

Theme: Gifts are given by God to enable every Christian to be an effective minister for God, helping to build His Church and Kingdom.

I. Intro – The Joy of Gifts

- A. Most people enjoy getting gifts
- B. We all enjoy gift giving on Christmas Eve/Day
- C. But the real joy is not opening the gift - it is using the gift
- D. An unused gift is a wasted gift
- E. Today - Spiritual Gifts - the Church in Action

II. Opening Up Spiritual Gifts

- A. Review of defining spiritual gifts
 - 1. We saw Paul used five Greek words to refer to gifts
 - 2. This leads to 5 key points about gifts
 - a. Gifts are based on the grace of God
 - b. Gifts are empowered by the Holy Spirit
 - c. Gifts make God's grace & Spirit's work visible
 - d. Gifts strengthen the church
 - e. Gifts are used to serve others
 - 3. We must understand these ideas to open up gifts
- B. Defining spiritual gifts
 - 1. Definition
 - 2. Spiritual gifts are as varied as believers!
 - 3. Gifts refers to how God acts in & through believers

III. Spiritual Gifts & Service - The Church In Action

- A. Every single believer has a gift given by Christ
 - 1. Grace refers to gifts (Eph 4:7-11; Rom 12:3-6)
 - 2. Every single one given grace/gifts (vs 7)
 - 3. Come from ascension of Christ (Eph 4:7-11)
- B. Some are called to equip/prepare believers (vv 11-12)
 - 1. Their key function is to prepare others
 - 2. καταρτισμός - prepare/qualify/furnish
 - 3. Similar to coach on a team
- C. The saints do the work of ministry (vv11-12)
 - 1. God's people do works of service (v12 NIV)
 - 2. The saints do work of ministry (v12 ESV)
 - 3. Not just leaders – no “clergy”/“laity” distinction
 - 4. All types of ministry – not just menial tasks
- D. An example: Winter Relief
 - 1. We have all just seen an amazing example of this
 - 2. Spiritual gifts and works of service combined
 - 3. Every member using gifts and serving
 - 4. Now way for a few people to do this
 - 5. This was the church in action!

IV. The Purpose - A Healthy Church

Spiritual Gifts - The Church In Action

Ephesians 4:7-16
January 20, 2013
Communion
Hebrews 13:20-21

- A. Purpose - The Body built up (v12)
 - 1. So that - this is why Christ gave these gifts
 - 2. So that the Body may be built up
- B. The picture of a healthy church (vv13-16)
 - 1. Unity - the body serving is united
 - 2. Maturity - becoming like Christ - takes whole Body
 - 3. Stability - not infants, blown around
 - 4. Growing - vital healthy Body, connected to Head
- C. The key - each part must do its work (v16)
 - 1. Paul reiterates this comes from each part working
 - 2. A healthy Body needs all parts - not just one or two

V. Applying the Word

- A. Do you believe God wants to work through you?
 - 1. Do not be robbed of this - it is your heritage!
 - 2. Christ descended to save us!
 - 3. When He ascended He poured out the Spirit & gifts
 - 4. Every one of us** are called to be used by God
 - 5. Don't just look for others - expect God to use you!
 - 6. Christianity is not a spectator sport!
- B. Communion - the Gift of the New Covenant

Gifts are 'spiritual' - empowered by the Spirit
Gifts are based on the grace of God
Gifts are given so that we can serve others
Gifts are for action - they are not just 'potential'
Gifts make the grace and Spirit of God visible

Spiritual gifts are concrete expressions of God's grace, manifested by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, in order to enable us to serve others in love.

3 For by **the grace given me** I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. 4 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5so **in Christ we who are many form one body**, and each member belongs to all the others. 6 **We have different gifts, according to the grace given us.** If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.
Romans 12:3-6

11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,
Ephesians 4:11-12 (ESV)