

## **Spiritual Gifts 4 - What does “Spiritual” mean? The Importance of Using the Spiritual**

**Gift** a class taught for the Gulf Coast Baptist Church Bible Institute by Steve Thomas 1/11/21

**Introduction** - For some the word “spiritual” brings to mind a mystical picture. Rather than thinking of cauldrons and ghosts, the believer should think of things pertaining to the human spirit rather than physical things. It is to operate in the immaterial, outside of the emotional or physical realm; to operate within the renewed human spirit as filled by the Spirit of God. Many believers operate based on what their bodies (the physical) tell them to do, and others operate based on their feelings (the soul), rather than by focusing on the renewed mind, the place where the Holy Spirit has placed the Eternal Life - God’s quality of life.

### **A New Testament concept**

The word spiritual is found and used mainly in the New Testament. When it is found in the OT, it is concerned with one who the Holy Spirit has “come upon”. Num 11:17, 25. It should be noted that OT believers were not indwelt with the Holy Spirit, neither were they renewed in the spirit of their minds. The term is used in Hosea 9:7 referring to one who is claiming to be inspired. When the term is used in the NT, it refers to something that emanates from the spiritual realm, instead of the physical. Paul tells the Corinthians that the spiritual believer can discern all things, being able to weigh two things together to derive their value (1 Cor 2:15). This is in direct contrast to the natural man, which cannot understand the mind of God.

The Carnal man is in the same state as the natural man. He is operating out of the flesh. The Apostle Peter understood the concept. In the second chapter of his first epistle, he notes that there are desires that come from the flesh. The Carnal and Spiritual man are contrasted several times in scripture (1 Cor 3:1, 9:11, Rom 15:27).

### **Gifts from God**

The gifts given to the believer have been prepared by One who loves him (1 Cor 2:9-12). Paul told the Ephesians in chapter 4 that Christ gave gifts after His Ascension. The service gifts taught in this course were gifted (graced) towards the Body and placed in each believer.

### **For the Profit of the Body**

Paul told the Corinthians that the service gifts were for the profit of the Body. The Body of Christ was likened to the human body. 1 Cor 12 shows that the believers are members “out from” a part of the Body of Christ (vs 27).

God has tempered the Body with different operations for different purposes (12:25). The Greek word *sumphero* is used in verse 7 to show the reason for the gifts. When the gifts are directed properly, there are no schisms (a rent, division, dissension) apparent in the Body. There are no divisions in the Body, but at times there appears to be. When Believers are carnal, living out from the flesh, instead of the spirit, they become at odds with one another and with the purpose of the entire Body. It appears at this time that there are divisions in the Body.

Consider Paul’s comments in Phil 2:20. He was certain that Timothy would care for the Philippians in a way that they would be the most benefited. But Timothy needed to exercise his gift in order for this comfort to be directed. Paul desired to see the same type of care directed by the Corinthians towards each other (1 Cor 12:25).

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### **For the Ministry of the Saints**

As seen last week, the gifts were given to minister to each saint. Peter (1 Peter 4:10) directed each believer to give according to how they had received. This is proportional. As Christ gifted each believer, we are to direct that gift in direct proportion to the other believers.

As good stewards of what God has given the believer, he dispenses that property towards others. A steward was one who served under a master as the executor of his household. His responsibility was to dispense to the household the necessities to run the estate, in the time that they needed them. An evil steward, allowed the goods to rot, and not be put to good use. A selfish steward used the household goods for personal gain, but a good steward, saw a need, and directed resources towards it. A good steward of God’s grace will do the same thing, directing God’s property (the spiritual gift) towards those in need.

### **For the Glory of God**

Peter continues (vs 11) to expound on the use of the gifts. He explains that they are for the glory of God. The term Glorify is a term used in the NT for expressing to God His worth through our activities. The Greek word is *Doxa*. It carries the idea of expressing an opinion based on physical or spiritual manifestation of power, signifying the worth of its possessor (Luke 9:31, Matt 6:29, Matt 24:30).

The Spiritual gifts should be used to show the power of the Gift Giver. The Corinthians were using gifts to “puff up”, to vaunt themselves as seen in chapter 13. When they are used in love, they bring glory to the Son, who gave the gifts. The Son gets glory as the giver of the gifts. He is the agent that makes glorification possible (Hebrews 13:21). This concept is seen in Romans 7:25 as Christ being the agent by the believer can be thankful. The Greek preposition *dia* shows agency translated “through”.

The Father is also the recipient of Glory. 1 Peter 1:3 tells the reader that “the God” is the one who should be Blessed - eulogized. Good things should be said about the Father.

### **Conclusion**

When the believer operates from the renewed spirit instead of the flesh or soul, the Godhead is able to be manifested in his life. The power that resides in the Godhead is revealed when the service gifts are directed towards other believers. Believers are benefited, and attention is directed towards the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

# **Immaterial Things provided by the Holy Spirit for the Believer**

*Spiritual is used in Scripture to describe the possession or operation of immaterial things provided by the Holy Spirit.*

**The church is seen as a spiritual entity.**

**1st Pet. 2:5**

**Blessings. Eph. 1:3**

**Songs -- Eph. 5:19**

**Sacrifices -- 1st Pet. 2:5**

- **Body -- Rom. 12:1**
- **Giving -- Phil. 4:18**
- **Faith -- Phil. 2:17**
- **Praise -- Heb. 13:15**
- **Fellowship -- Heb. 13:16**
- **Doing good -- Heb. 13:16**

**Understanding -- Col. 1:9**

**Body -- 1st Cor. 15:44**

**Gifts -- 1st Cor. 12:1; 14:1**