

INTRODUCTION

1. We are in a series called *Christian Basics*.
2. And in our last time together we looked at prayer and Bible study.
3. In this 3rd message, we're going to take our first look at what the Greek called "Grace Gifts," which is the literal meaning of spiritual gifts.
4. Before we consider these grace gifts, there are a few things we must consider first.
5. We have said this past Sunday that God's Word commands us to be filled with the Spirit.
6. These are not my words but Paul's words as they are found in Ephesians 5:18.
7. When you consider those words and the effects that are associated with them you can't help but to see the same parallel found in Colossians chapter 3:16.
8. These two passages issue in the same results but with each command phrased differently.

9. One says to be filled with the Spirit while the other says to let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly.
10. The conclusion is simply this: Being filled with the Spirit is being controlled by the Word of God.
11. Now how does that work with *Spiritual Gifts*?
12. When you are controlled by the Word or filled with the Spirit you will then manifest the Spirit through supernatural gifts.
13. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 12:7 - “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.”
14. When these Spirit-given gifts are in operation they manifest the Holy Spirit who then causes the Body to be built up.
15. When the Body is built up then Christ is glorified.
16. Before we go further let me help you to understand two important truths about the church and the gifts that are manifested.

I. The Church is a Called Out Assembly

“Church” Gr.ekklesia, from ek, “out of,” and klesis, “a calling,” and kaleo, “to call.”

A. An Assembly of People

“The word” itself “does not indicate the nature of the called out group; it can be used in a technical sense of the NT church, or it can be used in a nontechnical sense of any kind of group” (Paul Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology*, p.347).

Acts 7:38 translates it “congregation” and Acts 19:32, 39 translates it “assembly.”

“In secular Greek literature it was used of town meetings, local gatherings of citizens called together by their rulers to hear official announcements or witness government ceremonies” (John MacArthur, *Matthew 16-23*, p.133).

In the LXX “it was used of the Israelites assembled for religious purposes. For them it

meant the assembled people of God” (D. Edmond Hiebert, The Thessalonian Epistles, p.38).

B. An Assembly of Believers

“It its every other occurrence, it is translated ‘church,’ the church being looked upon as a called out body of people, called out of the world of unsaved humanity to become the people of God” (Kenneth Wuest, Word Studies in the Greek NT, p.35).

1. We are the called of Jesus Christ

a) Called to be saints - Rom.1:7

“To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, *called to be saints.*”

b) Called according to His purpose - Rom8:28

“And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are *the called according to*

His purpose.”

- c) Called into the fellowship of His Son - 1 Cor.1:9

“God is faithful, by whom you were called *into the fellowship of His Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.*”

2. We also have been called out

- a) Of the world - Gal.1:3-4

“Grace to you and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.”

- b) Of from Satan - Eph.2:1-3

- c) Of sin - Rom.6:17-18

“But God be thanked that though you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from

the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness.”

II. The Church is the Body of Christ

A. Paul's Analogy of a Body (1 Cor.12:12-27)

1. The body is one (v.12)
2. The body has many members (vv.12, 14-16)
3. The body has a head (v.28)
4. The body has a function (v.28)

B. Paul's Analogy of the Body Applied to Christ

1. The body of Christ is one - Eph.4:4

“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling.”

2. The body of Christ has many members - 1 Cor.12:27

“Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.”

3. The body of Christ has a head - Col.1:18

“And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence.”

4. The body of Christ has a function

a) Romans 12:4-8

(1) “Prophecy” (v.6)

Gr.propheteia, from pro, “before,” and phemi, “to speak.” It means to “speak before.”

It has the literal meaning of speaking forth, with no connotation of prediction or other supernatural or mystical significance.

It is simply the gift of preaching, of proclaiming the Word of God.

(a) 1 Cor.14:3 - “But he who

prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.”

(b) 1 Pet.4:11 - “If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

(c) Acts 15:32 - “Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words.”

“The gift of prophecy is the gift of being God’s public spokesman, primarily to God’s own people—to instruct, admonish, warn, rebuke, correct, challenge, comfort, and encourage. God also uses His

prophets to reach unbelievers” (John MacArthur, Romans).

The gift of prophecy is the Spirit-given ability to “proclaim the written Word of God with clarity and to apply it to a particular situation with a view to correction or edification” (Leslie Flynn, The 19 Gifts of the Spirit).

(2) **“Ministry”** (v.7)

Gr.diakonia, This is “a very broad term meaning service for the Lord” (Believer’s Bible Commentary) or “service of any kind” (Barnes).

Specifically the word “refers to one who serves.” This is the activity of the servant.

“Service is a simple, straightforward gift that is broad in its application. It seems to carry a meaning similar to that of the gift of helps mentioned in

1 Corinthians 12:28, although a different Greek term (antilpsis) is used there. This gift certainly applies beyond the offices of deacon and deaconess and is the idea in Paul's charge to the Ephesian elders to "help the weak" (Acts 20:35). The gift of service is manifested in every sort of practical help that Christians can give one another in Jesus' name" (John MacArthur, Romans).

“The person who has the gift of ministry has a servant-heart. He sees opportunities to be of service and seizes them” (Believer’s Bible Commentary).

- (a) Lk.10:38-42
- (b) Acts 6
- (c) John 13
- (d) Mat.23:11 - “But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant.”

The gift of ministry is the Spirit-given ability to “joyfully and diligently serve other Christians in practical and supporting roles, often freeing others to minister their gifts” (Flynn).

(3) **“Teaching” (v.7)**

Gr.didasko, “The root word carries the idea of ‘systematic teaching or training’” (MacArthur).

(a) This was the activity of the early church (Acts 2:42)

(b) This is an important element in the Great Commission (Mat.28:19-20)

(c) The Apostle Paul had this gift

2 Tim.1:11, he says he was “appointed a preacher, an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.”

- (d) Barnabas had that gift and ministered it in Antioch beside Paul, where they were "teaching and preaching, with many others also, the word of the Lord" (Acts 15:35)..
- (e) Jesus, of course, was both the supreme Preacher and supreme Teacher. Even after His resurrection, He continued to teach. When He joined the two disciples on the road to Emmaus, "beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures.... And they said to one another, 'Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?' " (Luke 24:27, 32).
- (f) Regular, systematic teaching of

the Word of God is the primary function of the pastor-teacher. As an elder, he is required "to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2) and to hold "fast the faithful word which is in accordance with the teaching, that he may be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9). Above all, Paul entreated Timothy, "pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching" (1 Tim. 4:16). Pastors are not the only ones the Lord calls and empowers to teach. But if a pastor's ministry is to be judged, among other things, on the soundness of his teaching-as the passages just cited indicate-then it seems reasonable to assume that, in some measure, he should have the gift of teaching.

The gift of teaching is the Spirit-given ability to "explain clearly and

apply effectively the Word of God”
(Flynn).

(4) “Exhorting” (v.8)

Gr.parakalo, “to comfort, help,
advise, strengthen” (MacArthur).

This is also a broad term but is one
“which enables a believer to
effectively call others to obey and
follow God's truth (see note on v.
1). It may be used negatively to
admonish and correct regarding sin
(2 Tim. 4:2), or positively, to
encourage, comfort, and strengthen
struggling believers (cf. 2 Cor.
1:3-5; Heb. 10:24, 25)” (John
MacArthur, The MacArthur Study
Bible).

The gift of exhorting or exhortation
is the Spirit-given ability to “come
alongside to help, to strengthen the
weak, reassure the wavering,
buttress the buffeted, steady the

faltering, console the troubled, and encourage the halting” (Flynn).

(5) “Giving” (v.8)

Gr.metadidomi, “super-give”
(MacArthur)

(a) Mat.6:1-4

(b) Prov.22:9 - “He who has a generous eye will be blessed, for he gives of his bread to the poor.”

This gift denotes the sacrificial sharing and giving of one's resources and self to meet the needs of others.

The one who has this gift has the Spirit-given ability “to be sensitive to and to provide for the needs of the saints with great joy and generosity” (Swindoll).

(6) “Leading” (v.8)

Gr.proistemi, has the basic meaning of “standing before” and gives the idea of leadership.

“In the New Testament it is never used of governmental rulers but of headship in the family (1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12) and in the church (1 Tim. 5:17). In 1 Corinthians 12:28, Paul refers to the same gift by a different name, "administrations" (kubern?sis), which means "to guide." In Acts 27:11 and Revelation 18:17, it is used of a pilot or helmsman, the person who steers, or leads, a ship.

Although it is not limited to those offices, the gift of church leadership clearly belongs to elders, deacons, and deaconesses. It is significant that Paul makes no mention of leaders in his first letter to Corinth. Lack of a functioning leadership would help explain its serious moral and spiritual problems, which

certainly would have been exacerbated by that deficiency. "Free-for-all" democracy amounts to anarchy and is disastrous in any society, including the church. The absence of leaders results in everyone doing what is "right in his own eyes," as the Israelites did under the judges (Judg. 17:6; 21:25; cf. Deut. 12:8)" (John MacArthur, Romans).

The gift of leading is the Spirit-given ability "to preside, govern, plan, organize, and administer by example and service in humility with wisdom, confidence, efficiency and ease" (Flynn).

(7) "Showing mercy" (v.8)

Gr.eleon, it "carries the joint idea of actively demonstrating sympathy for someone else and of having the necessary resources to successfully comfort and strengthen that person"

(MacArthur).

- (a) This is one of the beatitudes Jesus mentions in **Matthew 5:7, “Blessed are the merciful; for they shall obtain mercy.”**
- (b) James makes reference to it 2 times in his letter (James 2:13; 3:17)
- (c) Probably the illustration that is most familiar is the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37

The Greek word *eleon*, as seen in Luke 10 “embraces loving-kindness, though pity is included” (Kittel).

Applying this to the church we would say that this is the Spirit-given ability “to sense needs and to manifest practical, compassionate, cheerful love toward suffering members of the Body of Christ”

(Flynn).

This is what is meant in **Romans 12:14** where Paul says, “**Rejoice with those who rejoice, and weep with those who weep.**”

- b) Paul makes several important points in 1 Corinthians 12:11, 28-30 concerning spiritual gifts
- (1) The Holy Spirit decides who has what gift (v.11)
 - (2) There are temporary and permanent gifts (v.28)
 - (3) Not everyone has the same gift (v.29)

Gene Getz said, “Paul described the church as being ‘many members’ yet ‘one body.’ However, ‘all the members’ did not ‘have the same function’ (Rom.12:4). All had gifts that differed ‘according to the grace given’ by Christ (12:6). One member of the body could

not say to the other, ‘I have no need of you’ (1 Cor.12:21). Since the church was ‘many members but one body’ (12:20), all members were to contribute to the growth of the body. Anything that interfered with the ‘functioning body’ interfered with the process of edification” (Sharpening the Focus of the Church, p.153).

CONCLUSION

1. The January 1992 Issue of Leadership Magazine had a good analogy of gifts in the body. Listen to what someone wrote:

“The following is a eulogy for Someone Else: ‘Our church is deeply saddened by the passing of an irreplaceable member, Someone Else. For all of these years he did far more than any other church member. Whenever leadership was mentioned, Someone Else was looked to for inspiration and achievement. Whenever there was a job to do, a class to teach, or a meeting to attend, everybody always turned to Somebody Else. It was common knowledge that Someone Else was among the largest contributors to the church. Whenever there was a financial need,

everyone just assumed that Someone Else would make up the difference. Although we are grieved by the loss of Someone Else, his death comes as no big surprise. He was far too overworked and continually stretched too thinly. In fact, we may have contributed to his death by expecting too much out of Someone Else. He left a wonderful example to follow, but it appears there is nobody willing to fill the shoes of Someone Else. I shudder to think what will now happen to our church since we can no longer depend on Someone Else” (Leadership, January 22, 1992, pp.7-8).

2. We are the church of Jesus Christ – called out of the world, Satan and sin.
3. We are the Body of Christ and individually members of one another.
4. How do you define the church? How do you see your gifts?
5. I would like to close with the following comments about the church written many years ago by someone I highly respect, John MacArthur. He said,

The church is “not an organization made up of programs, systems, and methods dedicated to attracting money and members to itself. It is a living organism...a body with a personality which is alive and breathing and feeling and acting, and yes, suffering and sorrowing and bleeding, and in constant need of healing and restoration...both individually and corporately, local and worldwide.

It is not buildings and offices, departments and programs, or hierarchies and positions dedicated to earthly display and self-glorification for the purpose of being accepted by the world. It is people, living and loving, learning and laboring, leading and following, together for the glory of Christ.

It is not another world institution dedicated to applying a balm of humanistic principles and solutions to man’s personal and social ills. It is an agitating force, a pricking conscience, a sword of opposition, and a stinging salt solution of conviction with the purpose of causing men and women caught up in Satan’s world system to be aware of their sin and their need of a Savior” (Leading the Flock, p.1).

6. We need to return to the basics!