

Fall Semester, 2003
Spiritual Gifts Class, Session #5
Topic: “The Lists of the Gifts” Part 1
Instructor: Dr. Marc A. Graham
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Romans 12:3-8

Prophecy
Service
Teaching
Encouragement
Giving
Leadership
Mercy

1 Cor. 12:8-10,28-30

Message of Wisdom
Word of Knowledge
Faith
Healing
Miracles
Prophecy
Discernment
Tongues (Languages)
Interpretation of Tongues
Apostleship
Teaching
Service/Helps
Administration

Eph. 4:11

Apostleship
Prophecy
Evangelist
Pastor/Teacher

I. AS WE EXAMINE THESE LISTS, NOTE THAT THERE ARE TWO TYPES OF GIFTS.

A. Miracles:

1. By this I mean that there are gifts that involve God giving to an the ability to perform miracles.
 - a. Examples of this would be tongues, interpretation, healing.

B. Ministry gifts:

1. By this I mean that these gifts focus on enabling and empowering a person to perform functions and tasks that minister to the Body and through which the Spirit builds up the Body
 - a. Examples of these would be prophecy, mercy, service/helps, administration, encouragement, giving, etc.

- C. We will focus our attention on the Ministry category over the next two weeks and reserve our discussion on the Miracles category for the period of time that we discuss the Charismatic controversy.

II. EXAMING SPECIFIC GIFTS. (Beginning with the list in Romans 12).

A. Prophecy: This particular gift is the most prominently mentioned of all the gifts in the lists, particularly in 1 Corinthians 14. Only the gift of Tongues rivals Prophecy in the attention given to it in the pertinent texts.

- a. *Propheteia* has the literal meaning of “speaking forth” with no connotation of prediction of the future or any other mystical significance. The gift of Prophecy is simply being spiritually empowered to proclaim the Word of God.
- b. God used many Old and New Testament Prophets to predict the future, but that was never an indispensable part of their ministry. What made them Prophets of God was their commission to say what God had told them to say. Sometimes this involved predictions. Most of the time it involved preaching against the sins of the people and declaring God’s sanctions against them.
- c. The gift of Prophecy, then, is the gift of being God’s public spokesman ---usually to His own people---admonishing, warning, instructing, rebuking, consoling and encouraging. John Calvin said that by prophesying, he understood not the gift of foretelling the future, but of interpreting Scripture, so that a Prophet is an interpreter of the will of God.
- d. Romans 12:6: “If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.” The phrase seems to indicate that Paul is saying that all proclamation (prophesying) must conform to the revealed Gospel. The phrase might be translated that the prophet is to prophesy “according to the standard of the faith” (the term faith referring to the whole content of the Apostles’ doctrine/ Scripture---see Jude 3 for this particular usage of the word).

B. Service: This is a general term for practical “ministry.”

- a. *Diakonia* is the word chosen by the Holy Spirit here in Romans 12:7. It is the greek term from which we get the word “Deacon.” The gift manifests every sort of practical help that one Christian can give to another in Jesus’ name. It is similar to the gift of helping in 1 Corinthians 12:28, though a different greek word is used there.

C. Teaching: This is a special ability to interpret and present God’s truth understandably.

- a. *Didasko* is the greek word used in Romans 12:7. It can refer to both the act of teaching and to what is taught. Both are appropriate to the gift. It can apply to a teach in a seminary, college, Sunday School,

Bible club, or any place where God's truth is taught.

- b. Clearly this is a gift critical to the life of the church. The Great Commission itself (Matt. 28:18-20) embodies a command to "teach them all things that I have commanded you." Throughout the New Testament the saints went through the world teaching the Word of God.
- c. With this gift and the gift of Prophecy comes great accountability. For there are dire warnings throughout the Scriptures against false prophecy/teaching (see James 3:1).

D. Encouragement: This gift embodies the idea of urging, pleading, warning, advising, encouraging, admonishing, strengthening, comforting. At one point this gift may be used to exhort someone to turn away from their sin. At another time it may be used to encourage someone in righteous behavior.

- a. *Parakaleo* is the greek word here in Romans 12:8. It is a compound verb, *para* (alongside) + *kaleo* (to call out). Thus, the word means "one who is called to come alongside." The Holy Spirit is called the "Paraclete" (*parakletos*) in John 14:16-17, the "Comforter," the "Counselor," literally "the One who is called to come alongside and bring help to us."
- b. This word can also be translated "exhorting." It is important to see that the chief function of the gift of Encouragement is not "making people feel good." Rather, it is calling upon, encouraging Christians to follow the Word of God and live consistently with God's revealed will. A part of that will be consoling people in the midst of the struggle and urging them to stay steady in following Jesus. It will also involve bringing comfort to one who is struggling, with the goal of helping them persevere in their walk with the Lord and not give up in the midst of the trial.

E. Giving: This gift involves sharing, imparting sacrificially that which is one's own to help the needs of others. A person with this gift is quick to respond to others material and physical needs, even at great personal cost and inconvenience.

- a. *Metadidomai* is the greek word in Romans 12:8 (contributing). The usual word used for "giving" is *didomai*. Putting *meta* on the front intensifies the word.
- b. *Haplotes* is the greek word translated "generously." It means that the giving is to be heartfelt, sincere, without ulterior motive or strings attached. The Christian who gives generously gives *of* himself not *for* himself.

c. The contrast can be seen in comparing Barnabas, the Son of Consolation (Acts 4:34-37) with the insincere giving of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-10).

F. Leadership: Although not limited to these offices, the gift of Leadership clearly belongs to Elders and Deacons. It is interesting that Paul makes no mention of functioning leaders in 1 Corinthians. Lack of functioning leadership would go a long way toward explaining the serious moral and doctrinal problems in the Corinthian church.

a. *Poistemi* is the greek word used here and means “one who stands before or in front of.” In the New Testament it is never used of governmental leaders, but of headship in the family and in the church. The word was also used of a “pilot” or “helmsman,” one who steers a ship.

b. Effective leadership must be one with “diligence,” which is the greek word *spoude*. This word also includes the idea of “haste.” Thus, effective leadership is not marked by procrastination or idleness.

c. Without a doubt, Pastor Rowe embodies one who clearly has the spiritual gift of leadership. Consider that God has taken our Pastor, a man from very humble and impoverished background, and used him to accomplish some pretty extraordinary things.

G. Mercy: This is a person divinely endowed with a special sensitivity to suffering and sorrow. They will often spot needs that will go unnoticed by others, with the desire and means to help alleviate such afflictions. This gift involves much more than sympathetic feeling. It is sympathy put into action. The Christian with this gift always finds a practical way to express his/her feelings of concern.

a. *Eleeo* is the greek word here. It carries with it both the idea of having feelings of concern and sympathy and having the resources to address that need and bring comfort. A good New Testament example of this total package is the Good Samaritan (see Luke 10:25-37).

b. Mary Mohrbach is an example of one in our church who may well have the gift of mercy in her ministry to the Homeless. She not only has feelings of compassion for this group, but has involved herself in an extensive commitment of time and often her own resources to try to bring comfort to this group of people.

