

NORTHEAST HOUSTON COMMUNITY CHURCH
Sermon: Spiritual Gifts, Part 8 Teaching, Exhortation and Giving
Scripture Text: Romans 12:3–8
08/17//2014

Quote: If our giving is not according to our income God can fix it so that our income will be according to are giving.

Romans 12:3–8 (NKJV) ³ For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith. ⁴ For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, ⁵ so we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. ⁶ Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy* in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.

There are three categories of spiritual gifts.

1. Gifts of Spiritual Abilities given by the Holy Spirit.
2. Gifts of different Ministries given by Jesus Christ.
3. Gifts of different Spiritual Activities given by God.

1 Corinthians 12:4–6 (NKJV) ⁴ There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵ There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶ And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

There are diversities of Spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit in the form of abilities. There are diversities of spiritual gifts from Jesus Christ in the form of Spiritual office and or Ministry and there are diversities of spiritual activities from God

The study has caused me to be careful to make the proper distinction.

The varieties of ability gifts fall into three general types, speaking, serving and sign gifts (see vv. 8–10; cf. Rom. 12:6–8; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11).

1. **The speaking, or verbal, gifts**
 - a. (prophecy, word of knowledge, word of wisdom,)
2. **The Nonverbal gifts serving/ministry gifts,**
 - a. (leadership, helps, giving, mercy and faith)
3. **Sign or Authenticating Gifts**

Miracles. varieties of tongues (languages), interpretation of variety of tongues (languages), healings and discerning of spirits.

Last week we discussed that there is a difference between a great talent and spiritual gifts. Great talent can be possessed by Christians and non-Christians alike. The same cannot be said for Spiritual gifts.

Today I want to try and cover three more gifts listed in our focus passage.

Romans 12:6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; ⁷ or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; ⁸ he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality;

They are Teaching, Exhortation and Giving.

It took me some time to get started on this message because I had to determine how to classify teaching. Is it a spiritual gift of ability given by the Holy Spirit or is it a spiritual office given by Jesus or is it a spiritual ministry given by Jesus?

Gift of Teaching Ministry

I believe it is a Spiritual ministry (teaching ministry) given by Jesus Christ to the church. Let me first differentiate between the spiritual "office" of Pastor/teacher. That is one office that embodies multiple spiritual ability gifts to perform pastoral duties and teaching duties among others.

1 Timothy 3:2 (NKJV) ² A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, of good behavior, hospitable, able to teach;

Looking at our focus passage, for me over and over again I see teaching falling under ministry not so much as a spiritual gifted ability.

Remember the gifts of the Holy Spirits is a gift that only came from Him. It was not a gift that was learned, as we discussed concerning tongues.

If teaching fell into that category then there would be no need for seminary training or even to study.

Example:

Acts 18:24–25 (NKJV) ²⁴ Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. ²⁵ This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John.

Apollos was talented (eloquent of speech) in the scriptures. He was instructed, not spiritually gifted. He was accurate in what he knew but his knowledge was limited. He was fervent in his ministry.

Acts 18:26 (NKJV) ²⁶ So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately.

Apollos was taught by Aquila and Priscilla more accurately. In short, additional learning had to take place for him to improve in his ministry.

If teaching was a spiritual gift of ability from the Holy Spirit then I don't believe that any additional training would have been necessary.

A teaching ministry is necessary the church today for Sunday schools and at every level, bible Study and Biblical training. Those that teach must first study the word of God.
2 Timothy 2:15 (KJV 1900) ¹⁵ *Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.*

The Holy Spirit provides gifts to help us in that ministry I believe those gifts include the gifts of helps, administration and others that may be needed to do the work of that ministry.

V8 he who exhorts, in exhortation;

I believe that this also is a spiritual ministry gift.

Definition Exhort - 1. to incite by argument or advice: urge strongly <to do the right thing>
 2. to give warnings or advice: make urgent appeals

Biblical synonyms - “beseech”, “comfort”, “exhort”, “desire”, “pray”, “intreat” ¹ Encourage (NIV, NLT)

We all have been blessed by a sister or brother that took the time to comfort and encourage us at some time. Their act was a ministering act to us.

1 Thessalonians 5:14–15 (NKJV) ¹⁴ *Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all.* ¹⁵ *See that no one renders evil for evil to anyone, but always pursue what is good both for yourselves and for all.*

1 Timothy 5:1–2 (ESV) ¹ *Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers,* ² *older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.*

Acts 15:32 (NKJV) ³² *Now Judas and Silas, themselves being prophets also, exhorted and strengthened the brethren with many words.*

Exhortation is a mindset of positive encouragement and instruction. It is achieved by those that have been given the gifts of helps and of faith. They may have seen a brother or sister in need and pulled up beside them and offered encouraging words and perhaps assistance. Exhortation ministry are those like feeding the homeless, visiting the shut-in, the hospitalized, those in nursing homes and the bereaved are exhortation ministries. We are more familiar with the word encouragement, but either word is an opportunity for ministry.

Gift of Giving

V8b he who gives, [do so] with liberality;

Here is another spiritual ministry supported by the gifts of helps. Jesus may give a person a heart for giving. That becomes their ministry. Often this ministry born out of the gifts of help may go unpublicized.

Often their ministry occurs outside the wall of the church.

One example

James L. Kraft (1874-1953) This Canadian-born entrepreneur and inventor was the first person to patent processed cheese. He and his four brothers established Kraft Foods, Inc., the largest American food and beverage corporation, and the second largest in the world. Kraft supported the Baptist Church and encouraged religious education for young people.

¹ Strong, J. (2001). *Enhanced Strong's Lexicon*. Bellingham, WA: Logos Bible Software.

Others include:

1. **S. Truett Kathy (1921-)** The founder and chairman of Chick-Fil-A
2. **Robert G. LeTourneau (1888-1969)** LeTourneau was an American businessman, inventor, and academic. His colleagues called him "God's businessman."

There are less well-known people in many churches today that give more than their tithes and offering that help keep the church doors open and allow the church to perform other ministries.

I have found that God uses his children to bless His other children. He often blesses us so that He can bless others through us.

1 Timothy 6:17–19 (NKJV) ¹⁷ *Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty, nor to trust in uncertain riches but in the living God, who gives us richly all things to enjoy.* ¹⁸ *Let them do good, that they be rich in good works, **ready to give**, willing to share,* ¹⁹ *storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life.*

A person or church with a giving ministry will never go broke for they are storing up for themselves a good foundation on eternal life.

2 Corinthians 8:1–4 (NKJV) ¹ *Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia:* ² *that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality.* ³ *For I bear witness that according to their ability, yes, and beyond their ability, they were freely willing,* ⁴ *imploping us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints.*

The above is an example of a group of churches (*churches of Macedonia*) with a spiritual gift of giving and exhortation.

Christ and the Holy Spirit calls us and equips us for the work of ministry and for the edifying of the body of Christ, (Eph 4:12)

Message Scriptures: **Romans 12:3–8**, *1 Corinthians 12:4–6*, Rom. 12:6–8; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11, *1 Timothy 3:2*, Acts 18:24–25, Acts 18:26, *2 Timothy 2:15*, *1 Thessalonians 5:14–15*, *1 Timothy 5:1–2*, Acts 15:32, *1 Timothy 6:17–19*, *2 Corinthians 8:1–4*.

END

Pass It On

R. L. Middletown shared a scintillating story concerning a wealthy industrialist who stopped every morning at a certain shoeshine parlor. An Italian boy always shined his shoes. Tony liked Mr. Ward, and the feeling was mutual. One morning Ward asked his young friend, “If you could have one wish fulfilled, Tony, what would that wish be?”

The boy stopped, looked his friend in the eye, and replied, “I would like to study medicine. Above everything else in the world, I would like to be a doctor.... But I have to take care of my mother.”

Deeply moved, the philanthropist retorted, “Tony, suppose I told you that I would give you—not lend you—enough money to see you through the university and medical school, what would you say?”

Smilingly the boy answered, “I would say you wouldn’t do it.”

“I will do it, Tony. You are shining your last pair of shoes.”

The boy laid down the shine rag and kissed the shoes that were being bathed in tears.

Their friendship continued. Arduous years of schooling were completed. Time passed. Tony married. He enjoyed a lucrative practice. Then one day, a beautiful car stopped in front of Ward’s office. The young doctor hurried up the familiar stair. The meeting of the men was very tender. Finally, Doctor Tony said, “This is a great day for me. Here’s a check for all the money you have spent on my education, with interest.”

Ward took the check, looked at it for a brief moment, slowly endorsed it, and handed it back, saying, “Tony, I never expect any returns from the investments I make in human life. Anyhow, God has credited me with it on His books, so it does not belong to me. Take it and find another boy that is worthy. Send him through school on it. Maybe someday he will hand it back to you.”²

² Jones, G. C. (1986). *1000 illustrations for preaching and teaching* (185–186). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.