



BULLEEN BAPTIST CHURCH

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Series : "The Person & Work of the Holy Spirit"
Sunday, April 30, 2006 : Study 11

"THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT"

Notes by Rev. Gary Lockyer

Introduction

And we, who with unveiled faces all reflect the Lord's glory, are being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory ... 2Cor3:18

What is God's purpose for us? We are being transformed into "the likeness of his Son"
.... that is, we are being made more like JESUS.

Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when he appears, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. 1Jn3:2

"He who began a good work in you will bring to completion on the day of Christ." Php1:6

The PROCESS of becoming like Jesus will be completed when we stand before him.

Today's Study is on the Gifts of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit not only works in our life to make us like Christ, but empowers each of us uniquely for service and ministry ... in fellowship & co-operation with other members of the Body of Christ.

A. CONTRAST BETWEEN The "FRUIT" & "GIFTS" Of The SPIRIT

1. "Fruit" is SINGULAR. All the characteristics in Gal5:22-23 grow - not just a few.
"Gifts" is PLURAL (1Cor12:1) No one has every gift, only those the Spirit gives.
(1Cor12:11)
2. "Fruit" are VIRTUES; their growth in us is the measure of our MATURITY in Christ.
"Gifts" are ABILITIES; they indicate the nature of the MINISTRY God has for us.

Paul said of the Christians at Corinth, "You do not lack any spiritual gift." (1Cor1:7) He also described them as "worldly—mere infants in Christ" (1Cor3:1)

This is the basis for the statement at the end of last week's Study: *"The only reliable evidence of the Work of the Spirit in our lives is not a subjective emotional experience or spectacular signs or gifts, but the effective growth of a moral, integrated character that increasingly reflects the character of Christ himself"*

3. "Gifts" are TEMPORARY, "Fruit" is ETERNAL. (1Cor13:8-13). When we stand before Christ, the "fruit" is brought to completion (Php1:6), while the "gifts" come to an end.

B. A WORD STUDY ... & A DEFINITION

Paul, in 1 Corinthians 12, uses has a number of different words for "gifts"

v1. "SPIRITUALS" (*Pneumatikon*) .. related to "pneuma", the word for "Spirit"; indicates the SOURCE of the gifts. They are : "the manifestation of the Spirit" (v7), the "work of the Spirit who gives to each one just as he determines" (v11)

v4 "GIFTS" (*Charis-ma-ta*) Related to "grace." Indicates that the gifts are FREELY given, not earned by us or given as a reward.

v5 "SERVICE" (*Diakoniai*) Since the gifts are given by God's grace, the recipients are to use them freely to SERVE others.

v6 "Workings" (*Energmata*) Gifts are the "energy" of God working through us ... reminds us that the gifts operation depend on God's POWER and not our effort or natural talent.

Putting these words together, a definition of Spiritual Gifts is :

"Capacities graciously given by the Holy Spirit to the people of God, powerfully enabling them to serve God and each other in the body of Christ."

C. A SUMMARY OF BIBLICAL TEACHING ABOUT GIFTS

1. A GREAT VARIETY

There are 5 lists of Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament. They are found in :

[1] Rom12:3-8, [2] I Cor 12:1, 4-11, 1 [3] 1 Cor 12: 28-30 [4] Eph4:11 [5] 1 Ptr 4:10-11

No gift is in all 5 lists and 14 gifts are listed only once! What does this mean?

The lists seem somewhat haphazard. Therefore there may be MORE gifts than those listed.

As each Church is given a different list, not ALL of the gifts may operate in every Church.

Have some of the gifts been withdrawn? There is no CLEAR teaching that any have. Since the Holy Spirit acts with sovereign authority, it may be best to leave the distribution of any gift up to him!

"the Spirit gives to each one just as he determines" 1Cor12:11

2. A UNIVERSAL DISTRIBUTION

Spiritual Gifts are not just for a SELECT few. EVERY Christian is gifted for some ministry.

I say to every one of you just as each of us each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts according to the grace given us. Rom12:3-6

All these are the work of the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one. 1Cor12:11

But grace has been given to each one of us. Eph4:7

Each one should use the gift he has received 1Ptr4:10

In the "gift passages" of Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, both use a human body to illustrate that every member of the body has a vital role. By recognising this, two extremes are avoided.

False HUMILITY "I'm no good, you don't need me" (1Cor12:15-17)

Self IMPORTANCE "You're no good, I don't need you" (1Cor12:21-24)

3. A STATED PURPOSE Why are Spiritual Gifts given?

Are they "love gifts" to us from God for our OWN pleasure or enrichment?

Are they primarily ASSOCIATED with worship, enabling us to praise God?

Are Gifts to be viewed as SIGNS, "tapping into the flow of the supernatural" so that others may know God is present in power?

All of these are possible choices given in contemporary literature and commonly assumed by many.

But what does the Scripture teach?

To each is given a manifestation of the Spirit for the common good 1Cor12:7

As each has received a gift employ it for one another 1Ptr4:10 (RSV)

Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, excel in gifts that build up the Church. 1Cor14:12

God's purpose in giving Gifts is that his people may be ACTIVATED, ENCOURAGED and EDIFIED

D. PRACTICAL ISSUES

1. WHY DO I NEED TO DISCOVER MY SPIRITUAL GIFT/S

- To help me answer, "What is God's WILL for my life?"
- To enable me to see myself as a channel of God's GRACE to others
- To be more EFFECTIVE in service

.... liberating me to serve in areas that God intends, and

.... freeing me from guilt for not serving in areas outside my gifts.

2. HOW TO DISCOVER MY SPIRITUAL GIFT/S

- PRAY that God will guide me and expect that he will!
- COMMIT myself to ministry and service
- STUDY the types of gifts listed in the New Testament (see C1, above)
- LOOK for what "resonates" with my personality and desires.
- Get INVOLVED in an appropriate ministry area
- EVALUATE your experience; seek honest feedback from others
- If necessary, CHANGE to another ministry area and start over