

LESSON 16: SPIRITUAL GIFTS

PURPOSE and SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Read Jeremiah 1:5

- ▶ When is your purpose in life given to you?

Before you were born, God created you for a particular purpose. It does not matter how you came into being. God has a purpose for your life.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:7, 11 and Psalms 139:13-16

- ▶ When are your spiritual gifts given to you?

God has formed you in the womb. There are certain talents, personalities, and physical attributes that God has designed for each of you. When you become a believer and the Spirit indwells you, God gives you certain spiritual gifts to enhance your purpose inside God's church.

Read Ephesians 4:11-13

- ▶ According to this passage, what is the purpose behind God giving spiritual gifts?

God gives some gifts to certain people to enhance your walk spiritually. That would include the staff at church and Sunday school teachers.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:8-12

- ▶ According to this passage, what is the purpose behind God giving spiritual gifts?

God also equips those that are not leaders with particular gifts. The purpose of these people is to assist the leaders in deepening the church so that it reaches fullness in Jesus Christ. The purpose of all gifts is to glorify God. Several gifts are listed in Scripture, but this is not an exhaustive list.

WISDOM VS. KNOWLEDGE

Read 1 Corinthians 12:8-12

- ▶ What is the difference between wisdom and knowledge?

Wisdom is the ability to understand the truth in scripture. Knowledge on the other hand, is the ability to take that word and put it in your life. Any effective pastor has both wisdom and knowledge. Some people are only gifted with wisdom. These would include a lot of seminary professors and Biblical scholars.

FAITH

Read 1 Corinthians 12:8-12, Matthew 17:20, and Luke 17:6

▶ What is the gift of faith?

Faith is required for salvation. Every Christian has faith, but not everyone has the gift of faith. The difference is that people with the gift of faith have great vision and the trust in God to carry the vision out.

Example: Carson Watt came to Chris wanting to start a men's ministry. Carson felt led to do that, implemented it, worked on it, and today we have a thriving men's ministry.

Example: Betty Ward felt that she needed to start leading Celebrate Recovery at Central. She went on to start the ministry which continues to reach out to people in this community.

HEALING

Read 1 Corinthians 12:10-14, 14:39

▶ Is the gift of healing still active and if so how is it used?

A doctor does not necessarily have the gift of healing. He more likely has the talents to do well in school and is intellectually gifted. The gift of healing is the ability to pray over someone and allow God to use you to bring healing to someone else.

PROPHECY

▶ What is the gift of prophecy and how is it used today?

Prophecy is both foretelling and forth telling. In the Old Testament, the prophets mainly preached the need for repentance. They also told what would happen if they did not repent. The future foretelling was always used to back up the preaching of repentance. Prophets are usually great speakers. They can bring a strong, uncompromising message to large audiences.

Prophets and evangelists are often confused. The major difference is that an evangelist is someone who is good at cross cultural preaching. This includes most missionaries.

DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

▶ What is the gift of discerning spirits and how is it used today?

Some people are gifted with the ability of telling whether something is wise or not or a person is legitimate or not. People must be careful that they do not think they have this gift simply because they enjoy judging people.

GIFTS OF TONGUES AND INTERPRETATION

Read 1 Corinthians 14:2-4, 14:21, 14:39, and Acts 2:6-8

- ▶ Is the gift of tongues and interpretation of tongues still active and if so how is it used?

Yes, the gifts of tongues and interpretation are still active. Tongues is not ecstatic utterances. In Acts and Corinthians, it appears to be actual foreign languages. It is the ability to go into a land with a foreign language to preach the gospel in a language he does not know. The gift comes on him, and he speaks.

The gift of tongues usually impacts a person emotionally in some way. This could be because of the direct connection between the person and what the Holy Spirit is doing right in that moment.

There are a few cautions that surround the gift of tongues. First, the gift of tongues was not designed for use in the church. It is to be used more in the mission field as a sign to unbelievers. Another caution is that it can impact a person emotionally to a point where they want everyone else to have the gift of tongues as well.

APPLICATION OF YOUR GIFTS

Read Acts 22:1-3

- ▶ How was Paul gifted?

Paul was a highly educated man. Paul knew both Hebrew and Greek, which only the most educated of Jews knew. He studied under Gamaliel who was the Billy Graham of his day. Paul was a Rabbi and a Pharisee, both of which were prestigious positions. Paul knew Scripture and had the great ability to expound Scripture from the Hebrew.

Read Acts 4:13

- ▶ How was Peter gifted?

Peter was an uneducated fisherman, but had great confidence in preaching the Word. He did not know the Scriptures as well as Paul; he did not speak Hebrew like Paul, and did not hold a prestigious position like Paul.

Looking at their giftedness, it appears to make more sense for Paul to minister to the Jews since he was highly regarded. On the other hand, it would make more sense for Peter to minister to the Gentiles, since many were not as highly educated. However, God does the exact opposite. Isa. 55:8-9

▶ Why would God send them in direct contradiction to their giftedness?

God needed someone who would demonstrate to the Jews that they were not saved through their background, but by a relationship with Jesus. Peter was perfect for this job. If Paul had been used, then it could have demonstrated that knowledge of Hebrew rabbinic faith and your Biblical skills could save you.

Paul was better equipped to preach to the Gentiles because he had the strategy of an evangelist. Paul started on a road and walked all the way through Rome. He went to every major city on that road which contained a synagogue that would recognize Paul's credentials. The people of the synagogue would respect Paul and ask him to speak every Saturday, giving him a perfect opportunity to share the Gospel.

You cannot always look at your giftedness to determine where you are supposed to be. You have to allow the Holy Spirit to lead you and guide you to whatever place He has for you in the church. Your giftedness should be used to disciple others. If you are not using your gifts, then you will have to answer to God.

BREAKS FROM USING YOUR GIFTS

▶ Is it ever acceptable to not use your gifts?

If you are a young mom, then your priority is to minister and care for your children. While they are young, you are busy caring for them and are not expected to minister in other ways. When they begin school and living their own life, then you are responsible for using your gifts once again.

You are not gifted so that you can sit around and waste those gifts. You are responsible for using your gifts to build up the church. There are times when you need a break, but these are few and far between.

Everyone has gifts and talents that God has equipped you with to build up the church and bring others closer to God. What are your gifts and talents? Are you using those gifts in the church?