

## **The Source and Purpose of Spiritual Gifts**

### **1 Corinthians 12:4-7**

*Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup> and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup> and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. <sup>7</sup> To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

As with a good number of other things, the Corinthian church is divided over spiritual gifts.

*Spiritual gifts are those qualities and empowerments that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit give to the people of God in order to make them effective in ministry. When God's people use these gifts in service to one another, the entire church is built up in faith, hope, and love. –*

R.C. Sproul

There are two important things to remember when discussing spiritual gifts; their source and their purpose. If we understand this, it will solve a lot of conflict about spiritual gifts.

### **First: There are varieties of gifts. 4a**

Varieties =

In this chapter, Paul will list at least 9 spiritual gifts in vs 8-10.

- 1 - the utterance of wisdom,
- 2 - utterance of knowledge
- 3 - faith
- 4 - gifts of healing
- 5 - the working of miracles,
- 6 - prophecy,
- 7 - the ability to distinguish between spirits,
- 8 - various kinds of tongues,
- 9 - the interpretation of tongues.

### **Second: There are varieties of service. 5a**

This is probably offices in the church – elders and deacons - leadership

V 28 - *And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers,*

### **Third: There are varieties of ministries. 6a**

This is probably the outpouring in certain times or places as needed – body

V 28b- ... *miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.*

He says it like this in **Ephesians 4:11-12 –**

- a) *Service - And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,*
- b) *Ministries - to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ*

#### **Fourth: All the Gifts are Spirit-given. 6b**

Vs 8-10 – Read the list again

- 8a – *through the Spirit*
- 8b – *according to the same Spirit*
- 9 – *the same Spirit*
- 9b – *by the one Spirit*
- 11 – *one and the same Spirit*

The Holy Spirit is the Treasurer of the Trinity distributing God's gifts to his children

The point is so well made that Paul doesn't repeat it in v 10

V 4 – ***varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit*** – The Holy Spirit gives the gifts

V 5 – ***varieties of service, but the same Lord*** – (see vs 3) Jesus administrates the gifts

John 16:8-11 & 13-13-14 – Just as the Son is the Father's gift to you, so the Holy Spirit is the Son's gift to you? How much do you need Jesus? That's how much you need the Holy Spirit.

#### a) The Spirit's ministry in the World

V 8 – He will convict the world...

- Of sin – 9 – because they do not believe on me
- Of righteousness – 10 – because I go the Father (only Christ is righteous)
- Of judgement – 11 – the ruler of this world is judged

(Friends, we can't do that. Let us ask and rely on the Holy Spirit to do this)

#### b) The Holy Spirit's ministry in the Church

12 – The Holy Spirit is Jesus's translator

13a – He will guide us into all truth

13c – He will declare to you the things that are to come

14 – he will glorify me

V 6a – **varieties of actives**, *but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone* – The Father empowers the gifts

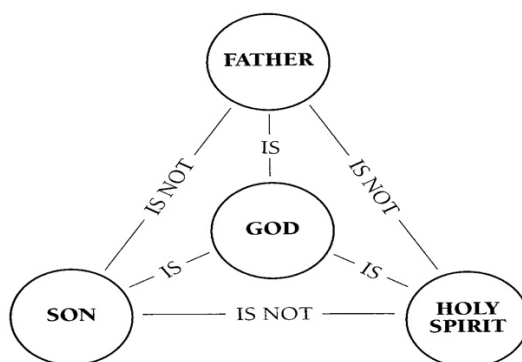
Wow! What omnipotent synergy.

Once again, the Trinity becomes our model for Christian living. It's important to review what we know about the Trinity.

a) Ontological Trinity – This is Who the Trinity is (Perichoresis = circle dance)



b) The Economic Trinity – This is What the Trinity Does



The key is unity in diversity or diversity in unity in two spheres: The Trinity and the church.

That spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit, the Son (Lord) and the Father (God) should ensure that:

- 1 – We rest in God's sovereign dispersal
- 2 – We are not jealous of one another's gifting
- 3 – We 'skill' the gifts in order to honor Christ who is worthy of their return

*Vs 31 - But earnestly desire the higher gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way.*

What is the more excellent way? Paul wastes no time in telling us -

### **T - 13:1-13**

- a) The gifts are given in love
- b) Without love the gifts are counter-productive
- c) The gifts should be exercised in love
- d) The gifts should be moderated by love
- e) The gifts will pass away
- f) Love will forever remain and is even greater than faith or hope.

You might ask, "How do I love the body of Christ?" Use your gift properly.

### **Fifth: Gifts are Given for the Common Good. 7.**

- a) Each is given = everyone has a Spirit-given gift
- b) The manifestation of the Spirit = the gifts are the Holy Spirit's life in you
- c) For the common good = As each member of the Trinity loves and serves the other, for the good of the other, we should do the same.

The problem with all of this is that the world cannot handle it and too often, the world is running the church.

### **Conclusion:**

Most conflict about the gifts boils down to ignorance about who gives the gifts and the purpose of the gifts.

The Holy Spirit gives everyone a gift as He sees fit –

*V 11 - All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.*

Gifts are given for the common good  
 Gifts are not given for not self-adulation.

### **Community Groups:**

- 1 – Read the text.
- 2 – What has gone wrong in the Corinthian church regarding gifts? See vs 1-3.
- 3 – How might spiritual gifts be misused?
- 4 – Why, in this discussion is it important to confess Jesus as Lord?
- 5 – How many gifts do you find in this chapter?
- 6 – How many gifted people do you find in this chapter?
- 7 – Who gives gifts to the church?
- 8 – What is the point in Paul's repetition of the Holy Spirit in verses 1-11?
- 9 – what other key phrases do you see in this section of vs 4-7?
- 10 – Who administers the gifts in the church? (determines what they are used for)
- 11 – Who empowers the gifts in the church?
- 12 – Why does Paul use the Holy Spirit when discussing the gifts?
- 13 – How is the Holy Spirit our model for having and using the gifts?
- 14 – Who gets a spiritual gift?
- 15 – Why has God given the spiritual gifts?
- 16 – Do you know your spiritual gift?
- 17 – How are you using your spiritual gift in the church?

Daily Devotions:

**Monday the 18<sup>th</sup>.** Confessing Jesus as Lord is more than words. How do your daily attitudes, behaviors, and actions 'confess' that Jesus is Lord of your life? Today, fly the banner of Jesus's lordship over your life. What difference does that make for you?

**Tuesday the 19<sup>th</sup>.** Read vs 4, 7, & 11. What does the Holy Spirit do for you? (Other than replicate the life of Jesus in you!) Write this contract on your heart today, "I'm going to live like the Holy Spirit is real in me," and live in his gifting, and empowering,

**Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup>.** What is the Trinity's work in our gifting? Imagine if your heart, mind and body synchronized like that? If you're married, you and your spouse? Ask the Holy Spirit to align your heart, mind and body today. Live in that Trinitarian model of oneness of all of life.

**Thursday the 21<sup>st</sup>.** v 6b says God "empowers...everyone." What is your gifting? How are you using it in the church; not just on Sundays but in God's kingdom work, Mon-Sun?

Remember, 'you are the church,' and 'the church is wherever you are.' Use your gift in and for God's church, the advancement of his kingdom in the world he has placed you. **Friday the 22<sup>nd</sup>**. When is the last time you had a conversation about the Holy Spirit? Is he, your forgotten member of the Trinity? How might you maintain this sense of a Spirit-filled life every day of your life, for the rest of your life? After all, the just as the Son is the Father's gift to you, the Holy Spirit is the Son's gift to you.