

"Spiritual Gifts"

Enablement For The Will Of God

Part V

I. The "Definition" of a Gift:

"A 'Spiritual Gift' is a divine enablement of a special ability for service upon a member of the Body of Christ."
--William McRae

A. The N.T. words:

1. "**Gift**" = pneumatikos → I Cor. 12:1.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware."

--The source of a "spiritual gift" is God; they are **divine/supernatural!**

--Every Believer has a "**divine enablement**" from the Holy Spirit!

2. "**Gift**" = charisma → I Cor. 12:4.

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit."

--The essence of a "spiritual gift" = **an ability!**

--Every "**Assembly**" of Believers is composed of individuals who are **gifted, enabled by God to serve Him effectively!**

B. What a "gift" embodies: (From William McRae)

1. "Ability" → that enables a Christian to do effective work that glorifies God!
2. "Qualification" → to serve in the work of God; a "gift" of God, not human ability!
3. "Strength" → a divine/supernatural strength to minister!
4. "Responsibility" → it is a stewardship from God, to be rewarded by God!

C. What about natural "talents"?

--It is imperative that we distinguish between a "spiritual gift" and a "natural talent".

--Natural abilities do not become "spiritual gifts" at the point of conversion.

--However, a natural talent can be the "channel" for the exercise of a spiritual gift, but never the "source"!

II. The “Distribution” of the Gifts:

- A. Gifts are distributed by the “ASCENDED” Christ, Eph. 4:7.
- B. Gifts are distributed to “EVERY” individual Believer, Eph. 4:7; I Cor. 12:7,11.
- C. Gifts are distributed for the “BENEFIT” of others, I Cor. 12:7.
- D. Gifts are distributed by the “SOVEREIGN” ministry of the Holy Spirit, I Cor. 12:11.
No one dictates to the “Dispenser”! He does as He wills!
- E. Gifts are given at the time of “SALVATION”, I Cor. 12:13.
- F. Gifts are distributed on the basis of God’s “GRACE”, Eph. 4:7.

III. The “Description” of the Gifts:

Romans 12:6-8

Prophecy
Service
Teaching
Exhortation
Giving
Leading/Administration
Showing Mercy

Ephesians 4:11

Apostleship
Prophecy
Evangelism
Pastor-Teacher

I Peter 4:11

Speaking
Serving

I Corinthians 12:6-10

Word of Wisdom
Word of Knowledge
Faith
Healing
Miracles
Prophecy
Distinguishing spirits
Speaking in tongues
Interpreting tongues

I Corinthians 12:28

Apostleship
Prophecy
Teaching
Miracles
Healing
Helping
Administration
Speaking in tongues

I Corinthians 12:29-30

Apostleship
Prophecy
Teaching
Miracles
Healing
Speaking in tongues
Interpreting tongues

A. General Observations:

1. There are **6** lists of “spiritual gifts”.
2. There are a total of **18** “gifts” listed.
3. There is **repetition** of several of the “gifts” within the six lists.
--See: “Prophecy” → appears in **5** of the lists!
4. A consistent method of **interpretation** must be used with each list.
--This will demand that each “gift” be defined in the same way in each list.
Some want to see “Healing” as physical in one list, but spiritual in another.

5. Our method of interpretation will be:
 - a. "Literal" → Each word will be interpreted to mean what it says!
 - b. "Historical" → Each word must be placed in its "normal" historical setting!
 - c. "Grammatical" → Each word must be understood as implied by the original text!
 - d. "Contextual" → Each word must be understood in the context where it appears!
6. Our interpretation must be exegetical, not experiential → We must not define these gifts solely on the basis of present-day usage and practice!
7. We must address the question: "Are all of these spiritual gifts **active** today?"
 - The answer is determined by a "consistent" method of interpretation of each text!
 - A consistent "Dispensational" interpretation of God's overall plan in human history reveals that some of the spiritual gifts are **no longer given** by God!

B. Helpful Categories for the 18 Separate "Gifts": I Cor. 12:4-6.

"Now there are varieties of gifts . . . varieties of ministries . . . varieties of effects . . ."

1. I Corinthians 12:6-10

2. I Corinthians 12:28 → The "SIGN" Gifts!

3. I Corinthians 12:29-30

4. Ephesians 4:11 → The "MINISTRY" Gifts!

5. Romans 12:6-8 → The "MOTIVATIONAL" Gifts!

6. I Peter 4:11 → A "Two-fold Summary": "Speaking" and "Serving" Gifts.

C. Discussion of the Three Major Categories:

The "SIGN" Gifts ("Manifestational")

I Cor. 12: 6-10, 28, 29-30

1. Each of these gifts was **real** → Each **functioned** in the early N.T. "Assembly".
2. These gifts were supernatural "**manifestations**" of the Holy Spirit who now, after the Day of Pentecost, indwelled all Believers.
3. Each of these "gifts" had a special **purpose** → to enable the newly born Church to function effectively in its early years.

4. **Major factor:** The canon (completed record) of the N.T. Scriptures was not finished until near the end of the first century, so many local “Assemblies” did not have any written portion of God’s Word. Much of the new Church was dependent on the verbal preaching of the N.T. “apostles”, “prophets”, and “evangelists”!
--Several of the “sign” gifts **allowed the infant Church to have God’s Word** before it was available in written form to the local “Assemblies”.
5. **Major factor:** Jesus had told the leaders of the Jewish nation who demanded miraculous “signs” to prove He was “Messiah” that they would get only **one sign – the “sign of Jonah”** (His bodily resurrection), Matt. 12:39; 16:4; Lk. 11:29.
--Several of the “sign” gifts gave supernatural **proof** of Jesus’ resurrection and of Jesus’ claims to be Israel’s promised “Messiah”! (See: Isaiah 28:11)
6. **Conclusion:** The “sign” gifts were **no longer needed** in the early Church after:
a. The Jewish nation was given final opportunity to recognize Jesus as “Messiah”!
b. The “canon” of Scripture was made available to the Church!
7. **Biblical Support** for this conclusion:
--These “gifts” are said to have “*ceased*” or to “*be done away*” → I Cor. 13:1-13.
1) Paul addresses the selfish abuse of the “sign” gifts in Corinth, 13:1-7.
a) Possession of the “sign” gifts is not the mark of spiritual maturity!
b) Paul’s argument in these verses is against the immature and selfish infighting of the Corinthian Church. The gifts are never for “self” or for personal benefit or recognition!
c) Demonstration of Christ’s selfless “love” is the “more excellent way”!
2) Paul addresses the function of the “sign” gifts before the Scriptures are made available in printed form, 13:8-12.
a) The Believer “*knows in part*” until “*the perfect comes*”.
--This certainly refers to the future when we see Christ “*face to face*”!
--It also would refer to the “partial” knowledge of God being progressively replaced by “*the perfect*” or completed truth of the written Word of God!
b) The need of the early Church was for the completed canon of Scripture!
8. **Warning:** Without an understanding of these two major factors, there can be no adequate understanding of the original purpose of the “sign” gifts in I Cor. 12!
--The danger is to attempt to restore or repeat what has “*passed away*” in God’s plan and purpose! This produces great confusion and discouragement!
--Your “spiritual gift” is **not** one of the “sign gifts”!
9. **Observation:** There are many genuine and Godly Christians who do not believe that the “sign” gifts have “*ceased*” or “*passed away*”.
a. Some believe that they have remained operative since God gave them in the early Church → therefore, they are actively given and to be exercised today!
b. Some believe that they did “*pass away*” for much of the Church’s history since the first century, but **now** they have been restored at the “*end of the age*”.

The “**MOTIVATIONAL**” Gifts

Romans 12:6-8

Observation:

The Christian is a very different person than the non-Christian!

--What makes the Christian act the way they do?

A. Christians Have A Strong "Inner" Motivation Which Affects Everything They Do.

1. 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

a. The "new creature" genuinely **loves God!**

We love Him because He loved us first. Our love is always a "response" to His love! We love Him, but only because He loved us first, II Cor. 5:14; I Jn. 4:10,19.

b. 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.

2. 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

a. The indwelling Holy Spirit **motivates** the Christian to **show** love "for" Christ!

b. The indwelling Holy Spirit **motivates** the Christian to **show** love "for" other people!

3. This "gifting" determines the way we **view** all of life. From it, we **form** our convictions. From it, we **express** our opinions.

a. Understanding a Christian's **Spiritual Gifting** will explain much of what they do and say. It is very helpful to understand in a marriage and family. It is very helpful within a Church Body.

b. As we study the "Motivational Gifts" of Romans 12:6-8, remember that every Christian has one of these God-given **motivations** functioning within them.

--This explains why Christians act the way they do!

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

--There are **seven** "Motivational Gifts" listed in Romans 12:6-8. As we study each of these "gifts", we will observe **four** things about each:

Observations one and two will be "_____!"

1. What does this "gift" give a Christian a **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 "_____!"

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

--What are the things 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 Described

1. The Gift Of "PROPHECY":

*"Since we have **gifts** that differ according to the **grace** given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if **prophecy**, according to the proportion of his faith . . ."*

Romans 12:6

--Note: This is not the O.T. gift of "prophecy" -- the ability to "foretell the future".

a. Positive:

1) The "**Desire**" of this gift: To "_____" 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 "_____" or "_____" 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! (Gal. 2:11-14; Eph. 4:15)

b. Negative:

1) The "**Inability**" of this gift: To "_____" 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":

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

a. Positive:

- 1) The "Desire" of this gift: To "_____" the love of Christ by giving practical "_____" to people in need!
--This Christian is motivated to "love" people the way Jesus often did -- by meeting their needs. This is their "heart"! (See John 13:35)
- 2) The "Ability" of this gift: To "_____" 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 "_____" Christians who do not help others → those who show no concern!
--This Christian is often tempted to 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!"**

3. The Gift Of "TEACHING":

" . . . or he who teaches, in his teaching . . . " (Romans 12:7)

a. Positive:

- 1) The "Desire" of this gift: To "_____" or "_____" 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 "_____",
"_____" - "_____" **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 knowledge and is personally diligent in reading and study.

b. Negative:

- 1) The "Inability" of this gift: To "_____" 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 often become critical of them. (See II Cor. 4:2; Acts 17:11)
- 2) The "Frustration" of this gift: **"Don't you understand . . . people cannot be saved or grow spiritually unless they hear the 'unadulterated' Word."**

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 of 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!

Conclusions

Why do people act the way they do?

1. Every person has a **"sin nature"** -- which is expressed through their personality. This sin nature is selfish! Its focus is always on what is beneficial or pleasurable to "self"! It is helpful to notice that this sin nature manifests itself in one of four categories--one of the "Four Basic Temperaments". In a marriage and family, much

insight can come from knowing the Temperament of the person to whom I am married.

****A non-Christian possesses no other nature -- this is the only nature that can be manifest through the personality!**

****When a Christian is not "walking in the Spirit", this is also the only nature which can be manifest!**

2. Every Christian has a "**new nature**" -- which is expressed in and through their personality. However, this new nature is the "life" of Christ living in them by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This nature is like Christ --it is characterized by His love. Rather than living for "self", the new nature lives for Christ. In living for Christ, the in-dwelling Holy Spirit, gifts each Christian with an individual "spiritual gift". This gift determines the way we see everything in our whole world. Therefore, it is extremely important within a marriage, family or Church to understand an individual's spiritual gift.

****Our spiritual gift is like a pair of "eyeglasses" we put on -- all of life is seen through the lenses of these glasses!**

--Question: How do you see your wife? Children? Church? world?

****If we want to be effective husbands, fathers, and pastors, we must remember that we are looking through spiritual "eyeglasses"!**

3. One of the most common sins among Christians is the pride of assuming that, "Everyone should be like me!" Or, "I am right in the way I view things -- anyone who disagrees is wrong!"

****The Biblical truth is that God has purposed that we be very different from one another -- even in our marriages!**

****We are to value each other as God has purposed!**