



Power Lifting: Empowered by the Spirit
Derrick Shields
“Grace to Equip”
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Key Verses: Ephesians 4:7-13

Key Thought: Christ became incarnate, overcame death, and rose to supremacy to fill us with His Spirit— thereby gracing us with the “APEST” gifts in order to equip us to become like Him.

Points to Consider:

- The goals of the series are 1) for us to know our spiritual gifts, and 2) for us to exercise those gifts for the building of Christ's body, the church.
- Different than a skill, “A spiritual gift is a supernatural ability or capacity given by God to enable the Christian to minister and serve” (Kingham, *Gifts of the Spirit*).
- Through the incarnation, death, resurrection, and ascension, the “Christ”— which means “the anointed one”— enables us to *also* be anointed with the Holy Spirit. → The Holy Spirit, then, empowers “Christians” (i.e., “anointed ones”) with spiritual gifts.
- Paul lists several of these gifts, which, he says, are given so that Christians would, in essence, become like Christ— in an interdependent way.
- The equipping gifts are sometimes referred to as APEST (pronounced, “ay-pest”):
 - i. **A**postles often have spiritual authority over more than one local church/ministry and are geared towards the widescale expansion of the kingdom, typically entailing cross-cultural ministry.
 - ii. **P**rophets boldly declare God's will in real-world circumstances.
 - iii. **E**vangelists are drawn to sharing the gospel to lead people (closer) to God.
 - iv. **S**hepherds (or Pastors)— whether in small groups or large churches— care for and guide the spiritual formation of Christians around them.
 - v. **T**eachers communicate God's word such that even what is highly complicated becomes readily understandable.

Discussion Prompts:

- Unpack Kinghorn's definition, noting implications for each word/phrase.
- Why does Christ function as the “mediator” of the spiritual gifts?
- Do you recognize any of the APEST gifts at work in your group? Explain.
- If you had to choose, which of the APEST gifts might you have? And how can you experiment with trying to exercise them within our group/church?
- Can you share of when you've witnessed spiritual formation as a result of these gifts?