

## **Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time***

### **The Gifts of the Body, Part 2**

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

Code: 1312

Tonight we want to continue our study of the subject of the gifts of the Spirit. We're going to be considering several selected passages of Scripture.

First of all, tonight we will take another step and we will talk about the definition of the specific spiritual gifts. Christ revealed Himself first in a human body, through which all His attributes were manifest. And He has a new body today since His human body is gone into glory, His new body is the church, a spiritual body.

We who know Jesus Christ are that body and every Christian is a vital member of the body. And just as a human body must work together and totally to be healthy, so we must function in interdependence upon each other in order to be one body united.

Now, God has set in order a plan for the orderly function of the body. And the plan is this, each believer has certain grace gifts, charismata or newmatica, certain spiritual gifts. And these gifts the Holy Spirit gives a believer and then ministers through that gift to the rest of the body, so that your gifts are not so much for you as they are for the other members of the body of Christ.

Through these gifts then, the Holy Spirit ministers to the other members of the body and this network of inner mutual ministry strengthens every part and allows the whole body to grow strong and healthy.

Now, last week we saw some of the basic principles regarding this divine plan. Just let me read them and make brief comment. Principle number one, spiritual gifts are important and essential for the health of the body. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 12:1, "I would not have you to be ignorant brethren concerning spiritual gifts." And that phrase is a phrase that he uses only four other times. The Holy Spirit uses only four other times in the New Testament, each other time it deals with one of the cardinal aspects of salvation, so in terms of importance, the spiritual gifts concept ranks with the doctrines of basic salvation because it is that important for us to understand. It is the life and death issue of the health of the body of Christ.

All right, the second thing, the Holy Spirit is the source of these gifts. They are not sought. You cannot go after them to seek them. Principle number two, the Holy Spirit is the source of these gifts.

Principle number three, we're still reviewing. If you weren't here last week, the tapes are available on all of this series. Principle number three, the gifts are not natural abilities. They are sovereignly bestowed manifestations of the Spirit's power through divine enablement.

And as I said last week, the Holy Spirit may elect to us a man in the area of his natural ability and gift him in that area or he may not. Sometimes our natural aptitude is used. Sometimes it is not. And the point is the Holy Spirit gives these gifts sovereignly.

Principle number four, there is no hierarchy in the gifts. All the gifts are equally important, equally necessary and equally honored.

Principle number five, gifts are no sign or guarantee of spirituality. Some people have the idea that if you have a certain gift you're automatically spiritual. That is not biblical. All believers possess them even carnal ones. And the gift can be counterfeited and operated in the energy of the flesh. Having a particular gift is no guarantee at all that you are spiritual.

It is also not guarantee that you're always right. We saw how in 1 Corinthians 14 it even says that those who were prophets had to get their minds together and you had to hear the word of two or three of them before you could make a decision. Just because you have a gift doesn't mean you're always right.

Gifts can be misused. The greatest living example of that was the whole Corinthian problem. They were in the midst of misusing their gifts. So we see that the possession of a gift doesn't guarantee spirituality or infallibility on the one who exercises it.

Principle number six, the gifts when rightly exercised in the Spirit, have the promise of divine energy. When you really operate your Spirit given gift and the energy of the Spirit, you find that there is power as a result of it. When wrongly used however, 1 Corinthians 14:33 will show you what happened. When you exercise your gift wrongly it says, "For God is not author of confusion, but of peace as in all churches of the saints."

In other words, when you misuse your gift or exercise it in the flesh, it doesn't bring about unity, it brings about confusion. And so the gifts when rightly exercised in the Spirit are the promise of divine energy. That's why Peter says in 1 Peter Chapter 4 in verse 10, he says, "If you're going to speak and you have the gift, then do it in a Godly fashion. If you speak, speak as the oracles of God. If you minister, do it as the ability which God gives." In other words, use your gift in the energy of the Spirit.

Principle number seven, when the gifts are used, the body profits. The body of Christ must be one for the sake edification and result in testimony. The only way we will ever be healthy and build up is if we profit together and the way we prophesy is in the exercise of these gifts. Both the one who exercise his

gift profits and the rest of the body to whom the gift is ministered. As I minister to you, your build up is you minister to me, I'm build up.

Principle number 8, the gifts of the Spirit are distinct from the fruit of the Spirit. Now we didn't get into that last week. In Galatians 5:22 and 23, we have an important catalogue of the fruit of the Spirit. And it says this, "For the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control."

Now, the fruit of the Spirit are attributes which every Spirit walk Christian possesses. Fruit of the Spirit are characteristics, gifts of the Spirit are services. And that's the distinction. Every believer walking in the Spirit has love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control, all of those.

Those are characteristics of a Spirit walked believer. Gifts are the service of that believer. And while you're serving, those gifts should also at the same be manifest.

Principle number nine, you can have a gift and not be using it in a great theological statement. Most Christians are in this situation. And that's why Paul is in...Paul talking to Timothy is an example where he said stir up the gift, you know. You can have a gift, but not use it.

Principle number ten, spiritual grace gifts come in combinations. I believe that Christians have more gifts than they think they have. I look at the Apostle Paul and I can't figure out any gift he didn't have frankly. You look over there in Paul's writing to Timothy who was in a sense a lesser light in terms of popularity than Paul, and in 2 Timothy Chapter 4, Paul says this, "I charge thee therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ who shall judge the living and the dead it is appearing and His kingdom, preach the word," he obviously had the gift of prophecy, "be diligent in season, out of season, reprove, rebuke, exhort," he had the gift of exhortation, "with all long-suffering and doctrine," he also had the gift of teaching, "but the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts so they heap to themselves teachers having itching ears." Now verse 5, "Watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist," he also had the office of evangelism, "make full proof of they ministry."

So evidently, Timothy had a combination of many things. And that's simply an illustration. There you have ten basic principles regarding spiritual gifts. I'm going to leave it at that and I'm going to let you look up those verses, let the Spirit of God be your teacher.

We want to look at the gifts specifically and may I apologize at this point to you who have not been here in the past. We're trying to cover a lot of territory. And because of this, we're skipping over a long lengthy review. And if you'd like to catch up as I said, we have available those tapes which you could either purchase or check out of the library and hear the messages that lead up to this one.

And this is rather a technical one from some standpoints. All right, now we come to the spiritual gifts. And we want to look at these specifically tonight and see what each of them is so that you might understand what your gifts are in order that you might operate your gifts and the energy of the Spirit that the body might be healthy and that our witness might be effective.

Now there are two kinds of spiritual gifts, permanent edifying gifts and temporary confirming signed gifts. There are two kinds of gifts, permanent edifying gifts and temporary confirming signed gifts.

First of all, there are the permanent gifts which edify or build up the body. They are gifts which do not cease which began in the early church and still go on today. The first on there is the gift of prophecy. Now in 1 Corinthians Chapter 12, in verse 10, it says, "To another," in the middle of the verse, "to another prophecy." That was one of the spiritual gifts. In Romans Chapter 12, don't try to chase around with me on this, I'll read them to you. In Romans 12 verse 6, it says, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given us whether prophecy let us prophesize."

One of the gifts and the first one on the list, the first permanent gift was the gift of prophecy. That means preaching. It does not mean foretelling the future. It does not mean reading the crystal ball. It is the gift of preaching. It means to tell forth. That's exactly what it means, to tell forth, to declare. It is the gift of preaching.

Now, here comes a very important thing and we're going to be interjecting some things along here that are going to tie together at the end, and I want you to get this. This is critical to understand. An interpretive issue, there is a gift called the gift of prophecy and there is a ministry called a prophet. The gift of prophecy and the man who is a prophet are two different things.

Now, I want you to hang on to this for a minute. The gift of prophecy is not to be confused with the office of a prophet. I'll show you what I mean. 1 Corinthians 12:28 shows us the difference. In verse 10 of Chapter 12, it says, "prophecy is a gift." In verse 28, it says, "And God hath set some in the church." Some what? Some Apostles? Some prophets, some teachers. Now that is not a gift, that is a man. You see it?

In verse 10, you have the gift of prophecy or preaching in verse 28, you have the office of a prophet, and they are different. And unless you understand this, you do not understand the nature and the character of this particular spiritual gift. Now notice in verse 28 of 1 Corinthians 12 that it says, "and God hath," and it doesn't give a grace gift, it says, "God has set ethatah, which means God has appointed. And it says, "God has set some," and the some does not refer to gifts, it refers to men.

Down in the middle of verse 28 it says, very importantly after the teachers, it says, "after that miracles and gifts of healing and helps," in other words, the gifts are made distinct by the little phrase after

that. God established certain men in the church and on top of that He gave certain gifts. Do you see what I'm getting at? The gift of prophecy is distinct from the office of a prophet. And I'm not talking about an Old Testament prophet. I'm talking about a church prophet, early church prophet.

Now, I want to show you another verse, Ephesians 4:11, very important. And here you have the same thing again. These are not gifts in Ephesians 4:11, they are men. You might put it this way. They aren't gifts, they're gifted men. Verse 11, "And he gave some," some what, some gifts, no, "some men, apostles, some more men, prophets, some more men, evangelists, some more pastors, and teachers." Now, those are not spiritual gifts, those are gifted men given to the church.

Verse 12, "For the perfecting of the saints," see we need leadership in the church don't we? And so God has not only given every member of the body of Christ certain gifts, but He's given the church in total certain gifted men. And a prophet and a gift of prophecy are thus distinct.

Now, may I add this, that a prophet, the New Testament prophets, the early prophets belonged to a special call, watch this, for a special time in history. They belong to the first century church, the apostolic era. There are no "prophets" today, any more than there are apostles today. There are neither of those today.

They undoubtedly had as one of their gifts the gift of prophecy, right? If they were prophets, they undoubtedly had that gift. But they were a special breed for the beginning years of the church and they have ceased to exist. Though the prophets have ceased, and I'll show you why in a minute, the gift of prophecy or preaching still goes on doesn't it? I hope it does.

The gift is still going on. The office of prophet has ceased. And the Greek word as I said for prophecy simply means a foreteller or a preacher. And that's why in 1 Corinthians 14 verse 1, he says, "Follow after love and desire spiritual gifts," again in the expression of your service, plural, "but rather that you may preach." Every time you see that word you can pronounce it preach.

Verse 3, "But he that preaches speaks unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort." And he compares here with tongues in verse 4. "He that speaks in a language or a tongue edifies himself, but he that preaches edifies the church." In other words, preaching was a dominant thing.

And you know, there's kind of a running deal today where people are kind of putting down preaching and they want to get together in these little groups and just, you know, nobody wants to be the preacher and nobody wants to exalt himself supposedly that's what you have to do if you're a preacher, and they sort of put preaching down. Preaching is still a gift of the Spirit and it is to be sought in the ministry and meeting of the church. He says, "Seek as a body to prophecy or preach." No service of the body would be complete without a declaration of God's truth.

The preaching of the cross is still central in the meeting of the church. And then there are many attempts to de-emphasize it. Some churches have one preaching thing a week, Sunday morning and that's it. Well, that is not putting prophecy in the exalted place that it belongs preaching. It's the greatest gift from the viewpoint of important, because it edifies and builds the body.

Now what was the standard of measure for true preaching? Verse 37 of Chapter 14, here is the standard for true preaching. "If any man think himself to be a prophet," in other words, you think...and this is the early again, if an early church individual thought he had the gift of prophet, "let him acknowledge that things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

You know what the standard was of a prophet? Whether or not his words squared with the words of Jesus Christ. That was the standard. Now there are no more prophets friends, but you know that the gift of preaching is exercised under the same standard. What is our standard as we preach? Peter said what it is. "Let him speak as one who speaks the oracles of," whom, "God." Our standard for preaching is just the same. The standard for preaching today is not Time Magazine, Newsweek or Politics. It's not somebody's philosophy or a book review. It's the Word of God. That's our measure for preaching.

Paul new this in 1 Corinthians Chapter 2, great section on this. "I brethren when I came to you came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom declaring unto you the testimony of God for I determine not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." You say there is an ignorant man. No, there's not an ignorant man.

Verse 3, "And I was with you in weakness and fear and much trembling my speech and my preaching were not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." If I can claim a verse that I would like to see in my own life, that would be it. "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men."

Have you ever met anybody whose face stood in the wisdom of men? Boy are they vulnerable, but in the Power of God. However we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this age or this world nor the princes of this age that come to nothing, but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery even a hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world or before the ages unto or glory, which none of the princes of this age know for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory.

Apostle Paul says, "Our message is clear." Verse 13 of the same Chapter, "Which things also we speak not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Spirit teacheth comparing spiritual things with spiritual." The prophet office has ceased. It ceased with the Apostolic church. The gift of prophecy continues, the standard is the words of Christ and the Word of God. That's the

standard.

And it's interesting I think that the true preacher gives forth the word in the energy of the Spirit. That's the true preacher. There's a lot of false ones. Interesting too is the fact that in the early church this seems to be the gift most widely distributed. And just to have the gift of preaching does not necessarily mean you have to exercise it in a formal sermon. Not at all. The gift of preaching could be to children. It could be to young people. It could be to teach a class of adults. It could be to two or three or 10,000 or anything in the middle. The gift of preaching is a Spirit given and Spirit energized ability to proclaim the truths of Jesus Christ in the energy of the Spirit of God with results. And it doesn't have to be standing in a pulpit. It can be in a small group at any age level.

Now some of you have the gift of preaching. Maybe you can't stand up here and preach a sermon, but you have the gift of preaching. You can declare your faith to somebody in the energy of the Spirit with God given results.

And you may sit back and say "well, I get so nervous." I'm trying to tell you last week, it doesn't matter what your natural abilities or disabilities are. If you have the Spirit given gift of preaching and you find that you've...that the Word of God comes through you with power and penetrates the hearts of people no matter how large or how small the group, that's the gift of preaching.

Now, let me add a thought. Though this is a special gift and I'm going to add this thought every time in every one of these gifts. Though this is a special gift given to some, and only some, all Christians are to be preachers to some degree, aren't they? "Ye shall be my witnesses." All of us. So some have a special gift, they stand out a little bit, but all of us are to be preachers to some degree.

All right, gift number two, the gift of teaching. Romans Chapter 12, verse 7, don't look it up, I'll just read you these initial verses. "He that teacheth on teaching." Another gift of the Spirit is the gift of teaching. Now again this gift is distinct from the teacher. There is a gift of teaching and then there is a teacher. Look back at 1 Corinthians 12:28 again. "And God set ethatah appointed in the church, apostles, prophets," and what's the third one, "teachers."

Ephesians Chapter 4 verse 11 says the same thing, apostles, profits, evangelists, pastor teacher. There is again friends, a distinction between the gift of teaching and the office of being a teacher. You say well, now wait a minute. Did the office of teaching end? No, it did not. The office teaching still exists. It still goes on. The only two offices...God still has appointed teachers doesn't he? And appointed pastors and appointed evangelists. The only two that He does not have any more that ended with the apostolic error are the apostles and the prophets.

You say well, MacArthur, I mean, what gives you the liberty to do that? How do you know those are the only two that don't exist? Very simple, it's in Ephesians Chapter 2 and Chapter 3. Ephesians

2:20, now he's talking about the church and how it was built. Are you ready? Ephesians 2:20, and he's talking about all Jew and Gentile becoming one in the church and it says in verse 20, "The whole thing is built upon the foundation of the apostles and," what, "prophets."

Now go down in Chapter 3 verse 5, "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto His holy apostles and prophets." Now, the apostles and the prophets were the foundation of the church. Dr. Ironside said, "please friends, you do not put the foundation on the 20<sup>th</sup> story." The foundation belongs at the beginning. And the church began on a foundation of apostles and prophets. And then it moved from there and continuing ministries belonged to teachers, pastors, and evangelists.

Those are the three existing ministries that followed the foundational ministries of apostles and prophets. And so again we have the same kind of a dichotomy. There's one...it's one thing to have the gift of teaching, it's another thing to be an appointed teacher. Teachers were appointed in the early church and given specific position to teach, and that's true today. As God set some men to be teachers, obviously they've been lifted up above others. Some of the great professors in...in evangelical seminary, some of the great Bible teachers that travel world, some pastors who have obviously been placed by God to teach the word, all of these are divinely appointed teachers given to the church.

And on top of that, they have the gift of teaching, but you believers may have the gift of teaching and not be appointed to a teaching office in terms of a total ministry to the church. Do you see the difference? And since it is not...since teaching is not a foundational ministry, it's not included in Ephesians 2:20 or 3:5. Since it's not a foundational ministry, it's still going on and God still has his teachers doesn't He?

Still appointing them. As teachers who sort of have a shepherding ministry over the flock. God still gives the gift of teaching and still grants certain men to be teachers of the body. But may I quickly add there are many body members who have not been called to a ranking position as teacher, but who yet have the gift of teaching.

Now you say what's the difference between preaching and teaching? Well, one is proclamation and the other is study or research or communication or dialogue. Teaching is the ability says Pentecost in his book. To take a newborn babe in Christ and teach that babe the truths of the Word of God.

It's one thing to begin to declare and proclaim, it's something else to sit down with a newborn babe, put your arm around him and instruct him in the things of God. That's the gift of teaching. I mean, it could be in his Sunday School, it could be in a home, it could be a one to one counseling situation. It could be with any age or any number of people teaching.



But some have the gift of proclaiming and some have the gift of just bringing along that new babe and instructing him in the basics, some have both gifts. Preaching to an assembly is one thing and sitting down to personal instruction of a babe in Christ is something else and that's what teaching was.

The teachers in the early church were to take the new converts and nurture them. That's the gift of teaching. Now here again, teaching is a special gift. Every Christian does not have the gift of teaching, but every Christian is to be in some sense a teacher isn't he?

We are all responsible for that in some sense. Let me show you why I say that. In Galatians 6:6, it says this, I'm going to read it right now. "Let him that is taught in the word," you getting this? "Let him that is taught in the word share with him that teacheth in all good things." In other words, for every believer there is to be an interaction of spiritual truth.

You have the same thing over in 2 Timothy Chapter 2, verse 2. "And the things that thou hast heard from me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who shall be able to teach others also. Verse 14 the same chapter, "Of these things put them in remembrance, charging them before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers, but that they studied to show themselves approved unto God, workman that needed not to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth."

Every believer's responsibility is to teach at some level. Verse 24, "And the servant of the Lord, any believer any one who serves, must not strive but be gentle unto all men apt to," what, "teach." So you see in a sense we all are to be teachers aren't we. And yet although all of us are teachers, some of us have the gift of teaching and some of us rise above that have the office of teacher.

And I want you to notice that teaching and preaching is a balanced ministry. It's kind of evangelism and edification. It's...it's...the preaching is motivation and the teaching is instruction, see. They go side by side.

Third gift, is the gift of faith. This is an interesting gift. 1 Corinthians 12:9, "To another faith by the same Spirit, faith is one of the Spirit given gifts." No question about it. Verse 2 of Chapter 13, "Though I have the gift or preaching and understand all mysteries and all knowledge and though I have all faith," now there you'd have under the term all faith, the same concept of the gift of faith.

Now some people have the gift of faith. Every believer has faith as a fruit of the Spirit, right? One of the fruits of Spirit is faith. We all have it. As I say with every gift, we all are to exercise it to a degree just because we're believers, but some have the gift of faith and they rise a little higher in the body of Christ in order to exercise that gift to the other members. We all need to have faith, but some have the gift of faith. That's a grace gift. All of us.

I mean, even in Romans 12, doesn't it say that we have the measure of faith? In other words, whatever gift we have, we have the faith to operate it, so we all have faith. But some have the gift of faith. Now personally, I believe this and I think there's much scriptural corroboration for this, I believe this could just as well be call the gift of prayer.

It is not just faith in something for no reason. Why if anybody asks me believing, you'll receiving right? Faith is what moves the hand of God. This could well be the gift of prayer. You know, some Christians just have a way of laying hold of God in faith and energizing the Spirit, don't they?

I told you about old Pappy Reveal, it was so fantastic. That man had the gift of faith, the gift of prayer. He...I told you once that he prayed that he needed a station wagon for his mission. He prayed, "God give me a station wagon," and he got three or four of them within two weeks.

That man could lay hold on the thrown of God in prayer. He believed God and God was activated by his faith. Some of the gift of faith. Some of you people have that gift exercise that gift because the rest of us desperately need you to. The gift of wisdom.

All right the fourth gift, the fourth gift is wisdom. And that's in 1 Corinthians 12:8. "For the one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom." Wisdom is a spiritual gift. Now, there's one guy I know had this gift and that's Paul. Back there we just read 1 Corinthians 2. You know, he kept saying it over and over again. He said we speak wisdom, not the wisdom of this age, we speak the wisdom of God. Listen that man had wisdom. He had the gift of wisdom.

And well you say well what is the gift of wisdom? That is the ability to see deeply into the mysteries of God. That is the kind of insight that sees what the natural eye can't see, that hears what the natural ear cannot hear and the natural heart can't imagine.

That's the ability to take a simple phrase of Scripture or a simple truth of God and dive into it and pull out of it all the spiritual truth and mystery that's there. Paul had that gift. And it also, the gift of wisdom is the ability to take that and apply it to life, see. That's what wisdom is. If you want a simple definition of wisdom, it's this. The application of spiritual truth. The ability to take spiritual truth and apply it to life. Dig it out and put it into practice.

This is one of the requirements of deacons, you know. That they be able to do this, not only have insight into the mysteries of God and great spiritual truth, but to be able to apply it. Now some people have the gift of wisdom. They can...some...you know, you wonder about some people. You know, they can take a verse and you look at it and it just says...well, isn't that a nice a verse, see. And you know and somebody comes along and writes 49 volumes on that verse.

And you know, people will say I...how did you get that out of that verse? See, some people get...it's nothing human and it's nothing you've done and it's nothing you're responsible for. It's a Spirit given gift that allows a man to be able to dig into the mysteries of God and apply them practically to life.

Now again, all believers are to have wisdom to some extent aren't they? Just like we're to have faith and just like we're to teach and just like we're to preach, we're to have wisdom. Colossians 1:9, now don't look these up, I'm going to read them to you. Colossians 1:9 says, "For this cause we also since the day we heard it do not cease to pray for you and the desire," for the Colossians listen, "that you be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom."

Paul said you believers are to all have wisdom. James said in 1:5, "If any many lack wisdom, let him do," what, "ask of God." In a sense we all are to have wisdom, but some have the gift of wisdom. They rise above to minister to the body in a unique way. So the gift of wisdom.

Five, the gift of knowledge, that's in Chapter 12, verse 8 also of 1 Corinthians. The word of knowledge. Now if wisdom is the application of truth, knowledge is just the facts and nothing more. Knowledge is understanding the facts. That's it, scholarship in a human sense.

Now you know there are a lot of people like this, there are scholars who did into the Scripture and they can just...they...they work in research. Some people spend their whole life studying ancient manuscripts and archeology and all kinds of scholarly problems and Epsa Jesus and Isa Jesus and history and all kinds of other things. And they spend their whole life...I heard one guy one time he gave a whole big series of lectures on the doctrine of the Amusio. And it started on Monday and Thursday we finally found out what he was talking about.

He was going on and on and on and nobody even knew what was happening. There are people who are able by the Spirit of God to spend their life in searching out the things of God in terms of knowledge of facts and boy you want to know something upon the work of these men, we build our faith, do you know that?

This Bible didn't drop out of heaven like this friends. This was over the years and years and hours and lives of labor to determine which manuscripts were right and the principles and research of scholars. And you want to know something, sometimes those with the most knowledge have the least wisdom. The absent-minded professor. All the facts and runs into the walls and loses his papers and can't apply any of it to his life.

You see knowledge is the academic side of it and some men have the gift of knowledge. Wisdom is the application side. Knowledge is academic, wisdom is application. Now some Christians have both of those praise God. Some have neither and some have either one. Now remember none of these

operates on human ability. Just because a man has an I.Q. of 165 doesn't mean he has the gift of knowledge or the gift of wisdom. Some of the wisest people I've ever met didn't have an I.Q. like that.

But they had obviously the Spirit given gift of wisdom. I can think of one illustration perfect graphic illustration of an individual like that. These are Spirit gifts, they're not intellectual. They don't come about by education, they come about by sovereign act of the Spirit. And they may not come to someone who's particularly intellectual. Just because man has insights in the Scripture doesn't say anything about his I.Q.

Now let me add this thought again. Even though there's a gift of knowledge, aren't we all responsible to have knowledge? Aren't we all responsible to study to show ourselves approved under God? Aren't...didn't Paul say to the Colossians "I want you to be enriched in all knowledge?"

In 1 Corinthians 1:5, that in everything you are enriched by him in all knowledge. In verse 30 of 1 Corinthians 1 he says the same thing. "But of Him are you in Christ Jesus who have God has made unto us, wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption." In other words, both wisdom and knowledge are to belong to the believer. And yet even though we're all to have these, there is a certain sense in which some are specially gifted and rise above to minister to the body as in the case of every other gift.

Six, the discernment of spirits. 1 Corinthians 12:10 lists this gift. Some have the discerning of spirits. Now God wanted to protect the church from false doctrine. God wanted to protect the body of Christ from people coming in teaching the wrong thing, so He gave certain members of the body the ability to determine who was wrong and who was wrong. Some people have the ability to discern spirits. That is whether it's of God or Satan.

Now because the body faces continual opposition from a host of demons and evil spirit beings they are, because this is always going on and these demons always pose as messengers of light, trying to counterfeit the gifts of the Spirit and zap the energy of the church. Because of this, God gave certain gifts so that men could discern what was of God and what was of Satan and natural insight can't determine it. And I'll tell you something else, no board on earth or no committee on earth can determine it either unless there's somebody there who has the gift of discerning spirits.

Now Peter had this gift and that's...talk about a reversal, Peter had the gift of discerning spirits. And I think that's very humorous. And that shows you how God doesn't particularly care what your problems are or what your physical aptitudes are. He gives you the gift of His own free will, through the Spirit.

Acts 5:3, listen to this, "Peter say, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to lie to the Holy Spirit?" Now you say how did Peter know? And I'm sure that's exactly what Ananias said. How do you know

I lie to the Holy Spirit? I'll tell you how we know. He knows he had the gift of discernment.

He knew Satan had filled the heart of Ananias. He discerned that in the energy of the Spirit. And you want to know something? Listen, Peter wasn't really the...the big hotshot in that area. If you go back in your Bible a little bit to Mark Chapter 8, you'll hear Jesus say to him "Get thee behind me Satan." Now maybe that helped Peter to understand the problem a little bit.

It's the same Peter who was possessed of Satan who then became gifted by the Holy Spirit to discern when a man was filled with Satan or one of his demons. So it doesn't have anything to do with your background or your natural aptitudes. Peter had that gift. What a switch.

And yet is it not true that every Christian in a sense is to be discerning? Well, certainly it is. If you read your Bible carefully, you'll read these words. In 1 John 4:1, listen, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but test the spirits whether they are of God, because many false prophets are gone into the world." Every believer is to do that. Every believer is to be sensitive to spirits whether they're of God or Satan.

So you see, we all are to do that and yet some of us are gifted and discerners for the health of the body. You see how this works? And you'll see even more when I conclude.

Gift number seven, and with gift number seven, we come to love gifts. Now all the gifts are to operate in love, that's the meaning of Chapter 13. It doesn't matter what gift you have, it doesn't operate in love, it's fleshly. All of them are to operate in love, they have to. Look at 13:1 to 3, no matter what you do if it isn't in love it's nothing. It's worthless. If your gift isn't operating in love it doesn't mean anything. Why? Because the one thing Christ wants in the body is what? Love.

Love is what He wants. So all the gifts must be ministered in love. Now he shows three love gifts. Now although all the gifts are to be ministered in love and love is the fruit of the Spirit and we're all supposed to love yet there are three distinct love gifts that rise above to minister to the body. The first one is the gift of showing mercy. The gift of showing mercy and that's in Romans 12:8. Now really if you want a simple translation it means to do loving kindness. Sort of does. It means the acts of loving kindness. Now some people can't preach a sermon and they can't really articulate, but they can do little deeds of loving kindness.

The gift of the Spirit that just manifests itself in a compassionate kindness. Not on a human level. But it is Christ's love manifested by the Holy Spirit through the believer to the body. It's not just sympathy. It's not exercised out of duty, it's Holy Spirit kind of love and some people just have that gift of compassionate love that causes them to do things of kindness to people.

You know, some of the greatest testimony in the world is given without a word spoken, you know that? And love is expressed without saying a thing. You say well, then does that mean if certain people have the gift of showing love that the rest of us don't have to? No, no. Obviously, we all are. You look at in James 2:15. And it says this, "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food and one of you say unto them, depart in peace be ye warmed and filled notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what does it profit." Isn't that good?

Oh you're naked and you don't have anything to eat. Well go in peace and I hope you find something. It's real good. In other words, the implication is obvious. It behooves you to be merciful. Why if you offer a cup of cold water in His name, you've done it as unto Him. Paul writing to the Galatians kind of nailed down the same basic thing in Chapter 6 verse 2, "Bear ye one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." That's for every Christian, isn't it?

Think of another one too, right? 1 Corinthians 12:25, here it is, "That there should be no schism or division in the body, but that the members should have the same," what, "care one for another." So we're all to be showing kindness and yet some have the gift of kindness to minister to the whole body. Now you say well, I don't understand all the distinctions. Well, I don't either, but the Spirit of God does and He knows what He's doing.

All right, the next loved gift if exhortation, number eight. And that's in Romans 12:8 also. Now this gift is very important and you might get the wrong impression by reading the word exhortation. Let me give you what it means. The Greek word is paraklhsews or paraklhsews. Let's see, I can't remember where the accent is. Anyway it's paraklhsews. And paraklhsews is the act done by the paraklatas. And I know that straightens it out.

Praise the Lord. All right, paraklatas means one called along side to help. And the paraklhsews is the deed done by the one who comes along to help. Exhortation is not standing in the pulpit brow-beating people. It's not even a public gift. The gift of exhortation is the ability to get along some...along side somebody and comfort them with love. That's what exhortation is.

The paraklhsews gift is one of the most wonderful and precious of all the grace gifts. It's the word from which we get the word paraklet, which is the Holy Spirit's title isn't it? Jesus said, "if I go away," John 14, "I'll send you another comforter, paraklet, one who will come along side and help you."

Why even Jesus, 1 John 2:1, "We have an advocate with the Father Jesus Christ the righteous. The word advocate is parakletos. One called along side to help. The paraklet in the power of the true paraklet, the Holy Spirit, is used by the Spirit to come along side members of the body to minister, comfort, and consolation and encouragement and counsel and exhortation.

He's not a blustering individual who stands in the pulpit. He's energized by the Spirit to come along side a believer who needs comfort or care or ministry or counsel or love and just ministers to him in that way. That's exhortation.

As the showing of mercy...we might say this, as the gift of showing mercy is the acts of love, the paraklet gift is the words of love. It's the words of counsel. It's the words of comfort. It's the words of exhortation. And again, although there are some who have this gift and some of you have the ability given by the Spirit and His energy to just comfort people. You have this love and this desire to just sympathize and share words of counsel and words of comfort. Some of you who are in counselor core obviously are responding to this gift and this is the gift that qualifies you most of all to exercise the counseling ministry in the body of Christ.

But in the sense that some of us have it, there's also true that we're all to be paraklet aren't we? We're all to put our arms around each other and help and that's what the writer of Hebrews was trying to say in Hebrews 3:13. Listen to this, let's see, yeah, 3:13. "But exhort," and it's the same word, "paraklhsews, go along side one another daily." See for every believer. We're to put our arms around each other every day and...and comfort and counsel and share. And even though that should be true of all of us, there are some who rise above and have the gift of paraklet or paraklhsews.

Paul had it. Boy he really had it. He had all these gifts. But of course, he was strategic at the early church, but boy, but Paul had this because you see in 1 Thessalonians remember what he said to the Thessalonians? He said, "we didn't come to you to like this or like this or like this. We were as a nurse cherishing her children. We were," and I love this, he says, "we were gentle among you." Paul had that gift to just express himself in gentle counsel.

Then you have number nine gift, the gift of giving. That's a love gift. The gift of giving, and I dare say last week if I asked you all to circle you'd get your gift, you hurried past this one, hoping and praying you didn't have it. But number nine is the gift of giving. Now this is a love gift friends and this gift has direct reference to the material ministry, food, clothes, money, houses, whatever it is that you desire to give. This is a Spirit given gift. It is related to the Holy Spirit's supervision of everything that you possess. And it doesn't relate at all to how much you have.

Do you know that some of the people who have the gift of giving are the poorest people around? And I'm sure there are some other people who have the gift of giving, but do not exercise it. No, the gift of giving doesn't have anything to do with your pocketbook. It has only to do with the sovereignty of the Spirit of God who has given you the gift of giving.

And this means that you come to the aid of those who are need. Now it seems obvious to me too that along with the idea of the gift of giving, for some people there may come a surplus of funds as well so that they can be able to give to a great extent. That may be true as well.

But the gift of giving is to provide for the needs of others who cannot supply their own needs. You know if our church and the church of Jesus Christ was one like it should be we wouldn't even have to be on welfare folks. We ought to be taking care of our own. The New Testament says we are to care for the widows and the orphans. And we are to supply the needs of each other. There's no reason for us to be all hooked up with governmental agencies, except that we've gotten ourselves so messed up over the years that we could never untangle ourselves.

But ideally and working toward that goal, we should be supplying the needs to each other if those who had the gift of giving would release themselves and work that gift in the energy of the Spirit, that could happen.

Gift number 10, and now may I add again that every Christian is to give, right? Obviously, 2 Corinthians 9 says that. Let me just show you that verse real quick. 2 Corinthians 9:7 and 8 doesn't let any of us miss the joy of giving. "Every man..." "Every man," get it? "Every man, according as he purposes in his heart so let him give not grudgingly or necessity for God loves a cheerful giver." That's the point, every man. Every believer.

All right, ten, in ten we have two gifts which are the same, government or ruling. Government is the term in 1 Corinthians and ruling is the term in Romans 12. These are the gifts of administration. They belong to those who are in places of spiritual authority. Those who are, for example, pastors, teachers, or evangelists, would exercise this particular gift. In the place of authority, this would be a gift which would be necessary and the Holy Spirit would give it.

In 1 Thessalonians Chapter 5 in verse 12, "We beseech brethren to know them who labor among you and are over you in the Lord and admonish you." Some people have just the place of being over the others to care for them, not the Lord it over them or to hammer them down or to subject them, but to teach them and instruct them. In verse 13, "And you ought to esteem them very highly in love for their works sake." So you better love your pastor.

1 Timothy Chapter 5 gives another one, verse 17. "Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor especially they who labor in the word and doctrine." And all that I am in this church and in terms of New Testament is an elder. I'm no different than you. I'm not Reverend anybody, I'm just me and I happen to be an elder and I happen to be appointed by God to teach and to teach the word and doctrine. And consequently with that is great responsibility, but with it also by the grace of God is honor.

Then in Hebrews Chapter 13, you have the same thing from another angle. Verse 7, "Remember them who have the rule over you who have spoken unto you the Word of God whose faith follow considering the end of the manner of life." Verse 17, "Obey them that have the rule over you and



submit yourselves for they watch for your souls as they that must give account." You see that's the hook.

We may get the honor by the grace of God, but also are accountable to God for the kind of leadership. They must give account that they may do it with joy and not with grief for that is unprofitable for you. Verse 24, "Great all them that have the rule over you and all the saints." Don't ever go out the door without shaking hands with the Pastor.

Oh you didn't see that in that verse? That's pushing it obviously. But the pastor or the elder or presbyter or whatever he may be and that's all referring to a pastor, who is given oversight of the flock has the gift of government or ruling. And there are many other...many ministries in the world. Missionary organizations, executive positions with all kinds of things where they also have this gift.

Now, obviously, we all can't have the gift of ruling. If we all did, there'd be a whole lot of chiefs and no Indians. So we can't have that, but in the same sense doesn't the Bible teach every believer to rule his own house and to rule his own spirit and to subject his own body?

So in a sense we are to keep the rule over this area aren't we? All right, the 11<sup>th</sup>, ministry or helps, ministry or helps. Now both of these means service. These are gifts of assistance. And the early deacons had this gift. The word deacon from diaconia, diaconia means service. That's all it means. It means literally servants. Deacons means servants. They had the gifts of ministry or helps.

They're helpers, workers, people who labor behind the scenes, maybe you don't have the gift of teaching, maybe you work in some capacity over here or there and you find the Spirit of God energizing you and wonderful things are happening and love is there and the oneness is there, that's the energy of the Spirit operating through the gift of helps or the gift of ministry.

Now may I also add that this gift like all the others is common to all Christians in it's...in it's lesser sense. We are all to serve aren't we? None of us can say well I don't have the gift of service. Consequently, I don't have to serve anything. We all serve one another. In Galatians Chapter 5 in verse 13 it says, "For brethren you have been called unto liberty. Only use not liberty for an occasions of the flesh," watch this, "but by love serve one another."

We're all called to serve, but some are especially grace gifted for the service of the body. Now those are the permanent edifying gifts. Eleven of them. Now I want you to see the key to everything I've said.

Here it comes and with this we're going to stop and we'll continue with the remaining gifts next week. Here is the key to everything. Don't miss this. Every gift, now watch it, every gift that we have mentioned was characteristic of Jesus Christ. Did you get that? Every gift was characteristic of

Jesus Christ. He had every one of them in its fullness. All right? He had every one without exception. He was preacher. He was teacher. He was faithful. He was wisdom personified. He was knowledge in the flesh. He was the discerner of spirits, wasn't he? He was the shower of mercy. He was the true paraklet. He was the giver. He gave more than anybody ever gave. He was ruler and leader and he was servant and minister.

Every single one of these gifts was a characteristic of Jesus Christ. And I believe if you composite those 11 gifts you have the picture of Jesus Christ. He was all those things.

Now watch this, Christ in the flesh was all of those. Now, here's the key, when Christ left this world, He formed a new body, right? And what is that body? The church. But that body, the church, is to do just what His fleshly body did isn't it? To manifest His nature, right?

So naturally if all of those things were part of His fleshly body, all of them will also be apart of His spiritual body the church. What are these gifts? My friends they are the reproduction of the attributes of Christ into His body the church. That's what they are.

All these are now in the new body of Christ, the church. They are grace gifts given to the church by the Holy Spirit in order that the church may be the continuing life of Christ. In order that in the world we may radiate His person and His attributes and friends that's why if we do not operate these gifts, we do not radiate Christ.

We must exercise the gift if we're going to truly reflect Christ. All these gifts are given to the body that the body might radiate Christ. Now, I'm going to take it a step further. I'm going to drive it right to you. Did I also not say every gift all the way along the line in a lesser sense than the spiritual gift, everyone of these principles should be common to all Christians? Did I not say that?

Every single one of us Christians should have every one of these to a lesser degree than the gift end of it. You say why that? Because of this friends, do you know what you're called to as a Christian? You were called to be like whom? Jesus Christ. So naturally everything that characterized Him should be true also in you.

And if your testimony is going to be totally affective, the world is going to have to see in you the very reflection of Jesus Christ Himself. Now do you see what we could do this world if all this took place? If you and I were living examples of Christ and if as a total body we reflected the total nature of Jesus Christ, can you imagine how devastating our testimony would be? It would be the two-fold testimony of the witness of every member and the witness of the body in total, right?

Remember our sermon on the witness of the body? Those are the exact two things we said we must do. Witness individually as members in Christ likeness, witness as a body in Christ likeness and

Christ has given us every single ingredient to make it happen. All we have to do is be willing to do it.

You're not even to live your own life. Paul said, "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless, I live," what, "yet not I but Christ liveth in me." We're to radiate Christ as individual members. We're to radiate Christ in the exercise of the gifts at the next level up so that we shall be like Him.

And as Paul said, "He has called us to be conformed to the image of His," what, "Son." Do you see how really important it is that we know our spiritual gift and operate it? That our body witness might be effective and that each of us in a lesser degree than the gift exercise all these attributes that we might be like Christ.

Friends it's really exciting to think about. You, individually, you are the continuing ministry of the life of Jesus Christ. Did you get that? That's heavy. You are the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ. And you want to know something else, together we also collectively as a body are the continuing ministry of Jesus Christ.

And when we are what we were redeemed to be then the body will be what it was gifted to be and the world will see a clear witness.

Father, we thank you tonight for Your Word. We thank you for teaching us again principles that are absolutely essential to the health of the body. Lord God, we just pray that each of us with understanding and in the energy of the Spirit might operate our gifts not in the flesh, but in the Spirit. And that we might be used to make the body of Christ one in love and witness. And then Father in our own individual lives, that our testimony might be clear because we're like Jesus Christ. This we pray in His name. Amen.

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