

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

I Corinthians 12:1-11

Definition of Spiritual Gift – Gr *charisma* Lit. “Graces”

A Spirit-given ability for Christian service

Source – A special grace of the Holy Spirit

Nature – Spiritual ability, endowment, power

Purpose – Service, ministry, to build up people spiritually

1. The GIVERS Vs 4-6

Holy Spirit – Gives the gifts

LORD Jesus Christ – Controls the gifts

[Why he is called LORD, Head of the church, co-ordinating use of gifts]

Father – Responsible for results in people’s lives

2. The GETTERS Vs 7

Who? – Everybody has at least one

Why? – We are all important and useful, needed to complete the ministry of the Body of Christ

[The Church]

3. The GAINERS Vs 7 “For the common good”

PRINCIPLES:

1. They work in unity and support of each other NOT in conflict with each other Vs 3
2. “Different Gifts, Service, Results” BUT “The same Holy Spirit, Lord, God the Father” Vs 4-6
3. Holy Spirit gives them as He wishes – No indication that we are to ask for special ones Vs 11
4. No gift is given to or required of all believers
5. No gift marks believers as uniquely spiritual or special
6. All gifts represent supernatural levels of more common ministry
7. All gifts are to be exercised in humility, unity, and love.

PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS:

1. We are to be willing and working
2. We should be instruments NOT ornaments
3. As we mature in Christ our gifts will develop and become evident naturally
4. “Use it” or “Loose it”
5. We must be careful not to place undue emphasis on Spiritual Gifts.

PETER PRINCIPLES ON SPIRITUAL GIFTS I Peter 4:10, 11

A. Minister to one another Vs 10 *“Employ it in serving each other”*

How? - *“As good stewards of the manifold grace of God”*

B. Speak of serve by the POWER OF GOD Vs 11

“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!”

WHAT SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE NOT!

Spiritual Gifts are NOT Talents

TALENT

Source: Common grace of God
Time Given: Present from Natural Birth
Nature: Natural Ability used on human level
Purpose: Instruction, entertainment, inspiration on a natural level

GIFT

Special grace of God' Spirit
Present from Spiritual Birth
Spiritual Ability used to minister spiritually
Instruction, encouragement, edification on a spiritual level
to build up the Body of Christ

Spiritual Gifts are NOT Offices

Several offices are mentioned in the New Testament, such as Deacon, Deaconess, Elder, Pastor-Teacher, Evangelist, etc. and there are spiritual gifts that correspond with many of these offices. But just because someone has the spiritual gift, it does not mean that they will serve in the capacity of the office. For example someone may have the gift of teaching, but use it in a children's class, or a home Bible study instead of being the recognized pastor-teacher in a church body.

Spiritual Gifts are NOT Ministries

A ministry is not a gift, but an outlet or avenue for exercising that gift. For example the gift of teaching may be exercised in the formal classroom situation, in visitation, in home Bible studies, in one-on-one personal conversations, etc. Though a person's gifts remain the same his opportunities for ministering to people may change in location, in size, in regularity, in support, even in expression through different talents.

Spiritual Gifts are NOT Fruit

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Have to do with service opportunities
Are the means to an end
What a person has
Given from without
All gifts are not possessed by every believer
Will cease

SPIRITUAL FRUITS

Have to do with character qualities [Love, joy, peace, etc.]
Are the desired end
What a person is
Produced from within
Every variety of fruit should be in every believer
Will remain forever, they are eternal

Possession of gifts does not indicate godliness of life, maturity, or character. [Example – Church at Corinth]

Spiritual Gifts are NOT counterfeit gifts

One of Satan's main ministries is that of counterfeiting all that comes from God. I do not doubt that Satan can and does counterfeit every one of the spiritual gifts to deceive people and divert them from being true ministers of God.

There is NOT a Biblical focus on one gift or even group of gifts as is emphasized by certain believers today. It is the human tendency to emphasize something you have as best, and what everyone should have and exclude those things as unnecessary that others receive. We need to be very careful to maintain a Biblical perspective of the necessity for all the gifts and not over-emphasize some above others.

Usually spiritual gifts are given in combinations with maybe one being more dominant, but very seldom do we see them used singularly and in only one context without abuse, such as The over-emphasis of Tongues by the church at Corinth. Note that Paul says to them in I Corinthians 12:4-6 that even though it is the same Godhead involved in all the gifts that there are a variety of gifts, used in a variety of ministries, with a variety of effects from their use.

COUNTERFEIT GIFTS

1. Emphasis one or a few gifts
2. Glory for gift goes ultimately to person who exercises it
3. Spectacular nature tends to justify authenticity of the gift
4. Produces competition for gifts
5. Maturity linked to certain gifts
6. Produces jealousy, strife, disputes, dissensions, factions, envying, etc. Gal. 5:19-21

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Exercising of all the gifts in their proper settings
2. Glory goes to God
3. Spirit authenticates gift by the results produced
4. Completion and edification from gifts
5. Maturity through relationship with God not nature of gift
6. Produces Fruit of the Spirit [Gal. 5:22,23], unity, edification

