

02. Introduction to Spiritual Gifts (Part 2)

Spiritual Gifts—God's Way

By Robert Rohlin

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Bible Text: Romans 12;

Preached on: 1 Corinthians 12

First Baptist Church Las Colinas

1930 Gateway Drive

Irving, TX 75038-2405

Website: www.firstbaptistlascolinas.org

Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/rrohlin

Hi. We are going to once again continue our study in spiritual gifts and this is going to be the second review lesson. Essentially we had an introduction last week and we are going to start by reviewing again. And after we review what we learned last week, we are going to talk about some brief descriptions of the motivation gifts, somewhat by way of humorous analogy. And then also we are going to look at how to discover and develop your gifts. How can you get a clue as to which gift is yours? And I will say one word about that now is that in the coming seven weeks we will be looking each week at one of the seven spiritual gifts and one of the things that you will notice is that it is often easier to determine what our spiritual gift is based on the misuse of the gift. If you don't know what your gift is, the chances are that you are misusing it and once you see the misuses are, you may want to ask your partner, you know, or your parent or something like that, you know: Do you see any of these qualities in me? And they may say, "Well, I see the misuses in you." Maybe that will help you identify.

Well, let's look, again, review the types of spiritual gifts. We mentioned last week there were two 12s and two fours. And by that I meant there is a list of gifts in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. Then there is a list of gifts in Ephesians four and one gift found in 1 Peter four.

But we had the motivation gifts in Romans 12. We had the ministry gifts in Ephesians four. We have the manifestation gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and then there is a miscellaneous gift which is called hospitality. So hospitality is kind of lumped into a category by itself, but these first three categories—motivation, ministry and manifestation—are the key gifts and of these we need to really focus on the motivation gifts because that is the one he says he gives to each man severally as he will. That is the one he gives to each one of us individually.

So let's look a little deeper at motivation gifts. The reading for this is found in Romans chapter 12 and in 1 Corinthians 12 when it uses four different terms for spiritual gifts and 1 Corinthians 12 where it uses the phrase "diversities of gifts" it gives the Greek word $\chi\alpha\rho\iota\sigma\mu\alpha$ (khar'-is-mah) from which we get charismatic and some other things which, unfortunately that... it means a grace gift, but I think when it is applied to people who are,

you know, emphasizing the need to speak in tongues or the ability to work miracles and things of that nature, it is really a misuse of the word.

But it means that it is a gift that is given by God's grace and it is given to each individual Christian at the moment of their salvation and also every believer has only one of these. And why is it? Well, it is so that you can focus on it. You can concentrate it.

It is interesting that before these gifts are listed in Romans chapter 12 that the apostle Paul makes a point of reminding us, again, that we are all part of the body of Christ. And because we are a part of the body of Christ each one of us needs one another. The fact of the matter is if you had all seven gifts you wouldn't have need of other Christians. You would be a walking church in and of yourself.

And we find these gifts listed for us in Romans chapter 12 and we can see there beginning at verse six, actually, he says:

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.¹

And, by the way, a little interesting factoid here and we will talk about this more later beginning with next week, in fact, we will talk about this. But for each one of the seven gifts listed in those verses, verses six through nine or six through eight, there is one caution verse for each one.

So, for example, the very first gift that is listed is the gift of prophecy and in Romans 12:9 it says, "Let love be without dissimulation."²

In other words, love people without being hypocritical about it. Be sincere when you love.

He says, "Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good."³

A lot of times prophets, because they are very sensitive to hypocrisy and sensitive to the sin in the lives of people around them, they want to just totally cut the sinner off. And, you know, it is kind of like they want to do away with the sinner. And what this warning is telling them, you need to love people. Don't just say you love them, but inside be thinking, man, I wish he wasn't here with that compromised life. You need to love him sincerely. Your love needs to be without dissimulation.

¹ Romans 12:6-8.

² Romans 12:9.

³ Ibid.

But then he also goes on and he says, you know, “Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.”⁴

In other words, you need to learn how to hate sin, but still love the sinner. We can’t throw the baby out with the bath water, as the old saying goes.

So it is going to be fascinating these next weeks to look that God gives a specific work of caution to each one of the seven spiritual gifts, because any of us are capable of misusing our gifts.

Well, we had not only the motivation gifts, but the second category was ministry gifts. And in the ministry gifts what we have, first of all, is we have this list in 1 Corinthians 12:5 is where it uses the phrase in the King James Bible, “diversities of administrations.”

This is actually the Greek word diakonia διακονία (dee-ak-on-ee’-ah) from which we get deacon or servant. The same word is used in Ephesians four verses 11 through 12 and then in 1 Corinthians 12 verses 27 through 31 you see. I mentioned that this word διακονία (dee-ak-on-ee’-ah) as well.

And so, for example, in Ephesians four verses 11 and 12 it says, “ And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers,”⁵ which are really, typically, ministers in the church.

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry,”⁶ for the διακονία (dee-ak-on-ee’-ah), “for the edifying of the body of Christ.”⁷

So churches were given ministry gifts of apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. You know, apostles, interestingly enough, the Latin word of apostle is *missio* from which we get missionary. We don’t have any apostles anymore today.

Now the Mormon Church claims they do, but the reality is Scripture says there were 17 people who are referred to as apostles. Jesus happened to be one of the 17 so there is only 16 more normal people that are called apostles in the New Testament. To be an apostle they had to have been with the ... they basically had to have seen the resurrected Christ and they had to have a special call from God upon their lives to be sent. The word “apostle” means a sent one.

And then you have prophets which were, you know, people speaking forth the Word of God, not necessarily telling the future. You had evangelists whose real burden in life was sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and what he died on the cross to do for us. And then you had pastor teachers.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ephesians 4:11.

⁶ Ephesians 4:12.

⁷ Ibid.

Now in the King James this is pastors and teachers, but it is really more accurately kind of a hyphenated term here that they are pastor teachers. They are shepherds who teach. And they teach the Word of God.

And why did he give these gifts? Well, it was to perfect the saints. In other words, help saints to become mature for the work of the ministry. You are to perfect the saints so that they can go do ministry. It is not so that the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists and the pastor teachers can do all work of the ministry. They are to equip the saints so the saints can go do the work of the ministry.

And then he says, “For the edifying of the body of Christ.”⁸

So they would build up and edify the body of Christ.

Now in 1 Corinthians 12 we have some other gifts that are mentioned and we will be talking later about these gifts, but these gifts were typically confirmed by ordination. In other words, when you went to pastor a church, you were ordained and in Baptist tradition, at least, what happens is when a young man surrenders his life to the ministry and is ready, we give him an opportunity to give a devotional or preach a sermon in the church and then we give him some other opportunities. We listen to him and we watch him. We check his deportment. And I remember that after my son had surrendered to preach at the age of 13, everyone had the opportunity watch his character for about three or four years and determine that this was really serious that he really was sold out for Christ and really was trained to live for the Lord and just shortly before we left that church they gave him a license to preach which basically the church is... you don't have to have a license to preach the Word, but what this means is the church is giving an official endorsement to this young man that says we believe he truly has the call of God on his life to preach the gospel.

And then there is nowhere in Scripture that says we have to give a license to preach. It is just our way of having a church officially acknowledge that they have witnessed the evidence of a call on a person's life.

And then but usually when a man gets called to a pastorate or in a position or maybe he is going to go as a missionary or maybe he has got some other calling on his life for ministry, then he will be ordained. Now, ordination is kind of a different thing. We invite a group of people who are ordained, deacons and elders and pastors and we put them in a presbytery and they can question the candidate and I remember being grilled prior to my ordination about things. And then they will usually have a charge spoken. It is kind of a preached sermon. They will give a charge to the church and they will also give a charge to the candidate for the ordination. And then all those ordained people and sometimes when I have done ordination ceremonies for others, I will just have all the men of the church come up and lay hands on the ordination candidate and we will pray for him and

⁸ Ephesians 4:12.

then they can each speak a word of blessing into his life. And I have ordained pastors and deacons both and that is how I have done it.

But basically you are given an opportunity for ministry and typically that opportunity for ministry is given by the church of by, you know, like a parachurch ministry, for example.

Now there is, again, some extra gifts that you see mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12 that are not in Ephesians four, for example: miracles, healings, helps, governments, tongues. And that is a little confusing for some people who, you know, particularly were aware of the dangers of charismatic error. But, for example, is there a healing ministry in the church today?

One thing you need to understand, by the way, is I hear people preach very often about the gift of healing. I hear some people claim they have the gift of healing. But I have never yet found that phrase in Scripture. I think people that claim about having the gift of healing really need to go back and read their Bible carefully because what it talks about is gifts of healings. It is not a gift of healing, singular. It is gifts of healings, plural.

So, in other words, let's say, for example, that I am using my spiritual gift of teaching and I am preaching in a church in the capacity of a pastor or a Sunday school teacher and I am giving a spiritual... or maybe a lesson about the dangers of bitterness. And somebody there realizes that they have some bitterness in their lives. And bitterness is like an acid that does more damage to the vessel in which it is stored than to the victim upon whom it is poured.

Now let's just say for the sake of argument that they realize they have got the sin of bitterness. They confess it to the Lord. They forgive the person against whom they have been bitter and all of the sudden because of that a cancer that they have been fighting suddenly goes away or that because of that back pain that they have had that has kept them not only in pain, but great depression, suddenly the back pain is gone and the depression is gone. And the reason why is because these were caused by the symptom of bitterness. Bitterness can cause a lot of problems within the body.

In that case they would have gotten an individual gift of healing meaning they were the one being healed. When Scripture talks about gifts of healings it means that if you are sick and you got healed it was a gift to you. And if somebody else over there was sick and they got healed it was a gift to them. But no one had the power to just walk around and heal everybody except for Jesus Christ. And, well, of course, we do know that during the early stages the church in the book of Acts, which is kind of a transitional time, that there was a period of time where sometimes just the shadow of a disciple falling on you could bring healing about you But it didn't mean that they possessed a gift of healing. What it meant is that God as a result of this ministry that the apostles had, worked in the lives of people to give them individual gifts of healing.

So be very, very careful that if you hear somebody like a Benny Hinn or someone stand up and say that they have the gift of healing, that is not a scriptural phrase. Healings is plural. It is gifts of healings. It is an individual healing.

I experienced that gift because for eight and a half years I walked on a cane and I hurt constantly and doctors told me that, you know, I would never get over that condition just to get used to it for the rest of my life, go on medication the rest of my life. And then I attended a seminar that talked about dietary principles of Scripture and I decided, well, I am going to try to eat the way they ate before the flood and I did that for like three months and my health was totally restored. I had a gift of healing. That didn't mean that I healed someone else. That meant that God gave me a gift by healing me and letting me experience good health again.

And then, of course, helps can be servant. You know, what about miracles? I believe that the ... and, by the way, I do believe it is appropriate for churches to consider having a healing ministry in the sense, not that they, you know, have a healing service and, have the lame and the people in wheel chair come up on the stage and they lay hands on them and say, "Get up out of that wheelchair and walk." And then, you know, a few weeks later the person is back in the wheelchair. If anything it was a temporary affect or it was a fake effect to begin with.

But I do believe that churches... a lot of churches just minister to the spirit of man. They get up and they teach theology or they teach Scripture and they have a word of prayer and you are supposed to go home having your spirit enriched. But a good church not only does that, but they look at the needs of your soul, your mind, will and emotions. They want to help you think more accurately. They want to help you make better decisions. They want to give you emotional stability and they will have a valid counseling ministry. And so that is part of having a valid ministry is to minister both to the spirit of a man and to his soul. And then, but guess what? Man is also a body. And I believe that the Church of Jesus Christ needs to figure out they can minister to the physical needs of the people that God entrusts to them.

Sometimes that means, for widows and orphans, that we help provide their food. But what about do you have some people in your church that are knowledgeable about principles of health? Could somebody in your church have a ministry where they could tell somebody like me that walked on a cane of eight and a half years, why don't you try this diet and try it for a minimum of 21 days and let's see the effect it has on it and explain why this dietary principle is based on Scripture.

I found a lot of things in Scripture that respond, our bodies respond to. I remember one day I was watching my wife and this... it was a long time ago before we even had children, but she was just particularly weak one day and it was just a... it was unlike her because she was normally, you know, a fairly energetic person and my wife never complains and for her to be so weak and tired and drained and complaining, it just didn't seem right to me.

And I happened to notice as I was looking at her, that she had on a wool skirt and a linen blouse. And in the Old Testament there is a law that mentions not to mix wool and linen. And, of course, the purpose of the law was you didn't want weave wool and linen together because when you wash it the fabrics would shrink at different rates and it would destroy the woven fabric.

But they... I had also noticed some study not that and discovered that scientists have now proven that when wool and linen are mixed together it sets up an electromagnetic field that can actually cause muscle weakness.

And so I said, "I want you to do one thing for me. Would you go change your clothes? Would you take off that wool skirt and put on like a cotton skirt instead?"

And she went and she did that and she came back and she felt within 30 minutes just felt fine.

So, in other words, could your church have a ministry with people that understand the Word of God and its health principle and could explain to people where they needed to make changes in their diet or other things in order to experience healing in their life?

I think this bit about miracles. I think we need to be very careful. There is a lot of miracles documented in Scripture. And even in the time of acts talks about a lot of this, but I think we... And I do still believe that God is a miracle worker today. I just dispute the ability of people to around claiming that they work miracles. I believe God works miracles as manifestations. But could a church have a miracle ministry?

Well a church can certainly facilitate God's power being put on display in the lives of people in several ways. I think the greatest miracle today that we see is when a couple who is headed for divorce court gets some needed counseling and prayer and people coming around them and that marriage is restored. I think it is a miracle today for people to, well, maybe not a miracle. I am over stating the case here, but the world sits up and takes notice of when marriages are healed and when people who were in debt are no longer in debt.

But also could you just have a ministry where when you can't solve a person's problem, could you gather together as a church and pray for that individual and ask God to put his power on display in their lives in such a way that he alone gets the glory?

And I think we would see miracles if the church would gather together and pray corporately for special needs that would come together and pray in a manner that they could all agree upon and just give God an opportunity to put himself on display.

I know I have seen financial miracles in my life where there was no other way. We had a certain goal at our church to reach a certain number of dollars we wanted to give to missions this last year. And we got down to the third week of December and there is only one more week left and we were going to miss our goal by 7000 dollars and I knew that

based on past offerings there was no way that was going to happen. Then, lo and behold, the last Sunday in December there was basically 13,000 dollars in offerings which for our small church was an amazing thing. So we met that goal and God worked a miracle. But I had prayed for it. I said, "God can't reach it by anything normal. You are going to have to do something special for this to happen."

You know, and then there is governments and tongues and we will talk more about that, talk specifically about what tongues really was in Scripture and what people have made it out to be. But I certainly think there is a ministry of the tongue, not in the sense on speaking in some babble that is not even a real language, but I think that there is a ministry of the tongue in several ways. One is could people be used to... taught to use their tongues to glorify God in song, you know, in the choir ministry, in the music ministry? I also think it is not a bad thing for a church, maybe to encourage young people to learn a foreign language so that they can be of use in a mission field.

So this last Sunday in our church we had someone sing, three young ladies that had been to India and they learned a hymn in one of the Indian dialects and they sang it for us and it was beautiful and we had no idea what they were singing, but then they sang the translation of it, too, and it was just an incredibly awesome song and a hymn to God and it is just so exiting to hear that.

I remember that there have been times that I have gone and ministered to someone and had to use Mandarin Chinese to minister to them. And I remember one time that a young man lay critically ill in the hospital and he had been hit by a Greyhound bus and his parents say he was on life support and his parents went in to talk to them and they explained to me in Chinese that, you know, he had a knowledge of Christ in his head, but they weren't sure that he had it in his heart. And explained all this to me and my Mandarin is not that good. Again, I was amazed that I understood what they what they were saying. And I was also amazed that when I replied to them, I was able to bring up vocabulary and words that I had not used in years since my last trip to Asia. And I marveled later that I knew those words.

And then my wife showed up at the hospital later that afternoon and I was with her. And my wife grew up in Taiwan as a missionaries daughter. She learned to speak Mandarin as a child. She speaks it fluently and so she was talking to the couple. I did not understand a single aspect of that conversation. And I believe what happened is God gave me the grace to remember vocabulary that I didn't know or would... that I didn't remember consciously, but he enabled me to use it again and also God probably enabled me to understand some language that I would not have normally understood because there was no one else there to understand it and these people needed ministering to.

And then once my wife was there I no longer had need of that gift and I didn't have that knowledge anymore. And so it is kind of a fascinating thing. But that was kind of a manifestation of a real language. I am not saying that any cloven tongue of fire came down on my head. I am not saying there was anything miraculous, but I certainly thought that I had experienced the grace of God.

And we will be talking more about the ministry gifts after we finish the motivation gifts.

I also want to talk about the manifestation gifts. These are listed in 1 Corinthians 12 verses six through 11. And the phrase where he says they are diversities of operations. And this uses a couple of different Greek words. There is ενεργημα (en-erg'-ay-mah), the word from which we get energy. When you impact something you impart energy to that. The ενεργημα (en-erg'-ay-mah) means the impacted energy or the effect that a work of the Holy Spirit has on those to whom or those to whom ministry is happening.

And this word φανερωσις (fan-er'-o-sis) which is most often translated in the King James Version as a manifestation, but it means to show or to manifest. And so, in other words, what happens is that God works a work in the lives of those who are the recipients of ministry and that ministry has an effect in their life where God shows or manifests himself to them and puts his power on display.

So let's talk about the relationship between the three types of spiritual gifts.

A Christian is given one of the God given motivation gifts listed in Romans chapter 12 at the moment of his salvation. This becomes his motivation and his driving force, his passion. When a Christian is serving in the area of their motivation gift it is when they are the happiest.

Now this Christian, then, is given an opportunity of ministry within his church or a ministry by the church. He is commissioned to do something. Perhaps he is ordained to do something and I say he, but, you know, there is opportunities. I do believe the roles of pastors are reserved specifically for men. Scripture teaches that, because it is pretty hard for a woman to be the husband of one wife.

So there are certain roles that are for men only, but there are certainly opportunities for ministry within the church of Jesus Christ by women.

So this individual has been given an opportunity of ministry by their church and then through this Christian's use of this motivation gift in the ministry that is given to him by the church, God works out a manifestation in those who receive his ministry.

So you get one motivation gift. You use it through a ministry opportunity that your church allows you to have or some other ministry allows you to have and then God works an effect or an impact in the lives of people to whom you minister. And those are the manifestation gifts.

So these are the relationship between the motivation, the ministry and the manifestation gifts.

So different motivations affect our response. So let's imagine for a minute that you have got a dinner party going on over at your house and somebody knocks something off the

table. Maybe it is a plate of, you know, squishy looking, you know, green peas and carrots or something, you know. Anyway it falls off the table.

And I want you to notice how the different gifts are likely to respond. So, first of all, the prophet.

The prophet is likely to point to the person and say, “Well, that is what happens when you are not careful.” And their motivation is to correct the problem. In other words, they want to make sure that, you know, hey, you should never... I don’t want you ever dumping stuff on the floor again, so let me explain to you that happened because you weren’t careful and because you weren’t careful that happened.

You know, that is probably not the response most of us are looking for, but that is kind of the way a prophet is wired.

Let’s look at the server. The server’s response is a little different. They instantly say, “Oh, let me help you clean that up,” and they are instantly out getting the broom and the dustpan and whatever else is necessary, you know, carpet cleaner spray and what not. And their motivation is they see a need and they want to fulfill that need.

Well, then the teacher—and this is me so you will know what I am going to do if this happens at your dinner party—I am going to explain to you how that happened. I am not going to say, “It happened because you weren’t too careful. You need to be more careful next time.” I am going to say, “You know, I think the reason it fell is because the center of gravity was over the edge of the table and therefore it tipped over and it was too heavy on one side,” because, you know, my motivation is to explain the why of everything.

And then you have the exhorter or sometimes you would call this the encourager. And they are going to say, “You know, the next time let’s serve desert with the meal rather than bringing an extra trip and maybe that is what caused the whole thing of confusion. And so we are going to prevent this problem in the future by changing our methodology a little bit.” And that is kind of the exhorter.

And then you are going to have the giver. And they say, “Well, I will be happy to buy a new dessert,” you know, because their motivation is that there is a tangible need that needs giving to.

And then you are going to have faith, the organizer. This is going to be the one that barks out the orders to everybody else what to do. And so, you know, “Jan, would you get the mop. Sue, would you pick it up. Mary, help me fix another dessert,” and off they go.

And then with we have that wonderful gift of mercy and the mercy person says, “You know, don’t feel so bad. That could have happened to anybody.” And they are trying to relieve the embarrassment.

And, quite frankly, if I am knock dessert off, that is the one I want coming my way and I think maybe I am... I am still trying to figure out my wife. We have been married for 30 years and she is either mercy or giving. I don't know.

So I am going to teach this whole series and she is going to tell me at the end which one it is so I can quit being confused after 30 years because I really believe that Judy would give away everything I had if she had the opportunity. So she has got a lot of giver in her, certainly.

By the way, a little note... a little note on that. The more mature you become as a Christian, the harder it often is for people to tell what your gift is because the more mature you are, the more of the other gifts you also exercise. So in other words, if you are a server, but you start making a practice as you mature to encourage others, somebody may look at you and say, "I am not sure if they are a server or an exhorter."

And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works:
Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.⁹

And so, you know, what we want to do is get so well rounded that people are confused, you know, about which is our real gift.

Now, let's give another situation. Let's say that you are in the hospital and you are sick and seven different people from your church come to visit you each with a different spiritual gift.

So this time we are going to let the giver come first and actually I have got about a page backwards, so let me jump over here and put a page in.

This is the prophet comes from first again. And, you know, they are going to say to you, "What is God trying to say to you through this illness? Is there some sin you haven't confessed yet?" You know and that is a valid question because the Scripture does teach us, particularly in 1 Corinthians chapter 11 it says, you know, there are some of you that have partaken of the Lord's supper unworthily and because of this many of you are sick and weak and some now even asleep. That means they died because they didn't treat the Lord's supper with the reverence it deserved. That is a big deal.

James says that if you see a brother that is overtaken in a fault you go to him and if you help him confess his sins, turn back away, you have warned a brother, but it also says that if anyone is sick among you let him call for the elders of the church and let them come and anoint him and pray with him and confess ... he is to confess his sins and then God will provide healing to him.

So in other words—and, by the way, that is a fascinating thing. Most of us when we get

⁹ Hebrews 10:24-25.

sick the first thing we do is go see the doctor. According to Scripture the first thing we ought to do is call the elders of the church, have them come and anoint us with oil and pray over us. And, by the way, it is not the responsibility in Scripture of the elder to go and anoint a person with oil and pray. It is the responsibility of the sick person to ask the elder to come over and pray because you are showing your faith in God's healing power by saying, "Pastor, would you come over and anoint me with oil and pray over me because I am sick."

And that is really the first thing we ought to be doing. And what we normally do is we go to the doctors. We take the over the counter drugs and we take all this, that and the other thing and before we ever call anybody to pray for us.

Ok, so let's talk about the server. So the server comes to your bedside and he is going to say, "Well, here is a little gift. Now I brought your mail. I fed your dog. I watered your plants and I washed your dishes. So don't worry about a thing, you know?"

That is the server. And then the teacher, here I am again. I am going to come to your hospital bed. I have researched your illness. And let me tell you what I think is causing it and what I think some effective treatment alternatives are.

And, by the way, I love doing this. I, you know, I have been researching the illness lately and I think I have done a better diagnosis job than the doctor had, but I won't tell you my opinion of the medical profession.

So the teachers that, you know, they are going to explain it. And then the exhorter, the encourager comes up and they are going to say, "Well, how are we using what we are learning here to help others in the future?" Because that is what exhorters are all about. They want you to grow. The person most concerned in your spiritual growth will be the exhorter. They want you to grow so that you can turn around and minister to others. And a marvelous gift.

Now let's talk about another way to know your spiritual gifts. So maybe in between the stuff falling off your table and the hospital visit, you can see yourself one of those people and you are kind of get an inkling of where at. I think probably one of the best indications of what your spiritual gift is what is it that other Christians do that ticks you off. Now think about that. I want to ... we are going to have a moment of silence here. I want everybody to think about that question. What is it that other Christians do that just ticks you off?

Ok, so let's look at some possible responses and see if any of these sound more.

Now if you are a prophet—and my oldest daughter is a prophet—it is when they compromise with the world. So, Melody, you just... you know, what gets under Melody's skin very often is when she sees someone kind of saying one thing and then Donald is nodding his head back there. They see somebody saying one thing and acting

like a Christian, but then they have worldly compromise and it just irritates them. It just rubs them raw. Well, that is Melody.

And then the server is when they see a need and nobody seems properly concerned about it. Nobody is doing anything about it. It needs to be done. There is a problem here and if somebody just took a few moments with, you know, maybe the equipment found in a standard tool box they could solve a problem and relieve somebody of a major issue. And it just irritates them when nobody is doing anything about it.

And then there are the teachers. The thing that grips me the most is when people don't care about what God's Word says. And when people don't, you know... it irritates me, quite frankly, and I am not picking on anybody, because I don't... I haven't been walking. It irritates me when I see people not taking notes.

Now why does that irritate me? Because everybody will go put their money in a bank, right? Because we think that money is safe in a bank. And you know more about a banking you would think twice about it. But anyway, you put your money in the bank and you think that it is safe there because it seems to be safer there than just under your mattress and you seem to be able to keep better track of it through keeping a checkbook register than just being under your mattress and taking out the 20s whenever you need them.

And there is a logic to that and that is a good idea. And if we are careful with our finances, why do we not care about a greater treasure which is the Word of God? Why are we not writing God's truths down as they are taught to us? Why do some people, you know, they... and what really gets me, I remember at our last church very frequently on the way home from church my kids would tell me something they had learned in Sunday school. And they said, "Daddy, I don't think that is right."

And I said, "Well, you know it is not right because the Scripture says this, this and this."

And what irritating me is there were people teaching their own opinions rather than finding their truths in the Word of God. So this is a thing that really irritates me, that I am very passionate about. I want to see people take the time to figure out what the Bible says rather than just going off on their on their own, doing what they thinks is right and whatever they have a warm fuzzy about, right? Obviously you can probably tell I am a little passionate about that.

And then the exhorter, they just don't like it when they see somebody get saved and then they are still five years later a baby in Christ. They want to see that person grow and mature and they want to see that person actually able to serve others. In other words, so exhorters are really bothered when Christians are not growing spiritually. They are bothered if they are in a church and people aren't making spiritual progress. They are not bearing fruit. They are not becoming productive Christians.

And then there is the giver and that is givers are bothered when people won't trust God for their finances. We had some cousins come over yesterday to the house and they were telling some stories of how God had really clearly indicated a change in career for them and how God had provided a job for this young man. I say young man because he is younger than me. I think he is in his 40s, probably, but he is younger than I am, so he is young. You know, but at any rate, it is fascinating to listen to people that trust God for the direction of their job, trust God for the direction of their finances and that is really an awesome thing.

And, by the way I am going to be sending out just a... this is free. I will be sending out an email probably later tonight. I gave a presentation yesterday on what I believe is the coming economic collapse of the United States and how to prepare for it. And our men's calls that are normally 90 minutes it went, really, two hours which was different because people were very intrigued by what was there. So I have made a recording of that presentation and I put it on the internet and I will send out a message. I would encourage all of you who want to know what is coming and how best to prepare for it, you might want to check out this message.

All right. So and then the giver is concerned about, you know, not trusting God for the finances and then the organizer just gets upset when things aren't getting done or when they are being done inefficiently. And one of the problems organizers have, by the way is they get so irritated with everybody else's inefficiency, very often they will just go do it themselves, you know, because that is easier.

And then you have the person with the gift of mercy and that is they get upset when they don't see other Christians having genuine love for each other, when they see people who are hurting and nobody seems to be demonstrating any care for them. That is what really, really bugs them.

So what do we actually need in our church? And this is an interesting question. I think the ideal church would have all seven of the gifts in play. In fact, it is my dream church is to have a church with a board that has one of each of the seven spiritual gifts on it, because then you would have a complete board. You would make every decision from within the frame of all seven spiritual gifts. So you would have a profit that, you know, his job would be, well prepared sermons that expose sin and proclaim righteousness and warn of God's coming judgment, because that is something we all need to do. Then you would have the server who would give practical assistance to every member of the church and encourage them and help them fulfill their responsibilities and servers like to lighten the load on other people so that they can use their gifts to go do what God has gifted them to do and thank God for those people. And then the teacher would be the one giving the in depth Bible studies on the Word and helping people really understand God's Word and bringing out the rich meanings of the original language and bringing out the context of Scripture. And, by the way, teachers their big thing is like to organize and systemize everything, you know, so it's they love bullet points and they love PowerPoint, ok? So this is their thing. And then you need an exhorter and this would be the person that would give counseling and encouragement and they would see kind of where you are at

spiritually in your life and they would help you grow into that thing. And then the giver, you know, in a church it would be great to have a giver in charge of, you know, not only being maybe the treasurer, but also promoting the giving programs and helping people realize about special opportunities for giving, directing maybe a benevolence ministry, things of that nature. And then the organizer it would be nice to have somebody who just, you know, really did a good job at keeping things organized and I am grateful Linda helps me do a lot of that because I am not naturally gifted. Between Linda and Faith I get a lot done. But it is great to have someone that helps you organize and plan the calendar and think about when things are and start making arrangements and sending out emails and contacting people because Scripture says that all things are supposed to be done decently and in order, not haphazard and at the last minute, ok, which is my normal modus operandi. And then we have the gift of mercy and this would be kind of special outreach programs to people that were hurting. Maybe that could include counseling ministries where people just need somebody to listen.

I never will forget one lady that told me one time that when her husband died, you know, there were a lot of people that came and tried to offer counsel, a lot of people that came and tried to, you know, tell her stuff. There were people that, you know, provided financial gifts for, you know, until she could get her life insurance, a lot of the thing. But then she told me. She says, "The thing I remember the most is one guy from our church came over, never said a word, went to each of the kids' rooms, got their shoes and polished them all so they would look nice of the funeral. And then he left."

She said, "I will never forget that." You know, it was just a practical thing that really spoke volumes to her and I don't know if that was a server or a mercy, but whoever it was, she was so thankful for him.

So let's think a minute about what the church is called. In 1 Corinthians 12 it is called the body of Christ. Now, you know, there is a whole lot of debate in theology particularly in missionary Baptist circles about, you know, is the church always local or is it universal? Is there a universal Church? I think the best illustration I ever... or explanation that I ever heard of this is that every reference in Scripture to the Church refers to a local visible body of Christ. However, the body of Christ is something that is universal. So it is kind of like... universal is the wrong word. The body of Christ includes all of the believers. It doesn't include all people. It is all believers, ok?

But the interesting thing about this is I believe that the church is a local visible representation of the body of Christ just as baptism is visible representation of what has already happened in a person's heart when they receive Jesus Christ as their Savior.

And so but it is interesting, though, that we are referred to as, believers are referred to as the body of Christ. Now I want you to see how seriously God takes this, ok? So let's look at 1 Corinthians 12 and I am going to read verses 12 through 27 again. And I know we read it last week, but you never are wasting time if you are reading the Word of God, so 1 Corinthians 12 beginning at verse 12.

For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many. If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body?¹⁰

Do you get the idea God is trying to be thorough here? You know, it is kind of a little redundant. But he is not done yet. He says:

But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you. Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary: And those members of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.¹¹

In other words, it is not parts of the body you don't see in many ways are more important than the parts of the body you do see and you have got to exercise more care with them and they provide, you know, vital functions that the rest of the body cannot live without.

And he says:

For our comely parts have no need: but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.¹²

In other words, one gift is not more important to another in the body of Christ. They are all important. We all need one another. Every part... everybody has a vital role and function.

And, by the way, think about that. God did not save you so you could just warm a pew at First Baptist Church Los Colinas. He saved you because he has a job for you in his kingdom and you have got to figure out. This is why it is important for you to know your

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 12:12-20.

¹¹ 1 Corinthians 12:21-23.

¹² 1 Corinthians 12:24-25.

spiritual gift. You need to know where you are supposed to be and what you are supposed to do and how you are supposed to work.

And then he says:

And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.¹³

So we are all one body, but we have different functions within that body. And it is true. One member suffers, the whole body suffers.

Last week my sinuses were suffering and the rest of me suffered with it, because I didn't want to bring my nose to church so the rest of me had to stay home with the nose, ok?

So the important thing is for us to understand there that there is a fantastic analogy in the Scripture and that is Romans 12 lists seven different motivational gifts. And both Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 teach that these gifts are present in the body of Christ. And the local representation in that in the world is the church and here in Irving it is us, ok?

Since God frequently makes use of analogies between the physical world and the spiritual world, we ought to wonder if there are seven spiritual gifts, are there seven things in our body that correspond to these seven spiritual gifts? Could there be seven characteristics of the body that match the seven spiritual gifts?

Doctors used to say that we had six kinds of sense perceptrors and not that many years ago, 10, 15, 20 years ago they said, no there is another one. And the doctors now say that the nervous system has seven different kinds of perceptions within the nervous system and it is interesting how these correspond directly to the seven things.

So let's look at the first sense receptor that is heat. You all know that if you get your hand close to the fire on the stove you feel the heat coming up or you are standing back even some times 10 feet from a good bon fire. You are feeling the heat that is coming off of that bonfire.

So these perceptrors send warning messages to the brain when heat gets past a certain point of tolerance. I forget now which... was it Wycliffe that used to hold his hand of the flame or was that Huss that used to do that? John Huss, Bohemian missionary and he used to... he was afraid that one day he would have to be martyred for Christ and he used to hold his hand over the candle flame to see how much pain he could tolerate.

One thing Huss, I don't think understood then, but he certainly understood later is that God doesn't give you the grace for a pain until it is your time for that pain. It is like every woman that has ever had a baby knows you only have grace for one contraction at a time, not for the whole labor all at once.

¹³ 1 Corinthians 12:26-27.

Same thing. You don't get the grace to burn at the stake until it is your turn to burn at the stake. But God's grace will always be there. That is the thing we can take confidence in.

But there is a heat perceptor that says, "Oh, boy, that heat is getting a little too hot."

Again, you know, it is amazing sometimes, you know, what, you know, how... how those things affect us and our reactions to them. But when God's judgment was immanent on his people, the prophet was the one that would often go out and proclaim God's judgment. He is kind of like you all are sinning. You are getting too close to the fire. Judgment is about to come. You need to repent and you need to get away from the coming judgment. You need to get back right with God because if you don't you are going to be judged. It is kind of like if you don't stop you are going to be burned. That was the function of the prophet.

Then the second kind of sense perceptor is touch. Yesterday, I guess it was the day before yesterday. We were sitting in the living room at the house and I have a girl over here and a girl over here which, you know, fulfills my dream I had when I was 14 to being surrounded by girls and that is why I have six daughters. And so one of the daughters she was just touching me, just really lightly. Trying to see how lightly she could touch my arm without me feeling it. Well if those hairs... every one of those hairs on my arm is connected to a nerve and I feel it. I am sensitive to it. And she is like, "Do you feel that?"

And I went, "Yes."

You know, and she jumped and stubbed her toe and blamed me for stubbing her toe, because, you know, she was tickling my arm.

And then when my other daughter on the other side decided that my arm hair was apparently not curly enough and if you pulled on it just right across your fingernail, you could curl the hair on my arm. But she found out I said, "Ouch" when you did that.

And, you know, but the thing is the touch... Have you ever noticed when you want to get somebody's attention and maybe they are engrossed in something and you have already called their name and they haven't heard you that what you can do is just come up and tap them lightly and you get their attention. Just a little light touch gets their attention and because I have counseled my kids years ago. I said, "Kids, if I am talking to somebody and I am engaged in conversation with them, please don't ever interrupt me. But what I do want you to do is if you need my attention, if you will just come up and put your hand on my shoulder and wait there. I will know that you need my attention and I will stop when it... at the first convenient moment and I will see what it is you need."

And that is a great way to train your kids, by the way so they are not interrupting your conversation. In other words, just have them put their hand on your shoulder.

And the thing is, a light touch indicates that somebody needs some attention. And this corresponds to the server because the server is sensitive to the fact that somebody needs help. The server sees that there is a project that needs doing or a practical needs that needs meeting and there are more sensitive to it than the rest of us. So you servers don't get irritated if we don't notice. You are more gifted to notice it than we are. Come tell us about it and we will get involved. But you are going to be more gifted to notice it.

And then there is another sense called the sense of balance. And that is, you know, you stand on one foot and you lean over all the sudden your brain says, "Whoa, don't keep doing it, you know, you are going to go over ok?"

And so we have this sense of balance. And, by the way, this is one of the challenges as we get older that sense of balance becomes harder. That is why a lot of old people fall.

By the way, they have now shown that the best preventive for old people falling, of all things, is vitamin D because it is actually a hormone and it keeps the sense perceptor, the balance perceptor turned on which otherwise turns off in late life. And so they are saying, you know, take 4000, 5000 IU a day of vitamin D that old people are less likely to fall. And, of course, once they start falling they go into the nursing home, you know, because there is the danger osteoporosis and other things causing broken bones. So it is important that we have this sense of balance. And if the body goes too far out of balance, then it will fall. And I think this corresponds to the gift of teacher because teachers want to make sure that truth is always in balance.

One of the things I struggled with yesterday on the men's call and if you listen to the recording of the men's call, it will be posted online later, one of the things I struggle with was keeping that presentation in balance because we need to understand that our security is in God, but we also need to understand that God wants us to be good stewards and the Bible, you know, doesn't want us to be fearful. God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind, so we don't want to be fearful. But on the other side in Proverbs 22:3 it says, "A prudent man foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself: but the simple pass on, and are punished."¹⁴ And that means that I need to if I see problems coming and if there is indications of problems coming, I need to adjust what I am doing now. So there are indications that we are going to have a sever economic problem here in the United States that is going to make the Great Depression look like a walk in the park.

If that is true, we need to be preparing for it now and there are some things that we can do. And so we need to make sure that we keep things in balance. So any truth in Scripture if you keep it out of balance, will lead to heresy.

For example, if all we ever did at this church was preach the love of God and how he wants you to be saved everybody would go away thinking, oh, God just loves everybody. He loves everybody so much he is not... we could preach that passage that says he is not

¹⁴ Proverbs 22:3.

willing that any should perish and we could say, “Hey, well, he is not willing any should perish, therefore everybody is going to be saved. Everybody will show up in heaven.”

Now that would be truth out of balance because you started with the truth that God loves us and he is not willing that any should perish and you have kept it out of balance. But Scripture also says that it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. Why? Because he is also a judge. He judges unrighteousness.

There is a place called the lake of fire. Everybody thinks the lost go to hell when they die. That is only true temporarily. Scripture says “And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.”¹⁵

Hell is just a really bad waiting place before you get to the final destination. The lake of fire is going to be even worse. At least if you are in hell, you will get out for a few moments during the judgment. Then you are going to be in the lake of fire and there is no escape out.

So, I mean, God is a just God. He is a judging God. And we have to [?].

There is another sense and that is the stretch perceptor. Have you ever noticed when you are stretching how you can kind of feel it is kind of like I feel those muscles stretching or if they are not muscles, whatever it is. But, you know, you feel you it stretching. You can feel when, you know, your skin is stretching and something is, you know, got you to where it is doing it. The exhorter is kind of the corresponding to this, because an exhorter’s job is to help you stretch. It is to help you grow. It is to help you know that you are not supposed to just sit where you are, but you are to grow further.

And then there is the sense perceptor of cold. Now this is the one that for a long time scientists didn’t think we had. They knew we sensed heat, but they didn’t really think about the fact that we could also sense cold. But there is a certain set of nerves in our body that when heat is leaving our body we feel cold.

Have you ever noticed that a child when they are having sickness and they have got a fever, 102, and you feel their forehead and you go, “Wow, he is burning up.”

Take the temperature. Yup. It is 102. And, by the back of my hand is almost as accurate as any digital thermometer in existence and not too long ago we had one kid that I felt her head and I said, “You know, I think she has got about a 100.1 fever.” And Judy felt her head and she doesn’t have a fever. She is fine. It is just other stuff.

So as soon as Judy left I stuck the thermometer in this kid’s mouth and took it and I was two-tenths of a degree off, but my hand was right. That child had a fever, you know?

¹⁵ Revelation 20:13.

So when... have you ever noticed what happens to a kid when they have got a fever, when you have had the fever? You are burning up. It is 102 degrees, but the child feels cold. Why is that? Because they are so hot, the heat is trying to leave their body and as the heat is leaving their body their cold perceptor said, "Oh, heat is leaving my body. I am cold."

And so here is a child with a 102 fever and what they want to do is pull the covers up over them. They want to snuggle. They want to get it... they want the warm broth to drink and they want a blanket to wear and meanwhile they are burning up, ok? It is because heat is leaving their body.

And when you feel heat leaving it makes you feel cold and that is why, you know, you don't want your feet uncovered at night, because you will leave out through your feet and you may have the rest of the body covered up, but your body will feel cold when your feet are sticking out from under the covers.

Now this is analogous to that gift of the giver because a giver is always in a mode where they... God has provided them resources and they want that, those resources to leave and meet the needs of others. They want those resources to go out. So the action of heat leaving is detected by the cold perceptors and a giver is the kind of person who would respond to a person who was cold or hungry.

Then there is the seventh one and this is the pressure perceptor. It is when somebody is pushing too hard. Now I remember years ago at... right over here in Forth Worth at the Kimble Science Museum and I believe they still have it if you go there, so it would be worth a visit for you and your kids some day to go to the Kimble Science Museum in Forth Worth. They had a bed of nails that you can lay on. And I don't know how many of you have ever laid on a bed on nails? Anybody just me and my kids apparently. They are actually pretty comfortable. In fact, as I am thinking about ditching my latest mattress and putting in a bed of nails and I haven't had a chance to talk to Judy about it yet, but we are thinking about it.

And if you think about it, nails are sharp. And these are sharp nails, by the way. And you push a sharp nail into your hand very much and you go, "Ouch." So how could you lay on one? Well, the reason they were able to build a bed of nails is actually comfortable to lay on, is they figured out how much pressure it took with a sharp nail before your body said, "Ouch." And then they figured out what the average weight of a person was and they put the nails closely together so that no nail would bear more weight than that amount of pressure it took for people to say, "Ouch."

So your body weight is distributed across the nails so that there is very little pressure on any one nail and so you lay there and you think, "Hey, this isn't that bad."

Meanwhile you thought that only Indian swamis that know how to meditate on their navel for a long time were able to do this. But it is really just science. It is not a hard thing to do.

But when we feel pressure, there is a point at which we get enough pressure that life becomes painful. You know, and sometimes for me it is just, it is the concept of, you know, being a software engineer for IBM and being a pastor and being a father of eight kids and trying to write books and you do all that at the same time and you think, “Man, that is pressure.”

I was just reading a little bit in the biography of Martin Luther this last week and found out that he was probably the last person as busy as I am. And he was a busy man and he was at one time he was authoring three books, teaching seminary classes and pastoring a church and was a dad and at the same time. The man was busy.

And, of course, his secret was praying which should be all that.

But, you know, an organizer or an administrator, they have the ability to say, “You know what?” There are some things we could do. I could either recruit help to help you or I could organize things so that you could find them more quickly or I could just relieve the clutter because, you know, I have the gift to be able to relieve the clutter and organize things so that you are not so stressed out from the lack of organization. Let me do that so that you can focus on what you need to do. And that is the pressure perceptor.

And then the last perceptor is just the perceptor of pain and pain is a gift. I don't any of you who have ever read Philip Yancey's books, but Philip Yancey did some research. I think his book is called *Where is God when it Hurts?* And he did some research into leprosy patients. And the problem with leprosy that they have discovered is that there is nerve damage so that you don't sense when you are doing damage to your body anymore.

And so he gives the story of a salesman that always wanted to look nice so always wore a really nice suit. He got these expensive Italian shoes, but because he had nerve damage he didn't realize the shoes were not the right size for him and he ended up having to have several of his toes amputated because the shoes were damaging and he didn't know it.

He tells a story of a janitor who was sweeping, but he was holding the broom so hard because of Hanson's disease, or leprosy, that he didn't realize how hard he was holding and it cut off the blood circulation and he ended up having to have his thumbs amputated because they basically died because of the damage that was done to them.

So pain is a gift. We don't like it. It is the gift nobody wants. Right? It is the gift none of us want. And this corresponds to the gift of mercy because a person with a gift of mercy senses when something is wrong because somebody is in pain. When I have pain it means that somewhere in my body something is messed up and it is trying to tell me about it. The same thing when somebody is hurting within a church it means there is something there that we need to turn our attention to. We need to do some ministry to or somebody we need to pray for, somebody we need to comfort.

So these are the seven sense perceptors. Isn't it amazing how each one of them corresponds to one of the seven spiritual gifts? When God says that we are to be the body of Christ, he is very, very serious about it.

Let's go to the Lord in a word of prayer.