

The Pieces in the Box

Series: Spiritual Gifts

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1



Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.” - 1 Corinthians 12:1

1. Why is it important to explore the gifts?

“Cease to hear instruction, my son, and you will stray from the words of knowledge.” - Proverbs 19:27

“Whoever gives thought to the word will discover good, and blessed is he who trusts in the LORD.” - Proverbs 16:20

“Listen to advice and accept instruction, that you may gain wisdom in the future. Many are the plans in the mind of a man, but it is the purpose of the LORD that will stand.” - Proverbs 19:20-21

“The one who states his case first seems right, until the other comes and examines him.” - Proverbs 18:17

2. How do the Scriptures use the term “spiritual gifts”?

“Now concerning spiritual gifts {the spirituals}, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.” - 1 Corinthians 12:1

- a. Verses 4- 7 in 1 Corinthians 12 provide fuller amplification of what Paul is referring to by “pneumatikos” or “the spirituals”. They are described in these verses as gracious manifestations of the Holy Spirit.
- b. • pneumatikos - a gift or endowment, characteristic of the presence or enabling Holy Spirit

More literally translated: spiritual things; the Greek word pneumatikos is an adjective and the English word gifts is supplied by translators. Pneumatikos is translated in various places as spiritual things and/or spiritual gifts. Sometimes the noun it is describing is supplied and we find phrases like spiritual meat, spiritual drink, spiritual Rock, spiritual songs, spiritual body, spiritual blessings and spiritual sacrifices. The foundational definition is most accurately rendered as spirituals in this 1 Cor. 12:1.

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- c. The more frequently used word to describe spiritual gifts is the Greek word charisma

chárisma - a graciously given gift; a gift of grace

Romans 1:11 - "For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to strengthen you."

Romans 11:29 - "For the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable."

Romans 12:6 - "Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith;

1 Corinthians 1:7 - "So that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift, as you wait for the revealing of our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 12:4-6 - "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone."

1 Corinthians 12:31 - "But earnestly desire the higher gifts."

1 Timothy 4:14-15 - "Do not neglect the gift you have, which was given you by prophecy when the council of elders laid their hands on you. 15 Practice these things, devote yourself to them, so that all may see your progress."

2 Timothy 1:6 - "For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands."

1 Peter 4:10-11 - "As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace:

3. Are the gifts of the Holy Spirit an important enough topic to warrant a focused study?

- a. Paul devoted nearly 20% of 1st Corinthians to this topic
- b. Paul addressed spiritual gifts in his letter to the Romans
- c. Paul addressed spiritual gifts in both his letters to Timothy
- d. Paul addressed spiritual gifts in his letter to the Ephesians
- e. Peter addressed spiritual gifts in his first epistle

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4. UNDEBATABLE TEACHING ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS AS REVEALED IN SCRIPTURE

- a. spiritual gifts were God's idea, were granted by God to all believers and characterized the life & ministry of the early church
- b. every believer has been granted access to spiritual gifts by God
- c. spiritual gifts are seen in Scripture as being, in various places, properly used but also improperly abused
- d. when properly used, spiritual gifts brought glory to God and good to the Church
- e. when improperly abused, spiritual gifts became a source of dishonor to God and disunity to the Church
- f. spiritual gifts are supernatural endowments belonging to Christians, and all of the gifts are imparted via the Person of the Holy Spirit
- g. not everyone will manifest the same gifts or the same level of functionality with those gifts
- h. Scripture teaches believers to eagerly pursue spiritual gifts
- i. some spiritual gifts have been in the past, and are still today, controversial

5. DEBATED TEACHING ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS AS COMMUNICATED BY SINCERE CHRISTIANS

- a. Does Scripture give us an exhaustive list of all possible spiritual gifts?
- b. If the Holy Spirit chooses specific gifts to specific people, why are we commanded to pursue gifts? (1 Cor. 12:31, 14:1, 14:39)
- c. What should we think about the misuse of apparent spiritual gifts among believers today?
- d. Why do the vast majority of our lives not resemble the supernatural lives of believers in the New Testament? Should they?
- e. Does an emphasis on spiritual gifts reduce our commitment to the objective teaching & authority of Scripture?

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- f. Do all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit still function today? If not, how do we know which ones have ceased and which ones continue?

6. Two Important Terms For Our Study Of Spiritual Gifts

- a. Cessationism - the position within Christianity that certain spiritual gifts (speaking in tongues, word of knowledge, word of wisdom, interpretation of tongues, etc.) ceased with the closing of the Canon of scripture and/or the death of the last apostle.
- b. Continuationism - the position within Christianity that the all of the gifts of the Holy Spirit taught in the bible - including speaking in tongues, word of knowledge, word of wisdom, interpretation of tongues, etc. - have not ceased and are available & active for believers today.

7. Principle which will govern this study:

- a. What do the Scriptures say about the nature, purpose and current status of the gifts of the Holy Spirit?
- b. SOLA SCRIPTURA: The anchor conviction of the Reformation, this approach to discerning God's nature, God's will and God's message holds that the Scriptures are materially sufficient and are by their very nature, as being inspired by God, the supreme and ultimate authority for the Church.

"Another great work of the Holy Spirit, which is not yet accomplished is the bringing on of the latter-day glory. In a few more years - I know not when, I know not how - the Holy Spirit will be poured out in far different style from the present. There are diversities of operations; and during the last few years it has been the case that the diversified operations have consisted of very little pouring out of the Spirit. Ministers have gone on in dull routine, continually preaching - preaching - preaching, and little good has been done. I do hope that a fresh era has dawned upon us, and that there is a better pouring out of the Spirit even now. For the hour is coming, and it may be even now, when the Holy Ghost will be poured out again in such a wonderful manner, that many will run to and fro and knowledge shall be increased - the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the surface of the great deep; when His Kingdom shall come, and His will shall be done on earth as it is in heaven. . . . My eyes flash with the thought that very likely I shall live to see the outpouring of the Spirit; when "the sons and the daughters of God shall prophesy, and the young men shall see visions, and the old men shall dream dreams."

- Charles Spurgeon; from his sermon "The Power Of The Holy Spirit" on June 17, 1855

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