

**Gifts**

*Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.*  
Romans 12:6-8

There is no way to be exhaustive in the teaching about gifts in this format. It requires study and teaching. One of the teachings that has been very helpful to me is “*Your Divine Design*” by Chip Ingram. This is a video series available on RightNow Media. It has helped develop my understanding of how to organize the various gifts and how to see what God is doing in our lives by entrusting them to us. I would highly recommend it for your further study. Maybe have a group of friends over to your house and learn about these things together! As we saw earlier in the week, Peter divides the gifts into two broad groups—speaking and serving. In the passage we are reading today, Paul lists seven gifts, each one falling within one or the other of these two groups. It seems like these seven gifts are the main motivational gifts, and that each follower of Jesus has one of these primary gifts. The two that are mentioned first are prophecy and service. Prophecy is the forthtelling of truth. It is looking at Scripture and being able to say, “Thus saith the Lord.” It is explaining the Word of God so that people can understand the meaning (consider Nehemiah 8:8). Service is demonstrating the love of God by meeting the needs of others. It is hands-on, in the trenches, ministering to other people. It is serving others so that they can be freed up to serve, many times sacrificially. Is there any way that you think you might have one of these gifts? Have others seen it in you?

Saturday, October 10, 2020

**Gifts (continued)**

*Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.*  
Romans 12:6-8

The other five primary grace gifts that Paul lists are teaching, exhortation, contributing, leading, and mercy. Teaching is the supernatural gift to be able to give careful and well researched explanation of what the Word of God means. People with this gift love to study and pour over the truths of God so that they can teach others. The gift of exhortation is coming alongside others to challenge or encourage them with truth so that their faith can be stimulated and built up. People with this gift help to lift others up. The gift of contributing, or generosity is the gift of giving. People with this gift love to give to others. They love to see needs and then see those needs met. Leadership is the gift that allows people to oversee the work of the Lord. People with this gift guide the work of the Lord to keep it on a spiritual path. The final primary gift that Paul lists is mercy. This gift seeks to extend the love of God to others who are hurting. People with this gift have a heart for the justice of God to be brought about and they seek to see how to make that happen. This is a very brief description of these gifts. Do you see any of these seven gifts as being your primary gift? If so, how can you develop that gift so that you can even more effectively help build the body of Christ? How can knowing your gift help you celebrate God's design for you?



Pastor Chuck Cervenka

**Celebrating Unity in Diversity!**

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Romans 12:6-8

Monday, October 5, 2020

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### Gifts

*Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them...* Romans 12:6

This week we will briefly look at spiritual gifts. What is a spiritual gift? What is the purpose of a spiritual gift? How can you know your spiritual gift? What are you supposed to do with that gift? Spiritual gifts can cause confusion for people and the answers to these questions are very important to help bring clarity and excitement as you uncover the gift that God gave you as he brought you into the body of Christ. Natural abilities are what you are given at your physical birth. Spiritual gifts are what you receive at your spiritual birth! We use the term “spiritual gift” although that exact term is not found in the Bible. The word that is used is gift or charisma (charismata is the plural). Literally this means “grace gift.” It is a gift that is given to you by God, by his grace, so that we can be supernaturally empowered to build up the church as we serve one another. The first few verses of Romans 12 help us understand that we are to celebrate what it means to belong to each other in the body of Christ, to be part of his family. Each member has a function, a role in the body. That function is fulfilled using the spiritual gift that has been entrusted to each individual member. And all the members using their combined gifts is how God builds the church and reaches into the lost world. The spiritual gift you have been given to steward will help shape you and give you direction to know the will of God. Today take some time to read Romans 12 and think about spiritual gifts. Do you know what one is? Do you know yours?

Tuesday, October 6 2020

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### Glorified

*As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.* 1 Peter 4:10-11

One place that speaks of grace gifts is 1 Peter 4:10-11. Peter divides the gifts into two major groups—speaking and serving (or ministering). God has uniquely created and empowered each believer to accomplish the work that he prepared for them to do. Each follower of Jesus has a unique way to live out their calling. For some, that means teaching or preaching or speaking the truth about God and his word. It could also mean speaking words of encouragement and exhortation. For others it means serving with their hands. Both are vital and both are necessary to build up one another. Notice that Peter, in using this broad explanation of gifts, is helping us see that the reason these gifts are given is so that we can serve one another as good stewards of those gifts. You have been given a gift by God so that you could be a steward of that gift for him. It is as each member discovers, develops, and utilizes their gift that God receives glory—he is glorified as we live out our design together. It is exciting to consider what can be built as we each use our gifts and to see the part we have in building and glorifying God. Discovering your gift allows you to have direction and purpose. You can zero in on the ministries that God has for you to get involved in and you will find that as you use the gift that has been entrusted to you to serve others you will find a joy that runs deep. You will be able to truly have the freedom to enjoy who you are designed to be!

Wednesday, October 7, 2020

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### Mature

*... until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...* Ephesians 4:13

Please read or listen to Ephesians 4:1-16 today. Here we see that grace gifts are actually an affirmation of victory—the victory of Jesus as he ascended into heaven. As the gifts are given and used, the victory of Jesus is manifested on earth. This serves to bring maturity to the body of believers and it draws the body into unity. It allows us to stand strong in a world that is filled with the deceit and scheming of the evil one. As each gift is discovered, developed, and utilized, the body is built up to maturity. Then we are able to withstand the forces that come against us. It is what allows us to hold together on mission for God. Gifts are the tools that God uses to accomplish this building. As a house is built, many tools are needed. Workers bring saws, hammers, pipe wrenches, measuring tapes, drills, pliers, and so many other tools. Each tool is needed to build the house. In the same way, Jesus uses the tools of the grace gifts he has given to build his Church—the Church that the gates of hades will not overcome. How is God using the gift he has given you to help you mature? How is he using that gift to help others mature? How are others using their gifts helping you mature? How is that building up the body of Christ?

Thursday, October 8, 2020

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### Satisfied

*But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.* 1 Corinthians 4:24-25

Please read and/or listen to 1 Corinthians 12 and 13 today. The church in Corinth has been entrusted with many miraculous gifts. But during the use of those gifts, some controversy had arisen. People were desiring the gifts that others had. Some of the gifts that had been given seemed more desirable than others. And those with what appeared to be less desirable gifts desired the ones that were more desirable and those with the seemingly more desirable gifts were considered better in some ways. Paul writes to let them know that each gift is significant and desirable and that some of the gifts that seem less desirable are the gifts that should be treated with special honor! They were to desire that the gifts would be motivated by love. In a way, this is a challenge from Paul for them to get about the business of using the gifts they have instead of desiring ones they did not. They needed to be satisfied that God had carefully bestowed each of them with the gift he knew they needed for their own growth, for the growth of the church, and for the growth of unity and love. Consider the illustration from yesterday about the tools needed to build a house. The noisiest tools may get the most attention, but the house could never be completed with just noisy tools. Precision, quiet tools are needed as well. Each one is equally important and unique, as is each follower of Jesus! Are you satisfied with the gift that God has given you? Have you desired others?