

## ***Every Spiritual Blessing***

### **Lesson 6**

#### **Ephesians 4:1-16**

**Memory Verse:** *I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, and with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

#### **Ephesians 4:1-3**

As we have studied the first 3 chapters of Ephesians, we began looking at our identity in Christ and Paul revealed the beautiful *mystery* of salvation that makes all believers one in Christ. He reminds us that we as believers are *no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God...being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit*. Paul taught that believers and followers of Christ are not just individual saints, but we are each a part of the body of Christ, *being fitted together in to a holy temple in the Lord*. Now we will begin to see a shift in what Paul is writing in the final three chapters. Paul exhorts the saints (all Christians), that in light of the grace of God in our lives, we have a responsibility to live accordingly. As Christians, our actions will have an effect on the body of Christ. The church is not a building, though we do need buildings to meet in, but the church is the collective body of Christ. Practically, you belong to a local church that you choose to attend. Spiritually you belong to the whole body of Christ and Jesus is the head over all. Practically, we need to realize our involvement with a church means much more than just attendance. God has given to each of His people His Spirit, and we each have been given spiritual gifts to use to help build up the church body so that whole body will benefit. The growth of the church is not solely the Pastors' responsibility. Paul gave these exhortations to the saints, and it is inclusive of every saint, not just "leaders" or pastors. We each have personal responsibility to take heed to these exhortations. We have everything we need to do this: the Spirit of the living God dwelling in us, we have every spiritual blessing available to us and we are united in Christ! Therefore, as we walk in step by faith with the Holy Spirit leading us and empowering us, the church will be edified and grow. As each of us do our part to obey, serve and abide with God—He is glorified! The church building or denomination is not how God is glorified. When the people of God truly live for God, the church then brings glory to God! Now Paul changes the "tone" of the letter to appeal to the believers to live worthy of their position in Christ and work together in unity. The basis of Paul's exhortation is founded upon the doctrine he has taught in the first 3 chapters and he encourages them to adhere to these foundational principles by the dynamic empowering of the Holy Spirit that wonderfully is available to all who are in Christ.

"The Christian life is not based on ignorance but knowledge, and the better we understand Bible doctrine, the easier it is to obey Bible duties. When people say, "don't talk to me about doctrine—just let me live my Christian life!" they are revealing their ignorance of the way the Holy Spirit works in the life of a believer. "It makes no difference what you believe, just a long as you live right" is a similar confession of ignorance. It does make a difference what you believe, because what you believe determines how you behave!" —Warren Wiersbe

## Day 1

1. Read Ephesians 4:1-16. Summarize in one or two sentences what you think Paul is teaching in each section of these verses:

Verses 1-6

Verses 7-12

Verse 13-16

2. How does Paul describe himself in Ephesians 4:1?

Remember Paul was literally a prisoner at the time of writing this letter. But he did not see himself as a prisoner of Nero; He saw himself as God's possession and his location would not change his purpose. The fact that Paul was imprisoned allowed the writing of these letters, and the Holy Spirit ensured that Paul's words would still be circulated years later! In each of his epistles we see that Paul was also a prayer warrior for the saints. John Phillips writes in light of this imprisonment that God allowed: "God shut Paul in with his pen and his prayers, so Paul praised Him by writing letters and interceding at the throne." Make the most of any circumstance, no matter where you are, you can still be used by God!

3. What is Paul's exhortation in Ephesians 4:2?

- a. The call to salvation alone is reason enough for us to walk worthy! Based on what you have learned about the spiritual blessings and calling of God through the previous lessons through Ephesians, why would it be reasonable that Paul gives this exhortation?

- b. Paul writes in Romans 12:1-2 the same type of exhortation, what does he write?

4. What is our calling? Do you ever feel inadequate or as if God didn't really mean you, when you read about "the calling of God"? Look up the following verses and write what you learn about God's calling on your life:

Romans 11:29

1 Corinthians 1:26-27

Philippians 3:13-14

2 Timothy 1:9

5. How do these verses on the calling of God encourage and assure you, as you consider that despite any insecurities you may feel, God has called you and has a purpose for your life?

## Day 2

If you are a born again Christian—you are called by God and have been given spiritual gifts! Now you have a responsibility as a follower and representative of Christ to be a witness (in word and deed) to those around you.

1. In Ephesians 4:2–3, what five virtues or characteristics does Paul give us to express a life *walking worthy of our calling*? What do each of these imply? Use a bible dictionary, dictionary, other bible translations, or provide scriptures to help you define each of these virtues:

Virtue

Definition

We are to “endeavor” to keep the unity of the Spirit. That means to keep it our aim and make every effort to stay united in the Holy Spirit (verse 3). With many different personalities and fluctuating moods and feelings this isn’t always easy, is it? The verb “endeavor” implies being eager to maintain or guard the unity of the Spirit. We each have a choice how to respond to one another, we can yield to the Spirit and move in grace towards one another or we can be ruled by our emotions and selfishness. Paul is encouraging us to choose the former and walk worthy!

2. Read Galatians 5:16-26. What connection do you see between walking in the Spirit, and thereby exhibiting the fruit of the Spirit and your ability to walk worthy as Paul describes?

3. Read Eph 4:4-6. It’s important to note that Paul is not teaching unity at any cost. Paul is instructing us to complete unity in Christ by the Holy Spirit and submitting to Him. In verse 4-6, the word “one”

is used seven times to describe the oneness of the church. Each of these essential statements describe our commonality and unity we have in Christ. Most commentators agree these statements likely come from an early Christian creed.. List these seven things:

- a. Did you notice the Trinity in these statements? It is the triune God that makes possible this unity among believers. Read John 17:21-23 and share what Jesus prayed for believers?

The Jews and Gentiles are a part of the ONE body of Christ. All believers equal because of the cross, being fully redeemed by the blood Jesus shed for us. We can prefer different styles of teaching or worship, and some people might prefer to meet in different settings, however that it is not disunity. The disunity or division we see within the church is usually the devil capitalizing on people who are not walking in the Spirit. Selfish ambitions, pride, unbridled feelings, misunderstandings, lack of knowledge of the Word of God or disobedience—will always be areas the enemy uses to sow disunity in the body of Christ. We must strive for unity by humbling ourselves to the Spirit of God.

4. When we are faced with circumstances that are dividing us, what should always be the tool we use to examine the situation to make sure we are handling things according to God's will? Read Colossians 3:16 and 2 Timothy 3:16-17 to help you answer this question.

- a. If you are faced with a circumstance where you need to go to someone because the situation is concerning sinful practices, unbiblical teaching, or someone causing division and strife, God gives us instruction in His Word how to handle these situations. Read the following verses and explain what you learn:

Galatians 6:1-2

1 Corinthians 5:10-11

Matthew 18:5-17

2 Timothy 2:22-26

2 Timothy 4:2-5

- b. From these verses, what do you see are the results of dealing with things in the way the bible prescribes? How does it assure unity, help others and protect you?

5. Acts 2:38-42 gives us a great example of a group of diverse people who were an example of a healthy “church”. What things do you see them doing in these verses that enable this group of people to live fully united in and by Christ (vs 38-41)?
  - a. Acts 2:42 gives the perfect way to maintain unity among a diverse group of people. In this verse, what four activities do you see that believers should be doing that will keep us united in Christ? (explain what you think each of those activities mean practically.)

“A Healthy church is characterized by unity, and it is a marvelous testimony to the watching world.” – Christ Centered Exposition

When we are united, we allow “building up” to occur. When we are divided, we hinder the building up, in fact we are tearing down, not building up! Let’s do all we can do to keep the unity of the Spirit and watch what God will do! Close your time of study today praying for your church, from the members to the Pastors that there would be a godly unity. Ask the Lord to help you do your part to promote unity and for His Spirit to move in your church in a mighty way! Make it a daily habit to pray for godly unity among your church family!

### **Day 3**

When the body of Christ is united, the Holy Spirit will not be grieved and we allow ourselves to be used by Him to do those beautiful works He desires to do through us. We each have diverse roles and abilities that will bless the church you attend, as well as the church as a whole (the whole body of Christ.) All followers of Jesus Christ are given spiritual gifts to build up and edify the body of Christ, and reach a world that needs to hear the Gospel and see it lived out in our lives.

1. Read Ephesians 4:7-16. Write out verse 7.

The word “grace” here is a form of the Greek word “charis” and indicates the “divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life, specifically of the divine grace and favour as exercised in conferring gifts, graces and benefits on man.” (The Greek Hebrew Key Word Study Bible ). “This kind of grace is not “saving grace” but the grace we learned about that God gives us for living the Christian life and as Paul emphasises here for ministry. The “ministry grace” is grace given so you are equipped and can serve and build up the body of Christ. Paul explains that, ‘Grace was given’ to him so he could preach to the Gentiles (Eph 3:8). Here we see how grace is given to every believer to do the work of ministry” (Christ Centered Exposition on Ephesians).

- a. According to verse 7 how has this grace been given?

2. As we continue through our text, verses 8-10 represent a picture of Christ's incarnation, resurrection and ascension. He came down from heaven to earth, died on the cross, resurrected from death and ascended to Heaven. Most agree that Paul is referring to Psalm 68:18. Psalm 68 is a victory hymn that declares the triumph of a king winning a military victory. When the enemy territory was conquered, the spoils of war would be brought back to his own kingdom. Jesus conquered sin and death; His crucifixion and resurrection proclaimed victory over Satan. He indeed is our victorious King who has distributed gifts to us to further His Kingdom now!
  - a. What does Eph 4:8 say that Christ gave to all people?

We know from our text the "gifts" are the spiritual gifts. We will dig a little deeper into what the gifts are, however, we can also discover another beautiful assessment of what Jesus had done after His resurrection and ascension. In John 16:5-15 as Jesus was preparing the disciples for what was to come, He told them that He had to depart and that He would send the Holy Spirit to come and dwell in believers; this is His Spirit, which He described as the Helper, also meaning "another just like" Himself. We are the temple of the Holy Spirit, and we need to take this to heart and not neglect this truth. In Acts 2:8 after His resurrection and prior to His ascending to Heaven, Jesus said that when the Holy Spirit would come upon them they would receive power!

- b. Read the following verses and see what the Holy Spirit is described as:

Acts 2:38

Acts 10:44-45

Jesus has given us the gift of the Holy Spirit and as a result we have the power and the gifts of His Spirit working in our lives!

"Each member has a particular role assigned. No two members are alike, and no two have exactly the same functions. The part to be played by each one is assigned according to the measure of Christ's gift, that is, He does it as He sees fit. If Christ's gift here means the Holy Spirit (John 14:16,17 and Acts 2:38) then the thought is that the Holy Spirit is the One who assigns some gift to every saint, and who also gives the ability to exercise that gift. As each member fulfills his appointed work, the Body of Christ grows both spiritually and numerically." — Believer's Bible Commentary

3. In Ephesians 4:10, Paul gives the result of Christ's descending (coming down) and His ascension (being taken up). What is the last phrase of verse 10?
  - a. Dig deeper...Now look back to Paul's prayer for us in Ephesians 1:18-23. How do you see the connection between Ephesians 1:23 and Ephesians 4:9-10, specifically regarding the phrase "that He might fill all things."

The point Paul is making is that Christ is our almighty powerful Savior! He descended and ascended and there is nothing hidden from Him, and He is above all things. He completely fills all things and everything in heaven and earth are under His authority and He is in control. To further display His work, He has decided that He would give us gifts that display His glory! Glory to God! He is in control.

4. Read Eph 4:11-16. Before we look at all the spiritual “gifts” that the bible defines in other scriptures, it is important to understand why Paul addresses these specific gifts. They are foundational, especially for the establishment of these first churches that Paul was ministering to.
  - a. What are the five specific gifts Paul lists?
  
  - b. Paul explains the reason these specific gifts are to be given to members of the body of Christ. List each reason you can identify from verses 12-16.
  
5. Understanding why God gives specific spiritual gifts and what they are for, how has your own life been impacted by people in the body who exercise those specific giftings?

Paul explains that the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers were gifted for the equipping of the saints for the ministry, for the edifying, encouraging and building up of the body of Christ. Remember to pray for those people God is using to minister in your life and in the church. We should hold them up, they have a great responsibility and like everyone they too need prayer. Maybe you have one or more of these gifts. If so, take this time in prayer and ask God to help you be more faithful and to help you exercise those gifts more often for the growth of the body of Christ.

**Day 4 & 5** (There is a lot to cover regarding the spiritual gifts, so do this at your own pace)

Paul lists just five of the spiritual gifts in our text this week, however there are several more mentioned in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians. For some the concept of “spiritual gifts” is unfamiliar or maybe even a little scary. Paul writes about these gifts in detail in 1 Corinthians chapters 12-14 and also in Romans 12.

1. Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11. Paul’s concern in verse 1 was that believers would not be ignorant about the spiritual gifts. In the NLT verse 1 reads: *regarding your question about the special abilities the Spirit gives us, I don’t want you to misunderstand this.*
  - a. What did Paul explain about the gifts in 4-6?

- b. Why do we have these gifts manifested in our lives according to verse 1 Cor 12:7?

It is important to note once again the representation the Trinity. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, not separate but the triune God working in and through His people!

2. List the gifts that Paul defines in these verses:

1 Corinthians 12: 8-10, 28

Romans 12:6-8

\* See the attachment to this week's study that gives description and insight into what these gifts are.

3. What does 1 Corinthians 12:11 tell you about the distribution or giving of these gifts?

- a. How does that speak to you about trusting God to give you the gifting that He desires to give you?

4. We all have spiritual gifts that help us to fulfill our calling or role in the body by using (or exercising) those gifts and spiritual abilities that we have been blessed with. Paul encourages believers in Ephesians 4:16, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27 and Romans 12:3-5 that we all have an important function in the body of Christ. Read those verses and share how they speak to you personally about your part in the *body* of Christ.

In Romans 12:1 Paul writes: *I beseech you therefore, brethren (sisters), by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.* As you begin to seek to understand your gifting and by faith walk in the gifting it will require you to present yourself to God, and there may be times when you feel literally like a living sacrifice, because your flesh (or mind) will struggle with fear and doubt, or maybe even selfish ambitions and pride will distract you, and you will need to literally sacrifice to the Lord everything and trust the moving of the Holy Spirit within you. As you begin by faith to learn to exercise your gifts, you will get more comfortable in them, meaning, you will get used to the way the Holy Spirit wants to use you and you will grow in those things. We should never lose the fear of the Lord in keeping our hearts right, holy and acceptable to God; but we will begin to feel less afraid of exercising our gifts, and we will grow more mature in them.



5. When Paul was writing to Timothy, reminding him of the gifts that God had placed upon his life, he encouraged him in 2 Timothy 1:6-7 "Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands. **7 For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind.**" Write out verse 7 as your own personal reminder and proclamation of truth! (Replace "us" with "me" as you write this).
  
6. Close your study for this week by reading through the list of spiritual gifts attached to the lesson. Do you recognize any gifts in your own life that you were not really aware you operating in?

\*There are spiritual gifts assessment questionnaires that are available through biblical teaching resources that can help you to begin to see what gifts you have. Many times other believers will have been blessed by you and confirm your gifts as they see you operate in them. Ask the Lord to reveal your gifts to you and to help you by faith to exercise those gifts and grow in your understanding of them. Go to others for prayer as well and agree together before the Lord your desire to know your gifts and use them for His glory and the church. If you have questions or concerns, don't be shy. Ask questions about the gifts, search the Bible to learn more and don't neglect the gifts and calling God has given you. God wants to use your life to display His glory and if you let Him He will!

## Scripture References for the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Romans 12:4-8	1 Corinthians 12:4-11	1 Corinthians 12:27-30	Ephesians 4:7-12
Prophecy Serving Teaching Exhortation Giving Leadership Compassion	Prophecy Healing Miracles Tongues Interpretation Wisdom Knowledge Faith Discernment	Prophecy Teaching Healing Miracles Tongues Interpretation Apostleship Helps Administration	Prophecy Teaching Apostleship Evangelism Pastoring

### SPIRITUAL GIFTS

#### Glossary & Description

**ADMINISTRATION** is a gift that provides insight into other people’s spiritual gifting, as well as natural talent, which puts people who want to minister in a particular way together with those who need just this ministry. These are “well connected” advisors in the body. (Septuagint uses same word in Prov. 24:6 & 11:14.)

Additional Info: Administration is the divine enablement to understand what makes organizations or projects function and the ability to plan and execute procedures that increase effectiveness. Administration is a serving gift. Administrators should serve in humility and wisdom, always seeking to coordinate the gifts and ministries of others for the common good. Different from leadership, administration works with the details that bring the overall vision to a successful completion.

**APOSTLESHIP** is the ability to communicate across barriers and plant churches with the knowledge of the gospel. It is usually accompanied with a distinct calling and a miraculous lifestyle. The Apostles established the government of God’s church. In Greek (apostolos) "a sent one", or "a messenger", is a Missionary. It is important to note there is a distinction between the office of an Apostle and the gifting of apostleship. The office of the Apostles, Peter, James, John etc. is distinct from apostleship as a church planter. The twelve Apostles were all eyewitnesses of the resurrected Lord. Paul identified this as the qualifying feature of one who holds the office of Apostle (1 Corinthians 15:8). Paul also saw Jesus and He called Paul to be His Apostle. The gift of apostleship continues in the church today, while the office of the Apostle was limited to the twelve of which Paul is among them.

Apostleship is the divine enablement to start a church or ministry and to have the authority to oversee its development and spiritual growth. New Christians look to apostles for leadership and wisdom. Paul and John warn of false apostles—therefore this is considered a continuing gift

needed in the church. The gift of apostleship is given to the church today for its instruction, correction, and nurture. This gift is seen most often in missionaries and church planters.

**COMPASSION / MERCY** as a spiritual gift that transcends both natural human sympathy and normal Christian concern, enabling one to sense in others a wide range of emotions and then provide a supportive ministry of caring and intercessory prayer. This gift is also called the gift of Mercy.

Compassion/Mercy is the divine enablement to feel genuine empathy for individuals with problems and to transfer this compassion into deeds which reflect Christian love. Saints with a gift of mercy are usually less judgmental and give unconditional love. Paul states in Romans 12:8 that mercy is to be exercised cheerfully. They may have difficulty giving “tough love” if they become emotionally involved. It is important to seek discernment and let God do His work in people.

**DISCERNMENT** is a spiritual gift that gives a heightened ability to determine the source behind a teaching, problem, or action is either divine, merely human, or satanic. For example in reading or hearing a teaching, encountering a problem, or considering a proposed course of action, this person will have discernment of what kind of spirit is authoring it. This will be a much needed gift near the End of the Age. Discerning of Spirits is the divine enablement to know with assurance whether certain behavior purported to be of God is in reality of Him. The gift of discernment is concerned with truth and error addressing error (even if someone's motives are pure). The operation of the gift of discernment will give approval to teaching and preaching that brings truth from God. The individuals with the gift Discernment work well with Intercessors but they need to be careful to distinguish between their personal taste and true discernment of God.

**EVANGELISM** is the gift of having a special ability to lead unconverted persons to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. The person with this gift has the wisdom to know when, who, and how to call the lost and rebellious into the Kingdom of God. Evangelists are the spiritual "obstetricians" in the church.

Evangelism is the divine enablement to effectively communicate the message of Christ to unbelievers that they respond in faith. The word evangelism stems from a Greek root meaning “to proclaim the good news”. All Christians are called to be Christ’s witnesses, but the gift of evangelism is given to some to endow them with an unusual capacity to lead others into a saving relationship with Jesus. Evangelism may take the form of public speaking or one to one witnessing. Saints with this gift need to be careful to respect other areas of ministry.

**EXHORTATION** is the gift of being able to encourage others by well-timed and wise counsel. This gift builds the Body of Christ by helping new, young and adolescent disciples to turn from sin and believe in the power of the Holy Spirit. Also called the gift of Counseling, or the gift of Encouragement.

Exhortation, or Encouragement, is the divine enablement to reassure, strengthen, and affirm those who are discouraged or wavering in their faith. This gift enables one to help others to develop ways of growing spiritually. This gift is usually exercised in private conversation although it may be sometimes exercised publicly. Those exercising this gift need to be watchful for feelings of superiority or the desire to dominate. It will be important to respect the dignity and integrity of others even when they are discouraged.

**FAITH** as a gift is having an extraordinary confidence in God that is unshakable by situations, pain, apparent failure, or ridicule. This gift strengthens the individual and other believers (by example) to endure persecution and wait upon the Lord.

Faith is the divine enablement to trust God's will and act on it with belief in God's ability and faithfulness. The Christian who possesses this gift of the Spirit has a supernatural conviction that God will reveal His power in response to the prayer of faith. The gift of faith takes biblical principles, and under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, applies them to the current situation. The common way this gift is exercised is through prayer. This saint with this gift should be careful never to put down others for a lack of faith.

**GIVING** empowers one in a sensitive way to detect material or financial needs and meet those needs with Spirit inspired generosity. Recipients of help from Christians with this gift have a clear sense that God has provided, not man.

Giving is the divine enablement to contribute material resources to the work of the Lord with liberality and a cheerful heart. The gift of giving empowers one to understand the material needs of others and to meet those needs generously. Often the one possessing this gift will discover that his giving harmonizes with the prayers of those needing help. This gift requires wisdom for there is Godly timing involved, a time not to give, ways to give, and what to give. Those with a gift of giving typically give much more than a normal tithe.

**HEALING** is a "sign gift" which enables one to function as an instrument of God's healing grace in the lives of hurting people. The gifts of healings (double plural in the Greek text) include miraculous healing of the body, the mind, the emotions, and relationships.

Healing is the divine enablement to be God's agent or human intermediary through whom God will restore health. In scripture, we are encouraged to place faith in Christ's ability to heal. This gift applies to all healing God chooses to perform...physical, emotional, and inner healing. Some look upon this gift as a specialized part of the gift of miracles, although scripture lists them separately. The function of this gift doesn't do away with God's healing through natural means such as diet, rest, doctors, or medicine. The saint with this gift should place his faith in God's power and leave the results to Him. Pride and self-deception are things to guard against.

**HELPS** enables one to assist people in routine ways that are supernaturally enhanced by the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The helped person has the impression that they have been blessed and God has touched them. Those with this gift should be highly esteemed in the Body.

Helps is the divine enablement to attach spiritual value to the accomplishment of practical and necessary tasks that support the body of Christ. In Acts, we see that the Christian community chose Spirit-filled laymen with wisdom to serve the temporal needs of the people. The gift of helps/service usually leads one to supply temporal services to the Christian community. Helps and service lead to a kind of ministry to others that relieves them of burdens and enables them to better serve. People with this gift have a difficult time saying “no” and can get burned out if they are not careful.

**KNOWLEDGE** is an ability to remember Scripture or have it supernaturally quickened, or to know a fact or truth about a person or situation revealed directly by the Holy Spirit. The gift of knowledge would also include information revealed through supernatural means for the purpose of edification, correction or evangelism. The speaker may or may not know that information is being communicated through them that they would have no way of knowing apart from supernatural revelation. God may reveal a fact or truth regarding someone’s life or circumstances to a person for the aforementioned purposes.

Knowledge is the divine enablement to accumulate and analyze information effectively. This gift is needed to effectively mediate the grace of God to human need. Many in the body who have this gift are at home with research and sometimes have a low need for people, depending upon the other gifts they have. This gift is often mixed with the gift of teaching. The Greek term is two words translated “word of knowledge” or “the ability to speak with knowledge.” This gifting also needs to guard against pride.

**LEADERSHIP** in the Greek is actually “he who provides leadership in giving aid.” These go first and lead by example, so that others are motivated to follow. (1 Cor 11:1) Those with the gift of leadership are quick to identify problems and show by doing how to minister to those in need.

Leadership is the divine enablement to instill vision, to motivate, and to direct people to accomplish the work of ministry. A leader usually sees the big picture. They are motivators and are usually outspoken and make wise plans. An active strong leader may have difficulty delegating. A Godly leader will listen for God’s directions and listen to others. They need to guard against pride and manipulating others to get what they want.

**MIRACLES** is another “sign gift” where the gifted person is able to cast out demons, show a supernatural sign to unbelievers, or perform a public healing-- all to the glory of God. Those with this gift will be humble, broken people, full of the fear of God.

Miracles is the divine enablement to be God’s agent to perform powerful acts that are perceived to have altered the laws of nature. Miracles were used in the New Testament to draw people to God or sometimes to simply meet human need (Acts 19:11). In America people are turning to

an interest in the supernatural. Many have pulled away from this gifting because of its abuse, but this is still a powerful gift to touch people for Jesus. In Mark 16:20, miracles were to confirm the word with signs following. The church needs this gifting in this generation.

**PASTORING** is the ability to "shepherd" an individual or community of Christian believers. This gift is a special empowering to lead people into green pastures, steer others away from danger, fight off predators, and bind up wounds. Those with this gift have "big shoulders" spiritually, and are not afraid to jump into people's problems.

Pastoring is the divine enablement to lead, care for, and nurture individuals/groups in the body of Christ as they grow in faith. The gift of shepherding is not limited to clergyman; some saints who possess the gift of shepherding perform the vital ministry by feeding and guarding others in Christian discipleship. In John 10:1-18, Jesus says that the shepherd sacrifices for his sheep; he goes before them and he protects them. Saints with this gift like people, and gain satisfaction in helping encourage people to mature. A Godly shepherd will desire to help people grow and not make them dependent upon the shepherd.

**PROPHECY** is speaking what God wants said with clarity, creativity, and power. It is also called the gift of Preaching. The primary ministry in this gift is not prediction, but in confronting people with the truth about God and man—with conviction and repentance as the result.

Prophecy is the divine enabling to proclaim God's truth with power and clarity in a timely and culturally sensitive fashion for correction, repentance, or edification. This is a divinely anointed utterance from God given as an immediate message to certain members of the body or the whole body. Some characteristics of many who exercise this gift are independence, boldness, bluntness, openness to truth, sober, and little mercy. This isn't an easy gift to exercise due to the fact that the response is often unsympathetic to the message. If you receive this gift, be careful about the following traits: lack of sympathy and sensitivity, pride, judgmental, and discouragement. Christian prophecy will be orderly, positive, and edifying to the church. Prophecy will bring inspiration and even clarification, but **never extra-biblical revelation** *which are things that are add to or alter the written word of God.*

**SERVING** is a gift that expresses the love of Christ by taking care of lowly or time-consuming tasks to allow others to be more effective ministers. Those with this gift seek no recognition, but will be exalted by God Himself at the End of the Age.

Service is the divine enablement to attach spiritual value to the accomplishment of practical and necessary tasks that support the body of Christ. In the book of Acts, we see the Christian community had chosen Spirit-filled laymen, who had wisdom to serve the temporal needs of the body. The gift of helps/service usually leads one to supply temporal services as they see the need. Helps and service lead to a kind of ministry to others that will relieve them of burdens and as a result enable them to better serve. People with this gift have a difficult time saying "no" and can get burned out if they are not careful.

**TEACHING** is the ability to understand and communicate the Christian faith so as to make the truth clear to others. The result of this gift is the equipping and maturing of others in the body of Christ so that they will grow in grace and be more effective disciples.

The gift of teaching equips one to impart truth to others in a relevant way so that the gospel can be understood and applied to life. Teachers bring clarity and unity. Through them, we receive help, edification, truth, and life. They exhibit good communication skills, are usually organized, and are good listeners. Some have an inward struggle with the desire to study in lieu of prayer and relationships. Guard against being rigid, impatient, more interested in facts than people, and being too detailed. A good teacher (even in lifestyle) is learner-oriented as well as content-oriented.

**TONGUES** enable some Christians (1 Cor 12:30) to praise God either in another language not learned (Acts 2) or in ecstatic utterance that is not an earthly language (1 Cor 14). In either case, one's prayer is directed to God, not to other people (1 Cor 14:2). It seems this is separate from one's personal prayer language because there is instruction given to pray for interpretation.

**INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES** is required if speaking in tongues is exercised publicly in a loud voice. This gift allows one to declare to others the intent or meaning of the public ecstatic utterance, so that the entire Body is built up.

**WISDOM** is special illumination that enables one in a specific instance to grasp divine insight regarding a fact, situation, or context. It is the divine enablement to apply knowledge effectively. This gift is useful in directing the Body in what to do next; in making God's will known.

The saint with this gifting is given the ability to discern a situation and share the wisdom of God for clarification and encouragement. All Christians may receive wisdom when in need of it, but when the gift of wisdom is operating, wisdom is given for a specific issue in a relevant fashion. A gift of wisdom often helps discern the root of the problem. All wisdom given is for God's glory.