

I. Review

A. We see the understanding, awareness, activation, and maturity of spiritual gifts as an essential dynamic of one's growth in relationship to God and the overall health and fullness of the body. This is a core conviction of our leadership team and strongly backed by the scriptures.

B. General Understandings

1. Love - The gifts are given to express God's love to others through us. If the building up of the body and furthering of the Kingdom through the gifts is not done in love, it is being done outside of the will and heart of God. (1 Cor. 13 in context of 12-14)
2. Grace - The gifts are given by grace, not merit of righteousness. They are not a validation of one's nearness to God or one's personal righteousness in God. Therefore, all the glory that the gifts produce belongs to God. Therefore, authority within the church should never be granted based on gifting. Instead, it must be based on the fruits of righteousness over time.
 - a. Gender - Because the gifts are given according to grace, there is no distinction of gifts that only belong to a certain gender or maturity of a saint. (Acts 2:17-18; Rom 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-11; 1 Pet. 4:10)
3. Diverse yet Equal - The gifts are dispersed throughout the body in a masterful way by God, based on not only what the body needs but also in a way that demands love and preference of one another in order to operate.
4. Intentional - Though the gifts are given to the body by grace, the scriptures tell us that the gifts are given to those who ask, and more than that, the growth that the gifts produce happens through intentionality on the part of the believer to use their gift. Also, the intentionality on the part of the Elders and Deacons to create and maintain healthy, safe, and encouraging ministry platforms for individuals to use, grow, and benefit the body through their gifts. (1 Cor. 12:31, 14:1, 12, 39; Titus 2:14)

II. Gifts Focus

A. There are a myriad of opinions regarding how many spiritual gifts there actually are. The most popular answers within scholarship today are 7, 9, 12, 18, and 22.

As we met together as a teaching team with the elders, we decided to focus on 18 gifts for this series.

1. Leadership - The gift of leadership is the divine strength (not natural) or ability to have influence over people through both intentional direction and lifestyle example. These individuals are able to meet people at their level while directing and focusing them to the bigger picture, vision, or idea and how they can fit, or contribute to it. (Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 3:1-13, 5:17; Hebrews 13:17)
2. Pastoral - Care for the personal needs of others by nurturing and mending life, heart, and emotional issues. These individuals carry a heavy burden for hurting and broken individuals. Their ministry and heart is generally personally focused and thrives in one-on-one long term discipleship, small groups, and church family dynamics. (John 10:1-18; Ephesians 4:11-14; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3)
3. Word of Wisdom - Individuals who are empowered to know and speak the wisdom of God in matters of counseling and consulting concerning all sorts of matters of life, through applying the truths of Scripture in a practical way. The best example we have of this gift is the wisdom given to Solomon to rule Israel. This gift of wisdom goes beyond mature life experience and into the arena of supernatural wisdom beyond our years or experience. (Acts 6:3,10; 1 Corinthians 2:6-13, 12:8)
4. Apostleship - Building and Planting. Constantly concerned with shoring up the foundations and core values of ministries and individuals. Also, identifies weak areas that need strengthening to bring greater function, and identifies where individuals fit into the body. Their ministry is generally corporately focused, a vast sphere of ministry, and thinks in terms of the wider and universal body of Christ. (Acts 15:22-35; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Galatians 2:7-10; Ephesians 4:11-14)
5. Exhortation - The gift of exhortation is the divine strength or ability to strengthen, comfort, or urge others to action through the written or spoken word and Biblical truth. The original word carries a strong indication of an ongoing intentionality rather than a one-time action. (Acts 14:22; Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 4:13; Hebrews 10:24-25)

6. Healings - Every time this gift is spoken of, it is used in the plural form. This means there are multiple ways in which Jesus heals people through the hands of the individuals with this gift. Types of healing include physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual (deliverance). Some of those methods include the various ways of laying on of hands, knowing various remedies, and discerning the cause of sickness. (Acts 5:16, 8:7, 28:8)
7. Discernment - Individuals who walk in this gift are empowered with insight into both the positive and negative aspects of individual or corporate attitudes, motivations, and influences of evil spirits. (Matthew 16:21-23; Acts 5:1-11, 8:17-23, 16:16-18; 1 Corinthians 12:10)
8. Administration - The original word translated “administration” could also be translated “government” or “wise counsel”. These individuals carry a supernatural ability to bring order to chaos, and to direct and organize communication, people, and resources in the body to accomplish a goal or vision. (Luke 14:28-30; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 12:28)
9. Mercy - The gift of mercy is the divine strength or ability to feel empathy (feel what others feel), sympathy (experiencing what others experience) and compassion to care for those who are hurting in various ways. These individuals have the capacity to work through the brokenness of individuals until they come to wholeness, no matter how hopeless it may look or long it may take. (Matthew 9:35-36; Mark 9:41; Romans 12:8; 1 Thess. 5:14)
10. Helps - These individuals are gifted to work in a supportive role for the accomplishment of tasks in Christian ministry with the ability to often see the need before others do. The original word translated “helps” means to give aid or to bring relief in the time of need. Therefore, this gift mostly is seen in the realm walking in supernatural aid or relief in times of crisis. (Mark 15:40-41; Acts 9:36; Romans 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 12:28)
11. Prophecy - Receives and articulates the heart of God in a current context in order to correct, exhort, and encourage the body. Commonly receives revelation from Jesus concerning people or situations through dreams, open visions, mental pictures, impressions, imputed emotions, inner voice, audible voice, and physical manifestations. (Acts 2:37-40, 7:51-53, 26:24-29; 1 Corinthians 14:1-4; 1 Thessalonians 1:5)

12. Teaching - Understanding and articulating the scriptures in a comprehensible way. They study and learn from the Scriptures primarily to bring understanding and depth to other Christians. Authoritative in defending and supporting doctrines or truth. High value on proper exegesis and a restlessness with scriptural obscurity. (Acts 18:24-28, 20:20-21; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-14)

13. Varieties of Tongues - There are three different aspects of the gift of tongues seen in scripture.
 - a. Known Language - The first is individuals empowered to speak in a known language that they do not know for the sake of effective ministry. (Acts 2:4-12; 10:46)

 - b. Unknown Language - The second is speaking a prophetic utterance to edify the body in an unknown language. This gift is only effective if there is an accompanying interpretation of tongues. This gift empowers an individual to supernaturally interpret an unknown language in order that the intended recipients can understand it and be edified. Sometimes the individuals that give the tongue are the same individuals empowered to interpret it, and sometimes it is another who interprets. (1 Cor. 14:2-19, 27-28)

 - c. Spirit Language - The third is speaking an unknown language over your own spirit to build yourself up in God. (1 Cor. 14:4-5, 15, 18; Eph. 5:19; Jde 1:20)

14. Interpretation of Tongues - I believe that the interpretation of tongues can be seen biblically as being used in two different ways, translation of an angelic tongue for the sake of prophetic edification, and interpretation of a known tongue for the sake of teaching, or evangelism. (Acts 2:4-6; 1 Cor. 14:21-22)

15. Faith - This gift of the Spirit is a feeling of supernatural belief or confidence to stir up intercession or ministry, and to believe God for unseen supernatural results in every arena of life. People who experience this gift seem to absolutely know what God wants to do in a given situation. (Acts. 3:4, 11:22-24, 14:9; Rom. 4:18-21; 1 Cor. 13:2)

16. Giving - The divine ability and heart to give finances and other resources for the purpose of advancing the Kingdom of God, and ministering to practical needs. Though this gift can manifest in the ability to produce wealth, it is mostly found in the ability to give it away . (Mark 12:41-44; Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7, 9:2-7 65)
17. Evangelistic - Has an ease and favor to engage individuals in conversations and ponderings of belief in Jesus. Strong focus on apologetics and the ability to cast down arguments of the carnal mind concerning Jesus. Unshakable burden to lead people to Jesus. (Acts 8:5-6, 8:26-40, 14:21, 21:8; Ephesians 4:11-14)
18. Word of Knowledge - Words of knowledge and prophetic words many times are blurred together to mean the same thing in charismatic culture. Scripturally, they are not the same. The word used for “prophecy” is used in the context of the knowledge of future events and circumstances and the word for “knowledge” is used in the context of current events and circumstances. Common examples of this are knowing that the Lord wants to minister to a certain topic or area in an individual or corporate way. It's also common to know unknown details of individuals' hearts and lives. Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:8; Colossians 2:2-3

III. Objective of Activation

- A. Our elder team has 3 objectives that they feel God has put on their hearts for this series on activating the gifts of the spirit.
 1. Understanding/Awareness of Gifts in General - As we cover these 18 gifts over the course of the next few months, we will give a brief overview of each gift addressing the common questions associated with it. We will also continue to strongly encourage and help individuals gain confidence and awareness of the gift/gifts they have been given.
 2. Understanding of how the Gifts Function Together - God arranges the gifts within the body perfectly; based upon need, sanctification, and advancement of His kingdom in the earth. This teaching series will be heavily focused on this aspect.

1. Need - The scriptures tell us of two types of need in the body through which He intentionally chooses to disperse gifts among us. Circumstantial or practical needs, and/or to bring revelation of the person of Christ. (Eph. 4:15-16; 1 Cor. 12:18-25)
 2. Sanctification - God will specifically arrange the gifts within the body in such a way that demands we prefer others over ourselves, and that demands the fruits of the spirit in order to function in unity.
 3. Kingdom - Jesus disperses His Holy Spirit among us that He might fill all things with Himself. We must see the reality of the giving of the gifts unto filling all things with Himself as a significant part of the fulfillment of great promises of salvation and restoration of all things. (Eph. 1:20-23, 4:7-16) (Num. 1-4 Moving into the Land)
3. Encouragement and Practical outlets for Activation - Lastly, during this series, our teaching team will be working with the elder team to encourage participation and activation of various ministry platforms within our Sunday services, lifegroups, and probably most importantly, in our everyday family, community, and marketplace lives.

IV. Resources and Lifegroups

- A. Teaching Series - Church Website (Fostering Spiritual Gifts; Church Leadership and the Five Fold Ministry; Gifts and Manifestations of the Holy Spirit; Women in Leadership; PHD (Prophecy, Healing, and Deliverance))
- B. Podcasts - Podcasts I recommend on Spiritual Gifts (Remnant Radio; Bible Thinker (Search Spiritual Gifts or Specific Gifts))
- C. Lifegroup Questions
 1. Go through the list of Spiritual Gifts and do q/a and general discussion based on the group's interest. Its ok if you dont have the answers we just want to stir up dialogue and have thoughts or questions in our minds for the series.
 2. How can your lifegroup be more intentional to see individuals in your group grow in their gifts for the benefit of the whole group.