

HOW TO UNWRAP YOUR GIFTS
SPIRITUAL GIFTS #13
1213
1 CORINTHIANS 12:28-31
DR. ROGER BARRIER

In Luke 11 Jesus says: "Only he who asks will receive; only he who seeks will find; only he who knocks will have the door opened."

I want to talk today on How to Unwrap Our Spiritual Gifts.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:28-31.

12:28-30 Mixed list of all the gifts

12:31 "Eagerly desire spiritual gifts."

THE COMMAND TO DESIRE THE BEST GIFTS RAISE A PROBLEM. How do we reconcile this command with the teaching that the Holy Spirit sovereignly assigns the gifts to whomever He chooses?

Here are three observations.

1. "Eagerly desire" can be imperative (command) "Eagerly desire the best gifts" or, it can be an indicative (a statement) "You are eagerly desiring the best gifts." Both translations are grammatically correct.
The context speaks about everyone having a free-for-all desiring the gifts, and Paul has been suggesting "Look, take the gift God has given to you as He wills and develop it for use to edify the church!" But you're all striving after the best gifts (as you see them), but let me show you a more excellent way." Then moved in to chapter 13 on "love".
2. The command is second person plural: the commands to desire the greater gifts pertain to the whole church more than to individual believers. To function smoothly a body needs all the parts.
3. The desire in an individual for a gift does not guarantee it. The overriding factor is the will of the Holy Spirit. Final assignment belongs to Him who allots gifts as He chooses (I Cor. 12:11).

Jesus alludes to receiving gifts from the Holy Spirit with the parable of the friend asking for bread in Luke 11:5-13.

READ AND EXPOUND LUKE 11:5-13.

A man receives an unexpected visitor and he has no bread for him. Although it is already midnight, he goes to his neighbor and asks for bread. The friend proves quite unfriendly in this situation, giving help only when the asker pesters him into action.

Jesus explains, "If you, then, who are evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him?"

How gladly God gives us His gifts. "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened."

It could be put like this: Only he who asks will receive; only he who seeks will find; only he who knocks will have the door opened.

THOSE WHO ASK, SEEK AND KNOCK INTERACT WITH GOD IN UNDERSTANDING WHAT THEY NEED.

Spiritual Gifts are not a department store gift catalog.

NEIMAN MARCUS CHRISTMAS BOOK

Cute; but it will all pass away.

Those who ask, seek and knock interact with God in understanding what they need.

By expecting us to ask, God leads us to self-understanding of our need.
We must be clear about what we need and want, and we must ask God over and over for this clarity.

Many Christians ask selfishly; they want special gifts in order to become more important; they strive especially for the gift of healing, working wonders, or prayer in other languages.

Others want the gifts in order to get ahead in their profession. They think, for example, that they could earn more money if they had the gift of leadership.

God cannot answer such requests. The gifts from the Holy Spirit are given so that God can work through them.

The right motive for requesting a gift is the knowledge that one's personal ability is insufficient.

Used to think I could have only one gift. But as ministry increases, my need for gifts increase.

So does yours.

I pray for the gifts of wisdom, administration, discerning of spirits, prophecy, and faith.

I need help in these areas.

Many people are not clear about their own needs, nor do they recognize their limitations.

ROMANS 12:3-8

* All of us as believers are to evaluate ourselves in terms of our God-given gifts.

A sensible estimate of our abilities is a spiritual necessity.

* This sound thinking in evaluation is to correspond to the measure of faith dealt us by God.

As we mature in Christ our gifts and ministries increase.

Perhaps we have overrated the nature of the gifts by thinking of them as something impressive when in reality they may be quite ordinary. Instead of flamboyant, grandstand abilities, they may be silent, steady workings of the Holy Spirit who does not come in earthquake, storm, or wind, but in the still, small voice and soft, simple way.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:6: God the Father pours in the power; Jesus assigns the ministry; The Holy Spirit gives the gifts

"MINISTRIES OF CHRIST"

Ephesians 4:11

(Building and Instructing)

Apostles

Prophets

Evangelists

Pastor-Teacher

Romans 12:6-8

(Supporting)

Prophecy

Service

Teaching

Encouragement

Giving

Administration/Leadership

Mercy

"GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT"

1 Corinthians 12:8-10

(Tools for ministry)

Wisdom

Knowledge

Faith

Healing

Miracles

Prophecy

Distinguishing spirits

Speaking in tongues

Interpreting tongues

We are diamonds in the rough and God facets us.

Watch people's ministries and see the facets develop over the years.

As become more spiritual man or woman will begin to blossom in other areas and that will develop your ministry even more.

Be careful not to label people because they may be just in a phase or developing facet.

To teach and raise up ministries have to know and experience what others under you do.
New Christians need to be instructed in all facets.

Those who ask, seek and knock interact with God in understanding what they need.

"Only he who asks will receive; only he who seeks will find; only he who knocks will have the door opened.

***THOSE WHO ASK, SEEK, AND KNOCK WILL DISCOVER WHAT GIFTS AND MINISTRIES GOD HAS IN STORE FOR THEM.**

BROKEN CAR ENGINE AND DIAGNOSTIC MACHINES
Steve Dowdle's truck vs. Julie's Delta 88 stopping on the road

HOW CAN THE GIFTS FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT BE RECOGNIZED?

Five Diagnostic Questions

1. WHAT ARE MY SKILLS AND ABILITIES?

2. WHAT IS THE HOLY SPIRIT TELLING ME?

The inner witness of the Spirit is not limited to confirming our salvation. He wants us to know what our gifts are and how to use them.

3. WHAT DO I ENJOY DOING?

God wants you to be "Happy in the service of the King." Christian ministry must not become a neurotic compulsion to duty.
Like Jesus, in doing the Father's will we should find delight, not drudgery

When a person discovers his gift and a place of ministry for it he may well exclaim, "I've found it! This is it!"
This has been called the "Eureka" principle.
And this delight continues. Later he will enthusiastically affirm, "This is what I'd rather be doing for the Lord than anything else in the world. I so enjoy it! This is my thing. This turns me on!" He will readily talk about his ministry and wish to improve it.

4. WHAT MINISTRY IS GOD BLESSING?

Someone may realize that often when he has prayed for sick people, they have become well.
Another discovers that people to whom he has given something have make especially good use of it.
Do you see fruit from your teaching?
Are people trusting Christ as a result of your evangelism?

As we begin to evangelize, exhort, show mercy, and help, the Holy Spirit gradually unveils certain gifts. So we should get busy in Christian service.
When considering whether to engage in some form of Christian work, adopt the well-known slogan, "Try it--- you may like it!"

5. WHAT DO OTHERS SEE IN ME?

The crowning confirmation that we do possess a gift is recognition of this gift by others.

Jake Ellis, well respected teacher at Northway: "Roger, you are a wonderful teacher."

God gives us parents, pastors, teachers, and friends to help us in making key decision like this.

As we are doing Christian service in obedience to the commands of Christ, others may see a gift in us long before we ourselves are aware of it.

Because self-estimate may be colored by deception, our character and abilities are often best evaluated by others. Others frequently recognize that we don't possess a gift we think we have.

One professor said, "it's so strange to meet someone who claims to have the gift of preaching when no one has the gift of listening."

One indispensable principle

PRACTICE! PRACTICE! PRACTICE!

Disuse of a limb results in paralysis or atrophy, so doctors order patients up soon after surgery. Similarly, exercise is the only way to prevent a gift's lapse or collapse. If you don't use it, you don't lose it, it just doesn't work very well.

The existence of a gift is a call to exercise it. Eyes are purposeless unless they exercise the function of sight. Paul advised Timothy, "Neglect not the gift that is in thee" (1 Tim. 4:14). Faithful utilization of a gift brings increased effectiveness in its ministry, but failure to develop a gift curtails one's service.

Those who ask, seek, and knock will discover what gifts and ministries God has in store for them.

Only he who asks will receive; only he who seeks will find; only he who knocks will have the door opened.

***THOSE WHO ASK, SEEK, AND KNOCK MUST BE WILLING TO RECEIVE WHATEVER IS BEHIND THE DOOR.**

Game shows: Door #1? Door #2? Door #3?

Those who ask, seek, and knock must be willing to receive whatever is behind the door.

Some people rashly reject certain gifts. They think, "Lord, give me whatever you want--only not the gift of speaking in other languages. That would be too embarrassing."

God often reacts to this by giving nothing at all.. For he lets no one rob him of this sovereignty to give or to keep as he wills.

How about dreams and visions?

"In the last days', God said, 'I will pour out my Holy Spirit upon all mankind, and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men dream dreams'" (Acts 2:17).

THERE ARE OTHER GIFTS THAN TONGUES by Siegfried Grossmann

A small child runs out into the street and is run over by a heavy tractor. The large tires roll directly over the child's chest, but the child stands up as if nothing had happened. The marks of the tires can be seen on him, and everyone is astonished that he is still alive. He does not understand the adults' excitement and says, "Didn't you see the men who lifted up the wheels as they rolled over me?" The child saw in a vision the invisible and yet real intervention of God's angels to protect him.

I believe that visions are very important today because our world--even Christian truth--has become so abstract. Many people can no longer picture God's being and working.

Sam Hall's visions

Struggling with caring for the church last Sunday night. Went to be overwhelmed.

Dreamed Julie and I were shepherding children to ocean observatory. Storm on ocean side.

Then waves came from breakwater side. Spray over us. Calm peace that all would be well.

Made it safely to observatory. Lord what does this mean? Awakened: "Be at peace. I am watching over you as your shepherd. All is well. I will protect you and the people under your care from all harm."

Those who ask, seek, and knock must be willing to receive whatever is behind the door.

REES HOWELS: INTERCESSOR

Love the tramp

No hat in London society: totally humiliated him.

Eat gruel as prayed for starving in India.

Don't start out here. God will grow you to accept whatever He has in store for you.

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Those who ask, seek and knock interact with God in understanding what they need.

Those who ask, seek, and knock will discover what gifts and ministries God has in store for them.

Those who ask, seek, and knock must be willing to receive whatever is behind the door.

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