Lesson 4: Spiritual Gifts Talents

A spiritual gift is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit enabling one in a supernatural Way to minister to the needs of others in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians. 12:7-11; 14:3,12,17, 1 Corinthians 6:19,20). When an individual is converted, the Holy Spirit with spiritual gift(s) endows him. One receives spiritual gifts at the time of their conversion from the Holy Spirit. The spiritual gift is one of grace and is not based on individual merit. It is provided as the Holy Spirit determines, not man (Corinthians 12:14). Like each member of the body, no gift is superior or inferior to another, since they each serve God's purpose.

It is important to distinguish a spiritual gift from a special ability or talent that one possesses. As used in the bible, spiritual gifts refer to a particular supernatural ability that the Holy Spirit provides to one that builds on and makes extraordinary one's otherwise natural proclivities. Christians have different gifts and no one gift should be expected by everyone (1 Corinthians. 12:29-30). This special ability may operate at special appointed times. They may be temporary. They can be for short or long periods. The duration depends on the need of the Church as seen by the Holy Spirit.

What happens is that through the anointing of the Holy Spirit one becomes enabled to accomplish certain things very easily which were formerly, and otherwise are, extremely difficult or impossible.

It is very helpful in evaluating and understanding the gifts of the Spirit that one learns also about the fruit of the Spirit. See Galatians 5:22. In tying them all together, one must pay careful attention to Matt. 7: 1527, (esp. 21-22). Displaying the gifts is no guarantee that one is saved or is doing the perfect will of God. It is by one's fruit that they are known. Read also Ephesians 4:7-16.

While there may be particular gifts that we find appealing, it is the Holy Spirit that determines which gifts are appropriate.

Note that Jesus says that it is not by our gifts that people will know that we are His disciples, but by our love for one another. See John 13:34. Be very careful as you allow the gifts to be exercised in you. If they are not being exercised in love, you have divested the Holy Spirit of control. See 1 Cor. 12,13. They will then become of little use for the purpose for which they were intended - God and His perfect will.

How can we know the gift God has given us? First, read His word. Second, pray often. Third, meditate on God's word frequently. The more we do this, the more we open ourselves to the knowledge of God through the workings of His Holy Spirit in us. See John 14:12,25; 16:711,12-15. Take time to know the gifts, 1 Cor. 12; how they are exercised, 1 Cor. 13; and how God uses them in his work, 1 Cor. 14 and Ephesians 4.
Then ask God to show you His gift for you. When opportunities come for you to be used of God, say yes, and God will in the situation show you how he can supernaturally use you. Take time, however, to be sure that the opportunity represents God's call to you. All needy situations are not necessarily God's call for you.

LISTING OF SOME OF THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Knowledge
Faith
Gifts of Healings
Miraculous Powers
Prophesy
Discernment between Spirits
Speaking in Different Languages
Being Merciful
Administration or Government
Interpretation of Tongues
Apostles
Evangelists
Pastors
Teachers
Helpers
Wisdom
Leadership
Service
Giving
Encouragement
Sometimes we mistake natural giftedness for spiritual gifts. We will see this is not Biblical thinking. Just because someone is naturally gifted at oration (public speaking) that does not mean they have the Spiritual Gift of Teacher or Pastor or even Evangelist. It could be an indication that one such gifting is present but there again the person may be naturally a very poor speaker (as Moses felt he was) but still called into a ministry that demands public speaking. Talents are natural abilities and are present at birth. Spiritual Gifts are given by an act of God's grace and have nothing to do with our natural ability, upbringing, training or that which is pushed upon us. Talents would include singing, playing a musical instrument, playing sports, dancing or acting. *(This lesson will include a Spiritual Gifts Inventory)*