

# **Spiritual Gifts Series**

Key series passage:  
1 Corinthians 12:1-11

14<sup>th</sup> May 2006

Session 1: Spiritual Gifts  
Introduction

*Speaker: Adam Voke*

*Vs 1 'about spiritual gifts.....I do not want you to be ignorant'*

-here was a church with many gifts (1 Cor 1:7 'you do not lack any spiritual gift') yet lacking understanding of what they had and how to use it. This was not good.

### **1. Gifts are given by God in Grace**

One specific word used: Greek = 'Charisma' or 'Charismata' = 'Grace Gift'. (Given freely, generously, undeservedly, without cost)

Outside N.T. it is a rare word (\*one occurrence is in buying property 'by purchase' or 'by gift')

Characteristically a Pauline word, but used for other things too such as rescue & salvation but most commonly used for 'Spiritual gifts'. Emphasis is always on the fact it is a grace-gift unmerited by us.

*Rom 6:23 'for the wages ('Opsonia') of sin is death, but the gift ('Charisma') of God is eternal life in Christ'*

-Wages earned means 'money to buy cooked meat' the regular word for a soldier's pay. But an Emperor coming to the throne, or on his birthday would sometimes give a free 'gift' of money. It was thus unearned and gracious.

### **2. Gifts are given freely to everyone**

'Birthday present' in Modern Greek. These presents are given by our Father after our new spiritual birth.

**Mark Stibbe: 'God has at least one present or gift for you and me. It is our responsibility to find which presents have our name on them, to unwrap them, and then to enjoy using them in bringing pleasure to the Father in heaven. Our purpose, in short, is to practise the presents of God'**

*1 Cor 12:7 'Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given' vs 11 'all these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines'*

*1 Peter 4:10 'each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others'*

1 Cor 12:12-31 – Example of the body, each one is a part with a function and ability. Christ has given the needed gifts and abilities in order for his body to function properly.

Don't have false humility – 'By the grace of God I am what I am'

### **3. Gifts listed are not exhaustive**

22 Gifts specifically mentioned in scripture, although these are not necessarily exhaustive.

**Wayne Grudem 'Paul was not attempting to construct exhaustive lists of gifts when he specified the ones he did, although there is sometimes an indication of some order, it seems that in general Paul was almost randomly listing a series of different examples of gifts as they came to mind'**

#### **Different ways of classifying gifts (Wayne Grudem):**

Short list 1 Peter 4:11 – Whoever Speaks, Whoever renders service (2 categories)

O.T. Categories

1. Prophetic – teaching, encouraging etc.
2. Priestly – mercy, serving, tongues etc.

3. Kingly – administration, leadership, governmental

Or

1. Knowledge
2. Power
3. Speech

#### **4. Gifts of the Spirit are not fruit of the spirit or the Holy Spirit himself**

The Holy Spirit himself is given as a free gift – *Acts 1:4 'Wait for the gift my father promised' Acts 2:38 'repent and be baptised.....and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit'* – The Greek word is different (Dorea) it's not used for Spiritual gifts, there is a distinction.

1. The Holy Spirit produces fruit in a believer's life (i.e. *Love in 1 Cor 13:4-7, Gal 5:22-23*)
2. The Holy Spirit manifests himself through spiritual gifts – *1 Cor 12:7 'manifestation'*

**David Du Plessis 'Let me say right here that I consider it heresy to speak of shaking, trembling, falling, dancing, clapping, shouting, and such actions as manifestations of the Holy Spirit. There are purely human reactions to the power of the Holy Spirit'**

#### **5. Gifts are not simply natural abilities**

Gifts come from the triune God – 1 Cor 12:4-6.

- '*the same Spirit*' = Greek 'Pneuma' = The Holy Spirit

- '*the same Lord*' = Greek 'Kurios' = Jesus. Also referred to in 1 Cor 12:3 as 'Jesus is Lord'

- '*the same God*' = Greek 'Theos' = God, the powerful and eternal father

Spiritual gifts are inspired and empowered by the triune God himself. We have something that is primarily divine in nature given to us as Spirit Filled believers.

Natural abilities are also God given **and should be used and developed in whatever ways are needed to serve him.** (Often there seems to be some overlap and God does use similar traits)

#### **6. Gifts are necessary and needed by the church in order to be healthy**

Rom 1:11 'I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to make you strong' – Paul wanted the church to be 'established' through this. He wanted to use his Spiritual Gift to strengthen them. To have the fruit and not the gifts is to be imbalanced and incomplete as we too can strengthen one another in this way.

**Rodman Williams (Bible Scholar) 'let it be firmly said that the Church cannot be fully or freely the Church without the presence and operation of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. What is depicted therefore in 1 Cor – and recurring in our day – is in no sense a peripheral matter but is crucial to the life of the Church. For the resurgence of the Charismata of the Holy Spirit signals the Church's recovery of it's spiritual roots and it's emergence in the twentieth century with fresh power and vitality'**

1 Peter 4:10. 'each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in it's various forms' Varied Grace = 'Poikilos'. Having many facets or aspects, having rich diversity.

Primarily gifts are used in order to serve, build up and develop the churches ministry in the world.

## **7. Gifts are also a person who is called to a particular office of ministry**

In Eph 4:11 – Apostles, prophets, pastors, teachers, evangelists are spoken of as gifts to the church (a different Greek word is used ‘Doma’ which emphasises a concreteness and consistency)

The person themselves is the gift given to the body, they are called and equipped to have a more permanent particular function within the body. These people will have the necessary gifts and abilities in order to perform that function well.

## **8. Gifts must be sought after, especially the ‘greater’ gifts**

1 Cor 14:1 ‘Follow the way of love (agape) and eagerly desire spiritual gifts especially the gift of prophesy’  
1 Cor 12:31 ‘eagerly desire the greater gifts’

Love is the guiding principle which should lead us to seek gifts and guide us in the way we use them, motivated by a desire to see the church of Jesus built up.

*1 Cor 14:12 ‘try to excel in gifts that build up the church’*

**Wayne Grudem ‘we should learn which gifts are most needed in the church we attend, and then pray that God would give those gifts to ourselves or to others. Whether those gifts are thought to be miraculous or non-miraculous really is not the important point at all’**

Be encouraged **not to stay where you are** with what you have, motivated by love you are to desire more so you can build up the church of Jesus Christ more!

## **9. Gifts must be used in proportion to faith and not neglected**

*Rom 12:6 ‘We each have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith’*

*1 Tim 4:14 ‘Do not neglect your gift’ 2 Tim 1:6 ‘I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God which is in you’ - if not they will weaken, not be added to or even disappear!*

## **10. Gifts are not a sign of spiritual maturity**

Gifts are given to every believer (1 Cor 12:7, 1 Peter 4:10) in grace, in order that they may serve the body of which they are a part of.

*1 Cor 1:7 ‘you do not lack any spiritual gift’ yet 1 Cor 3:1 ‘I could not address you as spiritual, but as worldly – mere infants in Christ’*

Matt 7:22-23 – people who prophesy and cast out demons who are not even known by the Lord!

**Graham Cooke ‘I have shared platforms with some people, have watched as others prophesied into their lives, and yet several months to a year later, I have witnessed a moral fall that had its roots in ungodly activity going back years into their lives. I have had close friendships and working relationships with key people who have fallen badly through immorality or fraud. The roots of sin had been strongly in place throughout our friendship, yet I had never seen nor heard. Looking back, I can see a common thread of behaviour in these people. They all believed that because their**

**ministries were anointed and successful, because prophetic words made no mention of their ungodly way, that God was not concerned about it!**

### **11. Gifts will only be in use until Christ comes again**

Interpretations of 1 Cor 13:8-10. Prophecy, tongues and knowledge will cease 'when perfection comes'.

1. Until the closing of canon of scripture, it has been done.
2. Until church is mature. It is.
3. Until the Parousia (second coming of Christ) – We still await it

Perfection = Greek 'teleios' means 'the end'. This is the plain meaning of the text.

Wayne Grudem in Systematic Theology uses 1 Cor 1:7 to make the point that we are still awaiting the return and that gifts are given until that point.

### **12. Gifts help you know what to do with your life**

You've been given gifts with a purpose for them to be used.

Parallels to children's responses to a Father giving them presents.....

1. Not expecting anything from God as a loving Father. Even though he wants to give good birthday gifts to his children? (Luke 11:13).
2. More pre-occupied with the gift than the giver, no thanks or relationship with.
3. Not content with the gift received. It lies discarded very soon.
4. The gift is gratefully received and appreciated and used for its intended purpose.

Can a duck run? Can a rabbit climb? – Yes but they are not very good at these things, they have other abilities they should focus on using more!

If you know what your spiritual gifts are then you have a good idea of what God wants you to do, so don't devote all your energies to doing other things.