

CHRISTIAN BASICS: SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1 Corinthians 12:4-10

I. INTRODUCTION-

- a. The Bible says that God has given every Christian... a spiritual gift of service.
- b. A spiritual gift of service... is a God-given ability and empowerment ... to serve others... and build up the church.
- c. There are several passages in the New Testament where spiritual gifts are identified ... Romans 12:6-8... 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28... Ephesians 4:11-12... 1 Peter 4:10-11.
- d. There are just under twenty spiritual gifts mentioned in these passages ...if you are a Christian...you have been given at least one of these spiritual gifts.
- e. Do you know what your spiritual gift of service is?... Are you using your spiritual gift of service to minister to others and build up the church?
- f. The subject of spiritual gifts... is very important to the Christian life.
- g. When believers stand before the Lord... and He judges how we lived for Him after we were saved... the Lord will judge us on how we used and employed the spiritual gift of service that He gave us.

II. THE INDENTITY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS-

- a. The spiritual gifts named in the scriptures... can be identified and organized in this way.
- b. #1, Speaking gifts... the gifts of proclamation mentioned in the Bible are ...apostle... prophet... evangelist... and pastor-teacher.

- c. According to the Bible... to be an apostle... one must have been an eyewitness of the ministry of Jesus...there are no apostles in the New Testament sense today.
- d. Neither are there are prophets...in the New Testament sense today.
- e. Before the writing of the New Testament was completed... God gave some in the church the ability to speak directly to certain subjects and issues that the church was facing.
- f. With the completion of the New Testament... the office of prophet and the gift of prophecy were no longer needed.
- g. There is no basis today... for anyone to call themselves an apostle or prophet.
- h. Those who do so...are assuming a title and position that they do not have.
- i. The gifts of evangelist...and pastor-teacher... are present in the church today.
- j. Evangelists are those who are gifted in a special way... with the ability to preach and proclaim the gospel to those who are lost.
- k. Pastor-teachers are those who are gifted and called to give spiritual leadership to the church ... and teach and proclaim the Word of God to God's people.
- l. #2, Service gifts... the Bible speaks of gifts of service and ministry to the church... and God's people.
- m. Among these are the gifts of teaching... ministering...serving ... exhortation...encouragement ... wisdom... knowledge... discernment ... helpfulness... leadership... administration ... giving... generosity ... mercy... faith... and hospitality.

- n. #3, Sign gifts... the Bible speaks of special sign gifts given to the early church... that were used to authenticate the ministries of God's apostles and other leaders.
- o. The sign gifts the Bible speaks of are of the gifts of tongues... interpretation of tongues... miracles... and healing.
- p. With the completion of the New Testament... the sign gifts are no longer needed... and they are no longer given today.
- q. What call speaking in tongues today... is not the biblical gift of tongues or languages.
- r. No one today has the gift of interpretation of tongues... no one today has the gift of miracles ... and no one today has the gift of healing.
- s. God does miracles today... and God heals today... but He has bestowed no person with the gift of being able to lay hands on someone and heal them.

III. **THE ADMINISTRATION OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS-**

- a. When babies are born... people give gifts to the babies... and to the parents.
- b. When you were born-again... not only did God give you the gift of salvation ... He gave you a spiritual gift of service... a special ability to serve others... and build up the church.
- c. The Lord did not save us to sit down on a pew... he Lord did not save us to get comfortable in this world... and wait until we go to Heaven.
- d. The Lord saved us to serve Him in this world... and He gave us a gift of service to use.
- e. #1, The Lord sovereignly decides... which gift of service He gives you.

- f. Maybe you have the gift of teaching... maybe you have the gift of serving and ministering... to children... youth... young adults ... or senior adults.
- g. Maybe you have the gift of worship... maybe you have the gift of planning and organizing... maybe you have the gift of giving and generosity... maybe you have the gift of mercy and compassion ... maybe you have the gift of encouragement... maybe you have the gift of administration, planning and leadership... maybe you have the gift of faith... of helps... of wisdom... or discernment.
- h. 1 Corinthians 12:11 says that it was God alone... who decided which gift of service He would give you.
- i. My favorite gift the Bible mentions is the gift of helps... a person with the gift of helps gift is ready to serve... he or she is positive... they are ready to do whatever needs to be done to serve the Lord and help others... they don't have to be the boss... they don't have to be in charge... they are just ready to serve.
- j. #2, Because God decides which gift of service we are given... our gift of service... and our place of service in God's kingdom... should never be a source of pride.
- k. Instead of being prideful... we all should be humbled that God would give us the honor and privilege of serving Him in any way in this world.
- l. The higher the profile of the gift of service that God gives a person... the more humble they should be.
- m. #3, All gifts of service... and all places of service in God's kingdom ... are equally important.
- n. Some gifts of service may have a higher profile than others... some gifts of service may seem more important than others... but all gifts of

service... and all places of service in God's kingdom...are equally important.

- o. Never think that your place of service in God's kingdom is unimportant ... never think that your place of service in God's kingdom does not deserve your very best effort.
- p. Just because your gift of service... and your place of service in the church may be behind the scenes... and may often go unnoticed and unappreciated ...does not mean that your place of service is unimportant to the church and... to God.
- q. If you think your little toe is unimportant... trying living and walking around without it.
- r. Every place of service in the church may not get the same attention ... but every place of service in the church is equally important to the work and ministry of God.

IV. THE PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS-

- a. God gives spiritual gifts to His people for three reasons... to encourage believers ... to edify the church... to evangelize the lost.
- b. #1, Encourage other believers... my gift of service is intended to encourage you... to bless you... to minister to you... to help you grow in the Lord... to help you to be strong in the Lord... as you live life in this world.
- c. Your gift of service... and every gift of service... has the same purpose.
- d. God did not give us our gift of service... to show off how important we think we are.
- e. God gave us our gift of service to bless and encourage others ... to bless the members of your church family.

- f. When believers exercise their spiritual gifts in the right way and in the right spirit... we bless and encourage one another.
- g. #2, Edify the church... Ephesians 4:12 says that God gives gifts to His people... to edify... to build up His church.
- h. A strong and healthy church... is a church in which believers are exercising and employing their spiritual gifts as God intends.
- i. A church is not strong when 20 percent of the people... are doing 80 percent of the work and ministry.
- j. A church is not strong... when many members of the church... are content to sit on the sidelines... or in the pew... and not use the spiritual gift of service that God has given them.
- k. Ephesians 4:12-16 gives six things that will happen in a church... when believers are using their spiritual gifts.
- l. #1, The church will be built up... #2, The church will grow in oneness and harmony... #3, Individual believers and the church will grow in spiritual maturity and Christlikeness... #4, Individual believers and the church will stand firm in biblical truth and not be swayed by false doctrine and false teachers... #5, Christlike love will abound in the church... #6, Joy will fill the church as every believer knows the joy of contributing to the growth and strength of the church and the Kingdom of God.
- m. #3, Evangelize the lost... a strong church will be an evangelistic church ... a church that reaches out to the lost.

V. THE DISCOVERY OF YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT-

- a. How do you discover... your spiritual gift?
- b. #1, Understand that as a Christian... God has given you a spiritual gift of service.

- c. *1 Corinthians 12:7 “A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.”... 1 Peter 4:10 “God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.”*
- d. #2, Get involved in ministry... God is not going to send you an email ... revealing your spiritual gift to you.
- e. You will discover your spiritual gift...as you get involved in ministry.
- f. God reveals our gifts to us in the context of ministry... so being actively involved in ministry is the best way to learn what your spiritual gift is.
- g. #3, Find your interest... God gives you a desire to do what He has called you to do... so ask yourself what do you enjoy doing?... what ministries do you enjoy... what are you good at?
- h. #4, Pray... God did not give you a spiritual gift to make it hard for you to discover what it is... pray and ask for God’s guidance and direction.

VI. CONCLUSION-

- a. Serving the Lord in His church and in His kingdom is a privilege ... but it is a privilege that can be lost.
- b. Christians cannot lose their salvation... but Christians can do things to make themselves lose the privilege of serving the Lord in His church.
- c. *1 Corinthians 9:27 “I discipline my body like an athlete, training it to do what it should. Otherwise, I fear that after preaching to others I myself might be disqualified.”*
- d. Moses disobeyed the Lord... and he was disqualified from entering into the Promised Land.

- e. But with God... failure is not final... God is a God of mercy and grace... and by repentance and a return to consistent faithful living... believers can regain the privilege of service.
- f. Moses did not make it in the Promised Land with the nation of Israel ... but centuries later he did make it ... when he appeared with Elijah at the Mount of Transfiguration.
- g. As a Christian ... you have a spiritual gift... you have a ministry that God has given to you... it could be in Sunday School... it could be in evangelism and outreach ... it could be in children's ministry ... or youth ministry... find your ministry and begin to serve the Lord.
- h. There is no time limit... and there is no age limit... in our service to the Lord.
- i. But if we live long enough... there may come a time when we cannot serve the Lord like we want to.
- j. Billy Graham was practically blind and deaf before he died... he could no longer preach as God had called him to do ... but he could pray... and he could worship the Lord... and that was his ministry... that is what he did before he died.
- k. *2 Timothy 4:6-8 "As for me, my life has already been poured out as an offering to God. The time of my death is near. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have remained faithful. And now the prize awaits me—the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will give me on the day of his return. And the prize is not just for me but for all who eagerly look forward to his appearing."*
- l. The example of Bro. Sidney Jones.
- m. You are either serving Christ and living for the Lord... or you are serving Satan and living for the devil.
- n. Come to Christ today.