

Spiritual Gifts In Operation

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1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

I. We are not to be ignorant about the matter of spiritual gifts.

A. They are not to be confused with superstition or superstitious practices.

1 Corinthians 12:2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

B. Spiritual gifts have no association at all with the works of the devil.

C. Their source is the Holy Spirit of God, not the human mind or will, or skills, or natural talents.

D. Spiritual gifts are the manifestation of the Spirit of God; the revealing of his hand so that men can see and experience his presence together as a church.

E. Spiritual gifts are the Spirit of God working through those whose hearts are yielded to God for the furtherance of the kingdom of God, and the edification of the church.

F. Spiritual gifts are for the purpose of profiting the kingdom of God, not the glorification of any person.

G. We must keep these important facts in mind as we look at the particular spiritual gifts mentioned in the Scriptures.

H. The spiritual gifts specifically mentioned are several, but by no means all that the Spirit of God uses.

II. The first spiritual gift mentioned is “the word of wisdom.”

1 Corinthians 12:8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

A. This is the ability to explain and make clear the ways of God and to explain the Gospel and the mysteries of God, that He has revealed in his Word.

B. Not everyone is able to do this effectively because it is a spiritual gift.

1. That means it is not learned or acquired through instruction from other men.

2. Many understand and get a grasp on these things but they are not able themselves to explain them to others effectively.

C. This is included in the gift of prophecy, because the gift of prophecy is to be able to convey with words the truths of God to other people so that they understand.

D. We all have seen this gift exercised and we know very well what it is about.

E. We all have experienced the great difference between a Bible teacher or preacher when he teaches or preaches with the anointing of the Holy Spirit and when he does it with only his skills and talents.

John 6:63 It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.

F. It is a work of the Spirit of God that makes the words effective, not the abilities, or skill, or natural talent of the speaker.

- G. So not everyone has the gift of “word of wisdom” even though he may be saved and walking with God.

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

- III. The second spiritual gift mentioned is “the word of knowledge.”
 - A. This is the ability to retain knowledge of spiritual things more than others.
 - B. Not everyone can remember the things they hear concerning facts, or knowledge that is presented to them.
 - C. I think most of us can identify here; we have a hard time remembering things and keeping them in order and in their proper place in our lives.
 - D. However, there are some people who can remember, and then remind others of certain knowledge or understanding that they have heard and accepted, but have let slip from their conscious mind.
 - E. This gift is also in operation when someone finds knowledge that others have overlooked or have never known.
 - F. This is a spiritual gift, so the most important quality here is that the knowledge they have acquired has come through the Spirit of God and not other men.
 - G. It is the Spirit of God that has revealed to their mind this knowledge, which is then verified as true by the Word of God.

- IV. The third spiritual gift mentioned here is faith.

1 Corinthians 12:9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

- A. Our faith and trust in God is not something that is given to us from God as a gift.
 - 1. God does not “make” us or trick us into believing and trusting Him.
- B. However, Christ IS the “author and finisher of our faith.”
- C. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.” (Romans 10:17)
- D. But it is undeniable that there is something special about the faith of some people.
- E. The difference is that some people realize God’s response to their faith much more than others.
 - 1. Most people have been taught to simply trust what the Word of God says about THEM believing, and that is as far as they reach.
 - 2. They never have the confirmation of their faith that comes from God.

Romans 8:16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God:

- 3. Others, through the Spirit, realize God’s response to their faith in a more vivid and real way.
- F. Faith is not just a one-way thing; for us to believe in God is only part of faith.
 - 1. The other part is that God lets us know that He has faith in us, also.
 - 2. The more fully we trust Him, the more He will reveal himself to us, in ways that He simply does not and can not for others.
- G. It is very much like a man and a woman who get married; their relationship is based upon mutual trust.
 - 1. The greater the trust, the greater the intimate knowledge of one another.
- H. The spiritual gift of faith is the working of the Holy Spirit to reveal to others what faith can be like for them, through the example of one who has a closer walk with God.

- I. The gift of faith is the inspiration to believe God that radiates from our life by the working of the Spirit of God.
- V. The fourth spiritual gift he talks about is the gift of healing.
 - A. The gift of healing works the same as all the other spiritual gifts, and has the same purpose, also.
 - B. Man has more to be healed than his physical body; he has a sick soul, a broken heart, a defiled mind, and an evil conscience, and all the collateral damage that comes with those things.
 - C. Yet when the word healing is mentioned people are almost always referring exclusively to the healing of the physical body.
 - D. We can be healed in our soul and still be sick in our body.

Proverbs 18:14 The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?

- E. We can be healed both spiritually and physically and the body will still die – always.
- F. So obviously, the prophecies of healing in the OT about Christ referred much more to the spiritual man than to the physical man.
- G. The physical healing Jesus did, and that God does for us, is because of his mercy and compassion on us, and not really connected with a spiritual gift.
- H. The gift of healing that is a spiritual gift would, by its very definition, refer to the spiritual man and not to the physical man.
- I. There is more confusion over this spiritual gift than any other, unless it would be the gift of tongues.
 - 1. What a perversion of the truth to portray the gift of healing as a supernatural power possessed by a mere man to smite or speak and cure an illness or heal a wound in another person!
- J. The gift of healing is the work of the Spirit of God through us that lets us have a part in the healing of a soul, or the healing of a wounded soul.
- K. It is the Spirit of God using one of us to speak or to do the things that the sick or wounded soul needs to hear.
- L. God could do the healing by himself, without our participation, but because spiritual gifts are a manifestation of the Holy Spirit, He includes us in his work of grace, in order to reveal himself more clearly.
- M. Not everyone can have this gift of healing.
 - 1. Most of those who do are people who have been sick or wounded in their souls themselves, but were healed.

Proverbs 15:23 A man hath joy by the answer of his mouth: and a word spoken in due season, how good is it!

Proverbs 25:11 A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver.

- N. It is always God who heals and never a man.

Psalm 103:2-3 Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

Luke 4:17-19 And there was delivered unto him the book of the prophet Esaias. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

