



## Study 12

# THE USE OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS THE NEW TESTAMENT COMMANDS

The Church is a spiritual community. We are to be people who are led, empowered and continually filled with the Holy Spirit. Living the Christian life is not merely about what we know – it's about an ongoing spiritual experience. If it is not a *spiritual* transformation, then it is not genuine. And when this spiritual transformation takes place, the Holy Spirit gives gifts to those He has transformed. In fact, Spirit-transformed believers are *commanded* to share their spiritual gifts with the rest of the body of believers. Let's see how and why...

1. Why did Paul *long* to go to Rome and meet with the believers there?  
(Romans 1:11)
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Spiritual gifts are given because of God's grace (note Eph. 4:7 and Romans 12:6, which we will discuss a bit later). This has some important implications.

2. How does Romans 11:29 respond to the idea that spiritual gifts are God's *reward* for the believer?
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Sharing with others in the church the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit has given us is important both for others and us (note 1Peter 4:10).

3. What was Paul's wish for the Corinthians as stated in 1Corinthians 1:7?

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4. Why has Christ given spiritual gifts to His church? (1Corinthians 14:12)

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## TYPES OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

It might be over simplistic to conclude that the Scriptures contains an exhaustive list of all the spiritual gifts that God has available. We can surmise this because no two Biblical lists of spiritual gifts are identical. Thus, it might be reasonable to attribute some ability you have as having been given to you by the Holy Spirit. For example, you might have an ability to write poems. You have been gifted by the Holy Spirit to do this well. But you won't find *poem writing* in any of the Biblical gift lists. But what you will find are categories of gifts which *poem writing* might be associated with. Some scholars regard spiritual gifts as being categorised three ways: *Motivational Gifts*, *Ministry Gifts*, or *Manifestation Gifts*.

5. Can you recognise your own spiritual gift(s)? If so, what is it? If not, what has someone else told you is your spiritual gift(s)?

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## MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS

There are some things that we are more motivated to do. Perhaps this is because we are gifted by God in those areas. The thought of standing in front of hundreds of people to deliver a talk would terrify some! But for those who are gifted with an ability to talk to many people, there is no terror. The





thought of having to visit a sick person in hospital might not excite someone who is not motivated with mercy. When you are not gifted to do something, you are probably not motivated to do it either. In fact, what you probably are gifted at will also be prioritised over those things you have no motivation to do.

6. Romans 12:6-8 lists some of the motivational gifts. Match the particular gift with the possible definition of that gift.

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|------------------|-----|---|
| (a) Prophecy     | ___ | Explaining God's Word so that His will and ways are made clearer to others                              |
| (b) Serving      | ___ | Encouraging others in the commitment to and serving Christ  |
| (c) Teaching     | ___ | Declaring God's word, either as forth-telling, or fore-telling  |
| (d) Exhorting    | ___ | Coordinating people and resources, for a task to achieve a goal either through directing or influencing |
| (e) Contributing | ___ | Doing what needs to be done because it helps  |
| (f) Leading      | ___ | Showing care for those who are hurting or in obvious need   |
| (g) Mercy        | ___ | Supporting the goals and vision of the Church financially, materially, and with talent                  |

Can you recognise any motivational gifts you might have? Perhaps we think that our particular gift-ability is too insignificant to make any difference in our church. Sometimes we might hold back from contributing our gift-ability because we are waiting to be asked. But in most circumstances you don't need an official position or request to exercise these ability-gifts (note 1Cor. 12:18).

## MINISTRY GIFTS

While *Motivational Gifts* appear to be God-given natural abilities, *Ministry Gifts* are *special* abilities that have *responsibility* for others. While Motivational Gifts have no particular order, *Ministry Gifts* have an order.



7. How do we know from 1Corinthians 12:28 that Ministry Gifts have an order?

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“Order” is not the same as “hierarchy”. Because someone is *first* does not mean that they are *superior* or *best*. Order speaks of *responsibility*. Within the church there must be an order of Ministry Gifts. This means that within a church, leaders must be gifted to lead (to make decisions, care for followers, organise resources and people, accept responsibility for results and failures, handle criticism and opposition, and train those helping them). And because the Scripture uses the expression “first”, “second”, “third” to describe the role and responsibility of various Ministry Gifts, it means that there is a hierarchy of leadership *responsibility* within the local church. This means that there is also a hierarchy of *accountability* for leaders within a church. So the next time you have a disagreement with your church leader remember that it is he who God will hold accountable for his decisions and leadership that has affected you.

8. Read Ephesians 4:11-12. What are the ministry gifts listed in this passage and what is their purpose?

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## MANIFESTATION GIFTS

When we are converted to Christ it is the miracle of regeneration (Titus 3:5). Jesus described this miracle as being *born-again* (John 3:3). This miracle is made possible by the Holy Spirit. Therefore, every born-again (regenerate) believer has the Holy Spirit within them (note- John 20:22). But after Jesus had breathed the Holy Spirit *into* the believers He told them to wait for the Holy Spirit to *come upon* them (Acts 1:8). When the Holy Spirit comes upon a regenerate believer the Scriptures call this being *baptised in the Holy Spirit*. When this happened in Acts 2, the believers spoke in tongues and prophesied and soon afterwards it became obvious that they could work miracles (Acts 3). The *Manifestation Gifts* are mentioned in 1Corinthians 12:7-10. These are gifts of the Holy Spirit that become available to those baptised in the Holy Spirit. It is possible to seek these gifts as they are needed (1Cor. 12:31). It is the proper exercise of *these* spiritual gifts within a church’s meetings that has led to the term “Pentecostal”. We should seek to be used by God with these gifts in our Bible Study groups and Sunday services.

*Amen.*