

God's Principles and Priorities on Time, Talent and Treasure

Part 2. Talent: Using God's spiritual gifts, talents and abilities

III. New Testament "Gifts Lists"

So far, we have spent several lessons laying a foundation for studying spiritual gifts. We have examined the ministry of the Holy Spirit (*the giver*) and the purpose of His giving (*to build up the body for service, worship and witness*). We have seen that every member of the body is important and each member is to do its part. We have determined that the Holy Spirit distributes gifts as He sees fit and for the purposes He chooses. His design is "unity in diversity" and His goal is to always glorify God (Christ), the Head of the body (I Peter 4:10-11).

Traditional theology and our own (American?) individualism have fostered a self-centered approach to spiritual gifts. We are frequently urged to inquire, "What is my gift?" and "How can I discover my gift and use it?" This introspective approach often leads to pre-occupation with when and how "MY gift" will be used. Rather, we should focus on the needs of the Christian community and be ready to respond as the Spirit leads (*Spiritual Gifts, Charles and Anne Hummel*)

Ephesians 4:11-12. Here we see a list of gifted roles necessary for the establishment, growth and maintenance of [the New Testament] churches.

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Evangelists
- Pastors
- Teachers

Romans 12:6-8. Here Paul uses a list of spiritual gifts to illustrate the diversity of gifts and the importance of using the gift one is given.

- Prophesying[^]
- Serving (helping)[^]
- Teaching[^]
- Encouraging (exhortation)[^]
- Contributing to the needs of others (giving)[^]
- Leading (administration)[^]
- Showing mercy[^]

I Corinthians 12:7-11. As we indicated previously, there were several problems at the church in Corinth, not the least was the misuse [misunderstanding] of gifts - so much so that Paul dedicates three chapters (12-14) to clarifying the proper use of gifts. Again - gifts are diverse, the Holy Spirit distributes.

- Wisdom
- Knowledge
- Faith
- Healing *
- Miracles *
- Prophecy
- Discerning of spirits
- Speaking in tongues *
- Interpretation of tongues *

I Corinthians 12:27-30. A rather controversial list at times, Paul appears to rank gifted roles and gifts in their order of *honor* (not importance) in the New Testament churches. Regardless, he begins by stressing membership in the body, continues by emphasizing diversity, and ends with a segue into the attitude in which all gifts are to be exercised – love! (chapter 13)

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Teachers [^]
- Miracles *
- Healing *
- Helping (serving) [^]
- Administration (leading) [^]
- Speaking in tongues *

* The "sign" gifts (MacArthur) – given as signs to validate apostleship, proclaim revelation, build the early church, and spread the gospel

[^] Motivational gifts (Morris) – the individual is motivated by the use of the gift