

Message #42

**Romans 12:1-8; I Corinthians 12:1-4  
Ephesians 4:7-16; I Peter 4:7-11**

As we examine the material of spiritual gifts, it is clear that God does not want us to be ignorant (**I Cor. 12:1**); God does not want us to be arrogant (Rom. 12:3a); God DOES want us to be accurate (Rom. 12:3b).

**GOD EXPECTS US TO HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF THINGS THAT PERTAIN TO THE SPIRIT OF GOD AND HE EXPECTS US TO HAVE KNOWLEDGE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS.**

That is clearly the central theme of I Corinthians 12-14.

**QUESTION #1** – Where in the Bible do we find the subject of spiritual gifts?

The subject of spiritual gifts shows up in different places in Scripture, however, much of our understanding comes from four major N.T. passages, three written by the Apostle Paul and one written by the Apostle Peter:

1) Romans 12:1-8; 2) I Corinthians 12-14; 3) Ephesians 4:7-16; 4) I Peter 4:7-11.

**QUESTION #2** – What is a spiritual gift?

**Sub-question #1** - What isn't a spiritual gift?

(Misconception #1) - A spiritual gift IS NOT a spiritual office.

(Misconception #2) - A spiritual gift IS NOT a natural talent.

(Misconception #3) - A spiritual gift IS NOT a spiritual ministry.

(Misconception #4) - A spiritual gift IS NOT a spiritual opportunity.

**Sub-question #2** - What are the key words connected with spiritual gifts?

Before coming to an accurate definition of a spiritual gift, there are three key words we must grasp: 1) gift; 2) grace; and 3) strength. By and large, the first two words are used the most, but all three show up clearly in I Pet. 4:10-11 (also see Rom. 12:3, 6; Eph. 4:7).

The word “gift” refers to a free gift or endowment given by God.

The word “grace” refers to a gracious grant from God in which He bestows His gracious favor on someone.

The word “strength” refers to a special strength, power and ability given by God.

**Sub-question #3** - What is the definition of a spiritual gift?

Dr. Walter Elwell defines it: “Gifts of God enabling the Christian to perform his (sometimes specialized) service” (*Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*, p. 1042).

Dr. Paul Enns defines it: “The ‘grace gifts’ that are sovereignly given to believers by the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation as a special ability for service to God and to others, particularly believers” (*The Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 636).

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer defines it: “...a gift is a divine enablement wrought in and through the believer by the Spirit who indwells him. It is the Spirit working thereby to accomplish certain divine purposes and using the one whom He indwells to that end” (*Systematic Theology*, Vol. 5, p. 275).

Dr. Charles Ryrie defines it: “...a spiritual gift is a God-given ability for service” (*Basic Theology*, p. 367).

A spiritual gift is a divine grant of God in which He graciously gives supernatural spiritual ability to a believer, thus empowering and enabling the believer to accomplish supernatural spiritual things as the believer faithfully ministers for God and ministers to others.

**QUESTION #3** – Who gets a spiritual gift?

The Bible record is very clear that every believer receives a spiritual gift.

Romans 12:3 says gifts are given to “every man,” “to each.”

I Corinthians 12:11 says gifts are distributed to “each one individually.”

I Peter 4:10 says that “each one has received a special gift.”

**QUESTION #4** – Who determines which spiritual gift a person receives?

Every passage that deals with the subject of spiritual gifts explicitly emphasizes that it is the Triune God who determines what specific gift is given to a person.

Romans 12: 3 says, “God has allotted to each....”

I Corinthians 12:11 says the Spirit distributes gifts as “He wills.”

I Corinthians 12:18 says God placed each in the body as “He desired.”

I Corinthians 12:28 says God made the appointment of gifts “in the church.”

Ephesians 4:11 says Christ “gave” gifts to His body.

I Peter 4:11 says God supplies the “strength” for spiritual gifts.

**QUESTION #5** – When does God give the believer his spiritual gift?

As near as can be determined, a person actually receives his or her spiritual gift at the moment of salvation.

**QUESTION #6** – Why does God give spiritual gifts?

**Reason #1** - So that every believer might potentially accomplish God’s perfect will with his life. Rom. 12:2

**Reason #2** - So that every believer might develop and minister to others.  
I Cor. 12:5-7; Eph. 4:12; I Pet. 4:12

**Reason #3** - So that every believer will continually realize that we need each other.  
I Cor. 12:12, 14, 20, 25

**Reason #4** - So that every believer can accomplish powerful things for God. I Cor. 12:6

**Reason #5** - So that every believer can manifest the grace of God. I Pet. 4:10

**Reason #6** - So that every believer may glorify God. I Pet. 4:11

**QUESTION #7** – How can a believer discover his spiritual gift?

**Ingredient #1** - Be spiritual. Rom. 12:1-2

**Ingredient #2** - Be prayerful. James 4:2

**Ingredient #3** - Be informed. I Cor. 12:1

**Ingredient #4** - Be opportunistic.

**Ingredient #5** - Be active.

**Ingredient #6** - Be willing.

**Ingredient #7** - Be counseled.

**QUESTION #8** – How long does a person have his spiritual gift?

The believer is given the privilege of having a spiritual gift until he gets to glory and then he will be judged on how he used his gift (i.e. Eph. 4:14).

God wants to use you and the church body needs you. It is time to count for the glory of God.