

Evangelism and Witnessing Lesson 3 2Q 2012

Spiritual Gifts for Evangelism and Witnessing

Read Memory Text – Eph 4:11, 12: “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

Thoughts?

Does this text represent all the Spiritual Gifts?

1Cor 12:27,28:

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. ²⁸ And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.

Does this list all the Spiritual gifts?

Does a gift have to be listed in the Bible in order to be a spiritual gift?

Can you think of others not listed?

- Metal working and artistic skills
- Music
- Technical skills – working with computers, internet, TV, radio,
- Writing, editing, publishing,
- Mechanical skills
- Others?

Is there a difference between natural talents and spiritual gifts? How would you describe the difference?

The Moody Handbook of Theology describes the difference as:

COMPARISON OF NATURAL AND SPIRITUAL ABILITIES

Comparisons	Natural Talents	Spiritual Gifts
Source:	From God Through parents	From God Independent of parents
Possessed:	From birth	Probably from conversion
Purpose:	To benefit mankind on the natural level	To benefit mankind on the spiritual level
Process:	Must be recognized, developed, exercised	Must be recognized, developed, exercised
Function:	Ought to be dedicated by believers to God for His use and glory	Ought to be used to God's glory

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Thoughts?

Any questions about the gifts listed in the texts above?

SUNDAY

Does every member of the church receive spiritual gifts?

Do you know yours, keeping in mind gifts are different from natural talents?

¹ Enns, P. P. (1997). *The Moody handbook of theology* (270). Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press.

Read second paragraph, “We have already...” thoughts?

Does the equipping with gifts come fully developed or do the gifts themselves require use, exercise, and will expand with development?

What is the purpose of spiritual gifts? Are the gifts given primarily for the development of the individual person, or are they given for the development of the body of believers?

If a person refuses to allow the gift to be manifest in them, what might happen? Might God give that gift to another, not to punish the one who didn't utilize it, but because the church needs the blessing of that gift?

Once someone receives a spiritual gift, is it like other gifts, theirs to use as they freely want? Or does the spiritual gift function by continual interaction with the Holy Spirit? In other words, it is the Holy Spirit enabling and providing the ability and only in unity and harmony with the Holy Spirit does the gift work?

Was Samson's strength a Spiritual Gift?

- What was the purpose of giving Samson strength?
- Was it for the building up, edifying of Israel?
- Did the Spirit control how Samson used this strength?
- Did Samson have great leeway in how he used this gift?
- Did it require Samson to stay in unity with God?
- Did Samson eventually lose this gift? Why?
- Why did Samson get this gift back? Was it magic hair growth? Or was it a change in heart?
- Do you think Samson regretted losing this gift?

What about Solomon?

- Did Solomon get a spiritual gift of wisdom?

- Did God control the use of that gift?
- Did Solomon have great leeway in how he used it?
- Did Solomon eventually lose that gift? How and why?
 - I would like to suggest that Solomon, like Samson, when he turned to pagan worship and sacrificing his own children had lost the gift of wisdom. And he spent many years doing foolish things.
- Did he get the gift back? Why? How?
 - In later life he repented and was inspired to write Ecclesiastes

Can a spiritual gift be lost? What about the gift of prophecy?
 Can a person be gifted with prophecy but reject it and then have that gift lost? Can other gifts be lost if not used?

- Do you think persons who lose gifts regret it?

What can we do to not lose the gifts we have been given?

What can we do to maximize the usefulness of the gifts we have been given?

MONDAY

Read first paragraph – “To a certain...” thoughts?

What does it mean to be “called?” To receive a call from the nominating committee, pastor or elder?

Is calling anything more than an invitation? When Jesus told the parable of the wedding and the heralds went out with invitation – does that represent God’s calling?

Is the invitation to salvation freely offered to all? So could we say God calls the entire human race that is capable of receiving a call?

Are some humans beyond receiving the call, in other words beyond understanding, comprehending and responding to the

invitation? Yet does the invitation still get sent to the entire world?

What about being called to the clergy? What is that calling? Is it different than any other calling? How can one know if they are called to any ministry or position in the church?

- Is it a feeling of conviction?
- Is it a desire for that office?
- Is it a sense of duty or obligation?
- James says we are tempted by our desires, so if someone has a desire to be a pastor, does that necessarily mean that desire is from God?

Do people ever believe they are called by God to a certain role when they are not?

Does God every gift someone because they asked for the gift?

Are we told to ask for wisdom and that God will honor it? Is this the only gift we are supposed to ask from God?

Does a gift of the Spirit mean character transformation? If a person has received spiritual gifts, but doesn't experience character transformation to be more like Christ, what might happen over time? Might those gifts be lost?

TUESDAY

What can we do to discover our gifts? Any idea?

Read last two paragraphs, "When someone..." thoughts?

Can you think of anything else?

What gets in the way of discovering our spiritual gifts?

- Fear?
- Anger?

- Selfishness?
- Pride?
- Hurt?
- Misconceptions about God?
- False beliefs about what the gifts are, how they work, the role of believers in the church?
 - For instance – what about a woman being gifted to be a pastor? Might this be overlooked if she has been taught her entire life only men can be pastors?
- Any other beliefs that might obstruct our recognition of a spiritual gift?
 - How about our beliefs about healthy living? Do we undermine our ability to be used by God and for the manifestation of gifts if we are unhealthy?
 - Will God override our choice to lead an unhealthy life by supernaturally giving us exceptional health?
 - Will an unhealthy brain undermine the gift we have been given?
- Television, video games?

THURSDAY

Read second paragraph, “It is significant...” thoughts?

What church? Is it a single denominational church? Is it all denominations? Is it the church invisible?

Was Martin Luther gifted? When the organized church booted him out, did he lose his spiritual gifts?

Does that tell us something? If the gifts of the Spirit are given by God for the health and benefit of the church, and they are not lost by a person when the organized church rejects that person with their gifts, what does this mean about what constitutes the church, as far as God is concerned?

What should you do if you know what your gifts are but the organized church won't let you use your gifts?

Say you have the gift of preaching but the church won't let you preach, or teaching and the church won't let you teach?

Did Jesus have the gift of teaching? Did he wait for church leadership to recognize His gift before He taught?

Did the disciples have gifts? Did they wait for the organized church to endorse them before they began ministering their gifts in God's cause?

Should we just strike out on our own and ignore the organized church?

What is the balance between following God's leading and gifting in your life and receiving the endorsement of an organized church?

Read fifth paragraph, "Spiritual gifts..." thoughts?

Do you think Martin Luther had desire for unity? Did he seek to cause a break or to reform and purify his church?

Throughout history do we find that Spirit filled individuals led to reforms and those reforms brought division with church leadership?

Christ said:

"Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. ³⁵ For I have come to turn

" 'a man against his father,
 a daughter against her mother,
 a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—
³⁶ a man's enemies will be the members of his own
 household." Matt 10:34-36

What do you think about this? Was Christ not Spirit led? Did He not have gifts of the Spirit? Was He misusing His gifts

because His ministry led to breakdown of unity in the organized church of His day? Should He have succumbed to church leadership?

As I considered the next questions I found myself quite disturbed and sad as I contemplated the evidence from history. I also found myself becoming frightened, lest I find myself in such a place.

- Can anyone think of a time in history where the leadership of an established organized church stood on the right side of advancing truth?
- Does the Spirit lead individuals away from the true body of Christ? No!
- Does the Spirit lead individuals away from organized churches? What do the lessons of history say?

What would those who wrote this paragraph say to persons coming to a Revelation seminar who were currently members of a Baptist, Methodist, Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Catholic or other church and those members said, “Our pastor told us the Spirit doesn’t lead people away from the church?”

My view is that the Spirit always works on the heart to transform the person to be like Jesus and leads us into the unity of love, and in the practicing of Godlike methods. Then the Spirit leads the individual to the place where the Spirit wants the individual:

- Jesus filled with the Spirit was led to the wilderness, then to the Temple to confront the leaders, not to get the blessing of the leaders
- Elijah led to confront a king and spiritual leaders
- Paul led to the desert, and then to the Gentiles, and at times confronted spiritual leaders
- Stephen led to confront the Jews in Jerusalem, to confront church leaders

- John the Baptist led to confront the nation and a king and church leaders
- Timothy and Titus to churches in Greece and Asia minor, and had conflict with local leaders

Do we believe that evangelism is about making people members of one particular denomination, or leading them to a genuine healing relationship with Jesus Christ and allowing the Spirit to lead that person where the Spirit wants them?

Then, within various organizations the Spirit leads us to unite together in common purpose to make the truth about God known. Thus the Spirit seeks to cut away things that interfere with this work.

In our individual lives the Spirit “circumcises the heart” meaning He cuts away attachments to worldliness, selfishness, fears, insecurities, and relationships that would undermine our growth in Christlikeness – including relationships with organizations who teach false views of God or which undermine our spiritual growth.

In the church body it seems the Spirit would be working to cleanse the church from influences that misrepresent God and undermine the work of preparing the world for Christ’s return, i.e. undermine the presentation of the truth about God.

WEDNESDAY

The lesson is making the point that not everyone is gifted with the same gifts, for a reason. As Paul uses the metaphor of the body, and the body wouldn’t be very good body if all the parts were a foot, or a mouth, or an eye, that it works best when each part fulfills its purpose.

Likewise in the church while there may be spokespersons, teachers, preachers, evangelists, they wouldn’t be very effective if there weren’t many more people working behind the scenes to organize, plan, set up, clean, prepare etc.

In the military for every soldier who carries a weapon there are many more soldiers who work behind the scenes supporting and supplying the ones in combat. Without those support soldiers the combat troops would soon become ineffective. In fact, one of the most effective strategies in stopping an advancing army is to cut their supply lines, to make ineffective the work of the non-combat forces.

In the church there are many on the front lines, but for every effective person speaking, preaching, teaching, holding seminars, conducting Bible studies there are many, many more behind the scenes and without those the work would come to a screeching halt.

How many went to the open house at Heartwise and saw the TV studio?

Our ministry and Heartwise are a good example of this. While myself, Russell, Wendell and others teach here, Dr. Marcum, myself and others will be on the TV programming, none of this would get outside the room to reach anyone if it wasn't for many of you who work behind the scenes here and at the studio.

- TV camera people,
- answering phones,
- running the computers,
- updating the websites,
- organizing, planning,
- preparing materials,
- writing the study guides
- praying daily for these ministries and the people involved,
- supporting with financial support,
- and more!

This is a team effort and we each have a role to play. If you are not currently involved and want to be, please let us know, we can always use more help.

The greatest joy in my life is to present the truth about God's kingdom and see minds that were held in captivity of fear and insecurity about God set free. To see the lights go on, to see the joy in the heart of another, to see the frantic, chaotic, living replaced with peace and self control. This brings joy. If you have never had the joy of sharing the truth about God and His kingdom and methods of love what can we do to help you experience this joy?

Anything you need from us to equip you in your circle of influence?

FRIDAY

Read comment 1 at the top. "In consultation..." thoughts?

How many would like us to develop a training seminar, put on over a weekend in which we would provide materials and courses designed to teach you how to share this message effectively?

Read and discuss questions 1 and 2.