

Volume VII

The Essentials



Spiritual Gifts

We'd like to welcome you to the educational series "The Essentials". These series of study books are designed to equip the believers of Christ with the essentials to live the life the scripture say we should have. This series will also help us to understand and embrace our anointed call to change our view about ourselves and give ourselves to become ambassadors of change in world around us.

To properly understand the calling of Christ it is mandatory that we give ourselves to grasping some clarity related to His call. The central resource to discover what Christ has called us to is the Bible. In the pages of the bible, we will discover that we have been made for a purpose. As a matter of fact, "we have been made for this time and this time is made for us". Since so much of who we are and who we are to be is held within the sacred scripture, we must develop a new mind-set in seeking to learn about our Lord's plan for us.

We must embrace this reality: “Our assured purpose is rooted in the word of God. To understand our assignment and the father’s destined will for us, it is imperative that we engage the searching of the scriptures as a lifetime journey”. 1 John 3:2 ...it doth not appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear we shall be like him...

There are principle fundamentals that God has laid out for our benefit that will help us to understand that “there is nothing that has happened to us that God is not aware of and has made to work for us”. We discover these truths as we study our God and His ways.

Special thanks to Bishop Timothy J. Clarke of the First Church, Columbus, Ohio for his permission to use the Foundation class material.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Introduction

This lesson is designed to provide a basic overview and understanding of spiritual gifts. It will provide a definition of each of the gifts listed in the primary scriptural passages and will conclude by administering a spiritual gifts assessment to assist each person in discovering what their gifts) are. The primary scriptural passages regarding spiritual gifts are:

~ Romans 12

~ 1 Corinthians 12

~ Ephesians 4:7-16

~ 1 Peter 4:10-11

"No congregation will be what it could be, what Jesus prayed that it should be, what the Holy Spiritual gifted it and empowered it to be, until it understands (and employs) spiritual gifts."

In the life of the local church there are two major problems related to the subject of spiritual gifts.

The first is that far too few Christians are involved in any kind of ministry. They conceive of themselves as spectators rather than participants. None of these 'spectators' have the joy of being actively involved in ministry and of seeing God work through them in the exercise of their spiritual gifts. We shall assume that since you are in this class you no longer consider this a viable option.

A second problem is with those who are actively involved in the ministry of the local church, but who are not functioning in a ministry which corresponds to their spiritual gifts. Their dilemma is illustrated by the story of a certain sea captain and his chief engineer who were having an argument as to which one of them was the more important to the ship. Failing to agree, they resorted to the unique idea of swapping places. The chief ascended to the bridge, and the captain dived into the engine room. After a couple of hours, the captain suddenly appeared on the deck covered with oil and soot.

Pastor John McArthur

"Chief" he yelled, wildly waving aloft a monkey wrench. "You'll have to come down here; I can't make her go!"

"Of course you can't," replied the chief.

"She's aground!"

Perhaps one reason why so many have chosen to do so little or nothing in the way of ministry in the local church is because they have seen how frustrated those are who are striving to accomplish tasks they were never intended to attempt. The primary qualification for most tasks in the church is a willingness to try, or at least too little fortitude to turn down the job.

The solution to both these problems is a proper understanding of the subject of spiritual gifts. You will understand that many books on the subject of spiritual gifts have been written and that no one message will deal with every important issue. But the

purpose of this lesson is to help make the subject of spiritual gifts a little less complicated.

What Are Spiritual Gifts

To accurately understand spiritual gifts it is necessary to recognize that the Holy Spirit is the giver of spiritual gifts and chooses to manifest these "gifts" in the life of individual believers.

1 Cor 12:11

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. (NIV)

Spiritual gifts can be defined as: "a distinctive ability, given by the Holy Spirit to every Christian, according to God's grace and design, for the purpose of building up the body of Christ." Stated another way, spiritual gifts are "a God-given super natural capacity that enables one to do effective ministry."

The phrase "distinctive ability" is meant to communicate the unique way in which God has designed each person for a specific ministry. To function or serve outside of your area of spiritual giftedness is to end up unfruitful and unfulfilled.

Spiritual gifts are given by grace and no merit therefore cannot be earned. God is sovereign and gives gifts according to His will, so you have nothing to do with the gift(s) that are given to you. Spiritual gifts are just that, "gifts" that are given by God through the Holy Spirit and are not taken back, they are permanent. God does not withdraw His gifts because of our disobedience or backsliding.

All of us are members of the body of Christ and have no spiritual existence apart from the body. Each of the members has a different service to perform and no one service is superior to another. God has designed the body of Christ to be

interdependent on each other in order to function properly and never intended for the independent operation of spiritual gifts.

Review

The _____ is the giver of spiritual gifts.

Do you choose your own spiritual gifts?

The Importance of Knowing Your Spiritual Gift

For various reasons many have played down the importance of knowing your spiritual gift. Let's continue our study of spiritual gifts by suggesting several reasons why it is imperative for every Christian to know his/her gift.

1. The prominence of spiritual gifts in Scripture. One of the ways we can measure the importance of a principle or a doctrine is to determine the amount of space devoted to it in the Bible. Subjects or doctrines which are merely implied are surely of less

significance than those clearly stated Matters mentioned infrequently should not be regarded as crucial as those frequently dealt with. Using this standard of measurement, the subject of spiritual gifts is a vital one, for we find gifts addressed specifically in four major portions of Scripture: 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14; Romans chapter 12; Ephesians chapter 4; and 1 Peter chapter 4. In addition to these central passages spiritual gifts are mention

Dr. Benjamin F. Reid, *Glory To The Spirit*, (Warner Press, Inc., Anderson, IN, 1997), pages 76-77.

else where in the Bible. Spiritual gifts must be important to the Spirit of God who inspired the writing of the Word of God and thus they should be important to us.

2. The elementary nature of spiritual gifts. When the book of First Corinthians was written, it was addressed to those who were obviously not very mature in the faith. There were many forms of carnality cited by Paul in

this epistle. The things of which Paul wrote in this book were not matters of the 'deeper life,' but rather the elemental truths of the Christian life. Due to the emphasis on spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians, we conclude that the doctrine of spiritual gifts is important and that it is foundational and fundamental to the Christian life.

3. Spiritual gifts are a matter of individual stewardship. When Peter spoke of spiritual gifts in his first epistle, he considered them a matter of personal stewardship:

As each one has received a special gift employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God (1 Peter 4:10).

Peter meant that just as we must give account of our use of the material things God has placed under our control, and just as we must give account of the use of our time, so we must also be accountable for the use of our spiritual gifts.

Now it is very hard to be a good steward of something we know nothing about, and of

something which we do not even know we possess. If you were given the responsibility of managing the assets of someone else, the first thing you would do is to take inventory of what resources were at your disposal. You would demand to know what assets you were to use wisely. So, also, the Christian cannot be a good steward in the matter of spiritual gifts without knowing what his gifts are:

Spiritual gifts are of great practical value and benefit to the believer.

Spiritual gifts are of such great practical value to the Christian he simply cannot afford to be ignorant in this matter. Let me suggest some areas of practical benefit.

Knowing your spiritual gift(s) will enable you to find your place of ministry in the local church. Since every Christian has a particular function in the body of Christ, and since your spiritual gifts equip you to carry out this

function, mowing your gifts help you to plug in to the ministry of a local church.

Knowing your spiritual gifts will enable you to determine your priorities. One of the most common problems we all face is having more things to do than we have time to do them.

Paul indicates in Romans chapter twelve, verses six through eight, that we should make the use of our spiritual gifts a priority in our lives. In simple terms, when we have too many things to do we must choose to function in the area of our spiritual gifts. You must know your spiritual gifts to set these priorities.

Knowing your spiritual gifts will be of great help in discerning God's will. To extend our last point just a little bit further, knowing your spiritual gifts can be of great help in discerning the will of God. The choice of your occupation, whether 'secular' or 'religious,' should take into account whether or not it will help or hinder the exercise and development of your spiritual gift. If you are not gifted to teach, you have a valuable

insight into God's will when you are offered a teaching position. There is a very distinct relationship between knowing the will of God (Romans 12:1-2) and understanding your spiritual gift (Romans 12:3-8).

Why Does God Give Us Spiritual Gifts?

God has chosen to gift every believer with spiritual gifts for the purpose of service. The body of Christ has been called and equipped for the purpose of spreading the Gospel message and:

To glorify God - spiritual gifts have been given to us to glorify God, not ourselves or our work.

1 Pet 4:11

If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God.

If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen. (NIV emphasis added)

To build-up the body of Christ - the gifts should build-up the body of Christ, not feed our pride our pride and ego.

Eph 4:11-12,

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers.

12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up (NIV emphasis added)

To develop unity in the body of Christ - the gifts should serve to unify the body. If we do not work together, it hinders the work of the Holy Spirit and is like serving: milk, eggs, flour, sugar, baking soda and a pinch of salt on a plate and calling it a cake.

Eph4:13

until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (NIV emphasis added)

**To develop maturity in the body of Christ -
"God is not as interested in your success as
your maturity**

Eph 4:14-15

14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. (NIV emphasis added)

**To grow the body of Christ - properly
exercising spiritual gifts will lead sinners to
salvation.**

Eph 4:16

From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. (NIV emphasis added)

Fred Smith

For the common good of the body of Christ - gifts have been given for the benefit of the whole body, not just a select few.

1 Cor 12:7

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (NIV emphasis added)

Every part of the body is essential to the well-being of the body. When one member fails to do his part, the body suffers.

There are two important corollaries to this truth that spiritual gifts equip the Christian to carry out his unique contribution to the body.

First, spiritual gifts are not primarily given to benefit the individual, but the entire body. Anyone who seeks a spiritual gift and employs it in order to give himself a kind of spiritual 'high' is missing the point of spiritual gifts. Perhaps this is the most serious

criticism of the contemporary tongues movement. Not only has one gift been exalted above all the others, but the primary purpose of this gift seems to be self-edification.

Second, if spiritual gifts are given to enable us to carry out every essential function of the body then we should expect spiritual gifts which correspond to every function described in the Scriptures. This is precisely the case.

While we can see that all are to engage in these functions, there are gifts which overlap some of them. It is those who are gifted in these various capacities who will excel in a particular function. If for every area of ministry there are those specially qualified for that ministry, it is vital to that ministry that those specially gifted in that area should be involved in that ministry.

The Nature of Spiritual Gifts

The difference between spiritual gifts and natural talents is not always easy to discern. It must be understood that even unbelievers have natural talents, but only those who have received salvation have spiritual gifts. Because someone has a natural talent or has a certain secular vocation, does not necessarily mean that that is their spiritual gift also.

In order to accurately describe the nature of spiritual gifts we will make two major assertions, both of which appear paradoxical. Until we understand the truths contained in these paradoxical statements, we shall not understand spiritual gifts.

Spiritual gifts intertwine the Divine and the Human. To view spiritual gifts in a merely human dimension leading to a gross misunderstanding of their divine element. Likewise, to view the gifts only from a 'spiritual' perspective will lead to a distorted appraisal. Spiritual gifts are 'spiritual' in

nature for they are given by the Holy Spirit to every believer (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). Each gift is a manifestation of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7). Spiritual gifts are 'spiritual' in that they are given only to those who are believers in Jesus Christ also, spiritual gifts differ from human talents and abilities in that they result in 'spiritual' fruit.

In addition to the divine element in spiritual gifts is the human counterpart. The gift of helps will involve someone of human involvement whether it be in the bringing of a meal, the fixing of a flat tire, or in cleaning up someone's house. The gift of teaching involves the study of the lesson and the preparation of what is going to be taught. Administration involves sitting down and making plans, calling meetings and evaluation of progress. The gift of giving includes the making of the money, the choice of where it is to be distributed and the actual follow-through of giving.

It has been said that spiritual gifts must not be confused with natural talents, and surely we must agree. But we must also insist that spiritual gifts not be divorced from natural talents and abilities. In Psalm 139, we are reminded that it was God who fashioned us in the womb. Whatever our capabilities or weaknesses, they were given to us by the omniscient God who designed us not only in the matter of spiritual gifts, but also in the matter of talents and abilities to carry out a certain task. Human abilities alone will never produce eternal fruit, but our abilities when empowered by the Holy Spirit can bring about spiritual fruit. It is no accident that Billy Graham is a gifted speaker in the human sense. But there are countless gifted speakers who have never seen a soul won to Christ.

Finally, spiritual gifts should be viewed on the human plane in that they, just as natural talents and abilities, must be developed. One may have the gift of teaching but that gift

needs to be developed, perhaps by seminary studies, certainly by some kind of training and much experience. Paul told Timothy, . . .kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands (2 Timothy 1:6).

Perhaps the best analogy of this interweaving of the divine and the human in the matter of spiritual gifts is that of the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. He was fully human and yet at the same time He was fully God. Divinity and humanity in one person. So also the Scriptures are the work of both God and men. Men spoke and wrote, revealing their backgrounds, education, personalities and styles, and yet these men were moved along by the Holy Spirit in such a way that every word these men wrote was the Word of God (2 Peter 1:21; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Spiritual gifts produce unity through diversity. Most Christians have failed to grasp the great diversity revealed in spiritual

gifts. The key text is found in 1 Corinthians chapter 12:

"Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons" (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).

Most Christians would agree that there is diversity in the gifts which are given to men. One may have the gift of helps, while another gift of administration, and so on. I am no longer completely convinced that the New Testament necessarily records every possible spiritual gift, so perhaps there is even greater diversity in gifts than we have thought. But the point I wish to underscore is that even among those who possess the same gift there is great diversity. This is what Paul meant in verses 5 and 6 when he said that there are varieties of ministries and effects.

There are infinite possibilities for ministry for those who possess the gift of teaching.

"Ministries" in verse 5 refers to the sphere in which the particular gift is to be exercised. One may use his gift of teaching in a pastoral role in the local church, while another teaches in a seminary. One may teach a junior Sunday school class while another may teach informally around the lunch table at his place of work. One may teach in Africa, while another will teach in North Dallas. When we think of the gift of teaching, all too often we have some stereotyped concept of what the sphere of this teaching will be, but Paul tells us we must keep an open mind to infinite possibilities for exercising this gift.

I have heard it said that there is no such gift as the gift of teaching young people. I would have to agree that there is only one gift of teaching, but that the sphere of ministry for a given individual may be teaching young people, while for another gifted individual that sphere of ministry may be teaching the aged in a retirement home. If we are to properly use our spiritual gifts we must not

only identify the gift we possess, but also the sphere of ministry God has ordained for us.

There is yet another dimension of diversity in spiritual gifts. Even when two men have the same gift of teaching, and employ that gift in almost identical situations, there will be diversity in the 'effects' or results of that teaching. One man may be exceptionally gifted, while the other only moderately so. One evangelist may win hundreds to Christ and another thousands, while another wins only several dozen. The effectiveness of each man's gifts will vary. The practical implications of this are many and we shall deal with some of them later.

All of this diversity and variety contributes to Christian unity rather than contradicts it. The very fact of such diversity necessitates unity and interdependence. This interplay between diversity and unity is illustrated by the story told by Donald Grey Barnhouse: Several years ago, two students graduated from the Chicago-Kent College of Law. The

highest ranking student in the class was a blind man named Overton, and when he received his honor, he insisted that half the credit should go to his friend, Kasprzyzak. They had met one another in school when the armless Mr. Kasprzyzak had guided the blind Mr. Overton down a flight of stairs. This acquaintance ripened into friendship and a beautiful example of interdependence. The blind man carried the books which the armless man read aloud in their common study, and thus the individual deficiency of each was compensated for by the other. After their graduation, they planned to practice law together.

Common Misconceptions of Spiritual Gifts
Before we go on to the subject of discovering your gift, let's take a moment to deal with some of the most common errors we make related to spiritual gifts.

1. Confusing Spiritual Gifts With Spirituality

The great error of the carnal Corinthian church was to confuse spiritual gifts with spirituality. Those who spoke in tongues thought themselves to be several notches higher on the spiritual scale than those who did not have this gift. The Corinthian church was apparently an exceptionally gifted church, but it was also one of the most carnal churches in the New Testament. My friend, you may not be comforted in hearing this but the man who has the gift of pastor-teacher may be far less spiritual than the one who has the gift of helps. The one with the gift of giving may be far more spiritual than the evangelist who is winning thousands to Christ. We need only recall the Old Testament figure, Sampson, to be reminded that while he was performing great feats of strength he was living a life devoted to the flesh.

2. Our Spiritual Gift Excuses Us From Other Responsibilities

The watchword of the Christian sluggard is 'that's not my gift.' My pet peeve is the pastor-teacher who maintains that his sole obligation is to prepare for sermons. He has no time for counseling those who are struggling with life, no time to visit the sick, no time to comfort the mourning. That mentality is an abuse of the biblical teaching concerning spiritual gifts.

We have demonstrated that every gift relates to a function that is the responsibility of every Christian. Although some are gifted to give, all Christians are to give cheerfully to the Lord. While some are gifted to be leaders or administrators, every man is to be a leader in his home, and every woman needs to lead as well (cf. Proverbs 31). While our spiritual gift necessitates that we establish priorities, we are never excused from the responsibilities of all Christians. We are foolish to spend great amounts of time as the chairman of a committee if we are not

gifted as an administrator. We would spend our time much more profitably in the area of our gift. But let us be careful about excusing ourselves from tasks for which we are responsible. We may not be gifted at leading people to Christ, but we are to be witnesses for our Lord Jesus.

3. Obsession for Knowledge About Spiritual Gifts

Although I have already stressed the importance of knowing our spiritual gifts. I want to make it clear that knowledge is not so important that we neglect service. There is in my estimation far too much intellectualism in the Christian church. Such was the case in Corinth as well. Paul had to say to them. "Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up" (1 Corinthians 8:1. my translation). Many Christians insist upon knowing what their spiritual gifts are before they begin to serve God in any capacity. They are more interested in studying and knowing than in serving. It is no wonder that Paul had

to insert his chapter (13) on love in the midst of his teaching on spiritual gifts. It is my contention that we learn our spiritual gifts as we serve. If we devote ourselves to the service of others, we will inevitably learn what our gifts are. I am not negating the importance of study or doctrine; I am simply saying that our motive should be to learn to serve, not to study simply to learn.

4. Defining Spiritual Gifts in Terms of the Spectacular

One of the things which distress me most about spiritual gifts is the way we define the various gifts by the use of giants of the faith. The gift of teaching is the gift of Dr. Robinson, the gift of faith is the gift of George Mueller, the gift of giving is the gift of Le Tourneau, the gift of evangelism is the gift of Billy Graham. We have made two serious mistakes. One is that we have focused upon extraordinary gifts and most of us are not going to get close to their level of effectiveness. A person who wins several to

Christ in a year would not dare to suggest that his gift was the same as that of Billy Graham. A woman with the gift of faith who is trusting God to get her husband through seminary would not think of claiming to possess the same gift as George Mueller.

In addition to confusing the effectiveness of different individuals with the same spiritual gift, we also ignore the different spheres of ministry which God has for the same gift. We erroneously suppose that evangelism must take place in a coliseum, rather than around a coffee table. We think teaching must be done behind a pulpit, rather than on the back porch. It is no wonder that many Christians seriously question whether or not they possess some spiritual gift. It is often because they are trying to measure their gifts against the giants. Far more reasonable is the approach of measuring our abilities and gifts against the average Christian.

How Can I Discover My Spiritual Gifts?

Drawing all that we have said together, let's consider how one can learn what his or her spiritual gift may be.

1. First, I hope you have concluded that this matter is not the great mystery we have made it out to be. God has given you a gift or gifts and He intends for you to know your gift, to develop it and to use it for His glory. Gifts are not classified or top secret material intended only for the spiritual elite.

2. Second, arrive at a simple and concise definition for each of the spiritual gifts recorded in the Scriptures. The gift of faith is the supernatural ability to trust God. Faith is both active and passive. The housewife, for example, may demonstrate active faith by trusting God to establish a coffee-type Bible study for the gals in the neighborhood. The husband may exercise active faith in stepping out into a new type of business venture that will bring additional opportunities for ministry. Passive faith is faith which hangs on

for dear life. The seminary wife with the gift of faith may demonstrate her passive faith when all the obstacles point to her husband throwing in the towel and quitting seminary, but she keeps encouraging him to trust. These kinds of faith benefit the body by encouraging others to trust the Lord both actively and passively.

Whatever you do, do not define the gifts in terms of the spectacular. Rather, define the gifts as they relate to you and your situation. Consider how the gift of faith would manifest itself in your situation, on the job, at home, in your responsibilities in the church? We will look at definitions in the next section.

3. Third, and most important, obey the Scriptures. Corresponding to every spiritual gift is an imperative or instruction to every Christian to carry out that function. The reason why most Christians don't know what their spiritual gift is, is that they have never tried to do it yet if you were to ask me what I

thought your natural abilities were, the first thing I would do is to ask what you have tried. Have you ever tried to play baseball, to water ski, to bowl, to sew? If you haven't you will never know. You may study sewing, baseball, bowling or whatever, but you will never know if you are good at it until you have made a genuine effort to do it. The general imperatives of the Scriptures have made it easy for us. They command us to do everything which corresponds to some spiritual gift.

In your obedience to the Scriptures, do the things which you see need to be done? I believe it is almost impossible for one with the gift of teaching not to show his hand at a discussion-type Bible study. There is virtually no way you can keep a gifted teacher quiet. He senses a need to teach, and, if given the chance, he meets that need by sharing what he knows to be God's answer. The one with the gift of giving is the one who is most sensitive to financial needs. He senses needs

that go over every one else's heads. The same is true of the administrator. He will sense the lack of organization and immediately move in to meet that need. With every spiritual gift comes the complimentary ability to discern the need as well as the ability to meet it.

It is Bill Gothard who suggests that individuals react to given situations in the light of their gifts. If a waitress spills someone's meal all over the restaurant floor and a group of Christians are sitting nearby, each individual will react in accordance with this spiritual gift. The gift of mercy responds by concentrating on cleaning up the mess, the gift of giving offers to pay for another meal, the gift of exhortation seeks to cheer up the waitress. The gift of administration delegates and organizes the whole matter to avoid confusion. The gift of teaching suggests some ways to avoid a recurrence of the entire problem. Your spiritual gift makes you sensitive to certain needs that others may

not perceive. Do what you see needs to be done.

4. Fourth, devote yourself to what you do best. Once you begin to meet the needs you will quickly discover that you do some things better than others. The fact that you do not do some things very well is no indication that you are to cease altogether in that area. But this will be a clue as to where you should concentrate your efforts. On the basis of your own evaluation and the suggestions of those you respect, begin to devote more time and energy to the things you do best. This leads to the development of the gifts which you possess. Whatever opportunities come up which will aid you in enhancing your spiritual gifts, make the most of them. You may learn that a job change will help you develop your gift. For example, if your gift is teaching, you may well consider a teaching occupation that will enhance your abilities in teaching. If you are particularly skillful in counseling, you may be able to find

a job that gives you additional opportunities to develop this ability.

The Gifts

These are the spiritual gifts mentioned in the primary scriptural passages

1. Wisdom - the distinctive ability to discern the mind of Christ and apply scriptural truth to a specific situation in order to make the right choices and help others move in the right direction. Scripture: Acts 6:3, 10; 1 Corinthians 2:6-13; 1 Corinthians 12:8

2. Knowledge - the distinctive ability to seek out, gather, organize, and clarify facts and ideas on a number of diverse subjects. Scripture: Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:8; Colossians 2:2-3

3. Exhortation - the distinctive ability to appropriately communicate words of encouragement, challenge, or rebuke in the body of Christ. Scripture: Acts 14:22; Romans 12:8

4. Teaching - the distinctive ability to employ a logical, systematic approach to biblical

study in preparation for clearly communicating practical truth to the body of Christ. Scripture: Acts 18:24-28; 1 Corinthians 12:28

5. Pastor/Shepherd - the distinctive ability to assume responsibility for the spiritual growth and Christian community of a group of believers. Scripture: Ephesians 4:11-14; 1 Timothy 3:1-7

6. Apostle - the distinctive ability to provide spiritual leadership over a number of pastors and churches that results in tangible fruit in ministry. Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:28; 2 Corinthians 12:12

All definitions obtained from Spiritual Gifts by Dr. Dan Reiland through Injoy Ministries.

7. Prophecy - the distinctive ability to boldly declare the truth of God, regardless of the consequences, calling people to righteous living. Scripture: Acts 2:37-40; 1 Corinthians 14:1-4

8. Evangelist - the distinctive ability to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with others in

such a way that many non Christians believe in Christ and are converted to Christianity.

Scripture: Acts 8:26-40; Ephesians 4:11-14

9. Giving - the distinctive ability to cheerfully and generously contribute personal resources to God's work. Scripture: Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7

10. Mercy - the distinctive ability to feel sincere empathy and compassion in a way that results in practical relief for people's hurts, pain and suffering. Scripture: Matthew 9:35-36; Romans 12:8

11. Helps - the distinctive ability to work with and support other Christian's ministry efforts. Scripture: Romans 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 12:28

12. Leadership - the distinctive ability to influence others according to a "big picture" purpose, mission, or plan. Scripture: Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 3:1-13

13. Service - the distinctive ability to identify and meet the practical needs of others. Scripture: Romans 12:7; 2 Timothy 1:16-18

14. Administration - the distinctive ability to coordinate and organize people and projects.

Scripture: Acts 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 12:28

15. Discernment - the distinctive ability to perceive whether a person's actions

originate from Godly, Satanic, or merely human sources. Scripture: Acts 5:1-11; 1

Corinthians 12:10

16. Faith - the distinctive ability to believe

God with confidence for things unseen, spiritual growth and the will of God.

Scripture: Romans 4:18-21; 1 Corinthians

12:9

17. Miracles - the distinctive ability to

perform supernatural acts as an instrument or agent of God which alter the expected

course of nature. Scripture: Romans 15:18-19; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28

18. Healing - the distinctive ability to be used

as a human intermediary through whom God's supernatural power is applied to a

person's physical or emotional need.

Scripture: Acts 3:1-10; 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28

19. Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues - the distinctive ability to speak in a language which you never learned and communicate a divinely anointed message from God to unbelievers.

The gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues are often very controversial, but they don't have to be. To "demystify" these gifts, there are some things that we need to understand about these gifts.

The gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues are biblical – the proof and basis of these gifts existence is recorded in scripture.

1 Cor 12:10

to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues and to still another the interpretation of tongues. (NIV- emphasis added)

The gift of tongues is not the greatest spiritual gift and should not be viewed as a sign of "super spirituality".

The gift of tongues is a spiritual "gift" and is given to certain members of the body of Christ for the purpose of building up the Kingdom of God

The gift of tongues is not the sole evidence of being filled with the Holy Spirit.

Scripture speaks of two different forms of tongues (languages):

1. Heavenly - a private prayer tongue which is not understood by humans.

1 Cor 14:2

For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit. (NIV)

2. Earthly - historical tongues that are unknown to the human speaker, but are understood by the human hearers. {Acts2:1-12}

Other Spiritual Gifts - other spiritual gifts for which there is Biblical support.

1. Missions - the distinctive ability to minister effectively in cultures beyond your own. Scripture: Acts 22:21; Romans 10:15

2. Music - the distinctive ability to make a significant contribution to a worship experience through singing or playing a musical instrument. Scripture: 1 Chronicles 16:41-42; Psalms 150

3. Craftsmanship - the distinctive ability to use your hands and mind to benefit other believers through artistic, creative or a wide variety of construction arenas. Scripture: Exodus 30:22-25; Acts 18:2-3

4. Hospitality - the distinctive ability to make people feel "at home", welcome, cared for, and a part of the group. Scripture: Romans 12:13; Romans 16:23

5. Intercession - the distinctive ability to pray for significant lengths of time, on a regular basis, and often observe specific answers to

**those prayers. Scripture: Colossians 1:9-12;
James 5:14-16**

Conclusion

Our God is loving and gracious. Because of this, the Lord has chosen to give to each of us a wonderful spiritual gifts. These gifts have been given to bring glory to the Lord and to build-up the body of Christ. As believers we should strive to discover our gifts and serve the Lord with gladness.