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## TOPIC: RELEASING THE GIFTS

Quotes:

“For the church to grow, the pastor must give up the ministry and the people must give up the leadership.” Rick Warren

“Rare is the church today that advocates that the professional pastor or staff should do all the ministry” Peter C. Wagner

### **TEXT 1: ROMANS 1:11**

*I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong— **12**that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith.*

### **TEXT 2: EPHESIANS 4:1-16**

By Networking the Right People... In the Right Places... For the Right Reasons

Believers flourish in their service to Christ when they are serving in the area of their giftedness and in conjunction with their God-given uniqueness.

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<sup>1</sup> All definitions taken from Peter C. Wagner's book on Spiritual Gifts, the notes on the gifts researched by Rev'd Julio R Mekki, MTh, MIOD

Our prayer is that we will have through this training, fresh servants entering the work force of the church every term and every year, confident of their giftedness and eager to invest them in the service for God's glory.

### **SPIRITUAL GIFTS:**

A Spiritual gift is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit enabling one to minister to the needs of Christ's body, the church (1 Cor.12:7-11, 14:3,12,17)

The special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ

### **A GIFT OF GRACE.**

#### ***Definition of Spiritual Gifts:***

A Spiritual gift is any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the Church.

### **PURPOSE:**

Given to equip the Church to carry out its ministry until Christ returns.

In 1 Cor.1:7 Paul tells the Corinthians, "You are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ" And here he connects the possession of spiritual gifts and their situation in the history of redemption (waiting for Christ's return), the suggestion being that gifts are given to the Church for a period between Christ's **ascension** and his **return**.

Gifts are tools for Ministry not a sign of maturity so all believers are given them even immature ones like the Corinthians. Giving a foretaste of what is to come and thereby enriching believers.

Gifts are given as tools of Ministry and they are not necessarily related to Christian Maturity. Every believer both the mature and the immature has received spiritual gifts (1 Cor.12:7, 11; 1 Peter 4:10; 1 Cor.1:7)

We look at Spiritual gifts against the Fruit of the Spirit, because gifts have to be understood in their proper context. That is why the Apostle Paul interrupts his discussion of spiritual gifts with chapter 13 of 1 Corinthians, his intention is to put the entire discussion in its proper perspective.

It is not enough simply to “seek the greater gifts” (12:31a). Paul makes it clear that one must “seek after love” 1 Cor.13, 1 Cor.14:1, Galatians 5:22ff, Eph.5:18) thus pairing proper goals with proper motives.

Without love the gifts are without value (13:1-3). Paul tells us that love is superior to all gifts. So it is important to act in love than have all the gifts.

The superiority of love is further demonstrated by this fact, that love endures forever and all gifts are but temporary.

Our present knowledge and prophesying are partial and imperfect (v.9), but someday something perfect will come to replace them (v.10).

Read vv.11-12, the analogy of a child and the indirect and imperfect will be replaced by the direct and perfect.

In his continued argument Paul connects the function of prophecy with the time of its cessation. Prophecy is the greater gift but it only fills a certain need now, but does so only imperfectly, but when the “perfect” comes prophecy will cease and will become obsolete or useless.

All gifts will pass away but love will never pass away, there was love before the foundation of the world, and in creation God showed his love and power (Living beings) and throughout the OT God constantly showed his unfailing love to a rebellious nation, Israel and other nations,

In Christ God demonstrated his love toward us, and because God is love. In heaven his love will permeate.

## **DIFFERENT VIEWS AND WHERE WE STAND!**

**Cessationist debate.** (Did some gifts cease)

1. **Reformed & Fundamentalists Evangelicals** say no more need for the gifts
2. **Middle of the road Evangelicals** are undecided and say one cannot conclude either way from looking at Scripture.
3. **Charismatics and Pentecostal** say yes all gifts are applicable but the danger is they tend not to take careful study of scripture to deliver balanced teaching

The answer to this question is in 1 Cor.1:7, that the gift are needed from the period between the Ascension and the Return of Christ.

Where in Scripture Do we find them??

1 COR.12:28

- first **apostles**, second **prophets**, third **teachers**, after that **miracles**, then gifts of **healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues**.

**1 Cor.12:8-10**

- word of **WISDOM** through the Spirit, word of **KNOWLEDGE** through the same Spirit, **FAITH** by the same Spirit, **GIFTS OF HEALINGS** by the same Spirit, **WORKING OF MIRACLES**, to another **PROPHECY**, to another **DISCERNING OF SPIRITS**, to another **DIFFERENT KINDS OF TONGUES**, to another the **INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES**.

**EPHESIANS 4:11**

- **APOSTLES, some PROPHETS, some EVANGELISTS, AND SOME PASTORS –TEACHERS**

**ROMANS 12:6-8**

...if **PROPHECY**, *let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; or **MINISTRY**, *let us use it in our ministering*; he who **TEACHES**, in **TEACHING**; he who **EXHORTS**, in **EXHORTATION**; he who **GIVES**, with liberality; he who **LEADS**, with diligence;

he who shows **MERCY**, with cheerfulness.

1 COR.7:7

For I wish that all men were even as I myself. But each one has his own gift from God, one in this manner and another in that.

**Marriage**

**Celibacy**

**1 Peter 4:11**

If anyone speaks (**Covering several gifts**), *let him speak* as the oracles of God.

If anyone ministers (**Covering several gifts**), *let him do it* as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.

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## PRACTICAL GIFTS

### 3. DISCERNING OF SPIRITS:

*"The special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ*

...to know with assurance whether certain behavior purported to be of God is in reality divine, human, or Satanic."

Believers with this gift can recognize the true motives of people and also recognize when a person is distorting the truth or communicating error. This person often can recognize when Satan or other evil spirits are at work in a given person or situation.

*Scriptures: Matthew 16:21-23; Acts 5:1-11; 16:16-18; 17:11-16; 1 Corinthians 12:10; Hebrews 5:14; 1 John 4:1-6.*

### 4. EVANGELISM:

...to readily share the gospel with unbelievers in such a way that men and women often become Jesus' disciples and responsible members of the Body of Christ.

While the task of evangelism is an important spiritual exercise that all Christians should be involved with, God gifts certain members with an ability to have unusual sensitivity to when someone is ready to accept Christ, and will generally have greater success in leading people to Christ than other Christians.

People with this gift should be active in training others to share their faith.  
*Scriptures: Acts 8:5-6, 26-40; Ephesians 4:11-14; 2 Timothy 4:5.*

## **7. FAITH:**

... to discern with extraordinary confidence the will and purposes of God for His work." Those with this gift often scare other people with their confidence. People with this gift are often very irritated by criticism, as they consider it to be criticism against God and His will.

Probably the biggest danger for those with this gift is that they often try to project their gift onto other people. *Scriptures: Acts 11:22-24; 27:21-25; Romans 4:18-21; 1 Corinthians 12:9; Hebrews 11.*

## **8. GIVING:**

"...to contribute their material resources to the work of the Lord with liberality and cheerfulness."

While all Christians should practice the discipline of giving through the minimum of 10% (tithe), God gifts certain members of the body to give remarkably greater amounts of their income with liberality and great joy.

These people have an acute awareness that all they have belongs to the Lord and they are merely stewards, therefore they know that God will supply their needs and richly bless them in their giving.

*Scriptures: Matthew 6:2-4; Mark 12:41-44; Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 13:3; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7; 9:2-8; Philippians 4:14-19.*

**Note:** This gift is often associated with the gift of *voluntary poverty*, as many with the gift of *voluntary poverty* also have the gift of *giving*. However, not all with the gift of *giving* also have the gift of *voluntary poverty*. See notes on *voluntary poverty* for more information.

## **12. INTERCESSION:**

... to pray for extended periods of time on a regular basis and see frequent and specific answers to their prayers. Those with this gift often feel compelled to pray for specific requests when they are made known.

Gifted intercessors have a much greater occurrence of specific answers to prayer than most Christians.

Intercessors often have an acute understanding that prayer is genuinely a conversation with God, and when left alone, find themselves engaged in prayer.

Many intercessors experience times when God moves them to pray for situations when they are not entirely sure what they are praying for. To those who get to know intercessors well, prayer becomes contagious.

Those with this gift should help others learn how to pray more effectively. *Scriptures: Luke 22:41-44; Acts 12:12; Romans 8:26-27; Colossians 1:9-12; 4:12-13; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 5:14-16.*

## **14. KNOWLEDGE:**

...to discover, accumulate, analyze, and clarify information and ideas which are pertinent to the well-being of the Body."

Those with the gift of *knowledge* are at home in a book or studying. Those with this gift will often spend countless hours researching information.

These people are interested in ideas and problem solving through gathering information and studying. Often, those with this gift have a low need for people. On rare occasions, people with this gift will gather vast amounts of information through studying and analyzing personal experience, but the primary method of learning with this gift is reading and studying books and other written materials.

*Scriptures: Luke 1:1-4; Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 12:8; 2 Corinthians 11:6; Colossians 1:10; 2:2-3; 1 Timothy 2:15.*

## **25. WISDOM:**

... to know how given knowledge may best be applied to specific needs arising in the Body of Christ.

Those with this gift have an excellent ability to apply spiritual truth to everyday life. Often, people in the church naturally seek out people with this gift when they are facing complicated spiritual problems.

When a person with this gift considers past experience, they realize that they often make good and correct decisions and judgments. *Scriptures: Proverbs 4:5-8; Acts 6:3, 10; 15:13-20; 20:20-21; Romans 12:17; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-14; Colossians 1:28.*<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> \*\*Gift definitions adapted from *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* by C. Peter Wagner, *Jesus on Leadership: Becoming a Servant Leader* by C. Gene Wilkes, and Calvary Baptist Church, *Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts*. Gifted2Serve ©2001, Andrew P. Kulp, Mekki, Julio Ryan

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## COMMUNICATION GIFTS

### **6. EXHORTATION OR ENCOURAGEMENT:**

A special ability given by the Spirit to minister words of comfort, consolation, encouragement, and counsel to other members of the Body in such a way that they feel helped and healed."

Those who use this gift within a teaching or ministry situation are often driven to give practical application to their insights. Often,

those gifted in this gift desire step-by-step plans of action to help others mature in Christ.

Exhorters often find it natural to discover insights from personal experience when validated and amplified in Scripture.

*Scripture: Luke 3:16-18; Acts 11:23; 14:22; Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 4:12; 5:1; Hebrews 10:25.*

### **19. PROPHECY:**

The special God-given ability to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to His people with authority and urgency perceived by the hearers.

Those with the gift of prophecy will often feel as though they have a direct word from God that will comfort, encourage, guide, warn, or rebuke the Body of Christ.

Prophets are concerned about evangelism and will have a desire speak strongly against evil in society or in the church.

Prophets have a great sense of urgency to their message. Unless paired with the gifts of exhortation or teaching, prophets will often not feel the need to explain their message, but will expect immediate response.

The message of a prophet must always be tested in line with Scripture.

Prophets would be wise to test their message against Scripture prior to delivering the message, and using Scriptural precedent in delivery of their message. *Scripture: Luke 7:26; Acts 15:32; 21:9-11; Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; 14:3, 24-25, 29, 36-38; Ephesians 4:11-14.*

## **22. TEACHING:**

... to communicate information relevant to the health and ministry of the Body and its members in such a way that others will learn."

People with the gift of teaching enjoy studying the Bible and related materials in order to communicate what they have learned to other Christians.

Those with this gift find it easy to organize vast amounts of information in such a way as to make it easy to communicate, understand, and remember.

*Scriptures: Matthew 7:28-29; 28:19-20; Acts 15:32; Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28; Ephesians 4:11-14.*

**Note:** *Exhortation, Prophecy, and Teaching* are considered the communication gifts.

The distinctions for each gift are often confused. Often, gifted communicators have a mix of these gifts.

- *EXHORTATION* focuses on personal and practical application of the message or truth being communicated.
- *PROPHECY* focuses on the urgency and impact of the message or truth being communicated.
- *TEACHING* focuses on bringing thorough or adequate understanding of the message or truth being communicated.