

UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

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THE IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. The Prominence of Spiritual Gifts in the Bible (Rom.12:3-8); 1 Cor.12-14; Eph.4:7-12; 1 Peter 4:10-11).
2. Knowing your Spiritual Gifts will enable you to find your right place in the ministry of the local church.
3. Knowing your spiritual gifts will help you to discern God's will concerning your service/ministry in the body of Christ.

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4. It will enable you to prioritize your ministries with clear focus, dedication, and greater zeal.

5. Spiritual gifts are a matter of your stewardship - sense of responsibility, accountability, and faithfulness (1 Peter 4:10; 1 Cor.4:1-2).

6. A divinely planned mechanism through which we can demonstrate and appreciate unity in diversity in the body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- ▶ “Now concerning spiritual *gifts* brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant” (1 Cor.12:1).
- ▶ “Now there are diversities (varieties, kinds) of gifts....” (1 Cor.12:4).

THE WORD “SPIRITUAL GIFT”

- ▶ 1 Cor.12:1: “Spiritual *gifts*”.
Pneumatikos (masculine or Neuter), spiritual in nature, source, spiritual realm. *Spirituals* (“spiritual things” or “spiritual persons”). Spiritual in essence, pertaining to the spirit, spiritual qualities, characterized by the Spirit, under spiritual control.
- ▶ 1 Cor.12:4: “Varieties of gifts”. “Grace Gifts”- *Charisma* - Gift of grace, not based on merit. Based on God’s “grace” - gifts of grace, functions of divine grace.

DEFINITIONS

- ▶ A spiritual gift is a God given capacity of every Christian to carry out his/her function in the body of Christ.
- ▶ It is a divine endowment of special ability for service upon a believer.
- ▶ It is a divine enablement to serve effectively in the power of the Holy Spirit.

ATTITUDE TOWARDS SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Ignorance, no meaningful awareness.
2. Vague and superficial understanding.
3. Neglect.
4. Abuse.
5. Over-emphasis of certain gifts.
6. Biblical understanding, appreciation, and exercise.

CORRECTING CHARISMATIC CONFUSION IN CORINTH (1 Cor. 12 - 14)

- 1. The Importance of Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor. 12:1-3)**
- 2. The Source of Spiritual Gifts (12:4-6)**
- 3. The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts (12:7)**
- 4. The Identity of Spiritual Gifts (12:8 -10)**

CORRECTING CHARISMATIC CONFUSION IN CORINTH (1 Cor. 12 - 14)

5. The Distribution of Spiritual Gifts (12:11)
6. Unity in Diversity - Functional diversity in a Unified body resulting in health and growth (12:12-31)
7. Love: The greatest of all - The Supremacy of love over gifts (13:1-3).
8. The Superiority of Prophecy over Tongues and the need for Corporate Edification and order in the exercise of Gifts, and the Regulations for the use of Gifts (14:1-40).

SPIRITUAL GIFTS & NATURAL TALENTS

- ▶ **Natural Talents (natural abilities)** are given by God at birth through parents to believers and unbelievers alike to benefit mankind generally.
- ▶ **Spiritual Gifts** are given by God only to believers, at conversion, independent of parents, to benefit the body of Christ particularly.
 - ▶ Both must be recognized, developed and exercised.
 - ▶ A natural talent may be involved in your spiritual gift.
 - ▶ Similarities in source, process, and function. But major differences in the areas of *possession, empowering, impact, and results.*

CONTRASTS WITH GENERAL COMMANDS

- ▶ Though general commands are given to all believers, this must be distinguished from spiritual gifts.
 - All should *exhort* one another (Heb.10:25), but only some have the actual gift of exhortation.
 - All should *give* (2 Cor.9:7).
 - All should *witness* (Acts 1:8).
 - All should walk by *faith* (2 Cor.5:7).

DISTINCTIONS BETWEEN GIFT, OFFICE, AND FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

1. **Gift vs. Office:** A person may have certain spiritual gifts but not occupy any office in the church. But those who hold offices also should exercise certain spiritual gifts. A gifted person may not occupy an office, but one who occupies an office must also be a gifted person. Gifts are given to both men and women, but offices in the church are to be occupied only by men.
2. **Gift vs. Fruit:** The “fruit of the Spirit” (Gal.5:22-23) is a cluster of spiritual qualities which the Holy Spirit produces in a believer. But Spiritual Gift is a God-given ability for service. Only those who are “spiritual” manifest the “fruit,” while even the “carnal” believers are endowed with spiritual gifts and may exercise them.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Sovereignly given by the Holy Spirit (1Cor.12:11).
2. By the risen, ascended, glorified Christ (Eph.4:7-11).
3. By God the Father (Rom.12:3).
4. Each person of the Godhead is involved in bestowing spiritual gifts (1 Cor.12:4-6).
5. Distributed to all believers (1Cor.12:7, 11; Rom.12:3; Eph.4:7; 1Pet.4:10).

THE PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- ▶ Spiritual Gifts are given for the *edification (building up)* of the church for the “common good,” “for the profit of all,” “what is beneficial” for all (1 Cor.12:7; Eph.4:12; 1 Pet.4:10).
 - Serve the family of God.
 - Enhance the body of Christ.
 - Help the Church mature and move forward.

LISTS OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Rom.12:3-8 (7 gifts).
2. 1 Cor.12:4-11 (9 gifts).
3. 1 Cor.12:28-30 (9 gifts).
4. Eph.4:7-16 (4 gifts).
5. 1 Pet.4:10-11(2 gifts).
(20 Gifts are mentioned by name in these 5 lists).

CLASSIFICATION/CATEGORIES OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. **Speaking Gifts** (teaching, prophecy, exhortation etc.).
2. **Serving Gifts** (showing mercy, service, giving etc.).
3. **Sign Gifts** (healing, miracles, tongues etc.).