



Systematic Theology

A study of the major doctrines of Scripture

TOPIC 6 – THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH
LESSON 106 – INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL GIFTS

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Charismatic Confusion

- ▶ Spiritual gifts, or *charismata* (gifts of grace) play a vital role in the life of the church as each member uses the gifts, they have been given to do their part in edifying the whole body.
- ▶ Few areas of doctrine are more controversial or confused in the church today, but we find this was also true even in the New Testament church as Paul devoted 3 chapters of 1 Corinthians wholly to a discussion of gifts, their uses and misuses.
- ▶ We have seen that Christ gives as gifts gifted men to equip the saints for service (Eph. 4:11-12), but the Holy Spirit also bestows upon every believer spiritual abilities to be used in building the body (Rom. 12:5-8; 1 Cor. 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

Charismatic Confusion

- ▶ God is the source of these gifts and abilities according to His sovereign prerogative.
- ▶ Every believer is obligated to find and use their gifts in ministry to one another.

Gifts of Grace

- ▶ These gifts (abilities given by the Holy Spirit) are gifts of grace – not earned, worked for, or deserved. It is God's favor shown to us making us fit for His body and kingdom.
- ▶ Gifts in the New Testament include salvation (Rom. 6:23), undeserved blessing (Rom. 1:11; 11:29), and divine enablements for ministry (Rom. 12:6; 1 Peter 4:10).
- ▶ These are gifts of grace, not learned, earned, or manufactured.

Gifts of Grace

- ▶ The gifts are also called pneumatikos (pertaining to the Spirit) in 1 Cor. 12:1, literally meaning spirituals or spiritualities.
- ▶ These are things with spiritual characteristics or under spiritual control and can be applied to people or to things.
- ▶ These then are things relating to the Holy Spirit, bestowed by Him and to be used under His control for the glory of Christ.

Diversity of Gifts

- ▶ Believers are uniquely gifted so that the diversity of their giftedness covers everything necessary to contribute to the unity of the body.
- ▶ 1 Corinthians 12:7-27 makes it clear that the body could not function if every member was the same and had similar functions.
- ▶ Believers then are to be faithful stewards of the gifts they are given (1 Peter 4:10).

Diversity of Gifts

- ▶ Spiritual gifts are not a sign of rank, maturity, or privilege and cannot be used for self-edification or to exert spiritual pride. We serve one another in the body selflessly and sacrificially following Christ's own example (Phil. 2:2-4) with humility (Rom. 12:3).
- ▶ If spiritual gifts are used to cause division or disruption in the body, then whatever is being exercised is not a genuine spiritual gift. That is not what they are for and not how they can be used (1 Cor. 14:40).

Listing the Gifts

- ▶ Romans 12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; 7 or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; 8 he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

Listing the Gifts

- ▶ 1 Corinthians 12:8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

Listing the Gifts

- ▶ 1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

Listing the Gifts

- ▶ 1 Corinthians 13:13 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.

Listing the Gifts

- ▶ 1 Corinthians 13:8 Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part.
- ▶ Ephesians 4:11 And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

Listing the Gifts

- ▶ 1 Peter 4:10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 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.

Listing the Gifts

- ▶ Romans 12:6-8 – prophecy, service, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, acts of mercy.
- ▶ 1 Cor. 12:8-10 – utterance of wisdom, utterance of knowledge, faith, gifts of healing, working miracles, prophecy, discerning spirits, speaking in tongues, interpreting tongues.
- ▶ 1 Cor. 12:28-30 – apostleship, prophets, teachers, miracle workers, healers, helpers, administrators, tongue speakers, tongue interpreters.

Listing the Gifts

- ▶ We can see in these lists that each list is a little different and so none are to be considered exhaustive.
- ▶ John Frame states that surely there are more spiritually enabled abilities that God gives for members of the body to serve and any gift of grace thus bestowed is to be considered a spiritual gift down to things like cooking, singing, and anything that assists in the purposes of serving the church. Were it not for God's grace and gifts we could do none of it!
- ▶ Typically, the lists are divided up into speaking gifts and serving gifts (1 Peter 4:11).
- ▶ The blending of abilities while engaging in ministry should discourage us from thinking of the gifts too narrowly or with rigid definitions.

Miraculous and Ministry Gifts

- ▶ Another way to categorize the gifts is into lists of miraculous gifts and ministering gifts. The miraculous signs are designed for affirmation of the message and messenger concerning the gospel and include the apostolic sign gifts (Heb. 2:3-4; 2 Cor. 12:12) and the revelatory gifts through which God gave His word to the church. These gifts are to be considered temporary being limited to the apostolic age.
- ▶ The ministering gifts, including both speaking and serving gifts (1 Peter 4:10-11), continue to be bestowed by the Holy Spirit in His church for the purpose of edification, growth, and witness.

Discovering Your Gifts

- ▶ The best way to discover one's spiritual giftedness is by engaging in ministry (service) according to one's God given desires, opportunities to serve, and the response of those served. Giftedness, like calling, comes with an inward desire and an outward confirmation.
- ▶ In serving one another, areas of giftedness gradually become apparent both to you and to others.