

STEWARDSHIP OF GIFTS

SCRIPTURES: Genesis 39
Luke 16:1-13
1 Corinthians 12—Read and make at least five personal applications.

MEMORIZE: 1 Peter 4:10

The subject of gifts of the Spirit is perhaps one of the richest areas of study to give us a clear understanding of the meaning of our relationships within the body of Christ. Each member of the human body has a specific function and, in a healthy body, contributes to the proper functioning of the whole body. Just so, every Christian has a specific function in the church and should contribute to its growth and well being.

As in any area relating to the Holy Spirit, there is much distortion, fanaticism and heresy regarding gifts. One must be careful to get a biblical balance. It is easy to be swept into extremes. A text taken in isolation from its context and isolated from the rest of Scripture on the subject, can be made to support non-biblical views. This lesson will not discuss the controversy over tongues, healing, miracles and prophecy. Those issues are dealt with in the lessons on 1 Corinthians 12-14. The purpose here is to present a positive context.

God's plan for you is very much determined by the way He has equipped you to serve Him in the local church. A wrong concept will result in a power play for recognition and status if gifts become a means of self-aggrandizement. A proper view will result in the smooth functioning of the church. The answer? We must all be satisfied to carry out the task for which God has equipped us.

1. Compare the stewardship of Joseph in Genesis 39 and the unrighteous steward in Luke 16:1-13 in reference to the use of gifts.

DISTRIBUTION OF GIFTS

2. How is it determined what spiritual gift(s) you will receive?
1 Corinthians 12:11
3. How does prayer enter into the distribution of gifts?
4. When do we receive our gift(s)? 1 Corinthians 12:11-13

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5. How does the illustration of the human body relate to spiritual gifts?
1 Corinthians 12:12-18

6. How does our placement in the Body of Christ relate to spiritual gifts?
1 Corinthians 12:18

7. What conclusion about gifts would you draw from 1 Corinthians 12:4-6?

8. How should the truth about gifts affect your attitude toward yourself positively and negatively? Romans 12:3

9. Does any Christian have all the gifts of the Spirit? 1 Corinthians 12:28-30

10. Is there any one gift of the Spirit that is given to all Christians?
1 Corinthians 12:28-30

PURPOSE OF GIFTS

11. Why have we been given spiritual gifts?
1 Corinthians 12:7

1 Corinthians 14:12

1 Peter 4:10

Ephesians 4:11-16

12. What are your stewardship responsibilities in the light of the texts above?

13. Relate God's purpose for you in salvation to the good works mentioned in Ephesians 2:10.

14. Draw at least five principles from 1 Corinthians 12:19-27 that help you understand the unity of the body.

GOD'S ENABLING

Many Christians feel inadequate for the task to which God has called them. They speak of themselves disparagingly, refusing to recognize their gifts and believing that they have no abilities in the gifted area. This is illogical.

15. Identify the means of God's enabling in each of the texts below:

Romans 12:3

Romans 12:6

Ephesians 4:7

1 Thessalonians 5:24

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16. With these verses as a basis, write a paragraph, presenting the proper biblical view.

Many ask, "How can I identify my spiritual gift(s)?" First of all, it must be stated that the emphasis on knowing your gifts has become distorted. The first thing of importance, is to develop your spiritual walk with the Lord. As you are filled with the Spirit, walk in the Spirit and are led by the Spirit, your spiritual gifts will become apparent.

You will become interested in certain areas of service. As you have opportunity to minister in these areas, you will find that you enjoy them, that you are somewhat successful in doing them, and that other, more mature Christians recognize your abilities in those same areas.

17. In what ways will you identify your gifts?
18. Develop a list of gifts from 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 12:28-30; Romans 12:6-8 and Ephesians 4:11.
19. Excluding apostles, prophets and miraculous sign gifts (tongues, healings, miracles, knowledge, etc.), can you identify your gift(s) of the Spirit? Use the four tests above to substantiate your answer.