

# UNDERSTANDING SPIRITUAL GIFTS Part 7

We've been talking to you about spiritual gifts. While Scripture provides a number of places where spiritual gifts are discussed, we've spent most of our time in the book of Romans. This is because the book of Romans not only provides us with a list of spiritual gifts, it also gives us information on how spiritual gifts should be ministered. (Unless spiritual gifts are ministered the right way and with the right attitude, we may not see the results that we expect.)

Romans 12:6-8 provides us with a list of spiritual gifts (beginning with prophecy and ending with the gift of mercy). We've examined several of these gifts already.

We come now to...

## THE GIFT OF TEACHING

**Romans 12:7**

***7 ...he that teacheth, on teaching;***

The gift of *teaching* is **the ability to explain or convince others concerning the doctrines of the Bible.**

**Acts 18:24–28**

***24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, and mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John. 26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly. 27 And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace: 28 For he mightily convinced the Jews, and that publickly, shewing by the scriptures that Jesus was Christ.***

There was a noticeable increase in Apollos' effectiveness AFTER he received and was informed about the Holy Spirit. (We should point out that just because you are given the gift to teach doesn't mean you're called to the office of pastor or teacher!)

**Romans 12:7**

***7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;***

Those with the gift to teach are admonished to “wait on (be devoted to) teaching.” The reason Paul gives this admonition to those with this gift is because it requires hard work to see results! Thus, someone with this gift might abandon this gift for one that produces immediate results.

**Romans 12:11**

***11 Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord;***

Again, Paul admonishes those with this gift to be not slothful in the exercise of this gift. Paul gives basically the SAME command to Timothy!

**1 Timothy 4:12–15**

***12 Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity. 13 Till I come, give attendance to reading, to exhortation, to doctrine. 14 Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery. 15 Meditate upon these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy profiting may appear to all.***

The next gift in our list is...

## **THE GIFT OF MINISTRY**

**Romans 12:7**

***7 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering...***

The “gift of ministry” is NOT a gift that places a person into the ministry. Instead, the “gift of ministry” refers to **practical ministry that assists the congregation in some way**. (The Bible also refers to this gift as “helps”.)

Notice, the SAME advice Paul gives for teaching he gives for the gift of ministry. Those with the gift of ministry are commanded to “wait on” or be devoted to their ministry. The reason Paul gives this command is because, unlike some gifts that are OCCASIONAL, the gift of ministry is ONGOING. Thus, there might be a temptation to abandon this gift for one that is less demanding.

**Romans 12:10**

***10 Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love...***

Those with this gift are also instructed to be “kindly affectioned one to another.” This means they are to serve (or minister) to the members of the Church as if they were members of their own family!

**Romans 12:10** Holman Christian Study Bible

***10 Show family affection to one another with brotherly love...***

Sometimes we treat ministry like a job. But, if we treat ministry like a job, then we might be tempted to ‘quit’ the ministry like we would our job. However, when we view our service in ministry like service to our family, we will be less likely to quit our ministry!

Finally, those with this gift are commanded to “prefer one another.” This is not simply a reminder to put others before ourself. It’s actually a reminder to those with this gift to *lead the way* in their service.

**Romans 12:10** Holman Christian Study Bible

***10 Show family affection to one another with brotherly love. Outdo one another in showing honor.***

Notice, we ought to operate in our gift (ministry) in such a way that we become an inspiration and an example for others to follow!

The final gift in this list is...

## **THE GIFT OF PROPHECY**

**Romans 12:6**

***6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;***

Prophecy is ***the ability to speak by divine revelation or inspiration.***

We should point out that not all prophecy is *predictive* (i.e. foretelling of future events). In fact, prophecy is *primarily* about exhortation, edification or comfort.

**1 Corinthians 14:3**

***3 But he that prophesieth speaketh unto men to edification, and exhortation, and comfort.***

As we’ve said this before—just because you have the gift of prophecy it doesn’t mean that you’re called to the office of a prophet.

Paul gives those operating in the gift of prophecy some advice.

**Romans 12:6**

***6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;***

Those who prophesy should ONLY say what they believe God has revealed to them—nothing more, nothing less. (We get into trouble whenever we try to impress others by trying to say more than what God has said!)

**Romans 12:9**

***9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.***

This is Paul's admonition to those who prophesy—do it without DISSIMULATION. In other words, those prophecy ought to do it without hypocrisy (i.e. don't fake it).

Furthermore, those who are the 'recipients' of someone else's prophecy are also given some advice.

**Romans 12:9**

***9 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.***

This is almost the EXACT same advice Paul gives to the Thessalonians concerning prophecy.

**1 Thessalonians 5:20–21**

***20 Despise not prophesyings. 21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.***

This is a reminder that when we receive a word (prophecy) from others, we must "judge" it. If we determine that something they said is good (from God), then we should keep it. If we determine that something they said is not good (not from God), we should dismiss it WITHOUT dismissing them or the gift itself! This is because God has given these gifts to the Church for our profit.