each one individually just as He wills.” (I Cor. 12:11)*

E. How Many "Spiritual Gifts" Are There?

--Note: There is much division of opinion in answer to this question. One thing is clear -- God has given many "gifts" to His children in His Body, the Church.

--Note: There are several ways to categorize the "Gifts". Each method has its own validity. The categories are often determined by what Biblical truth is being emphasized.

--Note: Simply compiling a list of all the “gifts” mentioned in the N.T. without an attempt to organize them into categories can be confusing, even misleading.

--One of the most helpful ways to organize the "Spiritual Gifts" is as follows:

1. The “Manifestational” Gifts: I Corinthians 12:8-11.

--These were the "miraculous" or "sign" gifts which God gave to the early N.T. Church → “the word of wisdom”, “the word of knowledge”, “faith”, “gifts of healing”, “effecting miracles”, “prophecy”, “distinguishing of spirits”, “various kinds of tongues”, “interpretation of tongues”.

--Note: We believe these **sign gifts** have “ceased”, I Cor. 13:8.

2. The “Ministry” Gifts: Ephesians 4:11.

--These are the "leadership" gifts given to the Church → “apostles”, “prophets”, “evangelists”, “pastors”, “teachers”.

--Note: These **ministry gifts** are not given to every Believer.

3. The “Motivational” Gifts: Romans 12:6-8.

--These are the "spiritual" abilities given to Christians for ministry → “prophecy”, “service”, “teaching”, “exhortation”, “giving”, “leading”, “mercy”.

--Note: One of these **inner motivations** is given to every Believer!

II. The "Motivational Gifts" Of Romans 12:6-8.

A. Background:

Every Christian has been "gifted" by God with a Spiritual Gift.

--This "gifting" **enables** us to serve Him.

--This "gifting" **motivates** us for personal involvement in ministry.

--This "gifting" determines the way we **view** all of life.

From it, we **form** our convictions . . . and, we **express** our opinions!

Understanding a Christian's **Spiritual Gifting** will explain much of what they do and say. So, it is very helpful in all of life -- especially in marriage, in family, and in the Church.

"Spiritual Gifts" Explain Why Christians Act The Way They Do!

B. Approach:

--There are **seven** "Motivational Gifts" listed in Romans 12:6-8.

--We will observe **four** things about each gift:

--Observations one and two will be "Positive":

1. What does this "gift" give a Christian the **desire** to do?

--This "desire" is the motivation of the "gift".

2. What is the **ability** that is given with the "gift"?

--Each brings its own enablement for service.

--Observations three and four will be "Negative":

3. What is the **inability** of the "gift"?

--What is it that this particular gift cannot tolerate?

4. What is the **frustration** of each "gift"?

--What statement would best describe what is being "thought" and "felt" by the Christian with this gift?

The Motivational Gifts

1. The Gift Of "PROPHECY":

(This is not the O.T. gift which was to "foretell the future.")

a. Positive:

- 1) The "Desire" of this gift: To **declare** the Truth!
--This Christian is motivated to "speak" God's truth whenever and wherever possible. (This is their "heart"!) See Acts 20:20-21.
- 2) The "Ability" of this gift: To **recognize** or **discern** the Truth!
--This Christian is enabled to "see" or "sense" both Biblical "Truth" and general truth in all areas of life!
--This Christian is not afraid to "confront" people verbally!

b. Negative:

- 1) The "Inability" of this gift: To **tolerate** any lack of "Truth".
--This Christian is concerned, or even angered, whenever people fail to speak or act in the Truth.
- 2) The "Frustration" of this gift: **"Don't you understand . . . the only thing that can really help people is to make them deal with what God says!"**

2. The Gift Of "SERVICE":

a. Positive:

- 1) The "Desire" of this gift: To **show** the love of Christ by giving **help** to people in need!
--This Christian is motivated to "love" people the way Jesus did -- by meeting their needs. (This is their "heart"!) See John 13:35.
- 2) The "Ability" of this gift: To **recognize** the needs of people!
--This Christian is enabled to "see" where people have outward physical and practical needs.
--This Christian will not wait to be "asked" for help; they will "initiate" the help-- they just show up with what is needed!

b. Negative:

- 1) The "Inability" of this gift: To **tolerate** Christians who do not help others -- those who show no concern!
--This Christian will criticize those who don't help others.
- 2) The "Frustration" of this gift: **"Don't you understand . . . people must see the love of Jesus as well as hear it! How will they know He cares if we don't?"**

3. The Gift Of "TEACHING":

a. Positive:

- 1) The "Desire" of this gift: To **document** or **validate** the Word of God by "detailed" study.
--This Christian is motivated to "dig" into the Word for its eternal treasure and to teach others. (This is their "heart"!) See II Tim 2:15.
- 2) The "Ability" of this gift: The desire and skill to do the **detailed, long-term study** required to "rightly divide" the Word of Truth.
--This Christian is enabled to "analyze" and "interpret" the Scriptures. They focus on "sound doctrine".
--This Christian normally has many books, even a library, devoted to Biblical research and is diligent in reading.

b. Negative:

- 1) The "Inability" of this gift: To **tolerate** lack of accuracy or doctrinal purity in the teaching or preaching of God's Word.
--This Christian will not accept anything that is taught until they "study it" for themselves. If they differ with those who are teaching or preaching, they become critical of them. See II Cor. 4:2.
- 2) The "Frustration" of this gift: **"Don't you understand . . . people cannot be saved or grow spiritually unless they hear the 'unadulterated' Word of Truth."**

4. The Gift Of "EXHORTATION":

a. Positive:

- 1) The "Desire" of this gift: To **encourage** other Christians to "walk in the light" and to "grow in the knowledge" of Christ!
--This Christian is motivated to "motivate" others in the Lord! They want to get involved with others, to walk along beside them, to catch them when they fall! (This is their "heart"!) See Acts 20:18-19.
- 2) The "Ability" of this gift: To be **sensitive** to and **identify** areas of needed spiritual growth in the lives of others.
--This Christian devotes much time and energy in the lives others. They are involved in many relationships outside their own marriage and family.
--This Christian likes to give gifts of encouragement -- helpful books and literature on spiritual growth.

b. Negative:

- 1) The "Inability" of this gift: To **tolerate** their follow-Christians who have no desire or willingness to "grow" spiritually.
- 2) The "Frustration" of this gift: **"Don't you understand . . . where the people in our Church should be spiritually?"**

5. The Gift Of "GIVING":

a. Positive:

- 1) The "Desire" of this gift: To **provide** the financial means to carry on and to advance the cause of Christ.
 - This Christian is motivated to take what God has given to them and to give it to others! (This is their "heart"!) See II Corinthians 8:1-4.
- 2) The "Ability" of this gift: To make the hard **choice** to take what could be used for themselves and to **give** it to others!
 - This Christian is disciplined in financial matters.
 - This Christian often lives on "little" or does not live on the level which would be possible to them.
 - This Christian has a unique ability to discern where their financial gifts would do the most good.

b. Negative:

- 1) The "Inability" of this gift: To **tolerate** Christians who don't give sacrificially! To **tolerate** Churches and Christian ministries which do not use God's money efficiently!
 - This Christian can be very "judgmental" about how other Christians use their money!
- 2) The "Frustration" of this gift: **"Don't you understand . . . what could be done for Christ if Christians just used their money to glorify God!"**

6. The Gift Of "ORGANIZATION":

a. Positive:

- 1) The "Desire" of this gift: To **organize** the people of God to effectively "fulfill" the plan and purposes of God.
 - This Christian is motivated to be an administrator --to be used in the "behind the scenes" organizational framework.
 - This Christian is not motivated by a desire for power or public recognition! (This is their "heart"!) See I Pet. 5:1-4.
- 2) The "Ability" of this gift: To function as an **efficient manager** of God's people!
 - This Christian can "see" where people can "fit" into getting the task accomplished.

b. Negative:

- 1) The "Inability" of this gift: To **tolerate** inefficient management within the Church which hinders the cause of Christ!
 - This Christian can "offend" others in the effort to get things done efficiently or in a "Christ-honoring" way!
- 2) The "Frustration" of this gift: **"Don't you understand . . . what God's people could do if they worked to their potential?"**

7. The Gift Of "MERCY":

a. Positive:

- 1) The "Desire" of this gift: To **show** the love of Christ by being "sensitive" to and providing "help" for the **inward hurts** of people in need.
 - This Christian is motivated to help people see that the love of Christ for them is the answer to the inner needs of their life. (This is their heart) See Eph. 3:16-19.
- 2) The "Ability" of this gift: To **feel the hurt** of other people.
 - This Christian is able to "sense" where people are hurting, often saying, "Is something bothering you? May I help?"
 - This Christian is "sympathetic" to a person's inner feelings.
 - This Christian is "patient" with the failures of Christians.

b. Negative:

- 1) The "Inability" of this gift. To **tolerate** the insensitivity and impatience of some Christians with those who are hurting!
 - This Christian will question the "maturity" those who speak the Truth of the Word, but fail to show the "love" of Jesus.
- 2) The "Frustration" of this gift. **"Don't you understand . . . people must sense the love of Christ in us before they can believe that His love can help them!"**

III. How Do You Recognize Your Spiritual Gift?

1. You must be "**growing**" spiritually!
 - a. Since these gifts are given by the Holy Spirit, a Christian must be learning to "walk" by Him, in order to discover His gifting. (Gal. 5:16)
 - b. Since these gifts are given by the Holy Spirit, a Christian must be learning to be "filled" by Him, in order to discover His gifting! (Eph. 5:18)
 - c. Note: An "underdeveloped" spiritual life leads to an "underdeveloped" and little used spiritual gift!
2. You must be meaningfully "**involved**" in the Body of Christ since these gifts are given for the "common good" of Christians. Lack of "involvement" in the mission and purpose of the Church lead to difficulty in identifying spiritual gifts.
3. You must be "**responding**" to any ministry opportunities God's places in front of you. Involvement in Christian ministry will give opportunity for your gift to be seen.
4. You must be "**listening**" to other members of the Body of Christ. They will often recognize your gift before you and will sometimes make comments about how God has gifted you. **Note**: Be sure to ask your Church leaders what gift they see!