

Gifts of the Spirit

by Bill McLeod

The gifts of the Spirit are essential for the growth and edification of the Church, and for serving others in need.

Duration: 19:53

Scripture: Ephesians 4:8-13, Ephesians 4:16

Topics: "Spiritual Gifts"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the gift of healing and emphasizes the importance of simplicity and humility in receiving God's blessings. He shares a story of a man who experienced a miraculous breakthrough in his business after he obeyed God's prompting to attend a prayer meeting. The preacher also highlights the need for churches to understand the truth that God desires to produce His Son in every local church. He mentions the example of Methodist churches in the 1850s experiencing revival and the impact of testimonies on unbelievers. The sermon concludes with a reminder that all parts of the body of Christ are necessary and should not be overlooked, using the example of the disciples' failure to cast out a demon. The preacher also mentions the examples of George Muller and God's ability to provide abundantly for His people.

Transcript

Well, good morning, Grace Baptist Church. Did you come praying? Praising? I hope so. I've tried to.

I want to read from Ephesians chapter 4, and we'll begin at verse 8. Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he had captivity kept him, and gave gifts unto men. Now that he ascended, what is it, but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also as ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill or fulfill all things. And he gave some apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the perfection of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.

That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, tied about with every wind of doctrine, by the sight of men, and coming crossed in us, whereby they lie awake to the sea. But speaking the truth in love, may go up into him in all things, who is the head, even Christ. Notice carefully verse 16.

From whom, that is, from Christ the head, from whom the whole body fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplies, according to the effectual working and the measure of every part, makes increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. This I say, therefore, and testify unto the Lord, that you henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind. Just that far.

I want to talk particularly about gifts that God gives to his people, to his churches. You may have noticed in the scripture we read. First of all, he gave gifts unto men, and then he gave gifted men to the church.

That's always the order. God gives men to various types of ministry, and then he gives these gifted men to the church. You know, there was a time when Protestants, theologians, many of them were teaching that the gifts all ended with the apostolic age.

They're not needed for today. We don't have to think about them at all. And even some great evangelical names bought that idea.

The problem is they bought it without any scripture. They were never able, even when confronted publicly, they could never give any scriptures that supported their view. Because 1 Corinthians 1.7 said, God's address to the church was calling.

He said, so that you come behind in no gift, waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. So in other words, what Paul was saying was this. That the gifts of the Spirit would be with the church until Jesus returns.

So those with the idea they were ended, had nothing to stand on. They came behind the Corinthian church in no gift, it said, waiting for the coming of Christ. Well, we have local churches, and then we have the universal church.

This is a local church. The universal church, the Bible speaks about that in Hebrews 12.22. You are called to go outside into the city of the living God, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly. That's the universal church.

To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven. That will be when the gospel nation is ended, the church is all home. That will be the universal church.

And in both the local church and the universal church, God is trying to reveal his Son, Jesus, to local churches like this one here. And of course when the whole thing is ended, it will be clearly seen what God had in mind. Even now, we're told by Paul again, that God is showing principalities and powers in the heavens by local churches, his wisdom.

God is trying to show his wisdom, I say, to principalities and powers in heaven through this church, and every true evangelical church. Okay, that's Ephesians 3.10, by the way. You know, we have in the Bible, Jesus is called in Isaiah 53.1, the arm of the Lord.

Then we have Jesus speaking about the finger, the Holy Ghost. So Christ is the arm, the Holy Ghost we could say is the hand. And people who are preaching the gospel are the feet.

How beautiful are the feet of those that preach the gospel of peace. Thank God for that. So we have a complete Christ, or we would have if churches were aware of the fact that everybody in every church has at least one gift from God.

This is not recognized. This is not practiced today. You know what we have in our churches? We have a Christ who only has a mouth.

Or maybe we have a Christ who's a mouth and one eye. And Paul talks about this when he puts it this way. The eye can't say to the hand, I have no need of you, nor the head of the feet.

But it seems that's how we're operating, and we put heavy emphasis on certain parts of the body of Christ. And other parts, just as necessary, are completely overlooked. And it's amazing to me how much of the New Testament theater often is dealt with, yet still almost totally ignored.

The Apostles, Luke 9, they saw a man catching on demons, and they forgot him. Why? Well, because he didn't follow up then. That's not the whole story.

The story is this. They had just tried to cast a demon out of a child as Apostles, and they couldn't do it. And they were mighty embarrassed to see a total stranger casting demons out.

And Christ rebuked them gently for having forgotten this man and reminded them, He's with us. He's on our team. He's on our side.

So the eye shouldn't say to the hand, right? Now, here's the problem. Paul said, we do all things, dearly beloved, for your edification. For as much as you resemble spiritual gifts, see that you may excel to the edifying of the Church.

We don't need flashy, showy gifts. We need gifts that will edify the Church. Please keep this in mind.

There's a phrase, the manifestation of the Spirit, in 1 Corinthians 12. And every believer has some manifestation of the Spirit in his or her life. And when you become aware of what these are, and begin looking at them, because in the Scripture we read, it talks about every joint supplied, attached to Christ.

And so he says, the body grows. It increases as everybody in the Church understands the gift they have, and works at it, trusting God for grace. It's not how it is.

In the many 65 years of ministry, you rarely find a Church that understands this great truth. God is trying to produce in every local Church His Son. So what are they seeing? They're seeing kind of a Son that isn't really there.

A little bit, but not as God would have it, it seems to me. The complete Christ. Back in 1850, the state, Methodist churches, a great state of revival, and they said, more people will want to Christ.

So the testimony of Christians in churches in Jefferson, let's run the other way. They have some amazing examples of very hard-tough sinners being melted to a blot after hearing, perhaps, some girl give her testimony as what Jesus had done for her. We don't seem to have that today.

Our testimonies, they don't really seem to do much. I mean, we can't see all of what God is doing. But remember, we're to seek to excel, to edify the building up of the Church.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man for the common good, or for the good of all, as different translations put it. So every Christian has some manifestation of the Spirit in his or her life. You and I need to find out what it is.

And then ask God for help. We're supposed to use it rightly. And I'll never forget, it's for the edifying of the Church.

Not to build up your name, not on the trident, but the name of Christ. Let's begin with the gift called help. 2 Corinthians 1-11 says, Oh, so the gift of help has to do a lot with prayer.

That's something that all of us should and could do, to help the work of God. Paul said, You also, I quote him again, He knew where his power came from. Christians walking in the Spirit and praying for his ministry.

That's help. So we can look around. I don't think it means prayer only, but any means.

If you see somebody struggling, maybe their car is stuck, and you can help. Stop and help. It could be an opportunity for witnessing and sharing the gospel of Christ.

And oftentimes we Christians are the Savior of the world. We see a person in need. It could be a monitoring need or some other need.

And we just walk by, forgetting the gift of help. It's something that doesn't have to be an abiding gift or the only gift. But we should be aware of that.

You know, I'm amazed, and I've said this before, I think, even for this program, when I think of Acts 10-38. Jesus went about doing good. And healing all who were oppressed of the devil, for God was with him.

He went about doing what? He went about doing good. We think of him going about healing the sick, raising the dead. That's not how it's put.

He went about doing good. Seeing people suffering. He healed all who were oppressed of the devil, he said.

And he looked for people that were oppressed of the devil and did something about it. And we, as individual believers, should do the same thing. When Christ sent out 70, they were not apostles.

They're only mentioned once in the Bible. And he didn't tell them to cast out demons. He told them to preach the sick, or pardon me, to preach the kingdom of God.

And they came back to church with joy, saying, Lord, even the demons are subject unto us through your name. We are 70 men, anointed by God, going through the country, looking for people oppressed by the devil. Now, we don't want to get carried away in an area like this and see demons behind every tree.

No. There's all kinds of people that need to be prayed for. Over the years, I've had several cases where the person desperately needed freedom and liberty.

And I was not able to find out who it was. So what I would do in a case like that, I would simply pray at that moment for that person to be healed by God. There's a mental healing as well as a physical healing.

And we've seen over the years some very spectacular cases of people who had been in a, I don't know what you'd call it, a dark chamber for maybe 30 years, set free after five months of prayer. I guess, you know, that could come under the gift of hell too. So, he went by, I say, doing good, healing all those oppressed by the devil, for God was with him.

So we can follow and should follow. We hear of some person struggling, it's time we not go to them. It doesn't matter whether they're a Christian or not.

We can let them know, we're praying for you. And many times that's all that's really needed. But it has to be praying in faith.

Then there's the gift of giving. He said he would give with simplicity. I think he means with no fussing and no bragging.

Ploterno was like that. He had a business, it was on the rocks. He didn't know why.

And first of all, God told him he wasn't tithing. So he started tithing. And then one Wednesday night, prayer meeting night, he was working on a plan for a new hitch for his big machine.

He almost had it when God reminded him about the prayer meeting. He dropped his pencil and he walked away, went to church, paid for prayer meeting. When he came back after the prayer meeting, he said God in a very marvelous way gave him the plan for a hitch.

It was so successful that most of those in the same kind of business, earth moving machines and so on, they never caught up to him. God did something special for him. One time he stood with a check for \$50 million in his hand, and he looked at it and prayed this prayer, Dear God, whatever I do with it.

And God showed him, and he did it. Ploterno was actually born in Canada, but raised as an American citizen. And, of course, revolving George Miller.

It's probably through his life, looking at it, the modern value of English money. He probably prayed in, maybe, somebody said \$60 million. But when he died, he left nothing behind for himself or his family.

It was all spent for God. God gave him much because he knew he could trust him with much. And by the way, there's a verse that says, God is able to make all greats abound toward you all, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work of society.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/23/SID23867.mp3>
Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/bill-mcleod/gifts-of-the-spirit/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net