

Gifts of The Spirit (5)

Continued from previous session.

Background (Reviewed)

So far we have looked at Spiritual Gifts under the following headings:

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

Tonight we have our final session titled:

- Moving Forward

The three key passages from the Bible that we have been looking at are:

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

Moving Forward

Over the last few sessions we have looked at how we can position ourselves to receive the gifts that God has for us. The basic idea was to align ourselves so that we were in-line with God's plans and purposes. Having yielded ourselves to God and His ways, we can look at the gifts that God gives. We recognised how gifts are given to meet a need in someone's life. Our focus should be on the need in people around us that God would have us meet.

We also recognised that we are unique individuals who have a God-given personality, and that personality will shape how we use the gifts God gives us, but should never be an excuse for our poor behaviour.

Finally we looked at how our passion will help us understand our calling, and this will help us recognise where we should use our gifts.

So where does this leave us?

Romans 12:1-2 Your Position

The starting point for ministry and service is surrender. To offer yourself as a living sacrifice is a profound thing that requires constant attention. As someone once said, the problem with Christianity is that yesterday's decisions don't work today – Jesus calls us to take up our cross daily (Luke 9v23). A life of sacrifice is fertile ground for gifts to grow.

The difficulty we often find with surrender and sacrifice is we want to determine the level or degree to which we surrender or sacrifice ourselves.

Surrender and sacrifice is the pathway to transformation. Only as we let go of our pride and our will, as we accept God's plans, in that place of sacrificial surrender we are touched and changed by God. As we walk through this transforming process so God's plans and purposes become clear.

How clear is God's will to you today?

If it is not very clear then maybe there is an issue of surrender or sacrifice that God is calling and leading you to work through?

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 Your **Source**

Spiritual gifts have a spiritual source. It is the Holy Spirit who gives these gifts – as he chooses (v11). That is why it is so important that we keep in step with the Spirit (Gal 5v25). This requires us to be looking for what the Holy Spirit is doing, recognising the activity of the Spirit and following His lead. Gifts used in this context will be effective.

If we don't recognise the Holy Spirit, what should we do?

Maybe this is a question of inviting the Holy Spirit to show Himself to you?

Ephesians 4: 1-3 Your **Walk**

The type of lifestyle God is calling us to is one of humility, gentleness and patience. Humility grows in us as we surrender and give ourselves in service to God. The Holy Spirit works in us so our services is loving, given in gentleness and with patience.

John reminds us that this is a walk that it "in the light" (1 John 1v6-7). Light represents openness, purity – with nothing hidden from God.

How is your walk?

Is it time to sit in the light of God's righteousness, holiness, love and grace, allowing Him to highlight the areas of our lives that He would like us to change?

Do you want to serve?

There are always opportunities for people to use their gifts in the life of any local church. Our desire is that people will be led by God so that they serve in their place of calling, using the gifts that God has given them. The desire and intention is that we not have "round pegs in square holes".

Here are some of the current areas in which you could serve:

- Children and Young People
- Pastoral Visiting

- Practical Skills
- Faith Sharing
- Teaching and Discipleship
- Music and Worship

In addition to these opportunities within the Church there are so many ways in which you can get involved with our community.

- Kingsway Cafe
- Citizens Advice
- Residents Association
- Samaritans
- CATH

Simply steps

First, pray! Seek God. We will not be providing any spiritual shortcuts.

Second, talk to someone! Your Fellowship Group Leader, or one of the Leadership Team. Explore the questions, find out what excites you by talking about it.

Third, give it a go! You will never know until you try. If the first thing you try is not the right thing for you, then try something else!

Four, you can always “grow where you are planted”. Make the most of the place where you are now. Serve God now, where you are, and see what opens up to you.

In Conclusion

God longs to see you released into your full potential. His plan is to make you, create (re-create) you in His image. Your destiny is to fruitful – that is, someone who makes a difference. All you have to do is position yourself to receive, open yourself up to the working of the Holy Spirit, and walk through each day with Him.