



# FAITHFUL IN MINISTRY

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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# Faithful in Ministry

**SERMON REFERENCE:** Ephesians 4:7

**LWF SERMON NUMBER:** #1838

When God saved us by His grace, He gave each of us spiritual gifts. However, many of us do not understand how to use them. In order to be faithful in ministry, we must identify and develop our spiritual gifts.

Ephesians 4:7 says, “But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift.”

Spiritual gifts are God-given abilities for service and ministry. We do not choose our spiritual gifts; as our natural talents are embedded in us at birth, our spiritual gifts come at our new birth.

There are several spiritual gifts identified in the New Testament, such as wisdom, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, and discerning of spirits. Other gifts include speaking in tongues, acts of service, ministry, exhortation, teaching, giving, ruling, and mercy.

Ephesians 4:11-12 says, “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...”

There are five ways we can know our individual spiritual gifts:

1. **Desire:** We consider what we enjoy doing—what do we feel we naturally do well?
2. **Discovery:** We discover our gift as we endeavor to do it.
3. **Development:** Though they come naturally, our gifts must be crafted and studied.
4. **Dependence:** Our gifts must operate in the power of the Holy Spirit.
5. **Deployment:** We understand how our gifts operate as we work alongside other believers.

Finally, our gifts are displayed as we mature in our ministry.

Ephesians 4:13 says, “...till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...”

Adrian Rogers says, “You can tell when the gifts are working in a church when the church becomes like the Lord Jesus Christ.”

When the gifts are working, we will not be blown about by every wind of doctrine. Instead, we will learn how to speak truth in love and find that all of our gifts work together in flexible harmony.

## Life Application

It’s important to know our spiritual gifts and to discover and develop them, so that God may be glorified as we serve the Church.



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## 1) INTRODUCTION

- a) When the Lord Jesus ascended into Heaven, He left us an incredible giftedness.
  - i) It may be that you have not yet discovered what you have in the Lord Jesus.
  - ii) Could it be that you have left your spiritual gift under the tree, unwrapped and unopened and, therefore, unappreciated?
- b) When God saved you by His grace, He did not save you to sit, soak and sour; God saved you to serve.
- c) We are saved by grace, and we serve by grace.
  - i) As a child of God, you are a gifted child.
- d) Ephesians 4:7
  - i) The word “everyone” refers to every child of God.
    - (1) God has given to you a spiritual gift.
  - ii) The Greek word for “grace” is the word from which we get our word “charismatic”.
    - (1) You have a charismatic gift.
    - (2) “Charismatic” means “a person who has been gifted by grace”.
- e) Ephesians 4:8-16
  - i) When Christ ascended into Heaven, He did not leave us helpless, but rather equipped us to do what we need to do.
  - ii) If you are saved, you are a saint.
    - (1) And if you are a saved person, you are in the ministry.
  - iii) “Perfect” in verse 13 can be translated “mature”.
- f) Today’s message will focus on how we can discover, develop and deploy our spiritual gifts and minister in the body of Christ.

## 2) THE GIFT DELIVERED (EPHESIANS 4:7)

- a) Ephesians 4:7
- b) God has given every believer a grace gift, so do not insult God by saying that He cannot use you.
  - i) The grace that saved you is the grace that enables you.
  - ii) In the church, there can be no spiritual inferiority or superiority.
  - iii) We are what we are by the gift of God.
- c) A charismatic gift (a grace gift) is a God-given spiritual ability for service and ministry.
  - i) It goes beyond natural talent.
    - (1) Talent is natural.
    - (2) Spiritual gifts are supernatural.
      - (a) They are supernatural in source.
      - (b) They are supernatural in nature.
      - (c) They are supernatural in purpose.



- ii) You do not choose your spiritual gift any more than you can choose your natural gifts.
  - (1) You get your natural talents genetically by your first birth.
  - (2) Your spiritual gift is given to you at your new birth.
- d) Your spiritual gift is the gift of your ascended Lord.
  - i) Ephesians 4:8-10
    - (1) The Lord Jesus descended to this Earth, lived a perfect life, suffered, bled and died upon the cross.
    - (2) He was buried and rose again.
    - (3) When Jesus Christ died upon the cross for us and purchased our salvation with His blood, at the same time He defeated Satan.
      - (a) Satan's kingdom was crushed by Calvary.
      - (b) By His death, burial, resurrection and ascension, the Lord Jesus led captivity captive.
        - (i) Satan had taken the world captive, but Jesus took Satan captive.
    - (4) In this passage, Paul is speaking of a Roman Triumph.
      - (a) When a Roman general would return to Rome after winning a battle, the city would have a parade called "The Triumph".
      - (b) The Roman general would be riding upon his white horse.
      - (c) Following behind the Roman general would be the conquered kings and generals.
        - (i) They would have been stripped naked and chained to the conquering general's chariot wheels.
      - (d) The people would be praising the conquering general and mocking those who were stripped, shamed and subdued.
      - (e) Behind all of them would come the servants, bearing all of the spoils of the battle and the riches that had been conquered.
        - (i) The spoils were brought back to Rome to be given to the people of Rome.
  - ii) The Lord Jesus ascended up on high.
  - iii) Satan's kingdom is ruined.
  - iv) The spoils of the battle are given to us.
    - (1) That is our grace gift to serve our great King.
      - (a) It is a spiritual gift from our conqueror, the Lord Jesus Christ.

### 3) THE GIFT DESCRIBED (1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-10, ROMANS 12:6-8)

- a) 1 Corinthians 12:4-7
  - i) It is the Holy Spirit who gives different gifts to the church.
  - ii) God has given you a spiritual gift, not for your enjoyment but for your employment.
    - (1) Your spiritual gift is to bless the church, not to bless you.
- b) The gift of wisdom
  - i) 1 Corinthians 12:8
  - ii) Wisdom is supernatural insight into the mind of God.
  - iii) This is not common sense; it is uncommon sense.
    - (1) To be able to see life from God's perspective and to bring the wisdom of God into any perspective.
  - iv) People who have a word of wisdom make wonderful counselors.



- c) The gift of knowledge
  - i) 1 Corinthians 12:8
  - ii) This differs from wisdom in that it is the supernatural ability to know and apply the things of God.
  - iii) Knowledge puts wisdom into practical use.
  - iv) Some have the gifts of wisdom and knowledge combined, and they make wonderful leaders and counselors.
- d) The gift of faith
  - i) All people have ordinary faith
  - ii) 1 Corinthians 12:9
  - iii) All believers have faith.
    - (1) We cannot be saved without faith.
  - iv) Some people, though, have a supernatural gift of faith.
    - (1) It is mountain-moving faith.
      - (a) 1 Corinthians 13:2
      - (2) These are visionaries and pioneers.
        - (a) They are able to think big and to believe God for the big things.
- e) The gifts of healings
  - i) 1 Corinthians 12:9
    - (1) In the Greek, it is literally plural, “gifts of healings”.
  - ii) These healings may be for the body, soul and the mind.
    - (1) Physical healing, psychological healing, and spiritual healing.
- f) The gift of miracles
  - i) 1 Corinthians 12:10
  - ii) The age of miracles is not past.
  - iii) There are individuals who have the power to work miracles.
    - (1) We must also remember, however, that Satan has miraculous power, so we need to be careful.
    - (2) The gifts of healing generally came in clusters in the Bible.
      - (a) They were not normal in everyday Bible life.
        - (i) But we cannot deny that God is a God of might and miracle.
- g) The gift of prophecy
  - i) 1 Corinthians 12:10
  - ii) The word “prophecy” means “the ability to foretell and forth tell”.
    - (1) Primarily not to foretell the future, but to tell forth the will of God in a particular matter.
  - iii) 1 Corinthians 14:3
    - (1) Edification means to build people up.
    - (2) Exhortation means to encourage, to exhort and to cheer.
    - (3) Comfort means to hold up and to shore up people.
  - iv) A prophet is someone who builds up and shores up the people of God.
  - v) Every church ought to pray that God will give prophets to the church; spokesmen who can speak God’s Word.
- h) The gift of discerning of spirits



- i) 1 Corinthians 12:10
- ii) 1 John 4:1
- iii) There is much spiritual wickedness, as well as spiritual righteousness, in the world today.
  - (1) We need the Holy Spirit to be able to discern the spirits.
- i) The gift of tongues
  - i) 1 Corinthians 12:10
    - (1) The word “tongues” here means “languages”.
  - ii) This is the ability to praise God in a language that you have never learned in school.
  - iii) Tongues are not a sign to God’s people but to unbelievers.
  - iv) Tongues are not primarily a private prayer language, but they are a tool for witnessing, primarily, to unsaved Jews.
  - v) If God gives someone the gift of tongues, then He also gives someone else the gift of interpretation so that all can understand what is being said.
- j) The gift of interpretation
  - i) 1 Corinthians 12:10
  - ii) When someone is praising God in a language they have never learned, then there must be someone present with the gift of interpretation in order to interpret what is being said to everyone else present.
    - (1) For instance, if an English-speaking minister is talking to an audience of English speaking and Russian speaking attendants and the minister begins praising God in Russian (though he has never learned Russian), the unsaved Russians (specifically those who are Jewish) in attendance will see the power of God.
    - (2) A person with the gift of interpretation will interpret in English what is being said so that nobody is in the dark.
    - (3) 1 Corinthians 12:7
  - iii) No one is to come into a service and not understand what is being said.
    - (1) Everyone is to understand the Word of God.
- k) The gift of ministry
  - i) Romans 12:6-7
  - ii) Ministry is acts of service.
    - (1) This includes general church work.
      - (a) Church ushers, secretaries, those who work in the nursery, etc.
        - (i) Matthew 10:42
- l) The gift of teaching
  - i) Romans 12:7
  - ii) Those who have been taught, anointed and gifted of God to teach the Bible have the spiritual gift of teaching.
  - iii) Those with the gift of teaching may not necessarily teach in a class.
    - (1) They may be parents who are anointed by God supernaturally to teach their children.
- m) The gift of exhortation
  - i) Romans 12:8
  - ii) Musicians who not only have vocal ability but also the ability to move the hearts of others often have the gift of exhortation.



- iii) People who go out on visitations and who give counseling that encourages others often have this gift.
- iv) Those with this gift have the ability to cheer people on.
- n) The gift of giving
  - i) Romans 12:8
  - ii) This is the supernatural ability to make and to give money sacrificially and wisely.
- o) The gift of ruling
  - i) Romans 12:8
  - ii) Those on a church staff or who head committees or who are in a place of leadership may have the gift of ruling.
- p) The gift of mercy
  - i) Romans 12:8
  - ii) Those with the gift of mercy are the ones who do hospital visitations, work in benevolence, and who counsel others.

#### 4) THE GIFT DEVELOPED (EPHESIANS 4:11-12)

- a) Ephesians 4:11-12
  - i) Edifying is the building up, the developing of the body of Christ.
- b) Not only does God give to each of us spiritual gifts, but He also gives to the church spiritual leaders.
  - i) Apostles and prophets
    - (1) Ephesians 4:11
    - (2) There were twelve apostles and the prophets who wrote the Old Testament.
      - (a) The church is built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets.
      - (b) Ephesians 2:20
    - (3) We don't have apostles and prophets today, but pastors and ministers can preach with the authority of a prophet and apostle if they preach what the apostles and prophets preached.
  - ii) Evangelists
    - (1) Ephesians 4:11
    - (2) These are the soul winners who bring people into the body to help the body to grow.
  - iii) Pastors and teachers
    - (1) Ephesians 4:11
      - (a) This is not pastors and then teachers, but pastor/teacher.
        - (i) It is grouped together in the Greek language.
      - (2) The job of a pastor/teacher is to guide and feed the flock.
      - (3) God gives the church a pastor/teacher, not to do the work of the ministry, but to help the people to do the work of the ministry.
        - (a) Ephesians 4:11-12
        - (b) The job of the pastor/teacher is to help us to be mature so that we can find our spiritual gift and put that spiritual gift to work.





- c) God has a ministry for each of us.
  - i) He has a job for you.
  - ii) We are to serve the Lord Jesus in our churches.
  - iii) We have been called into the ministry.
  - iv) 1 Corinthians 12:18
- d) Here are five principles to help you know your spiritual gift:
  - i) The principle of desire
    - (1) What do you enjoy doing?
    - (2) What do you do naturally?
    - (3) What do you feel that you do well?
  - ii) The principle of discovery
    - (1) You will discover your gift as you endeavor to do it.
    - (2) You may hear others compliment you in that area.
  - iii) The principle of development
    - (1) 2 Timothy 2:15
    - (2) You have to develop your spiritual gift; study and work.
  - iv) The principle of dependence
    - (1) Your spiritual gift must operate in the power of the Holy Spirit.
    - (2) Your gifts are supernatural, and they operate with supernatural power.
    - (3) Depend upon the Holy Spirit of God.
  - v) The principle of deployment
    - (1) Put it to work.
      - (a) Go to work with other saints.
    - (2) You understand your gift in the body of Christ, in the church.
    - (3) It is in the fellowship of the church that you will discover your place in the body.

## 5) THE GIFT DISPLAYED (EPHESIANS 4:13)

- a) Ephesians 4:13
  - i) God has given us gifts.
  - ii) When these gifts work together, then the body matures and becomes like its head, the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - (1) We are to be mature.
  - iii) The word “perfect” in this verse means “mature”.
- b) There are certain ways in which we are going to be mature:
  - i) Mature in stature
    - (1) Ephesians 4:13
    - (2) This means that we will be like the Lord Jesus Christ.
    - (3) When the gifts are working in a church, then the church becomes like the Lord Jesus Christ.
      - (a) When the gifts are operating, we become more and more like the Lord Jesus.
  - ii) Mature in stability
    - (1) Ephesians 4:14



- (a) False cults corrupt and deceive people who are immature, who do not have the measure of the stature of Christ.
    - (b) People who are immature get blown about by every wind of doctrine.
  - (2) When the body is healthy and the gifts are operating, we become mature in stature and in stability.
    - (a) We are not blown about by every wind of doctrine.
- iii) Mature in speech
  - (1) Ephesians 4:15
  - (2) We are to speak the truth in love.
    - (a) To speak the truth without love is brutality.
    - (b) To speak in love without truth is hypocrisy.
    - (c) Immature people cannot blend the two.
      - (i) Truthless love and loveless truth are signs of immature people.
- iv) Mature in service
  - (1) Ephesians 4:16
    - (a) This speaks of flexible harmony.
  - (2) A physical body is connected by joints and works together because of the joints.
    - (a) It works the same in the spiritual body.
      - (i) Every member has a ministry, and we're held together by all of these joints.
      - (b) Rather than having flexibility, an unhealthy body gets rigid and firm.
      - (c) In a healthy body, all of the joints work together in harmony.
        - (i) The Greek word for "joint" is the word from which we get our word "harmony".
  - (3) When we love one another, then we don't inflame one another; hence, we don't get stiff and rigid.
  - (4) We serve one another, and the body works together.

## 6) CONCLUSION

- a) If you are part of the body of Christ, then you are a gifted child.
  - i) Find out what God wants you to do and get busy doing it.
  - ii) When you serve the Lord, it brings joy.
- b) You must be saved by grace before you can serve by grace.
  - i) You need to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior.
- c) If you've never truly been saved, you can be today.
- d) Pray to the Lord Jesus and ask Him to come into your life.
- e) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
  - i) Romans 3:23
  - ii) Romans 10:9-10
  - iii) Romans 10:13
  - iv) Acts 16:31
  - v) John 3:16



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Find God's Word. Ephesians chapter 4. In a moment we're going to begin reading in verse 17. A great Baptist preacher of yesteryear was named Charles Haddon Spurgeon, and Spurgeon told about going to visit an elderly woman in a poor house. She had nothing, others had to take care of her, and he had gone to visit her to give her some comfort. And he looked on the wall and there was a piece of paper, very much like a certificate, and it was framed and hanging on the wall. Out of curiosity, Spurgeon went to read it and found out it was an instrument transferring to this woman great wealth. She didn't know what it was; a pretty piece of paper. She had it framed hanging on the wall. It so happened that when she was a younger woman, she had taken care of an elderly man, and when he died, with this document, he had transferred his estate to her and she didn't know it.

When they finally went to the bank, the bank said, "We wondered who the old gentleman had left his wealth to." Isn't that kind of sad? There it was just hanging on the wall as a document, sort of a memento, but great wealth. She was gifted and did not know it, and that's like many folks that I'm speaking to today. The Lord Jesus Christ has given you a great, great legacy. My prayer is that it will get out of the pages of God's Word and get into your heart today and you will understand that you, yes, you are a gifted child. You have a spiritual gift. Now, when Jesus Christ was born, men brought gifts to Him, that's at His birth, but at His resurrection, as we're going to see, He gave gifts to us. And I'm just wondering if you've got your gift framed and hanging on the wall or if you have your gift still wrapped sitting under the tree or if you have discovered unwrapped and put to use the spiritual gift that you have.

Listen, we're talking today about ministry. God give me the voice and God give you the ears to hear, the heart to believe, and the will to obey so that you might find your place of ministry in the church where you belong because God put you in this body to serve Him. You are somebody in His body and God did not save you to come on Sunday morning and simply be a benchwarmer; to sit, soak, and sour. God saved you to serve and He did not save you to serve in your own strength. He saved you to serve Him by grace, a grace gift, a charismatic gift because the Greek word for grace is charis.

Now let's read, look if you will, Ephesians chapter 4 and verse 7, "But unto every one of us is given grace." Listen, did that include you? Look at God's Word, "To every one of us." Did that include you? Nod your head if you think it included you. Yes! "But to every one of us is given grace. According to the measure of the gift of Christ." You have a grace gift. Again, the word grace is the Greek word charis. It's the word we get charismatic from. Sometimes we think, "Well, that's a person that might make a good politician because he has a ready smile and a warm handshake and verbal ability." No, no, no, no, no. That's a corruption of the word charismatic. The word charismatic just simply means having a grace gift. And who has the grace gift? You do! Who is charismatic? Every child of God. Listen, "Wherefore," verse 8, "He saith, 'When He,'" Jesus, "'ascended up on high, He led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men.'" When our Lord ascended to Heaven, He did not leave us helpless orphans. He did not give us the great missionary enterprise and then just say, "Do the best you can." He equipped us to do what we need to do.

So continue to read, verses 9 through 12, "Now He that ascended, what is it but He that also descended first into the lower parts of the Earth." That is the Lord Jesus has already come down, died and was buried in the grave. "He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens that He might



fill all things and He gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers." Now zero in on this next verse, "For the perfecting of the saints," that is the maturing of the saints, "for the work of the ministry." Why are the saints matured? How many saints here this morning? If you're saved, you're a saint. The only two categories, the saints and the ain't's. Now listen, if you're saved, you're a saint, and if you are a saved person, a saint, you lady, you sir, you teenager are in the ministry.

Did you know you've been called into the ministry? You have. Look now in Ephesians 4 verses 12 through 16, "For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry." The saints are to be matured for the ministry, and why? "For the edifying of the body of Christ so that you might be used to build up the body. Till we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect," that is mature, "man unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, that we henceforth be no more children tossed to and fro and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the slight of men and cunning craftiness wherein they lie and wait to deceive, but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into Him in all things which is the head, even Christ; from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." Now you're saying, "Pastor, that last part was just so many words to me. You lost me there." Well, we'll come back and we'll go over it again, but I want you to keep your Bible in front of you as we're talking today about finding your place of ministry.

Three things I want to tell you about your gift. First of all, let's see about **the gift delivered** in Ephesians 4 verse 7, the gift delivered. "But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." Everybody in his body has a grace gift. Don't you insult God by saying He can't use you. Don't say, "Well, I'm just not gifted. Brother Sorrell is gifted. Brother Whitmire is gifted. I am not gifted." Do not say that. You are saved by grace and you serve by grace. And the grace that saved you is the grace that enables you and there is no room for a spiritual inferiority complex or a spiritual superiority complex, because you are what you are by the grace of God, but you are what you are. I mean, God's grace has worked in you.

What is a grace gift? What is a grace gift? It is a God-given supernatural ability for service and ministry. Got it? I'll say it again. It is a God-given spiritual ability for service and ministry; it goes far beyond natural talents. Often, our grace gift is wed to natural talent, but it goes beyond natural talent. Natural talent is just what it is. It is natural. A grace gift is supernatural in its source, in its nature, and in its purpose.

Now, you do not choose your gift. I'd like to choose some. If I could just go out into a candy store and say, "I want this and this and this," but I can't, I didn't choose my gift. You can't choose your gift any more than you could choose the color of your hair. Well, take that back. People are doing that. Any more than you could choose the height of your stature. You just can't do it. You just simply, you inherit your gift, your talents naturally and you inherit your spiritual gift. It is a birthday gift when you're born naturally and it is a birthday gift for your second birth when you're born supernaturally. Now, how was this gift given to you? Well, when our Lord Jesus Christ came to this Earth, He suffered, bled and died, and rose again, and when He did, He turned tables on Satan. Look if you will again in Ephesians chapter 4 verse 8, "Wherefore He sayeth, 'When He,'" that is Jesus, "ascended up upon high, He led captivity captive."

Now, the devil had been going around taking everybody else to prison, but when the Lord Jesus suffered, bled, died, and rose again, Satan's kingdom came crashing down and Jesus led the captor, Satan, captive. He led captivity captive. He turned the tables on Satan, He triumphed over Satan. Now, when a Roman general would go off and win a victory, that Roman general won the victory for all of Rome. When he would come back, there would be a great procession called the triumph and the Roman general would ride there on a white horse. And the air would be filled with perfume and incense, and the people would be shouting the triumph. And behind the Roman general chained to his chariot wheels would be the vanquished generals,



the kings, the others. They would be dragged along, stripped naked. People would be laughing at them, ridiculing them because in the ignominy they have been defeated and humiliated and stripped and shamed, devoid of power. Their backs broken, their kingdoms ruined!

And then, behind them would come people bearing the booty of the battle, the spoils of the battle! And that general not only had broken the back of the vanquished army, but he brought back the gifts for the people, for Rome. That's the figure that the apostle Paul is using. The Lord Jesus went down into the nether world and He led captivity, that's Satan who'd been capturing everybody, captive! And then He gave the spoils of battle to us. You have a grace gift that is a glory gift and never, ever fail to appreciate what our resurrected, ascended Lord has done for you. Value your spiritual gift.

Now, I'm going to try to help you today to find out what your spiritual gift may be. I want you to put a bookmark there in Ephesians chapter 4 if you will, and then I want us to turn to First Corinthians chapter 12. Now just turn left and you'll come to First Corinthians chapter 12 and I'm going to read some of these gifts. And as I read some of these gifts, I want you just to jot down when you hear one that you resonate with and see if perhaps it might be your gift. All right, First Corinthians chapter 12 and verse 4 through 7, "Now, there are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit," that is, not everybody has the same gift, it's the same Holy Spirit who gives them. "There are differences of administration, but the same Lord. There are diversities of operations, but it's the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal." That is God gave you a gift, not as a toy, but as a tool. Not for your enjoyment but for your employment, to put you to work. Now the Bible says, "The manifestation of the Spirit." What is the manifestation of the Spirit? Your spiritual gift. Is given to how many men? Every man. To profit what? To profit withal, to profit the church. And then he gives a list of gifts where you're going to see them, what they are.

First of all in First Corinthians 12 verse 8, "For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom." Now maybe wisdom is your gift. I've met people that I believe had supernaturally the gift of wisdom. I'm not talking about being smart. I'm not talking about common sense, I'm talking about uncommon sense, to be able to see life from God's viewpoint, from God's perspective to bring the wisdom of God into any situation. If that is your gift, you will make a wonderful counselor.

Now look in verse 8, here's another gift, "And to another, the word of knowledge." Maybe that's your gift. Now, what is knowledge? Knowledge is not merely the ability to gather facts, but knowledge is the ability to apply wisdom in a very practical way. And there are people like that. There are people who have knowledge. It doesn't mean they know everything. The word here is a word of knowledge, like a man might have a word of law in a court case. Maybe God has gifted you with great knowledge. You have the ability to understand things as they are. And I meet these people and I talk to them. Sometimes I think, "Where did they learn all that? How do they know all of that?" Well, many times it is a supernatural gift.

Now, here's the third one, look if you will in First Corinthians 12 verse 9, "To another faith by the same Spirit." Now all people have ordinary faith if you're saved because you got saved by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ or by grace through faith. But you remember over there in First Corinthians 13, he's in chapter 12 now, and in chapter 13 he's going to talk about faith to move mountains. There're some folks, they can just believe God for anything and they have faith that's greater than the faith that the rest of us have. And God gives them faith because they're out there seeing things, envisioning things, believing things, and pointing the rest of us to the way. And they do that not because they are just more visionary than the rest, but because they have that faith.

And then, look in verse 9, "And healing by the same Spirit." Actually it's plural, healings, because the healing may be for the body, it may be for the soul, it may be for the spirit, it may be physical healing, it may



be spiritual healing, it may be psychological healing and God gives to people the ability to heal. I think that doctors may or may not have this gift. Some doctors do and some doctors don't, but it goes beyond the natural ability of a doctor.

You say, "Pastor, do you believe that some have the supernatural ability to heal?" Absolutely. Well, you say, "Well, what about thus and such a person? Do you think he has it?" Well, I'm not going to set in judgment upon any individual, one way or the other, unless he's absolutely a fake and a fraud and an imposter. But I'm telling you this, that there are and there is the supernatural gift of healing. I'll say this also. It's not always God's will to heal. It's not always God's will to heal. Don't ever let anybody tell you, it is always God's will to heal. You will ultimately be healed by the grace of God because when Jesus Christ died for you on that cross, not only did He take your sin, He took your sickness. But, your body is not yet redeemed but it will be redeemed. And so, our Lord heals by miracle and by medicine, He heals instantaneously. He heals in time. But if you're a child of God, He always heals in eternity. Sometimes you might have a loved one, you've been praying for them to get healed and they die and you say, "God didn't hear my prayer." Has it ever dawned on you they're the only one that's really well, you're sick and they're healed? Think about it.

Now, the gifts of healings, the gift of miracles, in First Corinthians 12 verse 10, "To another, the working of miracles." And there are those who have the supernatural ability of the charismatic gift of miracles. Now, this is a very rare gift. If you'll study the Bible, miracles did not go consistently through the Bible. They came in clusters, particular times in the Bible where healings and miracles took place, generally to confirm the message when a new pioneer territory or age as being taken on by Almighty God. But miracles do happen and I believe in miracles.

And then, there's the gift of prophecy. Look, if you will in verse 10, "To another, prophecy." Now, prophecy in the Bible is not primarily for telling the future. The very word prophet means to speak forth. It is not primarily "fore telling", but "forth telling"; it is speaking for God. Now, this gift is one that is so important that it gives us a definition of it. Turn the page and look in First Corinthians chapter 14 and verse 3, look at it. "But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort." That's what prophecy is. Edification, exhortation, and comfort. What does edification mean? To build up. What does exhortation mean? It means to fire up. What does comfort mean? It means to shore up. And so a person has the gift of prophecy, has the ability to build up, to fire up, to shore up, to help people. That is, that he's speaking for God. And he takes the fourteenth chapter of this passage here in First Corinthians to say where prophecy is so much more needful than other so-called showy gifts. And he says, "Pray for prophecy in the church," because people need to be built up, they need to be fired up, they need to be shored up. That is the gift of prophecy, to speak for God. And maybe that is your gift.

And then go back if you will, to First Corinthians chapter 12 in verse 10. And he speaks of another gift here. He speaks of, "The discerning of spirits", in verse 10, "The discerning of spirits." Now that doesn't mean to go around judging one another whether they're saved or lost, but there are a lot of wicked and vile spirits in the world today. The Bible says in First John 4:1, "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but test the spirits whether to be of God." I was sitting on an airplane and I always try to witness to somebody when I'm sitting by them. I figured God put me there, I don't make the seat assignments, the airline does. I'm sitting there, this lady got on. I breathed a prayer, "God help me to find some way to speak to this woman." I look over there, she's reading a book. The title of the book is Angels. They're talking about angels. Well, I'm kind of peeking, looking, trying to see what this book is about. There's no Scripture in this book at all. It's just full of new age imagination, and worse than imagination, demonically inspired ideas about angels. I said, "I see you reading a book about angels. Tell me about angels." "Oh," she said, "Angels are wonderful." I said, "Well, tell me about it." Oh, she said, Well, she said, "You know, I'm learning about angels." She said, "I'm praying to angels." And said, "Angels are guiding me." She said, "They talk to me." And, I said, "Oh. Well, tell me more about it."



So she's telling me about all these angels. I said, "Lady, did you know the Bible says that Satan could be transformed as an angel of light?" She looked at me like I'd shot her. And I said, "Yes." I said, "Satan can be transformed as an angel of light." And I said, "Let me share some things with you." And I began to share in a very warm and kind way as I'm so want to be warm and kind. And I began to share with this precious lady. And then I began to share the Word of God and to show it in the story. She's gloriously saved. And I've written her and given her some material to help her to get started in the Christian life. But the point of the matter is that I, there in me though, this may or may not be my spiritual gift, I know that I had enough moxie, enough understanding, enough intuition by the Holy Spirit to say this woman was being used and manipulated by Satan unwittingly, and we need in the body of Christ, the discerning of spirits. The Bible says in First John 4:1, "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits, test the spirits whether, they are of God."

And then he goes on to say in First Corinthians 12 verse 10, "There's the gift of tongues." Do you see it right there, "To another, diverse kinds of tongues." Now, what is the gift of tongues? Well, the gift of tongues is not primarily a private prayer language. The gift of tongues is not a sign to God's people. Tongues are not assigned to them that believe, but to them that believe not. What is the gift of tongues? The gift of tongues is the ability to praise God in a language that you have never learned. Not some unknown language. The word unknown is supplied by the translator, but a known language, the word tongue means language. And it is the ability to praise God in a language that you have never learned. It is primarily assigned to Jews to convince them.

Now, how would that work? Well, suppose today, since we have the freedom that the Russians now have to travel, let's suppose today that a busload of Russian tourists were to drive up here in front of Bellevue and they said, "We're going to show you an American church." And so those tourists get out and come in here. And let's suppose that to make it even more apt, it's a busload of Russian Jews and they've never been in a Christian Church like this one, and they've never been in any kind of a worship service much. And they come in here and they sit down and let's suppose they're sitting right over here in this section. They're all Russian Jews.

Now, let's suppose I, who don't know any Russian except a few words, suppose I get up here and I begin to praise God in perfect fluent Russian and they've not been able to understand anything's going on here, but suddenly they begin to understand. And afterward they say, "How do you know Russian?" I say, "I don't know it." That's a gift of God. It's a supernatural ability to praise God that way. But now, most of you don't know Russian either. So when I am there praising God in Russian, you're sitting in the dark. When I'm praising God in English, they're sitting in the dark. So God gives me the gift to praise God this way. Then, you're not supposed to be in the dark either, so look in First Corinthians 12 verse 10, "To one, diverse kinds of languages. To another, the interpretation of languages." So if I am praising God in English, the Russians don't understand. If I'm praising God in Russian, the English don't understand. But God gives to Jim Whitmire also the gift to interpret. And so Jim stands up and says, "Folks, want you to know what the pastor's saying?" And he interprets. And the word interpret is the word that's used for the interpretation of translation of a language. So nobody is in the dark. Isn't that wonderful?

I have the gift to speak to them, they understand. He has the gift to speak to you, you understand. Because the Bible says that every gift is given, what? To profit everybody. Nobody in a worship service is to be sitting in the dark saying, "I wonder what's going on." The Bible says the manifestation of the Spirit is given to profit every man. That's a supernatural gift. You say, "Pastor, you said to get out my pen and write down my gift. You haven't gotten to it. I don't know. I'm not in one of those." Well, turn to Romans chapter 12 here for just a moment. Romans chapter 12, and here is a gift that you may, a list that you may resonate with a little more. Romans chapter 12 verses 4 to verse 6, "For as we have many members in one body and all members



have not the same office." He's talking about the body is the church of Christ. The same office that means the same job, the same responsibility, the same ministry. "So we being many are one body in Christ and everyone members one of another. Having then gifts." There it is again, "Having then gifts differing according to the grace," there's our word charis, charismatic, "according to the grace that is given to us." We, listen, we're saved by grace, we serve by grace. "Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us." And now He gives another list of gifts. Listen to it, "Whether prophecy let us prophesy." Well, we've already talked about that.

Well, suppose you had the gift of prophecy. And by the way, the gift of prophecy is not telling people off. Some people say, "Well, you know I'm a prophet," and then whackity-whack-whack. Boy, they cut you down. I say, "Well, I can't help it. I'm just a prophet." Well, I don't read anything about cutting people down and calling it prophecy. Prophecy is what? Edification, exhortation, and comfort. It's building people up. Don't use the excuse that you have a gift of prophecy and tell people off. What, what would the gift of prophecy be? That's the ability to speak for God. Maybe you could use that gift in preaching, maybe in jail services. Maybe you could use it in missionary work, or maybe if you're a mother, to speak for God to your children.

And then let's look at another gift. He says in Romans 12 verse 7, "Or ministry." Do you see that? What is the gift of ministry? It literally means acts of service. Now, pay attention because you're going to plow close to the corn. There're a lot of you who have the idea right now that because you don't have some showy gift that you are not needful. We need more people to have this gift perhaps than almost any other in our church. This is general church work, yeoman's work. We need so many who have the gift of ministry in the grace building, the activities building. If you want to minister, we've got a place for you in typing, in ushering, in coaching. Do you know where we need folks to have the gift of ministry? Good morning. Listen, in the nursery, this morning and every morning just the ability to serve. Did you know what your grace gift may be? Changing diapers. You say, "That's a grace gift?" Well, I hope he gives a lot of you that grace gift. The grace gift to change diapers, ministry.

And then he mentions again the gift of teaching. Look in verse 7 again, teaching. Now maybe God's given you the gift of teaching so you can be a Sunday school teacher. Maybe you can teach in the missionary organizations, or maybe if you're a mother again, teaching your children at home, or a dad. You don't have to have an appointment in the church to exercise the gift of teaching.

And then he mentions again, exhortation. Do you see it in Romans 12 verse 8? Now, what is this gift? The gift of exhortation is the ability to move people for the grace of God. Do you know what? I think that impels most of the people in the choir. Now you know there's a difference between this choir and a lot of choirs. Now, a lot of choirs are wonderful and we know we're not the best, but we like people to think we are. Oh, we're the best. All right, oh, we are until we get to thinking we are, and then we no longer are. God knows who's the best. How am I going to get out of this hole? If I say we're not, I. Well, somebody else said it anyway. What makes this choir different? I believe they're singing by the grace of God, anointed to sing! That's exhortation. Maybe visitation, soul-winning, just the encouraging ministry. That's all exhortation, counseling sometimes.

And then look if you will, the gift of giving in First Corinthians 12 verse 8. Well, we all are supposed to give. You can't say, "Well, I'm not going to give anything this morning. That's not my gift." Oh, no. We all are to give just like we're all to have faith and we're all to encourage one another. But some people have the gift to make money and the gift to give money wisely and sacrificially. I can point out folks that I believe have the gift of giving, thank God for them.

And then there's a gift of ruling. Do you see it right there in verse 8? "He that ruleth." What is that gift? That's the gift of administration. Maybe if you serve on a church staff somewhere, maybe if you are a committee





chairman, maybe if you have leadership over an organization. Coaches many times have this gift. You might think, "Well, I'm just coaching a boys' basketball team, a girls' basketball team over here. I don't have any spiritual gift, but I do know how to lead boys and girls in an organized sport." Have you ever thought that God the Holy Spirit may be the one who gave you that gift to do that? And when you use that gift is just like Jim Whitmire up here using his gift of exhortation to lead us in praise and worship.

Then there's a gift of mercy. Do you see it in verse 8? "He that ruleth with diligence, he that showeth mercy with cheerfulness." What is mercy? It's the ability supernaturally to show the love of God. Hospital visitation, benevolence, counseling, the extension department. Now, these are the gifts. These are the gifts distributed.

All right, now go back to where we began, would you please, in Ephesians chapter 4, and we're going to have to really hurry because you're not listening very fast. Now, how are **the gifts developed**? We talked about the gifts distributed. How are the gifts developed? Well, go back again to Ephesians chapter 4 now and begin with me in verses 11 and 12, and look at this, "And He gave some apostles and some prophets and some evangelists and some pastors and teachers for the maturing of the saints," the perfecting of the saints, "for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." Now, not only does God give the members of the church spiritual gifts, but He gives to the church gifted leaders and He mentions these gifted leaders. First of all, He mentions apostles and prophets. Now, we don't have apostles and prophets today except in the secondary sense. I mean, we don't have apostles like the 12 apostles or the prophets who wrote the Bible, the Old Testament. We don't have those except in the secondary sense today.

But I, as a pastor-teacher, can teach and preach with the authority of a prophet and an apostle if I teach and preach what the prophets and the apostles taught, isn't that wonderful? If I teach and preach what the prophets and the apostles taught, then I teach and preach with the same authority because I'm preaching their message. Ephesians 2:20 says, "We're built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets." All right, and then evangelists. What are evangelists? These are the soul winners. And God has given to the church a great body of people who have the spiritual gift of evangelism. And those of you who get into EE, though you can be in EE without the gift of evangelism, and everybody ought to be a soul winner, some people, they just have the ability to win souls.

And then He mentions another person or persons, pastors and teachers. Now that's really just one group. Pastor-teacher is not pastors and then teachers, but pastor-teachers. That's what I believe I am. I believe that God has called me and equipped me to be a pastor-teacher. Now, what is the job of a pastor-teacher? Well, look at it. Just look at it and see what my job description is here from the Word of God. Ephesians 4 verses 11 and 12, "And He gave some pastors and teachers for the maturing of the saints." My job, my responsibility is to mature you in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Why? Why to mature you? So you can do the work of the ministry. You say, "Now wait a minute, pastor. Not me, that's you. You're the minister. That's why we come on Sunday morning and pay you. We pay you to do the ministry." Wrong. My job is to mature you to do the ministry. That's my job. I'm grateful that you pay me, but you see, I'm not a surrogate. I'm not a mercenary soldier. You can't just pay me to march off to war for you while you do something else. I mean, no, no. God saved you to serve. And when He saved you by grace, He gives you a grace gift, then He gives you a pastor-teacher, and it is the job of the pastor-teacher to help you to discover, to develop, to deploy your gift for the work of the ministry.

Well, why does He want you to do the work of the ministry? Well, look at it here in verse 12. Very simply put, "For the edifying of the body of Christ." When this church, when we, all of us discover our spiritual gift, when we find our place in the body, when we say, "Oh God, help me to discover what my ministry is," and we put it to practice, how wonderful it will be.



Now, I've got another whole third point, but I want you to look at an amazing **act of discipline**. I quit right now. Now that's difficult for me. I'm telling you it's difficult, but I'm in a battle with a clock this morning, but we're going to stop right here and say that if God enables me to do my job, I will be able to show you from the Word of God that if you have been saved by grace, you serve by grace, and God has given you a spiritual gift or gifts. You were not behind the door when the gifts were passed out, and it is your duty, your joy and your privilege to serve God that way. You say, "Well pastor, I just don't have any joy in my Christian life." "Oh, you don't. Well, what do you do?" "Well, pastor, I'm a member of Bellevue. I come on Sunday morning and I hear you preach." Is that all you do? "Well, I mean, didn't I do God a wild favor when I got here this morning?" That's all you do. No wonder you don't have any joy. Did you know that the Greek word *charis* not only means grace, but it means joy! If you want real joy, get saved by grace and serve by grace, and when it dawns on you that you found your place in the body and you're faithful in ministry, the joy will begin to flow in your heart.

Would you bow your heads in prayer? Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. If you're not certain that you're saved, would you like to be saved, would you? Would you like to know that you really do have life? Jesus said, "I've come that you might have life." Could I lead you in a prayer? We'll call this prayer the sinner's prayer. And you can pray and accept Christ as your personal Lord and Savior. You can do it right now. Would you pray this prayer? "Dear God, I know that You love me. Thank You for loving me. And I know that You want to save me. Jesus, You died to save me and You promised to save me if I would trust You. Jesus, I do trust You. I believe You're the Son of God. I believe you paid for my sin with Your blood on the cross. I believe that God raised You from the dead. And now I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Forgive my sin. Cleanse me. Come into my life. Take control of my life and begin today to make me the person You want me to be. And Jesus, give me the courage to make it public. Help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your name I pray, Amen."



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