

Message by Pastor Neal Christopher

The Mystery Of Spiritual Gifts

"There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men." 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NIV

DISCUSSION: Do you believe that God has gifted you? Why or why not? Is it hard to believe that God would give you gifts? Have you had people in your life that have talked down or hurt you in causing you to feel like you were worthless or inadequate?

There Are Different Kinds Of Gifts:

Service

Service

Administration (organize, group, complex projects)

Apostle (plant other churches, missionary, leadership)

Evangelism

Giving

Helps (Repetitive tasks that drain some inspire you, get stuff done in less time, make others better)

Hospitality (strangers at ease)

Leadership (Influence, God's people onto God's agenda, leaders don't just talk about leadership they do it)

Mercy (empathy, compassion, grace)

Missionary

Shepherd (work with individuals or groups to keep them going in the right direction in faith and life)

Voluntary Poverty

Celibacy

Craftsmanship

Workings (Miracles)

Exorcism

Faith

Healing-Some gifts are temporary and some are permanent

Miracles (wrist healed, disaster flood sump pump)--God doing whatever he wants

Gifts (Inspired Utterances)

Tongues & Interpretation

Discerning of Spirits (human from divine or satanic, which way to go)
Exhortation (Motivation for change)
Intercession
Prophecy (Not Future-telling, Foretelling, Conviction of both truth and sin)
Knowledge (Know things you can't know)
Wisdom (Apply knowledge to practical life and organizational situations)
Teaching

DISCUSSION: How did you feel when Neal explained the list of gifts? Which one(s) of these gifts do you feel strongly about or think might apply to you?

The only sure way to know what gifts I have is to serve the church, evaluate my performance in the church and have it confirmed by the church.

DISCUSSION: Where do you feel you ought to be serving and are not currently doing so? Why have you been reluctant until now? Did you commit to serving the church when Neal invited you to do so during service? Why or why not?

Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

1 Corinthians 12:14-18 NIV

We must use the gifts we actually have, not the gifts we want to have.

DISCUSSION: Are there areas right now that you are trying to serve in because you want to but you know you shouldn't be? Is it maybe because you are not called to or are doing so with wrong motives?

"For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you. Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us." Romans 12:3-6 NIV

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." 1 Peter 4:10 NIV

Misuses Of Spiritual Gifts:

Believing your gift is better.

Believing everyone should have your gift.

Believing you have gifts you don't.

The gifts are not from you or for you; they are from the Spirit and for the Church.

DISCUSSION: How does it change your mindset to know that the gifts are not for your sake or benefit but that of others? What can you do to make what you are currently doing less about you and more about others?

"To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."

1 Corinthians 12:7 ESV

"It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ."

Ephesians 4:11-13 NIV

If I am not serving the community of God with power from God then I am simply attending a Christian show.

DISCUSSION: Why do you think God wants **YOU** to serve His church?

"If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing." 1 Corinthians 13:1-2 ESV

"And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13:13 NIV

"Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends."

John 15:13 NIV

DISCUSSION: Why is it important that love be above all of the gifts? Is love a priority for you or have you overlooked it in order to be efficient, productive, or to feel better about yourself, etc? What needs to change so that you can serve in love?

PRAYER: Ask God to show you where He has gifted you.