

## **#7 - 4/15/2018 - Serving God's People - 1 Corinthians 12**

Believers receive special gifts from God for service to Him and His people.

**I. Spiritual Gifts - 1 Corinthians 12:** *<sup>1</sup>Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.*

### **Spiritual Gifts**

**1 Corinthians 12:** 1. Wisdom - v.8, 2. Knowledge - v.8, 3. Faith - v.9, 4. Healings - vv.9,28, 5. Miracles - v.10,28, 6. Prophecy - v.10, 28, 7. Discernment of spirits - v.1, 8. Tongues - v.10, 28 <sup>AA</sup>, 9. Tongues interpretation - v.10,10. Apostle - v.28, 11. Teaching - v.28, 12. Helps - v.28, 13. Administration - v.28;

**Romans 12:** 14. Service - v.7, 15. Exhortation - v.8, 16. Giving - v.8, 17. Leadership - v.8, 18. Mercy - v.8;

**Ephesians 4:** 19. Evangelism - v.11, 20. Pastor - v.11

**Miscellaneous Passages:** 21. Celibacy - 1 Corinthians 7:7-8 , 22. Martyrdom - 1 Corinthians 13:3, 23. Voluntary poverty - 1 Corinthians 13:32, 24. Missionary - Ephesians 3:6-8, 25. Hospitality - 1 Peter 4:9-10

In the table above are 25 unique spiritual gifts. God gives spiritual gifts to all His people. These gifts are parallel to natural talents in many ways. Spiritual gifts, however, are received by individuals not when they are born biologically; rather, they are received when we are born again. Natural talents must be recognized and developed, and it is the same with our spiritual gifts. Every Disciple has one or more spiritual gifts to be used in serving God and in obeying His commandments.

There are tests to help you understand your spiritual gifts. <sup>A</sup> However, having a specific spiritual gift does not relieve the believer from obeying all the commandments. For example someone may have a gift of evangelism but they are still to obey the teaching part of the commandments. Or they may have the gift of mercy, but they are still to keep the commandment of evangelism and the 3 parts of the great commission. <sup>B, C</sup>

**Have you been concentrating on serving with your gifts while neglecting obedience to the commands of Jesus and will of God?**

Notes: AA- [also 1 Corinthians 14:23,27-28]; A- For a free self-grading spiritual gifts test from Lifeway click [here](#); B-For New Testament Commandments click [here](#). C- I have receive help in this series on spiritual gifts from "Discover your spiritual gifts" by Gene Wilkes, click [here](#), "The Bible Exposition Commentary" by Warren Wiersbe to

buy click [here](#), "What are the different spiritual gifts?" click [here](#) and by the Sunday School Lesson.

**II. Spiritual Gifts are Diverse 1 Corinthians 12:12:4-6..** <sup>4</sup> *Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.* <sup>5</sup> *And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord.* <sup>6</sup> *There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.*

All spiritual **gifts** mentioned in the Bible come from the same Spirit. These different gifts are used in different **ministries** or ways to help individuals in the church. These ministries have different **effects** or results in individuals according to their needs and the working of God.

Three points: 1<sup>st</sup>, each person receives at least one gift. Spiritual gifts are not limited to some elite class of leaders in the congregation. 2nd, Paul referred explicitly to each Person of the Trinity: *Spirit ... Lord ... God*. Just as there is diversity and unity in the Trinity, so there is diversity and unity in the gifts He provides to meet the needs of the church. 3rd, there is a relationship between gifts, ministries, and effects. Gifts lead to ministries, and ministries lead to effects.

This week I have given a lot of thought to my gifts and how I have walked with Jesus over my lifetime. My desire has been to [1] obey the Biblical commandments, [2] walk in the will of God and [3] trusting God one day at a time. Therefore I lived every day following what I now know as Shamgars Success Secrets [modified by adding #4]: Start where you are, Use what you have, Do what you can, Jesus is the Multiplier.

I have followed my desire the best I knew how, since I was about 12 years old. Almost all of the major change events in my life came from someone asking me to do some thing that I tested against these criteria and if ok proceeded. Most of the time this resulted in my living wildly out of my comfort zone and skill set. This was true in all parts of my life.

**Are you using your spiritual gifts to serve God and others and saying ok when someone asks you to do something unless there is valid reason not to?**

**III. Spiritual Gifts are Specific 1 Corinthians 12:7-..** <sup>7</sup> *But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

The Spirit Himself is the precious gift given to each believer. His indwelling presence is evidence that we have been truly born again [[Romans 8:9-10](#)]. In v.7 Paul spoke about what the Spirit is currently doing for us. The exercise of the gifts of the Spirit by individual Disciples will produce results for the common good.

**Spiritual Gifts: 1 Corinthians 12:**

**[1] Wisdom** <sup>8a</sup> *For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit,*

With wisdom the Disciple can apply knowledge to make spiritual truths relevant in decision-making and daily life situations. With wisdom you discern the work of the Holy Spirit in the church, and apply His teachings to the needs of the church.

**[2] Knowledge** <sup>8b</sup> *and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;*

The gift of knowledge reveals itself in teaching and training in discipleship. It is the God-given ability to learn, know, and explain the truths of God's Word. A word of knowledge is a Spirit-revealed truth [[2 Timothy 3:16-17](#), [2 Timothy 2:2](#), [2 Peter 1:3](#)].

**[3] Faith** <sup>9a</sup> *to another faith by the same Spirit,*

The spiritual gift of faith results in a believer who trusts Jesus to work beyond their human capabilities. Disciples with this gift trust in Jesus even in the face of insurmountable odds and encourage others to have the same trust. They live one day at a time trusting in Jesus. Faith comes from the Spirit [v.9a] and being transformed by the Word of God [[Romans 10:17 NKJV](#); 12:1-2]. Living by faith can take you way out of your comfort zone.

**[4] Healing** <sup>9b</sup> *and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,*

This translation could be ~~%~~gifts of healings.+Many miraculous examples of bodily healing are found in the Gospels and Acts and then they passed off the scene. [from 1 Corinthians commentary by Warren Wiersbe on vv.8-10]. Today's medical advances were not available in the 1<sup>st</sup> century so God used miraculous healings both to help people and attest to the power of Jesus.

Today bodily healing is by medical specialists with many powerful procedures and medications. This does not preclude the requirement to pray in God's will for the healing of people today. Many of us prayed for my friend's wife in March 2018 who had a brain aneurysm and has substantially recovered. Her doctor said she had the help of a Higher Power in her healing.

~~%~~Healings+suggests that there are different kinds of illnesses. These "healings" include the means God uses to heal people not only physically but emotionally, mentally and spiritually. Some of the mental and emotional problems may require medical professional help and medication. Nothing should keep a believer from accessing this care.

However, a large percentage of emotional, mental and spiritual problems are not caused by physical problems that can be solved by medical specialists, technology and medication. I believe that today God intends His power to be attested to by changed lives of individuals who are healed from the brokenness of sin and despair by His Word. Therefore, all Disciples can have the gift of healing as we proclaim Jesus, teach His commands to Disciples and see the results in changed lives.

**There is power in the Word of God to change lives.**

**[5] Miracles** <sup>10a</sup> *and to another the effecting of miracles,*

"In the early church, miracles were a part of the credentials of God's servants [Hebrews 2:1-4]. Miracles, healings and tongues all belong to what theologians call 'the sign gifts' and belonged in a special way to the infancy of the church. The book of Acts, as well as church history indicates that these miraculous gifts passed off the scene." [from 1 Corinthians commentary by Warren Wiersbe on vv.8-10]

**[6] Prophecy** <sup>10a</sup> *and to another prophecy,*

"Prophets were New Testament spokesman for God whose messages came immediately from God by the Spirit. Their message was to edify, encourage, and comfort [1 Corinthians 14:3]. These messages were tested by the listeners to determine whether they were truly from God [1 Corinthians 14:29, 1 Thessalonians 5:19-21]. Ephesians 2:19-20 makes it clear that apostles and prophets worked together to lay the foundation of the church, and we may assume that they were no longer needed when the foundation was completed." [from 1 Corinthians commentary by Warren Wiersbe on vv.8-10]

**[7] Distinguishing between spirits** <sup>10b</sup> *and to another the distinguishing of spirits,*

There are true prophets of God and there are false prophets; which the Old Testament Israelites experienced. Moses provided instructions about discerning true prophets [[Deuteronomy 18:20-22](#)]. In the New Testament churches, some believers were gifted with supernatural ability to distinguish between persons truly inspired by the Holy Spirit and those led astray by other spirits [[1 John 4:1](#), [2 Peter 2:1](#)].

We should test ever statement made by anyone by comparison with the Word of God and the guidance of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. Another test of a prophet is whether their prophecy comes true [[Deuteronomy 18:22](#)].

**[8] Tongues** <sup>10c</sup> *to another various kinds of tongues,*

This gift is to speak in a language not previously learned so unbelievers can hear the gospel of Jesus in their own language. This occurred at Pentecost; <sup>7</sup> *They were amazed and astonished, saying, "Why, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? <sup>8</sup> And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born? [[Acts 2:5-12](#)]* This would be like sending our missionary's to a people with a different language and they could instantly communicate in the native language. This would be great, but today our missionary's have to spend months in intensive language training before going on the mission field. Tongue passed on during the 1<sup>st</sup> century. [See statement from Warren Wiersbe in #5 Miracles]

**[9] Interpretation of tongues** <sup>10d</sup> *and to another the interpretation of tongues.*

Apparently the church at Corinth had a problem with many people speaking in ecstatic languages that no one understood. Paul said about the church; <sup>23</sup> *Therefore if the whole church assembles together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad?* [1 Corinthians 14:23]. And

he followed, that in public worship this must be limited to two or three people who spoke in such ecstatic languages, each in turn, and then **only** if a translation or interpretation was provided [[1 Corinthians 14:23,27-28](#)]. [See statement from Warren Wiersbe in #5 Miracles]

We see examples of interpreters at the UN or when we provide our church services with interpretation in several languages. I experienced this in Curacao in 1999 when the people were speaking in Papiamentu in a public meeting with several hundred people present. I had 2 interpreters one for my English to Papiamentu and the other the reverse for me. It was very difficult. Interpretation of languages is indeed a skill or gift.

**[10] v.28 Apostles** Jesus used this term to indicate the twelve disciples He had chosen [Luke 6:13]. Paul used the word like it was already a term designating a specific group of men, including Paul, performing functions in the church with authority [[1 Thessalonians 2:6](#), [1 Corinthians 4:9,9:1-2](#)]. "We may assume apostles were no longer needed when the foundation of the church was completed in the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD." [Warren Wiersbe, see note on #6 Prophets].

**[11] v.28 Teaching** is instructing Disciples on-on-one and in groups the truths and doctrines of God's word. This is to build up, unify, and mature the Disciple in obedience to the 3<sup>rd</sup> part of the Great Commission [Matthew 28:19-20] and create Disciple-makers.

**[12] v.28 Helps** - Helping and serving others. People with this gift recognize practical needs of others and give assistance with joy and love for Jesus. This may lead you outside your comfort zone as you follow God's will.

**[13] v.28 Administration** enables the church to organize to fulfill God's purposes and long term goal; *This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come* [Matthew 24:14]. People with this gift lead by guiding others to stay focused on their task(s) in the big picture while keeping all His commandments out of love for Jesus.

### **Spiritual Gifts: Romans 12:**

**[14] v.7 Service** is to personally identify undone tasks in God's work, however menial, and voluntarily help to get the job done.

**[15] v.8 Exhortation** is to come along side someone with words of encouragement, comfort, consolation, and counsel to help them be conformed to the image of Jesus.

**[16] v.8 Giving** is sharing the material resources God has given a person to steward with liberality and joy without any thought of return.

**[17] v.8 Leadership** is providing direction to Disciples that will stimulate and focus them to fulfill the New Testament commandments out of a heart of love and joy.

**[18] v.8 Mercy** is to be sensitive toward those who are suffering, whether physically, mentally, emotionally, or spiritually. To feel genuine sympathy with their misery and speaking words of compassion, but also caring for them with deeds of love and Biblical guidance to help alleviate their distress.

#### **Spiritual Gifts Ephesians 4:**

**[19] v.11 Evangelism** is to be a messenger of the good news of the gospel of Jesus one person at a time or to groups.

**[20] v.11 Pastor** is to be responsible for the spiritual care, protection, guidance and spiritual feeding of a group of Disciples assigned to his care.

#### **Spiritual Gifts Miscellaneous Passages:**

**[21] Celibacy** is to remain single without regret and with the ability to restrain sexual impulses. This is an important spiritual gift for believing women today because there are far less believing men than woman. 1 Corinthians 7:7-8

**[22] Martyrdom** is to give one's life for suffering or death for the cause of Jesus. This is a real danger for at least 1/2 of the world's population and may be expanding further unless the church becomes serious about training believers to be Disciple-makers. 1 Corinthians 13:3

**[23] Voluntary poverty** is to purposefully live an impoverished lifestyle to serve and aid others. Today most Disciples in the USA could easily increase their giving % without reducing their lifestyle to this level. 1 Corinthians 13:3

**[24] Missionary's** are sent to minister in another culture. Ephesians 3:6-8

**[25] Hospitality** is to warmly welcome people, even strangers, into your home or church as a means of serving others in need. An example today is the number of believing couples who are opening their home to children in need of foster care and/or adoption. 1 Peter 4:9-10

#### **IV. There should be unity and diversity in the church. 1 Corinthians 12:11-12..**

*<sup>11</sup> But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. <sup>12</sup> For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.*

Three elements of vv.11-12.

1st All spiritual gifts come from the same Spirit. If the Spirit has given gifts, then they are all important. He always acts with **intention** to glorify Jesus and achieve God's purpose in individual lives and the church.

2nd Each person in the church has received a gift or gifts. Therefore, each person has a ministry in the life of the church.

3rd It's the Spirit who distributes gifts as He wills. We do not get to pick our own spiritual gifts, any more than we picked our own natural talents. This means that no one should feel superior (or inferior) because he or she has (or does not have) any particular demonstration of the Spirit.

Paul compared the church to a human body by making two assertions that set up his analogy. 1st, the human body is one. There is a **unity** to the human body even though it has a **diversity of parts**. 2nd, in the same way there should be **unity** and **diversity** in the church, just as there is in the human body.

**V. God's provision of spiritual gifts in the church is intentional 1 Corinthians 12:24b, 25-26.** <sup>24</sup> *God has so composed the body,...* <sup>25</sup> *so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.* <sup>26</sup> *And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.*

Paul presented an analogy of the human body [vv.21-26] to strengthen his case for the unity of the church. No division or problem in the physical body or church is possible without pain or trouble. The various parts are to exhibit a mutual concern for each other. All parts are interdependent, many yet one; one yet many. Every Disciple matters in the life of the church at large and to other believers individually.

Do you know what it feels like to hit your thumb with a hammer? Although only your thumb was hurt, your whole body is shot through with pain. I broke my little toe one time and I hurt beyond my toe. My doctor just laughed at me and said tape it to the next toe and it will heal---it did. Most divisions or problems in the church are not fixed this easily.

If one member of the human body or of the church suffers, all the members suffer with it. Similarly, if one member is honored, then the others share in the honor. Every Disciple matters in the life of the church at large and to other believers individually. Because we are all united to Jesus, what happens to one affects the others, whether it involves joy or suffering.

**How can I increase my joy for the diversity of gifts in our church while maintaining unity and comforting those who suffer?**

**VI. Summary/application 1 Corinthians 12:**

1. Are you using your spiritual gifts to serve God and others?
2. Have you been concentrating on serving with your gifts while neglecting obedience to the commands of Jesus and will of God?
3. There is power in the Word of God to change lives.

4. How can I increase my joy for the diversity of gifts in our church while maintaining unity and comforting those who suffer?

5. When was the last time you did something outside your comfort zone?

6. **Scripture memory 1 Corinthians 12:27** *Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.*

**Acts 2:24** *But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. [John 3:16 over]*