



## **A sidenote on Gifts**

Jesus is the head of the church. With that said, he bestows gifts on us that help the church body function. Ephesians 4:11-12 *“So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, 12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”* If you notice, many of these gifts’ cross paths with the main group we studied the last two weeks. Clearly, some people were born with a passion for mercy, giving, and leadership. They emulate those gifts more than others. However, the church also needs people with special attributes that run the church. Example: a business leader might head up ministry because they naturally lead. A person in a band might also lead worship in a church. In a way, Jesus orchestrates his church through our gifts.

I call these attributes special gifts. These gifts are Spiritual (in so much) as they are given for a time or a purpose. Sampson was given strength for a time. Gideon was empowered for a certain battle. Peter walked on water. 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 *“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. 8 To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 10 to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.”*

These gifts are powerful. Usually, they are Spirit led and can be used for tremendous good and tremendous harm. How can a gift be harmful? Sampson used it unwisely. Solomon took his wisdom too far. People have prophesied the wrong message. Some denominations use speaking in tongues within a wrong intent. People have even used healings for monetary gain. These gifts are from God. He bestows them on a few people for his reasons. Sometimes it's a prophetic word. Other times it's to heal. Just remember with all gifts, they are from God and for God within his church body. Be humble and mindful of what you may receive to do his will.

As we wind down this teaching on Spiritual Gifts, I do so with a caution, be mindful of who gave you these gifts. If God created you, then he put talent, passion, and gifts into your DNA. This is carefully crafted. yet, we must remember (always) that God had these gifts and gave them to you. They are yours. However, it says of Sampson "*he did not know that the Spirit left him.*" Is it more about the gift or God? Are you the power behind the gift? Who was this meant for? Is it to elevate yourself or bless others? Be grateful God wants to use you in his kingdom work. You are needed. As we are stewards with time and money, we are also stewards of what we have been given. Always use your gifts for the glory of God.

I have been enamored recently with the phrase *pour your Spirit out*. It brought me to Isaiah 44:3 "*For I will pour out water on the thirsty land and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring and My blessing on your descendants.*" Again, are these gifts for you? It's a tricky answer. Yes, God gave them to you. Yes, they give you purpose within God's creation. Yet, they are for the service of God. With that said, they are only powered by the Holy Spirit. It makes a ton of sense that Spiritual gifts need Spiritual fuel and Spiritual wisdom. Ask for the filling, not to be filled. There is a difference. Be eager to pour that Spirit out on others through your gifts. God pour Gods Spirit out!

I hope you took the test last week. The link is at the bottom of last weeks study. You will be amazed. I am reminded today in Numbers 20 that Moses was that close to entering the promise land. Just that close! Yet, He took his authority and leadership to mean He had authority and leadership over miracles. Moses took a second miracle of water from a rock into his own hands. God then banned him from entering the promise land. You must use your gifts with humility and respect for the one who gave them too you. For His purposes only.

We are not done. What to do with what you have? Don't just take them and walk away. Don't just say "ok, that was interesting." Use them. Explore them. This week take the time to think deeply about the correlation between you and kingdom work. Dream big dreams of what you could do. Next week, let's put you and your gifts to work. Have a great week.