

Gifts of The Spirit (3)

Continued from previous session.

Background (Reviewed)

There are some key Bible passages that speak about spiritual gifts. In this studies these will be looked at in different ways, to draw out different perspectives, helping us look at:

- Positioning ourselves to receive
- Identifying your gifts
- How you use your gifts
- Knowing where to serve
- Moving forward

Three key passages from the Bible that we need to consider are as follows:

1. Romans 12
2. 1 Corinthians 12
3. Ephesians 4

Having considered how we position ourselves to receive God's gifts, and looked at how we identify the gifts God has given, we turn now to think about how we use those gifts. We make choices in how we use and what we do with the gifts God gives us. In helping us to understand these choices we will be considering the place and role of **personality** and **attitude**.

Personality

The doctrine of creation tells us that God is our maker. This needs to be understood as a personal truth, not just a global truth. Psalm 138v13-16, and Jer 1v4-8 tell us that God knows about each individual who is born into this world. He sees us and knows from before we are born. Our personality is not hidden from him. He knows. God made you you.

Yet we also need to balance this with the teaching from 1 Cor 12 v 14ff that shows us that each of us is different and made to serve a higher purpose than our own individuality. We are meant to be part of a **body**. As such we need to value and appreciate each other, which requires us to accept and appreciate different personalities.

Two important truths:

1. Personality is to be appreciated
We must accept that God made us the way we are (Psalm 139)
2. Personality is NOT an excuse
We must also accept that God requires us to change (Rom 12v2, 2 Cor 3v18)

God loves you enough to accept
you the way you are,
but loves you too much to leave
you the way you are!

See “What you do best in the body of Christ”, page 66-67, for a simple exploration of how you relate to people through your personality.

Question: Do I feel that people should accept me the way I am, or am I willing to reconsider my actions and reactions in the light of scripture?

Attitude

You and yourself – Romans 12

- Your thinking is not perfect, and needs to be “renewed” – Rom 12v2
- Your evaluation of yourself should be based on faith – Rom 12v3

You and others – 1 Corinthians 12

- Accept your God ordained place and role – 1 Cor 12v18
- Accept and care for the people around you – 1 Cor 12v25

Note: Both the above passages lead into a comment on the place of love: Romans 12v9, 1 Corinthians 13.

Choose the right attitude – Ephesians 4

- Adopt an attitude that is worthy of your calling – Eph 4v1
- How to measure your attitude: humility, gentleness, patience, forbearance – Eph 4v2
- Commitment to unity – Eph 4v3

Your attitude will affect how you are received by other people. If you approach someone with a negative attitude, insisting on your rights and trying to promote your own ministry, then you will often meet with resistance. The same person with the same gifts who seeks to use those gifts in service, not seeking the praise of men, but offering up to God, will see a very different response.

Question: if I feel my gift is not being recognised by others, am I willing to evaluate my attitude to see if the problem is in me?

Your choice

Reminder about positioning ourselves:

- Is your life open to the Holy Spirit: does He have your permission to influence and shape your life?
- Are you living “right”: is righteousness and holiness something you seek?
- Are you committed to Unity: is God’s agenda more important than your own, even if it is found in someone else’s ideas and thoughts?
- Is diversity something you value: are you happy when someone else is used by God?

Reminder about our sense of gifting:

Gifting is **not** about the person using the “gift”. It is about the person you are serving. In one sense, the gift is for the recipient not the person delivering the gift. A good gift used in an unloving way is not what is wanted (1 Cor 13 v 1-3). The goal, the thing we should strive for, is the loving use of the gifts.

So **how you use** the gift is very significant.

We need to also remember that it is the Holy Spirit who gives the gifts. He determines who has which gift and in what measure. So if you want a particular gift, or are troubled because you don't have a gift, then that is something you need to resolve between you and God.

So **how you view** the gift is very significant.

Conclusion

Our personality and our attitudes will affect how our gifts are recognised, and received by other people.