

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DEFINED AND QUESTIONED
SPIRITUAL GIFTS PART 2
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1 CORINTHIANS 12:7

REVIEW:

Paul, in 1 Corinthians is dealing with a series of problems which confronted the church in Corinth. The letter as a whole has as its main purpose the solutions of these problems.

divisions in the church

church discipline, law suits, sexual impurity in social life;

marriage and single life

meat offered to idols and the gray areas of life

three problems of public worship - conduct of women, practice of the Lord's Supper, and orderly exercise of spiritual gifts

The purpose of 1 Corinthians 12-14 is aimed at the orderly exercise of spiritual gifts.

Most of their struggle was over the gift of tongues. It is the same today.

I have never seen a church fight over the gift of mercy . . . or service.

But most everyone wants to know about tongues.

Joe Hardy yesterday: "I need to sit down and talk with you about spiritual gifts."

"Did you get the gift of tongues." Pause

We are so little different from the Corinthians. We struggle today with the same issues.

But, we miss the whole point about gifts if we focus on tongues. So we won't. We will emphasize what is important, and give mention to what is less important.

DEFINITION OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Many definitions, so many leads me to believe that no one really has a handle on it.

Judy McGee: I just learned that God does not give gifts permanently. He takes them away and gives them as needed. You don't get a gift for life; but if you need any particular gift, He will give it when you need it!"

She was so excited. "Well, that is one way to look at it. . . . That is called the "tool box approach. To others he seems to give gifts for life. That is how we has worked with me. God can easily work both ways."

God never defines them. Leads me to believe that He will work through them in flexible ways in differing cultures and times.

1 Corinthians 12:1=pneumatikons

1 Corinthians 12:4=charismaton

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:7: "And to each is given the manifestation (phanerosis=making visible, making known, shining forth) of the spirit for the common good.?"

Dear Roger,

I just wanted to share something that I thought was significant about spiritual gifts that was in this past week's lesson in the class "Experiencing God: Knowing and Doing the Will of God" (p. 173):

Which of the following is a better definition of a spiritual gift?

1. A spiritual gift is a special ability God gives a person so he/she can accomplish the word God has assigned to the church OR
2. A spiritual gift is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit at work in and through a person's life for the common good of the body of Christ.

The first definition focuses in what / get so / can do something for God, the second focuses on God and what He does through us (John 15:5)

God's anointing be on you, Donna Jeffers

**A SPIRITUAL GIFT MAY BE DEFINED AS:
A SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATION-OF THE HOLY SPIRIT-WORKING THROUGH A
BELIEVER'S LIFE-TO ENABLE THE CHURCH TO EXECUTE ITS TASK ON EARTH.**

***A SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATION**

DO SPIRITUAL GIFTS HAVE A SPIRITUAL DIMENSION?

Yes! By definition. This is what sets them apart from purely natural phenomenon.

Illustration: Dunamis counseling and the word of Knowledge. Steve in counseling center making little progress with a client. God told him to mention one name. The reaction was instantaneous: "How did you know about her?" "God told me." Door opened rapidly.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND NATURAL TALENTS?

Natural talents are given through physical creation.
Some natural talents might be musical ability, carpentry, mechanical aptitude, and artistic skills.

Spiritual gifts are given through spiritual re-creation.
They are only given to believers and only in the realm of the spirit. They are designed to help bring eternal change to people.

Natural talents are often the vehicle through which spiritual gifts can be used.
A Christian vocalist may have the spiritual gift of evangelism, or prophecy being carried through the vehicle of musical talent.

Ken Medema and "Casas Is Going To Have A Baby."

ARE SPIRITUAL GIFTS THE BEST SIGN OF SPIRITUALITY?

NO. Christ-like maturity is primarily indicated by manifesting the fruit of the Spirit, not by the presence of gifts nor even their powerful exercise.

READ GALATIANS 5:22-23.

So the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, long suffering, etc. Gal. 5:22-23) is to be the outcoming character which is produced in the life of every believer.

God may choose to shine forth in a spiritually immature baby Christian. But that does not make the baby spiritual.

"Look, I got the gift of tongues last night and I am spiritual!"

Jesus said: "For by their fruit you shall know them" (Matt 7:16). Satan can imitate and counterfeit spiritual gifts, but he is baffled in trying to imitate the fruit of the Spirit.

Gifts of the Spirit must operate in the context of the fruit of the spirit (love, etc) under the control of the Spirit. If they're used in another context, they soon are out of order and trouble develops.

HOW MANY GIFTS ARE THERE? WHAT ARE THEY? ARE ALL THE GIFTS LISTED IN THE BIBLE?

Some list as few as 9; others range from 15 to 22.; still others list many more.

1 Corinthians is a problem solving book.

12 deals with unity of the church in the midst of diversity of gifts.

13 deals with love

14 deals with the use of prophecy and tongues in worship

Romans is the more normative list. It was written as Paul's theological treatise.

Ephesians was written to deal with gnostic heresy. It therefore emphasizes the resurrection and shows what Christ gave as gifts to the church after the resurrection. This is metonymy. The office implies the existence of the gift.

Let's Examine The Biblical Material Relating To Gifts.

COMPARATIVE LISTING OF GIFTS

<u>1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10,28-29</u>	<u>ROMANS 12:3-8</u>	<u>EPHESIANS 4:11</u>
Apostles		Apostles
Prophecy	Prophecy	Prophets
Teaching	Teaching	Pastor-Teacher
Wisdom		
Knowledge		
Faith		
Miraculous powers		
Healing		
Distinguishing between spirits		
Speaking in tongues		
Interpretation of tongues		
Helps	Service	
Administration		Pastor-Teacher
	Encouragement	
	Giving	
	Leadership	
	Mercy	
		Evangelists

Note that only prophecy and teaching appear in all three lists.
Only apostleship, service and pastoring appear twice.

ARE THERE OTHER GIFTS?

The catalog is far from complete: The gift of celibacy (1 Corinthians 7:7)

Bill Gothard and the motivational gifts from Romans.

Leadership Gifts-Supporting Gifts

Speaking Gifts-Serving Gifts-Sign Gifts

ARE ALL THE GIFTS FOR TODAY OR DID SOME CEASE AT THE END OF THE APOSTOLIC AGE?

Some want to classify the sign gifts (tongues, healing, miracles, etc) as no longer valid for today. comes from dispensational approach of the last century. Sign gifts were needed until we got the Bible and then god took them away.

Justified by 1 Corinthians 13:8. Not much evidence. Stretching it. I used to believe this.

Got older and couldn't work around 1 Corinthians 14:39. Could no longer accept the implications of dispensationalism.

***OF THE HOLY SPIRIT**

WHO IS THE SOURCE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

The Holy Spirit gives out gifts. 1 Corinthians 12:7, 8, 9, 11.

Be careful, gifts can be counterfeited. Fruit can never be counterfeited.

You can get something that is not from the Holy Spirit.

Occasionally people will tell you a formula whereby you can get the gift of tongues.

Say "praise the Lord" over and over again. You may get something, but, I don't believe it will be from the Holy Spirit--self conjured up, or demonic. If God wants you to have that gift, He is perfectly capable of bestowing it.

HOW ARE SPIRITUAL GIFTS GIVEN OUT?

There is no clear-cut Biblical teaching as to when the believer received his gift. However, it seems that the gift comes with the giver and is bestowed at conversion.

"Gift you received at the laying on of hands . . ." (2 Timothy 1:6)

Tool Box for use when needed.

IS ANY ONE GIFT A SIGN OF THE HOLY SPIRIT'S PRESENCE?

Usually this question is asked in terms of the gift of tongues, or in being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

The answer is No. 1 Corinthians 12:29-31 is clear to teach this. God never designed for any one gift to be had by everyone.

CAN A BELIEVER HAVE ANY GIFT HE OR SHE WANTS?

No. 1 Corinthians 1:29-31. Verse 31 is indicative, not imperative to fit context.

Verse 31 is also 2nd person plural.

***WORKING THROUGH A BELIEVER'S LIFE**

1 Peter 4:10: "As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace."

DOES EVERY BELIEVER HAVE A GIFT?

We do know for certain that each believer has a gift (1 Cor 12:6-7,11).

All of us as believers are to evaluate ourselves in terms of our God-given gifts (Romans 12:3)

CAN A BELIEVER HAVE MORE THAN ONE GIFT?

Yes, combinations: $2^n - 1$ where n is the number of gifts.

We are all quite unique.

We should recognize that our gifts will differ and hence we should have liberty to apply ourselves to the particular gift or gifts that are uniquely ours (12:6).

Tool box

DO SPIRITUAL GIFTS COME READY TO OPERATE?

It often takes time for gifts to mature and develop into its full effectiveness. Spiritual gifts come "in the rough", so to speak. They some come equipped for ready and able use. Like preaching or teaching or knowledge or helps. They take time to develop. The Spirit of God decides who receives what gift, the believer is under obligation to develop that gift.

Each member should have an opportunity to use his gifts interdependently with others (Romans 12:4-6).

Intercessors

IF A PERSON DOESN'T HAVE THE GIFT OF EVANGELISM (FOR EXAMPLE), IS HE EXCUSED FROM TRYING TO WIN PEOPLE TO CHRIST?

The absence of gifts do not take precedence over clear-cut demands.

For example, we are all commanded to be liberal in our giving. Because a Believer does not have the gift of giving, he cannot say, "Never pass me the offering plate again. I don't need to tithe. I don't have the gift of giving."

We are all commanded to witness.

CAN SPIRITUAL GIFTS BE LOST?

Gifts which are not used or developed apparently can be lost or entirely lose its use and function (like the appendix in the human body).

Jesus' parable of the talents directly illustrates the importance of most neglecting the gift that God has bestowed. To do so means censorship and rebuke by the Master Himself.

***TO ENABLE THE CHURCH TO EXECUTE ITS TASK ON EARTH.**

One thing vividly stands out - Spiritual gifts are to work together in unity for the "common good" (or edification) of the church - See 1 Cor.12:7.

Principles of Truth drawn from EPHESIANS 4:1-16: People with leadership gifts are to train others so that every member will contribute to the overall growth of the whole body.

WHAT IS THE TASK OF THE CHURCH ON EARTH?

REACH PEOPLE (NUMBERS) AND MATURE THEM IN CHRIST!

REACH PEOPLE (NUMBERS)

- * Acts 16:5: "And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in *number* daily."
- * Matthew 28:19: "Go ye therefore, and teach *all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

MATURE THEM IN CHRIST

- * Acts 14:21,22: "And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch, *confirming the souls* of the disciples and exhorting them *to continue* in the faith, and that we must through much tribulation enter into the Kingdom of God."
- * Acts 18:23: "And after he had spent some time there, he departed and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order *strengthening all the disciples.*"

TO DO THESE THINGS WELL, THE CHURCH HAS TO GET ORGANIZED.

- * Acts 14:23: "And when they had *appointed* for them *elders* in *every* church, and has prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they had believed."

I like to think of spiritual gifts along these three lines.

REACHING PEOPLE: Apostleship-Evangelism-Miracles-Healing-Mercy-Tongues

MATURING THEM: Prophecy-Knowledge-Exhortation-Tongues-Discernment-Interpretation of Tongues-Teaching-Wisdom-Faith-Giving-Pastoring

ORGANIZING THEM TO REACH PEOPLE AND MATURE OTHERS: Administration-Leadership-Pastor

1. Apostolic Witness and leadership gifts at Regional church level produce a nucleus of a body which experiences
2. MATURITY CHURCH GROWTH (primarily by utilizing pastor-teaching and supportive gifts) creates body evangelism and spurs
3. NUMERICAL CHURCH GROWTH (primarily by utilizing apostolic, evangelistic, and authenticating gifts) which forces
4. WHICH IN TURN ENABLES BETTER (utilizing ruling, helps, and governments) Organic Church Growth

ARE SOME GIFTS MORE IMPORTANT THAN OTHERS?

Prophecy is most important. Tongues in the least. All the others fall somewhere in between.

*That God has in fact given an order to the gifts which places what are sometimes called leadership gifts at the forefront and that the particular gifts being prized by the Corinthian church were quite far down the ladder. But even so, Paul's tone indicated that due to the interdependent nature of all gifts there should be no spiritual pride associated with any of these gifts.

*That, if there is a prizing of gifts, at least seek that which is most useful and beneficial to the whole church.

That the relative value of spiritual gifts is to be tested by their usefulness to the church as a whole (contrast of prophecy and tongues in the example illustrating this).

WILL WE EVER HAVE GIFTS MANIFESTED AND USED PUBLICLY AT CASAS?

Casas' Value: Gifts encouraged but not put on public display.

Public gifts are hard to verify: Julie will be a widow after seven years of marriage and serve like the prophetess Anna in the temple to the age of 84."

A false prophecy misused to bring condemnation.

WHERE DOES CASAS INTEND TO GO WITH SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

Bridge concept among churches in Tucson.

The Holy Spirit knows which gifts are needed, and when and where. The church cannot prosper unless those needed are functioning in their place.

A man broke his left arm. One night when he couldn't sleep, he imagined a dialogue between his right and left hand. The right hand said, "Left hand, you are not missed. Everybody's glad that it was you that was broken and not me. You are not very important."

The left hand said, "How are you superior?"

Said the right hand, "Why, my owner cannot write a letter without me."

The left answered, "But who holds the paper on which he writes?"

Said the right, "Who wields the hammer?"

Said the left, "Who holds the nail that the hammer hits?"

Asked the right, "Who guides the plane when the carpenter smooths a board?"

Retorted the left, "Who steadies the board?"

Said the right, "When our owner walks down the street and lifts his hat to greet someone, which of us does it?"

Replied the left, "Who holds his briefcase while he does it?"

Then the left continued, "Let me ask you a question, When our owner shaved yesterday he used you, but his face is cut because I wasn't there to help. Also our owner's watch has stopped. Know why? You may do the winding, but if I'm not there to hold it, the watch won't get wound. You cannot take money out of the wallet because I'm not there to hold it. The master can do very few things without me."

Similarly, our Divine Master needs all the members of His body to exercise all their gifts so that His body may function smoothly and effectively.