

UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

“Just As He Wills”

Scripture Reading: 1CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

-) **SLIDES 1-6**. Bible Jeopardy!
-) **SLIDE 7-10**. Read today’s Scripture text.
-) **SLIDE 11**. Today I want to revisit a sermon series I spoke several years ago. And this series will be on Spiritual gifts. I have titled this series “*Understanding Spiritual Gifts*” and I have titled today’s message “*Just As He Wills*” (v11).
-) I am revisiting this series for two reasons. 1) So we can properly understand the reason Spiritual gifts exist and God’s purpose behind them. And 2) there’s a lot of really bad doctrine floating around out there today. And the church (global) is presently being plagued with a serious misuse of certain Spiritual gifts.
-) Churches on every corner, in every county and city, in every state and nation are falling for the misuse of Spiritual gifts. And this now includes many of the mainline denominations.
-) In a few weeks we will focus on 3 gifts in particular that are being misinterpreted and therefore seriously misused. But for today, I just want to lay a very important foundation concerning spiritual gifts. We must understand the reason they exist and God’s purpose over the ages behind them.
-) To launch this series I want to give an analogy that will help lay the foundation on this important topic.
-) Between the years of 2007 through January of 2018, I worked 40 hours a week at McClung Companies in Waynesboro. I worked in their shipping department packing and shipping boxes 8 hours a day.

-) Since the management of my company wanted me to be effective and efficient at my job, they provided me with the necessary tools of the trade.
-) The 4 main tools I used every day were 1) my box cutter, 2) my tape gun, 3) my pallet jack, and 4) my computer and printers. Without these items, the job would not get done.
-) My company made sure I was properly equipped to do my job. Why? The better I do my job 1) the better they look in the community and 2) the better they can serve their customers.
-) Of course I brought some of my own expertise into the job such as my organizational skills (OCD) and computer knowledge that also helped my job go better—and all for the benefit of my company and our customers.
-) So there are some talents I brought to the table and some tools (gifts) my company gave me to use. When all these things were used correctly everybody wins.
-) The analogy? God wants our walk as Christians to be effective and efficient too. To do that there are tools we need to have. We call these tools Spiritual gifts.
-) **SLIDE 12.** What is a gift? Webster. *“Something voluntarily transferred by one person to another without compensation.”*
-) A gift is something that someone else gives you. And a gift is always what? Free. If it is not free, it is no longer a gift. It is a wage. If I have to earn it, it is no longer a gift. It is a wage.
-) **SLIDE 13.** Knowing this is critical. They are not earned. They are not learned. They cannot be bought. They cannot be taught. They are gifts! Repeat. If I can earn it or if I can learn it or if I can buy it or if I can teach it then it's not a gift.
-) In ACTS 8:9-25 there is an interesting story of a man named Simon who was practicing magic. They called him Simon the Sorcerer. Peter and John perform a miracle in his presence.

-) **SLIDE 14.** When Simon sees this miracle, he wants to buy this power. ACTS 8:18-19.
-) **SLIDE 15.** Peter's response to Simon. ACTS 8:20-23.
-) The apostles had a God-given gift and Simon wanted that gift so bad he was willing to pay for it. News flash. God's gifts cannot be sold nor can they be bought. Again, it is critical we understand that spiritual gifts are just that—gifts!
-) **SLIDE 16.** There are primarily 2 places in Scripture where one can find a listing of these gifts in various forms. One is 1CORINTHIANS 12:8-10,28 and the other is ROMANS 12:3-8. We will look primarily at 1CORINTHIANS this morning to help answer some basic questions about Spiritual gifts.
-) The first thing I must point out is that there are abilities we all have. Some call these abilities natural talents and some call them skills. In the vernacular we may say that person has a "*knack*" for doing that. In my analogy earlier I said I brought computer knowledge and organizational skills to my job.
-) But these natural talents are not Spiritual gifts. Even though our natural talents can be used in some way for the benefit of God's kingdom, they still, nonetheless, are not Spiritual gifts.
-) Turn to 1CORINTHIANS 12. We are going to use some verses from this chapter to answer some very important questions.
-) **SLIDE 17.** Who receives these Spiritual gifts? Who is the apostle Paul writing this letter to? The believers at the church in Corinth. 1 COR 12:1.
-) **SLIDE 18.** Only **BELIEVERS** receive Spiritual gifts.
-) Granted we may know of unbelievers who are great teachers and unbelievers who can be very encouraging. Many people possess such qualities. More about this next week (purpose).
-) **SLIDE 19.** How does a believer receive a Spiritual gifts? 1COR 12:11.

-) **SLIDE 20.** The **HOLY SPIRIT** distributes Spiritual gifts. Remember. They are not earned. They are not learned. They cannot be bought. They cannot be taught. They are gifts!
-) **SLIDE 21.** What gift or gifts does the believer receive? 1COR 12:11.
-) **SLIDE 22.** The Holy Spirit **WILLS** what gifts we receive. The NIV uses the word “*determines.*” They are not earned. They are not learned. They cannot be bought. They cannot be taught. They are gifts!
-) Every believer has at least one Spiritual gift. There’s a saying I learned early in my Christian walk that says, “*God doesn’t call the equipped; He equips the called.*” He gives you what you need for your situation. And everybody’s situation is different.
-) Here’s a very common question I hear. How do I know what Spiritual gift or gifts I have? Here are 3 possible answers.
-) One way is there is a test of about 100 questions you can take. Depending on how honestly you answer the questions the test will show you where your strengths and weaknesses are.
-) A second and better way is what gifts others see in you. Quite often we do not recognize the gift in ourselves but others do. There are people sitting in here this morning that I know one has the gift of giving, one has the gift of helping others, one has the gift of encouragement, and the fourth has the gift of serving. I won’t tell you who they because you probably already know. I am certainly glad these individuals are using their gifts here at Beech Grove Church.
-) **SLIDE 23.** The third and best way is how you respond when you use your gift. When we use our Spiritual gifts with the right intentions, they will never be a **BURDEN** to us or others.
-) **SLIDE 24.** EPHESIANS 2:10. If the Spirit of God is truly behind our gift(s), then it will be in His power that we do them with the right intentions.

-) **SLIDE 25.** There are some people who want to be everything to everybody. I can appreciate their determination, but they believe they have ever Spiritual gift available. That, my friends, is not Biblical. 1COR 12:14.
-) **SLIDE 26.** No one person has **ALL** the gifts. When a person tries to exemplify all the gifts, I guarantee they will be really bad at one or more of them because that's what happens when you try to use a gift you do not have. In that case, you are trying to do God's work under your own power.
-) Use example of my gift of administration (1COR 12:28).
-) The company I worked for, McClung Companies, gave me the right tools to get my job done well for the benefit of my company and our customers. Likewise the Holy Spirit gave all believers the right tools in the form of Spiritual gifts to get our job as believers done well—effectively and efficiently.
-) **SLIDE 27.** Spiritual gifts. They are not earned. They are not learned. They cannot be bought. They cannot be taught. They are gifts!
-) Well that's all we will cover today. Next Sunday we will look at God's purpose for us receiving these spiritual gifts.

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