

Gifted with Gifts

We are continuing with the series entitled “The Gifted” and today we’ll be examining the various ‘gifts’ we’ve been gifted with. But first, understand this - whatever gift or ability you have should be used to serve others. Your ‘gifts’ are meant to benefit and encourage others and not yourself! Also, according to *Romans 12:4*, every gift you’ve received will make you love and depend on others all the more.

1 Peter 4:10-11 specifically says, ***“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms. 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.”***

Every one of us has been *gifted with gifts* from the Lord, and these gifts were given so that we can perform some special and unique duty as a member of the Body of Christ. The Body does not function correctly unless our individual gifts are operating correctly. And, with these gifts comes much responsibility. It is your responsibility to make sure every gift functions properly and is used fittingly – bringing glory to God. The gifts are stewardship from God and should never be used for selfish gain. You are intended to be a channel through whom the blessings can flow – nothing else!

As a good steward of God’s grace you must do everything in your power to bring praise to God. If you are gifted to preach or teach, you must make sure that the words you speak are the very words God would have you say on that particular occasion. You see, it’s not enough for you to simply quote the Bible. You must have the assurance that you are presenting a particular message intended by God for the listener (at that time). Maybe this is why many have trouble reaching the lost?

Anyone who performs any kind of service should do it in humble recognition that it is God who empowers and equips. None of us should ever get proud; no matter how gifted we are in Christian service. The gift did not originate in us, nor we did not get it through our own efforts, but it was given to us from above. In fact, we have nothing except what we’ve received from God. All the credit goes to Him. Turn with me now to **Romans 12** and let’s read verses **3 to 8**...

Just as the physical body is made up of many members, each with a different function, the church is a body with many members. All these members are closely related and each one has an individual function and duty. We are not to inflate our own position or begrudge others their position. And we should not bully people! Possession of different gifts and talents does not denote differences in worth. We all belong to one body and are completely reliant on one another (interdependent). To think otherwise is to distort reality. Each person has intrinsic value and worth, as we are all equal before God and in Christ.

“God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.” This is not saving faith but the faith to receive and to exercise the gifts that God has given you. The measure of faith He has deposited in you corresponds exactly with the role He has assigned you to. In the Body, a finger and an ear need different measures of faith in order to perform their special and distinct functions.

Verse 6 – Paul now gives instructions for the use of certain gifts. This list does not cover all gifts because they concern “motivation,” rather than being exhaustive. Let me explain, you will likely have one or more of these gifts already in you - given for you to perform your designated duty in the body. But how do you know

which one you have? Simply, the one (or more) that motivates you, is your gift. This is why these gifts are sometimes referred to as the “motivational gifts.”

(1) Prophecy. To prophesy you do not need to be a prophet! All modern prophecy is a declaration of what’s in the mind of God as it has been communicated in the Bible. It is a proclamation and expounding of the truth that has *already* been revealed in scripture. Therefore, all truth and revelation can be prophetic. But remember, for this gift to operate properly it must serve and encourage others. Probably the best way to define this gift is that it uses existing truth or revelation (as communicated by God in His word) to edify or encourage others. It is not some symbolic or encrypted method of parading your spirituality. And what’s more, the prophecy given must be exercised in proportion to your faith.

This means that prophecy of any sort is to be done in accordance with the biblical maturity God has so graciously granted the speaker. Confirming that God is the source of the prophecy and also the originator of the gift. So don’t ever think that you can prophesy beyond the knowledge and revelation you have received from God’s word. Maturity in the word sets the measure.

Are you genuinely motivated by a sincere desire to serve, inspire, edify and encourage others with the knowledge and revelation you’ve received from God’s infallible word? If you are, then you probably have this gift in you.

(2) Ministry. Ministry represents a special gift that enables a person to effectively serve the church family in a physical way. This is a very broad term which implies serving God and others in a tangible way. Any person who has this gift has a servant-heart. It is someone who always sees opportunities to be of help to others – and quickly seizes them. If you have such a view of life then you have this gift in you.

(3) Teaching. A teacher is someone who is able to explain the word of God and effectively apply it to the hearts of his hearers. Irrespective of whether they have a public office as a teacher or not. If you are specially gifted to keep an eye on, and instruct, the revealed truth of God’s word, then this is you. Teaching is something that should be performed carefully and wholeheartedly as it can affect the course or destination of the listener.

If you feel obliged to keep an eye on, and conscientiously explain the revealed truth of God’s word, then this gift is probably present in you.

(4) Exhorting. An exhorter is an encourager. It is someone whose gift is stirring up people to press on to new accomplishments in Christ. Such people apply God’s truths in a very non-threatening but promise-full way. They galvanise you to do and achieve more. They are enthusiastic, passionate and challenging. If you are naturally inclined to stimulate, inspire and encourage others, then this gift is in you.

There is another aspect of exhortation that comes across in the Greek and that is “comfort.” If you are always drawn to people who are hurting, and you find yourself comforting them, then this gift is yours.

(5) Giving. This is a God-given ability that inclines and empowers a person to be aware of the needs of others and to help meet them. Such a person will always seek to contribute to the emotional and/or physical or material support of others. And above all – he does it liberally!

If you are a person who can’t help giving of your time, abilities or finances. And when you give, you give with much liberality. This is you!

(6) Leading. Whether you recognise it or not, you are influencing others (having some effect on those around you). This makes you a leader. However, the gift of leadership goes much further than this.

It refers to those who are gifted to effectively improve all areas of other people's lives, or those with a natural gift for administration. Anyone with this gift will have people following them, and these followers will believe that their lives are going to be enriched by the leader.

If you think that you have this gift – look behind you!

(7) Showing mercy. The gift of mercy is the super-natural capacity and talent of aiding those who are in distress. And anyone who has this gift should exercise it with cheerfulness. Of course, we are all expected to show mercy and do it cheerfully, but people with the gift of *showing mercy* are genuinely motivated by it. They are like a sunbeam lighting up a sickroom with warmth and love. If you have this gift all those around you will easily be able to corroborate it.

Note, many times we show mercy by helping people in distress, however, inside our hearts is dissatisfaction. While going through the motions outwardly, inside we are unhappy or resentful. You see, it is possible to show mercy without being cheerful. But if you have this gift, you are encouraged to exercise it with a cheerful heart. Helping people who are suffering is always a sacrifice, and therefore, any act of mercy must consciously be done with the right attitude.

Don't assume that you have this gift – simply ask those around you!