

Spiritual Gifts

1. Why is it important for a Christian to learn about spiritual gifts?

- Because each member of the body has been gifted by God's grace to minister to the body. The work of the ministry belongs to all the saints in the administration of spiritual gifts. We therefore have need to learn how to exist as a healthy productive member of the body, so that the body can grow and build itself up in love.

1 Corinthians 12:1 - Now **concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.** NASU

The Nature of Spiritual Gifts –

1. **Purpose of the gifts** – The gifts of the Spirit cause spiritual growth in the body through their administration. It is vital to understand that the use of spiritual gifts is imperative for the health and growth of the body of Christ. **God has given the gifts for the purpose of building up the body** and each member is gifted with a vitally important gift which needs to be expressed. Each one must use their gift.

Romans 12:6-10 - 6 We 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. 7 If it is serving, **let him serve**; if it is teaching, **let him teach**; 8 if it is encouraging, **let him encourage**; if it is contributing to the needs of others, **let him give** generously; if it is leadership, **let him govern** diligently; if it is showing mercy, **let him do it** cheerfully. 9 Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. NIV

2. **Motivation of the gifts** – The gifts are always to be used with the selfless motivation of love. They are for the purpose of edification and build up, not tearing down. The great love chapter, 1 Corinthians 13, comes right out of the context of Paul's teaching on how to exercise spiritual gifts.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 - 4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 **does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered**, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. NASU

3. **Uniqueness of the gifts** – Many times spiritual giftedness is as unique as the person who possesses it. Christians may possess many gifts at one time and many different combinations of gifts. It is beautiful to see how these are lived out in the lives of each different believer.

The Provision of Spiritual Gifts -

1. **Spiritual gifts and Apostolic authority** – The bible very clearly teaches that the Apostles were gifted with supernatural gifts for the purpose of confirming the authority and the authority of their teaching. Although they operated in the same gifts given to the church, they were given these in very strong degree and obvious demonstration of the Spirit's power.

(Acts 5:12-16, Rom 15:18-19, 1 Cor 9:2, 14:18, Heb 2:3-4)

2. **Spiritual gifts and cessationism** – Some teach that some of the spiritual gifts were only temporary for the purpose of Apostolic Authority and ceased with the closing of the canon of scripture. However, this doctrine is not supported by the text of scripture and is therefore extra-biblical. The burden of proof for cessationism lies with those who teach it. *There is no biblical warrant to single out certain gifts and call them temporary.* The gifts of the Spirit which were given to the church have not ceased and are still valid usable gifts today which are given by the Spirit as He wills for the common good.

The Exercise of Spiritual Gifts -

1. **Eagerly desire spiritual gifts** – We are to eagerly desire to possess spiritual gifts so that the body may be built up and edified. Again and again we are exhorted to desire and use the gifts God has given us.

1 Corinthians 12:31 - 31 But **earnestly desire the greater gifts.** NASU

1 Corinthians 14:1- Pursue love, **yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts,** but especially that you may prophesy. NASU

1 Peter 4:10-11 - 10 As **each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another** as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; **so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ,** to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. NASU

1 Corinthians 14:39 - 39 Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and **do not forbid speaking in tongues.** NIV

2. **Prophecy is greater than tongues** – Here is why we are told to desire the greater gifts. Because the gifts which edify and build up the church are therefore greater than gifts which edify only yourself. The purpose of the gifts is to build up and edify the church through the ministry of the gifts. Therefore the gifts which build up and edify the most are the greater gifts.

1 Corinthians 14:4-5 - 4 One **who speaks in a tongue edifies himself;** but one who prophesies edifies the church. 5 Now I wish that you all spoke in tongues, but even more that you would prophesy; and **greater is one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless he interprets, so that the church may receive edifying.** NASU

Application -

1. Teach your disciple that it is vital to be a productive member of the body and use the spiritual giftedness God has given. Not to use your gifts is sin.
2. Teach your disciple to eagerly desire spiritual gifts so that the body can be built up. Teach them to pray and ask God for gifts.
3. Some help in discovering your gifts;
 - a. Pray and ask God to reveal this to you and ask Him to gift you.
 - b. Ask others what giftedness they see in you.
 - c. What gifts do you enjoy and have the most interest in?
 - d. Put to death any known sin in your life. This is hindering your relationship with God.

Q & A – Anyone?

Recommended Reading:

John Owen – The Spirit and the Church

*This is an outline only and made to compliment the Fundamentals of the Faith manual.