

***Pastor Jeremy M. Thomas***  
***Fredericksburg Bible Church***

*107 East Austin*

*Fredericksburg, Texas 78624*

*830-997-8834    [jthomas@fbgbible.org](mailto:jthomas@fbgbible.org)*

**B1136 – September 11, 2011**  
**"Sealing, Intercession, Spiritual Gifts"**

We are going to finish up this section of the Framework and as we do I want to start by reviewing the big picture of how we're linking these events and doctrines. Remember we talked about the Heavenly Origin of the Church with Christ's ascension and session, that's the event, and we connected that to the doctrine of judgment/salvation. What Jesus Christ's session does is separate His First Advent from His Second Advent, so that in-between we have an inter-advent age. This introduces a period of grace and salvation before the judgment/salvation just as we saw grace before the judgment/salvation with the Flood of Noah and just as we saw grace before the judgment/salvation with the Exodus event. We are seeing that same thing now but this time around salvation is split apart from the judgment during this inter-advent age and so the salvation is occurring all through it and the judgment is primarily focused at the end of it. So it's the grace before judgment pattern again, over and over you see these patterns in the way God works.

Then we dealt with the Earthly Origin of the Church on the Day of Pentecost. Pentecost is the day the Father and the Son sent the Holy Spirit to earth so far as His operating base goes. And to that event we are associating, of course, the doctrine of the Holy Spirit. We reviewed the Trinity since the Holy Spirit is a member of the Trinity just as much as the Son is a member of the Trinity, and then we started in one by one going through some of the results of the Holy Spirit's work, and we talked about the acrostic RIBS, a device to remember it with: Regeneration, Indwelling, Baptism and Sealing. Each of these has an image associated with it. The image behind regeneration is creation. The image behind indwelling is the temple. The image behind baptism is the flood, judgment/salvation, identification. And sealing is a seal.

We spoke about regeneration being an instantaneous work of God, not a process, by which we are born again and born from above and our human spirit's are re-created, we receive eternal life and since eternal life is connected by John in his first epistle with Christ who is eternal life then there is a part of us, Paul calls the inner man, which does not sin. This is the regenerate self and this is who we really are so that when we do sin that's not really we who are doing it but sin living in us. The amazing thing is that when we walk by faith the righteousness that is produced is actually Christ living in us, and Christ is sinlessly perfect so His kenotic life is manifested through us. That's regeneration and it's unique to the Church. Israel had something similar, something called circumcision of the heart, but this is eternal life and there are some differences.

We spoke about indwelling in the OT Israel and the temple imagery vs the indwelling in the NT Church to show certain unique features. That's why we do these contrasts. We want to appreciate what is unique to this inter-advent age with this entity called the Church. The Church is not the same as Israel. Israel is a nation. The Church is multi-national. They don't even fit in the same category sociologically. And they certainly don't fit in the same category as far as what God is doing with them. So that's why the differences between pre and post-Pentecost indwelling in the chart is important, just to review the contrast between how the Holy Spirit worked in the OT, how the Holy Spirit works today.

<b>Pre-Pentecostal Indwelling</b>	<b>Post-Pentecostal Indwelling</b>
Job-centered ministry to further the purpose of God for the nation Israel	Life-centered ministry to make eternal fellowship with God a present reality and to build the church (John 16:13-15; Eph 4:11ff)
Local to only some believers (and possibly unbelievers)	Universal for all and only believers (Rom 8:9; Jude 1:11)
It was temporary (Ps 51:11)	It is permanent (Eph 4:30)
Could be asked for (2 Kgs 2:9; Luke 11:13)	Automatic with regeneration (No NT command to seek indwelling)

There are several key features of that chart. On the right side is that it is universal for all and only believers. That was not true in the Old Testament. In the Old Testament Jesus said the Holy Spirit, even to the disciples, the

Holy Spirit is “with” you, He will be “in” you. He used two distinct prepositions to describe this. So that’s the indwelling. As far as how indwelling relates to regeneration, regeneration provides eternal life and the new nature in Christ. Indwelling provides the empowerment of that new nature, in other words, the regenerate nature creates the temple inside of which the Holy Spirit indwells.

Then we had the baptism and another chart, there are eight different baptisms.

<b>Real (dry) Baptisms</b>	<b>Ritual (wet) Baptisms</b>
Noah’s (judgment/salvation from the antediluvian world into the postdiluvian world)	John’s (picture of judgment/salvation from the present world into the future Millennial Kingdom)
Moses’ (judgment/salvation from Egypt into the age of Israel)	Jesus’ (picture of judgment/salvation role of the Messiah)
Christ’s Cross (judgment/salvation work of the Messiah)	Christian (picture of judgment/salvation)
Fire (judgment)	
Spirit (salvation)	

Baptism is a tricky word; we said the translators down through history in the English language have kind of cheated here, because they never dared to translate the word. And so all they’ve done is just take the Greek word, *baptizo*, and turned it into baptize, and they don’t translate its meaning. The reason is because down through history there’s been arguments about the mode of baptism and all the rest of it. Furthermore, if you’ll notice in the chart there are far more baptisms that are dry than are wet. The ones on the left side of that chart are what we call real baptisms. The ones on the right side of the chart are ritual baptisms. The ones on the left side of the chart are dry and God is the agent. The ones on the right side of the chart are wet and man is the agent. So there are clear distinctions here in these baptisms. We said that Spirit baptism occurs at the time a person is regenerated and indwelled. And we showed that it began on the day of Pentecost. It didn’t begin in Jesus’ time, it didn’t begin in the OT, it began on the day of

Pentecost coterminous with the beginning of regeneration and the indwelling Spirit.

We're going to go on to the S in RIBS, the sealing ministry of the Holy Spirit. Turn to 2 Cor 1 and look at some of the verses that pertain to sealing and how this is used. The way of studying these doctrines if you want to approach the Bible doctrinally sometimes, is to look at the verses and look at what the practical issue that was being dealt with when that doctrine was taught. So obviously here we have Corinthians. In the context of 2 Cor 1 what is he talking about? Verse 17, "Therefore, I was not vacillating when I intended to do this, was I? Or what I purpose, do I purpose according to the flesh so that with me there will be yes, yes and no, no at the same time? 18 But as God is faithful, our word to you is not yes and no." He's talking about being faithful to promises just like God is faithful to His promises. And he goes into a lengthy reminder of God's promises.

Verse 20, "For as many as are the promises of God, in Him they are yes; therefore also through Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us. 21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God," and he's trying to build their confidence in God and verse 21 continues into verse 22, which is a clause that describes God. So verse 21 ends, he who "anointed us is God." Then verse 22 is an exposition of the nature and character of God. What has God done? He is the one "who also sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge," and the picture there is a down payment, it's the idea that God made a first installment in a financial transactions, and it's the idea of certainty, that God is making a good faith payment in advance of taking full possession of the item He's putting something down as a first installment that guarantees that He will take final possession of the object, which is us, and the pledge is the Spirit as a seal in our hearts, a guarantee that He will do so. So it's the Spirit Himself that is the seal. And that implies that it's connected to indwelling. That's why sealing always goes together with indwelling. It's connected to indwelling; it's just another way of looking at it. And notice in vv 21-22 that the Trinity is present; all three members of the Trinity are in verse 21-22. So here again you see how the Holy Spirit's work is distinguished. Here it's God the Father's work, but the Holy Spirit is the seal itself.

Let's go to Ephesians. The seal comes up again in this letter. In Eph 1 he's describing our position in Christ, that we are seated in Christ in the heavenly places where we have every spiritual blessing; he unpacks those spiritual blessings in the longest sentence in the Greek NT, vv 3-14 are one single sentence in the Greek. So if you want a challenge go home and try to diagram it. I think you'll find the brilliance of Paul. This guy was a genius, he was well-educated, he had a high vocabulary, and I'm convinced that God chose him to write half the NT just for that reason, because ever since then the church has been piddling around trying to understand what the man said. The guy is one of the greatest minds ever to the point that people in his own generation had a hard time understanding what he was talking about. And it's simply because this man would go from one idea to another idea and for all intents and purposes it appears he's just jumping from one topic to another, thoughts that are totally disconnected, but in his mind there's a logic, there's a connection and it just takes time to see.

And at the end of this great long sentence, in Eph 1:13, he gets to the end of this, he's talked about God the Father, vv 3ff, he's talked about God the Son, vv 7ff and then in verse 13 he rounds out the Trinity, saying, "In Him," and who is the Him, it's a pronoun, a pronoun has to refer to an antecedent noun, what's the antecedent noun of "Him?" It's Christ. "In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed," notice which comes first, you can't believe without hearing, you have to hear the gospel first to get the content, after you get the content then you can believe it. "having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14who is given as a pledge," now isn't that interesting, that's the same word used in 2 Cor 1:22. See - there again this ministry of this pledge. This down payment of the Spirit ensuring something more to come.

Now, having looked at verse 13 where are we sealed? "in Him," and the "in Him" is Christ. So we are sealed in Christ and it's linked to Spirit Baptism. It's Spirit baptism which puts us in Christ, so the Spirit puts us there and the Spirit seals us there. So do you see where this is going? What doctrine this is leading to? The doctrine of eternal security. We are sealed, verse 14, toward what goal? "With a view to the redemption of God's own possession." That's a reference to resurrection. The Spirit as a down payment assures us that everything else is going to follow, the redemption of our body, the eternal

state, and all the other stuff. And here I want to quote Dr Ryrie with respect to the seal. Dr Ryrie said, “One of the best earthly illustrations of sealing is a piece of registered mail. When something is registered at the post office, it is sealed until delivered. Actually only two persons can open registered mail—the sender (if it is delivered back to him) and the recipient. In the case of the believer, God is the one who sends him on his way to heaven, and God in heaven is the recipient upon his arrival. Therefore, only God can break the seal of our redemption, and He has promised not to do so....” See how strong this imagery of sealing is. That’s the sum and substance of it, that’s the power of this strong work of the Holy Spirit. He keeps us until the day of resurrection.

Next, Eph 4:30 is over in the practical end of Ephesians and you’ll see he brings up sealing again. In these first two cases of sealing the flavor is to give Christians certainty, to give Christians assurance that no matter what happens, we have the Holy Spirit. Notice, he never asks us, never tells us, never instructs us, there’s no imperative verbs here to seek the seal; there’s no imperative verbs to ask for the indwelling. They both come simultaneous with salvation; they do not come subsequent to salvation with some great experience.

In Eph 4:30 he’s talking about our sinning, and he’s talking about what we do when we sin. And he says what it does; it “grieves the Holy Spirit, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.” See that, not only does our sin grieve Him because we’re sinning in the face of the one who’s sealed us, but we are sealed for an end goal, for the day of redemption, just like Eph 1:13 - the sealing us unto the day of delivery when we are raised from the dead. So the sealing looks forward to our safe delivery in our final state.

So we’ve got four works of the Holy Spirit, and we’re going to spend the rest of our time on the fifth and sixth work. So in addition to RIBS we’re going to add two more, so we’ll have a total of six different operations of the Holy Spirit that define the Church. You can get more; this is not an exhaustive list here.

The next one is “T” for Intercession, and the one after that is “SG” for Spiritual Gifts. So those are the two things we’re going to add to RIBS as operations of the Holy Spirit. The major passage on the Intercession is found

in Rom 8 and we'll have to spend some time in the text and context of this passage. This is the famous passage, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose." Immediately prior to that promise that everyone knows, or should know, we have expounded for us another work of the Holy Spirit, which is making intercession for us. So we want to look at this.

Let's go back up in the context just a little bit, back to 8:18 so we get the flavor. He's talking about suffering, he says "For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us. 19For the anxious longing of the creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the sons of God. 20For the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will, but because of Him who subjected it, in hope 21that the creation itself also will be set free" *will be set free*, it means it's not set free now, ecological effects of the fall in Gen 3 remain today but "will be set free from its slavery to corruption into the freedom of the glory of the children of God." See, as goes man so goes nature. Remember the doctrine of judgment/salvation, the fifth point in that doctrine was judgment/salvation always involves nature as well as man. Think about the two illustrations of the doctrine of judgment/salvation. What are they? The flood of Noah. Was nature involved in the flood of Noah? You bet. The second one was the Exodus. Was nature involved in the Exodus? Absolutely. When Christ comes again, is nature going to be involved? You bet. See nature is always involved in this because who was commissioned in Gen 1 to be the lord of creation, (little "I")? It was man, and when man fell, nature suffered. And that's why it says, verse 21, when man gets straightened out in Christ, then nature will get straightened out, and not until.

Verse 22, another comment on the ecology of the environment, "For we know that the whole creation groans and suffers the pains of childbirth until now. 23And not only this" watch it now, we're getting close to our passage, "not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit," remember the word "pledge," there's the same kind of idea, we are given the Holy Spirit as the first fruits. What was the first fruits? First harvest, the first sign that you're going to actually have production. When the farmer gets his first fruits at least he can sigh somewhat in relief because it's a sign that there's more to follow. So here is the same idea in that the early believers that started coming in on the day of Pentecost were the first harvest or

believers who would receive the indwelling Spirit. "...even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons," comma, "the adoption as sons, the redemption of our body." We saw that in all those passages on sealing, "the redemption of our body" as a reference to our resurrection.

When you became a Christian you were instantaneously sealed. In fact, when you believed in the Lord Jesus Christ in a hundredth of a second, you were regenerated, you were indwelt, you were baptized, you were sealed, and you couldn't feel any of it. But it happened at the time that you trusted in Christ. And that all has a view to your resurrection. And it could be if the rapture comes first that you will not die, boom, you'll go like that. But if you do die, your body goes to the grave, and your spirit goes to be with the Lord; they can't stay separated like that, so at the rapture boom, down your spirit comes and up comes your body, and you're resurrected. So it's body, soul and spirit, always.

Now the redemption of our body is this resurrection deal, so he's saying that we have the first fruits, and it's the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives that guarantees the resurrection, because what He starts He's going to finish. So here's the Holy Spirit, now its RIBS, it all happens at the time that we become a Christian. The Holy Spirit now is indwelling you, boom, boom, boom, boom, boom, like this. He is the first fruits of the redemption of the body. When we sin, we grieve Him. We may not be the greatest place for Him, but He is ordered by the Father to be in us. That sets the tone for this intercession thing. I spent some time here because this is a passage you have to watch because people hit this passage driving forty-five miles an hour and don't pay attention to the text. There are some powerful truths in this text, but it's not going to come off unless you take your time and think your way through the context. That's what we want to do.

Verse 24, "For in hope we have been saved," notice it's past tense, "but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one also hope for what he sees? 25But if we hope for what we do not see, with perseverance we wait eagerly for it." What are we waiting for, in context? We just spent the time in verse 23, he told us. The resurrection! So what Paul is saying is during the interim of the Christian life, the period from the time we are born again until the time we die, or the rapture, whichever occurs first, we are in a contaminated



environment. We've just gone through verse after verse of the fact that we live in a fallen universe with a fallen body, with sin all around us, and in need of sanctification ourselves. Remember "I" says the indwelling of the Holy Spirit is in "R," in the regenerate nature. The regenerate nature doesn't need to be sanctified in that sense, to get away from sin. But what else has to? We're in a constant struggle here because of the body, because of the environment, etc. and so we're in suffering. And that's what he's saying. The whole Christian life, from the time we're born again till the time we die or the rapture, all that period of time is a period of groaning and travail.

Verse 26, "And in the same way the spirit also helps our weakness," it's in the same way what? Well, he just got through talking about hope, he's talked about the fact that the Spirit in verse 23 occupies us. We're waiting eagerly for the adoption, and he says "in the same way the Spirit helps our weakness," the weakness being defined in context as our present life in the fallen world with a fallen body, that's falling apart, and in that sense the Holy Spirit helps our weakness, including the sin in our life. Now he says, "...for we know not how to pray as we should," in the context, what's the issue over which the prayer probably is about? Verse 21-24, it's over the struggles in the Christian life. It's over the struggles of here we have one foot, as it were, in heaven and the other foot on earth. And he says, "in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness, for we know not how to pray as we should," presumably we're praying over issues that we would call sanctification issues. "...we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words," my translation says. Verse 27, "and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God." Now the question, an incidental question here is who is it who searches the hearts? It's Yahweh in the Old Testament and in Rev 2:23 it's a title of the Son. This is an interesting thing because usually you would think the intercession would be directed to the Father, but here the Holy Spirit indwells the believer and the passage says that the Spirit prays to the Son who sits at the Father's right hand. So the Holy Spirit is making intercession for us, we may be too but this is not our intercession, this is intercession He is doing for us. It says "with groanings too deep for words," that clause has misled many, many people who have hit this passage too fast and don't pay attention, because it's usually interpreted to mean some sort of angelic language, some sort of tongues phenomena or something else like that. In

other words, the Holy Spirit gets hold of you and you don't know how to pray and so He prays through this hoopla. That's not what it means. What it means is that whatever the Holy Spirit is praying it's secretive, it's not to be uttered, it's like He's talking on a secure line and if you think about it, He's doing it from inside of you; He's indwelling and He is right there in your life. He knows exactly what you're going through, this is the closest He gets to the kenotic state of Christ, knowing what it's like to go through what we have to go through; He's right there with us and He knows what we're going through. He knows our needs and we don't know how to pray all the stuff but He does and He starts making intercession for us, each one of us individually, on a secure line.

Why do you suppose that this is a secure line? So that whatever is being said can't be intercepted by Satan. Satan would just love to get his hands on some of this information. Believer A is down here in a fallen satanic world and believer A has a sin problem so the Holy Spirit is praying concerning sanctification of this sin issue in this guy's life and so He passes a message up to the Son, who by the way, in relation to the body is what in the imagery of the New Testament? The head, the head of the body. Our heads and bodies are connected by the nervous system, one of the secure links. That's a picture of the body of Christ working. That's a picture most people don't see, but the head is connected to the body, and the link that's going on here apparently is largely due to the indwelling Spirit. He is having this secure communication from within the body with the head of the body, the Lord Jesus Christ concerning our situation down here in this world, because we don't know, we don't have half a clue what's happening. But He does and so what I'm getting at here is that the Holy Spirit is the "on-scene commander" of our sanctification. Whatever our situation is the Holy Spirit shoots up intercession to the Lord Jesus Christ and says this believer needs this, this, and that. We know not how to pray for it as we ought, but He does. So you can see this passage in many ways is an expression of God's love, but it can also, sometimes when something happens you can say wow, Holy Spirit, you really talked to the Son on this one didn't you. You know if something drops into your life and it could be just as an answer to His prayer for us.

There's all kinds of these things going on in the background, and that's why when you look at the text, like verses 26-27 here...how we'll be all eternity figuring this one out, and we'll have all eternity to think on this, run it by,

maybe run a rerun, what was going on when that happened? Well, here's what was going on when that happened, boom, boom, boom, boom. Oh, is that what you were doing Lord? Oh, okay. So there may be in eternity these kinds of explanations that will take all eternity to see all the roots and the connections.

That is the intercessory ministry of the Holy Spirit and it's that that is included in verse 28 when it says that "all things work together for good." Why do "all things work together for good" in the context? Because the Holy Spirit is making intercession for us. So if you ever wondered how things somehow turn out together for good then that's one of the reasons "all things work together for good."

We want to conclude with Spiritual Gifts and 1 Cor 12. The thing to think about spiritual gifts, if you want to, it may help categorize this for you, when we talked about indwelling in the Old Testament we made the point that indwelling in the Old Testament could be a carpenter cutting wood for the temple. But the indwelling was for job-centered skills that somehow furthered God's program for the nation Israel. In the NT it's life-centered for filling your role in the body of Christ.

Now there are several things to remember about spiritual gifts. One of the things to remember is that every Christian has at least one gift. That's the first thing to remember, because it's a gift, the spiritual gift could be seen as your place in the body of Christ; it's sort of your function in the body. They talk about stem cells, stem cells are supposed to be cells from which you can derive different cells, you can get a liver or you can get a lung here. Well, the body image of us as believers is we're not stem cells; we are differentiated cells. That's where spiritual gifts come in. Every one of us is differential. Jesus is the stem cell, if you want to look at it that way, but we're derived from Him.

In 1 Cor 12:11, "But one and the same Spirit works all these things," and this is the key, "distributing to each one individually just as He wills." As who wills? The Holy Spirit wills. It's the Holy Spirit's choice, the Holy Spirit gifts us; He is the craftsman that is building the body of Christ. And he says okay, here's a believer and we're going to put him here; this is another person, we're going to put him over here; here's a third believer, we're going to put

him there. In other words, He positions us in the body. We're not always conscious of this but what it says is He "distributes to each one individually just as He wills," and then it goes into the body image in verse 12. He points out in verse 15, "If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body,' it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body," he goes through the foot, the ear and all the rest of it. It's not an organization, it's an organism, it's the body of Christ. The spiritual gift is your place; it can be mercy, giving, exhortation, etc. The gifts are listed several places in the Bible. This whole section, chapter 12, chapter 13, chapter 14 cover this thing of gifts.

One of the things to remember in the middle of all of this is chapter 13. Chapter 13 is the love chapter that is so famous in Corinthians and it is stuck in the middle of the gift section, which is interesting. Chapter 12 is gifts; chapter 14 is gifts and in the middle of it you've got chapter 13 which is the love chapter. What is his point in the love chapter? He says in verse 1, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels," so there's the gift of tongues, "but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2And if I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing." The point that he's saying here is this: that we, by virtue of our gift set up our function. But, just because we have a special ability, that does not equate to spirituality. People often get confused about this. You can have the gift of tongues and it means nothing as far as spirituality goes unless the tongues speaker is walking with the Lord. A person can have a gift and not walk according to the Lord. It's a very sobering thing and the production is zero, wood, hay and stubble; it doesn't do a thing. So that's what he's talking about here - that spiritual gifts are nice to realize, that they define our place in the body, every believer has a gift, or two or three, I don't know, the Bible doesn't really go into the details, but the ability does not translate into spirituality. Just because you have a gift does not mean that you are spiritual. A better way of thinking about it is, a person can have a position on an athletic team but that doesn't mean he plays a good game, he may play a bad game. Often very skilled players do have bad games. Well, we can have bad days when we're out of fellowship and yet we still have the gift. The gift hasn't been taken away, the gift can be exercised, the gift can be highly developed, and just because we're out of fellowship, carnal, something like that, it's a waste of time.

He goes on and he describes some of the gifts in chapter 14, most of it talking about the temporary gifts. You notice he's talking about the gifts ceasing, some of them. So the gifts have a cessation. We said that Protestantism believes in cessation, not because we don't like certain gifts, it's simply that certain gifts, once they have accomplished their purpose don't need to be given anymore. They were foundational gifts. Turn to Eph 2, we'll go back to that because that's a heavy church epistle. In Eph 2:20 it talks about two offices that involve gifts. It says the church has "been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets." Once the foundation is built, then the doctrine of cessation says that foundational gift goes away historically. When the last of the apostles died, that's it. Oh well, you know we believe in apostolic succession, we need... why do you continue to need apostles? What was the purpose of the apostles? To generate the canon of Scripture. Do we have the canon of Scripture? Yeah, so why do we need the apostles? Are they going to write Revelation 23?

It's interesting that every religious body who breaks off of Christianity who claims to have apostles always try to add to the Bible. Think about it. One of the largest groups in the world that talks about its apostles continuing is the Mormon Church. And in effect they've replaced the authority of Scripture with the Book of Mormon. The Roman Catholic Church with its idea of a continual life of the Popes from Peter in essence have substituted the oral traditions of the church for the authority of Scripture. That's why we have Mariolatry. In all these cases when people try to continue a gift and the gift has actually stopped because the Holy Spirit has stopped giving it, and they perpetuated people in positions to appear like they have these gifts, they get in trouble. That's the fastest way the Church gets in trouble, doing this stuff. That's why this passage is in here. The foundation has already been laid, the apostles and prophets, we don't need to lay the foundation again, we need to build on the foundation, so the foundational gifts cease, the building gifts continue.

There are the gifts and we could go into all the different kind of gifts, (there's teaching gifts, there's gifts of mercy, etc.), and if you want a sampling of it, Romans 12 some of the gifts are listed. You can think about it, if you're not conscious of your own gift... you don't have to, you know, contemplate your navel and go through all kinds of personality tests about this. If you say how

do I find my gift, one of the best ways of thinking about it, Rom. 12:7, “if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching, [8] or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.” It’s just natural. And you’ll notice that some of those gifts aren’t spectacular gifts, they’re not attention grabbers. And it’s funny because Dr. Ryrie said something about this one time. He said you know, we can make a list of all the gifts in the Bible, and do you know the one that doesn’t commit you to do anything? The gift of tongues. The one everybody wants. Suppose we had a revival of the gift of giving? Oh, I’ve got the gift of giving; people don’t flock to that gift for some reason. Why? Because it obligates you. Oh, I’ve got the gift of teaching. Oh yeah, we need some pastor-teachers out there, how about starting a church. Uh, no thank you. See, people don’t flock to those gifts because they obligate you. But you can sit there and flap your tongue in the breeze all day and it doesn’t involve any personal obligation. Just flap away.

Then there are exhorting gifts, encouraging. That gift isn’t spectacular, but it’s part of the body of Christ. You probably have seen this in your own life; many people have the gift of encouragement. Do you know how you can often tell they have the gift of encouragement? Because when they’re out of it they really irritate you, because instead of soothing you by their exhortation they irritate you, always opening their mouth at the wrong time. But they’re exercising their gift. So think about those gifts because we all have them, and they’re God the Holy Spirit’s investment in our lives and they don’t go away just because we’re out of fellowship, they can be used wonderfully in fellowship, they’re an annoyance when we’re out of it.

And another thing, they’re not for individual enjoyment, they’re for building up the body of Christ. Not that there aren’t any fringe benefits to exercising them properly. But their purpose isn’t for your own little party; they’re for the building up of others. That’s why it’s so important to keep on meeting with believers. How can you exercise your gift in the proper capacity if you’re not congregating? So they’re very practical and they show that we do need each other, no person has all the gifts, and they’ve been split up among us so that if we’re going to function properly we’re going to all have to be in place using our gifts. If you think about it, Paul wanted to visit the Romans. Why did Paul want to visit them? So he could build a church? No, he didn’t want to build on another man’s foundation. But so he could share his spiritual gift

with them and them with him. That was why he wanted to go. It was for mutual edification.

Alright, that was a quickie on Spiritual Gifts but what we've done is hooked the Earthy Origin of the Church on Pentecost up with these six works of the Holy Spirit, RIBS, plus the intercession ministry, plus spiritual gifts, and we could go on; you can study the Bible and find a lot more, but this is just a sampling of the work of the Holy Spirit, for which we can give thanks.

Next time we're going to start a whole new event, and we're going to leave Pentecost and go forward in time to the point throughout Acts when the Church emerges as a distinct entity from Israel rather than a sect within Judaism. It's a very important split that happens because it defines how we handle the identity of the Church versus the identity of Israel and that will cascade on down to Eschatology. Always your ecclesiology will affect your eschatology.

[Back To The Top](#)

Copyright (c) Fredericksburg Bible Church 2011