

# Fit or Misfit? (Part 8): The Motivational Gift of Exhortation

by Richard Siple

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*This sermon explores the motivational gift of exhortation, emphasizing its importance in the church and the lives of believers.*

**Duration:** 47:06

**Scripture:** Romans 12:6

**Topics:** "Holy Spirit", "Spiritual Gifts"

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## Description

The video is a sermon transcript about a man who had a passionate heart for Jesus Christ and impacted Europe with his love for God. The speaker begins by expressing gratitude for being part of a long history of genuine children of God. The sermon focuses on the design of our lives and the role of the Holy Spirit in leading us to cooperate with God's will. The speaker also mentions the motivational gift of exhortation and shares a testimony of a man who experienced transformation through his faith in Christ.

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## Transcript

Good evening. Now, if you're kind of strung away out there, some of you are, I don't know if it's the Jews and Samaritans or what, but I don't know which one you are. Just kind of, if you're way back and way off, why don't you kind of move up a little bit.

And we have the best seats in the house right here. And yes. Well, we have two or three that are getting revived, but the rest of you.

Rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft. Woo, you didn't know that, did you? Oh, that's a Bible passage I just quoted. Oh my.

Yes, my wife reminded me. That song almost made me forget what I told her to remind me of. So I'll do what I told her to remind me of, and then I want to say something about the song.

This morning, I did a terrible thing. I forgot to say anything to you about the Thanksgiving offering. And I believe in the bulletin it told you we're at, what, 88,000? That's pretty good, isn't it? That's wonderful.

And if anybody would like to give the other 12,000 and get it to 100, I'd really be thrilled. And so would everyone else. So anyway, there it is, and God is doing some really good things in the hearts of his people

about that offering.

And every penny of it is going to principle. Isn't that wonderful? Every bit of it will go to principle. But what I love about it is, at the same time, it will release interest money, 7% interest money, to go on ministry.

So you get both. It's a win-win. So it's a wonderful situation.

And this is supposed to be the last Sunday. I do believe if you sneak some in later, we'll accept it. But anyway, you can think and pray about that.

The song tonight, I did not know our sister was going to sing it, so this is just off the cuff, all right? But in my mind, it's the greatest prayer outside the Bible. And it's a prayer of St. Francis. And of course, I know that many of you are aware that St. Francis was a Catholic monk.

But what maybe you're not aware, fully aware of, is the great man of God that he was, and the great evangelistic thrust that he led in at his time. But Francis Bernardone was the son of a very rich merchant whose home was in Assisi. And he spoiled his son, gave him everything.

Francis lived like a prince of royal blood. He had all the money he wanted. He dressed, acted, everything as if he were on the throne.

He gave himself totally to a sinful life. He threw himself with passion into every wickedness. And he had the money to do it.

Wine, women, and song, you name it, he did it. And he lived so wickedly that he almost killed himself. And he came to a point where he was so physically ill that he thought he was going to die.

And at that point, he cried out to God. He did, of course, live in a Catholic surrounding, Roman surrounding, and he went to church probably once in his life at least. But he was part of the Roman church, and so he had some idea about God and about Christ, but nothing clear.

And so he cried out to God that he might not die. It took him a long time to recover, and as soon as he recovered, he threw himself back into his sin again. But this time, he couldn't enjoy it like he did before.

And he was beginning to find that it bugged him. He was beginning to find that it didn't taste good and that there was an emptiness and a blackness in his soul and a longing for something. And he became so dark in his soul and so depressed that he was sick again.

And then he began to get serious about his need for God. And so one day, he stopped at a little wayside shrine, and he cast himself down in that place and cried out to Jesus Christ to forgive his sins and to save his soul. And I have those prayers.

By the way, I think I have those prayers recorded in my book on revival, because he turned out to be one of the greatest revivalists of history. And the Lord saved him, and then later, he gave his life fully to the Lord. After he was saved, and he became a Christian, and he would no longer destroy himself in sin, his father got upset with him and disowned him.

And in fact, his father beat him almost to death. And so he took everything his father had ever given him, clothes, money, possessions. He took them to the city square in Assisi, and he piled them up there and said, I give all these back to my father.

From now on, I only know my father in heaven. And he began to live for Christ, and he went out and started preaching a simple gospel. Not the complicated business of Rome, but the simple gospel of Jesus Christ.

And that he died for sinners, and that the simple man who didn't have any scriptures, even if he could read, and who mostly couldn't read, could understand the simple gospel of Christ. He began to travel and preach. Other young men began to follow him and become his disciples.

He finally organized them and sent them out two by two. The Pope of Rome finally recognized what he was doing, and set it up officially as a Franciscan order. And that Franciscan order still continues today, though certainly not in the pattern of Francis.

And before he was finished with his life, this is hard to imagine. In the Christian and Missionary Alliance, which is totally, you know, given to missions, we have something over 2,000 missionaries. Francis, in the 1100s, sent out 60,000 missionaries two by two across Europe.

Try to get your mind around that. 60,000 missionaries preaching the simple gospel of Jesus Christ, salvation through his blood, and salvation by faith. It was actually the first step of the Reformation.

Now, you got that free tonight has nothing to do with the sermon. But I couldn't help it when she sang the song, because it is a great, great prayer. And it came from the heart of a man totally given to God, and a man who touched all of Europe with a passionate heart that blazed with love for Jesus Christ.

And so, there you go. A chapter out of revival history. Let's stop and pray.

Thank you, Lord, that we can be together tonight. We thank you that we belong to a long history of genuine children of God. We thank you, Lord, that we belong to the body of Christ by the new birth, that we've been put in that body by the Holy Spirit himself, sealed there for eternity.

And we thank you. Now, tonight, let us think again about how you have designed our lives. Let the Holy Spirit teach us and lead us into cooperation with the will of God.

We pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Well, have you found yourself yet? Tonight, the motivational gift of exhortation.

Three down and four to go. After tonight, three to go. Have you found yourself yet? Be patient.

You will. Remember that there are three divisions to the working of God's gifts. Always keep those straight in mind so you don't confuse the scriptures on this.

There are the motivational gifts, of which there are seven, as listed in Romans 12. And those are the ones we're considering in this series. Then there are at least nine spiritual gifts, or maybe more, but there's at least nine.

They're listed in 1 Corinthians 12, so it's easy to remember. Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. In one, the motivational gifts.

In the other, the spiritual gifts that are all supernatural. They're not natural. They're supernatural.

They're not given when we're born. They are given when we're born again. So they are supernatural by the Spirit of God.

Then there are ministries that people are given by God, or to which people are led by God, and those people then become gifts of God to the church. And so you have to keep that in mind. For instance, when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts, men.

And then it names them apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, for the perfecting of the saints into the work of the ministry, etc. So there is the ministry that grows out of our motivational gifts and our spiritual gifts put together, and then God's calling and leading and placing, and then we have a ministry for God. Got it? So we need to keep that in mind as we go along.

Someone has said, as Pastor Siple was preaching, he went right down the line and described me completely. It is obvious that this is my gift, but I really wish that it weren't. Please let me say that the happiest place in the world is in the will of God.

If God has designed your life in a certain direction, whatever you may think, you will be the happiest and most fulfilled living and walking in that design. Well, you can see that, can't you? Sometimes, you know, we think, oh, I don't want to go that way. And God says, yeah, but you haven't begun to live till you go this way.

And then you'll begin to be fulfilled the way I have made you. So don't be like Saul of Tarsus. The Lord said to him, it is hard for you to kick against the ox goad.

And we don't want God to have to prod us. Old Dr. Brock wrote a song that became common in the Canadian revival back in the early 70s. The chorus goes, let God have his way.

He knows what is best. Let God have his way. He'll give you sweet rest.

Let God have his way. Then you'll surely be blessed this moment. Let God have his way.

Amen. Please look with me at Romans 12, six to eight for our text tonight. We have different gifts according to the grace given us.

If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve. If it is teaching, let him teach.

If it is encouraging or exhorting, let him encourage. There's a wonderful verse that I want to use as a secondary text tonight. It's Isaiah 50 and verse four.

The Lord has given me the tongue of a discipler that I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. Right on. I have to read that again.

It is a biblical description of this gift. The Lord has given me the tongue of a discipler that I may know how to sustain the weary one with a word. I love to watch a person with this gift.

I love to just be around them and be there as they're with other people and just stand in awe and watch them. It's wonderful. They just say all the right stuff and everything they say is full of love and they just encourage people and lift them up and help them.

It's a wonderful gift. If I'm happy with a gift God's given me, but if God said you can't have that one, I'd say give me this one because I think this is a marvelous one. I've known a number of friends over the years that really, really had this gift and it was just great to be around those people and watch them work for God.

It was night. Two figures with heads covered moved quietly through a back alley in the city of Jerusalem. A 10 foot wall was broken by a large oak door.

They stopped. One of them knocked carefully and said, The Lord is risen. On the other side of the door, a muffled voice replied, He is risen indeed.

There was a sound of a heavy bolt scraping against wood and the door opened. A man lifted a torch high. One of the two men in the alley uncovered his face.

The man with the torch waved him inside, closing and locking the door behind. The two men followed the torchbearer down a long passageway, then through an arch into a large courtyard filled with people seated on mats and cushions on the flagstone floor. Dozens of torches set in niches in the walls filled the area with light.

Can you picture it? Conversation ceased and all eyes were fixed on the two men who now stood in the light with heads uncovered. One of them said, Brothers and sisters, it is my privilege tonight to introduce you to Saul of Tarsus. There was an audible gasp.

A woman screamed. A child began to cry. A voice in the crowd asked, Brother Barnabas, why have you betrayed us? Some were sobbing openly.

We will all die, cried another. Barnabas stood with hands raised, signaling silence. Finally all was still.

Then Barnabas began his strange story about the conversion of Saul of Tarsus. And as he talked to them, many of them already knew many of the facts. How Saul of Tarsus was a doctor of the law, one of the most brilliant men in all the Jewish faith.

How he was committed totally with a zealous attitude beyond imagination that the Jewish religion should be kept perfectly. In fact, at one time he said that he had no time but ever broken the law of God or the Jewish faith. He began to persecute the church.

He was arresting people, putting them in prison. Finally he was on his way to Damascus with letters from the high priest to try to find and capture and drag into prison all the Christians he could in that city. Barnabas told the story how that on the way a great light appeared to Saul of Tarsus and he was stricken to the ground.

He was blinded by the light. He heard a voice saying, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? It is hard for you to kick against the ox-goat. He said, who are you, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus, who you are persecuting.

And he said, Lord, what will you have me to do? And so the men who were there had to guide him because he was blind and they took him into the city and for three days he fasted and prayed and waited on God to find out what was happening. But then there was another man with a gift of encouragement. He was not an apostle.

He was not an evangelist. He was not anyone in the public eye. He was a simple Christian in the church in the Damascus area, but he turns out to be one of those disciples.

And the Lord said, Ananias. And he said, here I am, Lord. And he said, Saul of Tarsus is praying in a certain place and I want you to go to him and lay your hands on him and pray for him that he'll be healed and be filled with the spirit.

He said, Lord, you have to be kidding. This is a great persecutor of the church. And God said, that's all right, you go.

He's a chosen servant unto me. And Ananias went and went in the house and said, brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus that appeared to you in the way has sent me that you might be filled with the spirit and receive your sight. And he prayed for him and he was healed and filled with the spirit and arose and was baptized with water and began immediately to preach the gospel and began to prove in the synagogues and the marketplaces and everywhere he went that Jesus was the Messiah, the Christ.

Well, that's the story. And it happened like this. And I can show you that tonight.

And I want to do that beginning in Acts chapter nine, verses 26 to 28. When he saw came to Jerusalem, he tried to join the disciples, but they were all afraid of him, not believing that he really was a disciple. But Barnabas took him and brought him to the apostles.

See, these wonderful people with this gift, they just believe in you. You know, some of us prophets might be looking for something, you know, but not someone who has this gift. They come alongside, put their arm around you and believe in you and are ready to help you.

And so here is Barnabas. And as you're going to see, he's one of the greatest figures in the Bible who has the gift of exhortation or encouragement. And so he went and took Saul and brought him to the apostles.

He told them how Saul on his journey had seen the Lord and that the Lord had spoken to him and how in Damascus he had preached fearlessly in the name of Jesus. So Saul stayed with him and moved about freely in Jerusalem, speaking boldly in the name of the Lord. And so the very first contacts that the now new apostle of Jesus had was through the ministry of Barnabas, through this encourager, this exhorter, this man with this wonderful gift and a man who was also full of the Holy Ghost.

So I don't know what all spiritual gifts he had along with it. Acts 11 verses 19 to 26. Now those who had been scattered by the persecution in connection with Stephen, and of course Saul was there when Stephen was stoned to death, traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch, telling the message only to Jews.

Some of them, however, men of Cyprus and Cyrene went to Antioch and began to speak to Greeks also, telling them the good news about the Lord Jesus. The Lord's hand was with him and a great number of people believed and turned to the Lord. News of this reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem and they sent Barnabas to Antioch.

When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all, that's his ministry, and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. He was a good man full of the Holy Spirit and faith and a great number of people were brought to the Lord. These people make wonderful soul winners.

Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul. He said, wow, this is wonderful what God is doing in this church in Antioch. I'm going to go find Saul.

So he went and found Saul and when he had found him, he brought him to Antioch. So for a whole year, Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch.

What a pair! We have Saul who is all fire and power and is now called Paul and he's a great apostle and a great theologian, a great thinker, a great intellect, and he's proclaiming and proving that Jesus is the Messiah, the Christ. And then we have Barnabas, a man full of the Holy Ghost and faith who has the gift of encouragement. So he's discipling the new Christians, encouraging them, strengthening them, making them to go on with God.

What a twosome! What a pair! See, that's what God wants to do is put together in the church people with all different gifts to produce what's needed in the church. So there they are. And they're first called Christians at Antioch, which became a great church and a great missionary church.

Acts 14, 19 to 23. Then some Jews came from Antioch and Iconium and won the crowd over. They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city thinking he was dead.

But after the disciples had gathered around him, he got up and went back into the city. The next day he and Barnabas left for Derb. They preached the good news in that city and won a large number of disciples.

Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the disciples and encouraging them to remain true to the faith. Here's this great man of God, Barnabas, encouraging all these new Christians, discipling them, strengthening them, exhorting them. And he said, we must go through many hardships to enter the kingdom of God.

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and with prayer and fasting committed them to the Lord in whom they put their trust. Now go to Acts 15. Come on, stay with me.

I want to give you a good picture of this, a biblical picture. Acts 15, 35 to 41. But Paul and Barnabas remain in Antioch where they and many others taught and preached the word of the Lord.

Sometime later, Paul said to Barnabas, let us go back and visit the brothers in all the towns where we preached the word of the Lord. He said, let's go back and see how they're doing. Barnabas wanted to take John, also called Mark, with them.

But Paul did not think it was wise to take him because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and had not continued with them in the work. They had such a sharp disagreement that they parted company. Now you think that in the early church, none of the great Christians ever disagreed.

Yes, they did. Here's two great brothers, great missionaries that had founded churches in city after city, did a great job together. But now they disagree over this and Paul is being very strict.

But Barnabas, he's this warm, loving, forgiving, helping, encouraging man. So Barnabas took Mark and sailed for Cyprus. Paul chose Silas and left, commanded by their brothers to the grace of God.

So there they went. But see, Barnabas, this discipler, this encourager, this exhorter, this man that strengthens others, he said, wait a minute, there's good stuff in this young man. He's repented of his

desertion.

Let's give him another chance. And what came out of it? Your gospel of Mark and your New Testament came out of it. A great life of ministry for God came out of it so that later he was one of Paul's choices to serve the Lord.

And that's because of this great gift in this wonderful spirit-filled man of God. Galatians 2.1, 14 years later, I, that is Paul, went up again to Jerusalem, this time with Barnabas. I took Titus along also.

He went up there to be approved. And Barnabas is saying, listen, you've got to go back, meet with the apostles, explain what you believe and how you're preaching and what God is doing and get their approval. See, you know, you think about the great apostle Paul and you think about all the great work he did, but you don't realize that Barnabas was just as much in credit for everything that Paul ever did.

Because at every step of the ministry of this great apostle, Barnabas was in there helping, encouraging, making sure that he went on with God. So it's a great picture. Galatians 2.9, James, Peter and John, those reputed to be pillars, gave me and Barnabas a right hand of fellowship.

So that's, Barnabas says, you've got to do this. Galatians 4.10, my fellow prisoner Aristarchus sends you his greetings as does Mark, the cousin of Barnabas. Acts 4.36, Joseph, a Lehighite of Cyprus, whom the apostles called Barnabas, which means what? Son of consolation or son of encouragement.

That's what his name meant. You know what my name means? It means a lion-hearted shepherd. It's funny, isn't it, about names? You ought to look into your name, see if it relates at all to your gifts.

Well, this great man, son of encouragement. Now let me give you a quick description of the motivational gift of exhortation or encouragement. I'm just going to run down and give you a quick description.

You can take down as much of it as you can. It means to be called alongside, to encourage. It stimulates others to action and enjoys motivating other people.

Gift of encouragement. Those with this gift are strong result evaluators. They're concerned about others' reactions.

They want to see fruit. They're generally good communicators, practical, down-to-earth, how-to people. They prefer small group or one-to-one ministry, enjoy sharing Christ when involved with the person, does not like cold calling, not overly concerned with the numbers game.

These people can make mistakes because of uninformed enthusiasm, but that's why they need to work together with others. They love people. They have a long-lost friend personality.

That's a good personality. My wife sometimes tries to help you understand me. She says, you just don't realize how focused he is.

It isn't that he doesn't like you, he didn't see you. He was walking right down, he passed me in the store and didn't speak to me. Forgive him.

If you don't, you can't go to heaven. But that never happens with one of these people. They see everybody, say hello to everybody, love everybody.

They don't miss anybody. They wouldn't want to hurt anybody's feeling. They have an eye for what is wrong.

They can read faces quite well. They move with the movers. Get on the bandwagon and get it done.

Unusual boldness and courage will seek out the high or the lowly. Danger of being a people pleaser. I haven't seen this man in a long time.

We were friends for many years. When I was in Akron, he was a pastor in Stowe. Wonderful pastor.

He and I were on a trip one time because we were both speaking at a weekend rally revival conference. We were the two speakers. We were going along and we went by a place in the airport where a man was filling the cigarette machine.

I don't just naturally do things like this guy. This guy is an encourager. That's his great gift.

Fine preacher, great pastor. But as we're walking by, he stopped and he's very pleasant and he smiled at the guy and he put his hand on his shoulder and he said, do you use those cancer sticks? And this guy said, what? He said, you were filling that machine up. I just wondered if he used those cancer sticks.

You know, the guy's all confused. He almost dropped the cigarettes. It would have been great if he had.

But anyway, you know, and but Paul's he's smiling away, smiling away. And so he kind of put his hand on his shoulder in a loving way and started talking to him about Jesus right there. Well, the guy, you know, the guy stopped trying to fill the machine and listen to him.

And he shared Christ with him and gave him a gospel track. And and we went on our way rejoicing. And I went a lot of places, did a lot of things with that man.

And he couldn't help it. I mean, he didn't have to train to do it. He just did it.

It's just, you know, he would have been like that if he hadn't been a Christian. But when he became a Christian and was filled with the spirit and called into the ministry, then, wow, he became a soul. And so it was a lot of fun to be with him.

Uh, dangers or weaknesses? Yeah, because we're fallen, we all, you know, have weaknesses connected with our gifts. There's a danger of using people manipulation, not best as a final authority and a tendency to use gimmicks. So watch it.

But their greatest joy is seeing results, whether it's out in the world or whether it's in the church. What about secular vocations? Well, they're great salesmen, coaches, press secretaries, promoters, advertising people, nursing, counseling, social workers, politicians, public speakers, comedians, public relations, et cetera, et cetera. You get in the picture out in the world, vocations in the world.

What about church ministries? Senior pastors? Yes. But they have to learn discipline, youth pastors and workers. Yes.

Discipling groups. Small groups are one on one. Good at promotion.

The church, good elders, deacons, Sunday school teachers, visitation committee members, social committee chairman, fellowship ministries, home Bible studies. Great. Once they learn how to conduct

evangelistic home Bible studies, hospitality, welcoming Bible college teachers and deans, very good deans at Bible college.

I had two different kinds of deans at Bible college. One was a theologian and he could not stand the least, which was bad for me because I sometimes, you know, didn't do anything really bad. But one time I did put mustard on all the banisters of three floors of our dormitory.

I mean, it wasn't wicked, but it was a mess and he got somebody's clothes and he got really angry. But meanwhile, we had a dean of the building who was one of these other people and he saved, tried to save my neck. You know, he thought, well, he's young and a little stupid, but he's not bad.

Let me give you another one out of the scriptures now. Priscilla and Aquila out of the New Testament. They took Paul into their home and business.

Acts 18 verse 1. After this, Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. There he met a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus who had recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla. So you've heard about Aquila and Priscilla because Claudius had ordered all Jews to leave Rome.

That was the emperor Claudius. Paul went to see them and because he was a tent maker as they were, he stayed and worked with them. They took him into their business and home.

Priscilla and Aquila. So here, now you watch how this develops. They traveled with Paul.

Acts 18, 18. Paul stayed on in Corinth for some time. Then he left the brothers and sailed for Syria accompanied by Priscilla and Aquila.

They said, this guy needs our help and we're going with him. And they shut down their business of tent making and packed up and went with him. He's going as a missionary and they're going with him to help support him and encourage him.

And to disciple the new converts, as you'll see in a minute. Marvelous people, wonderful people. Well, here's Acts 18, 24.

Meanwhile, a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria came to Ephesus. He was a learned man with a thorough knowledge of the scriptures. He had been instructed in the way of the Lord and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John.

He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. And here's Priscilla and Aquila. They go to church Sunday morning.

Here's a new preacher and what he's saying is true, but he doesn't seem to know the whole thing. So what do they do? When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately. See these people, that's what they do.

So they said, come home and have dinner with us. We want to talk to you. And when Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him.

On arriving, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. For he vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the scriptures that Jesus was the Christ. So Priscilla and Aquila had a hand in all of this great ministry.

Some theologians think that he wrote the book of Hebrews. I happen to think that Paul did, but I can't prove it and neither can they. So maybe Apollos did it, I don't know.

But it would be interesting if this man who was discipled and taught and encouraged and exhorted by Priscilla and Aquila went on to have a book in the Bible, wouldn't it? Same as Barnabas with John Mark. So they helped him to become a great evangelist for Christ. They're listed as Paul's fellow workers.

Greet Priscilla and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus. 1 Corinthians 16, 19. The churches in the province of Asia send you greetings.

Aquila and Priscilla greet you warmly in the Lord. Of course, warmly. And so does the church that meets at their house.

Warm people. I'll tell you what, I can only touch on these things, but I remember the first time I got ready to preach this series. I took a tremendous amount of time studying this.

And man, you could walk through the Bible and find these people with these motivational gifts of every kind. And you'll find the scriptures just saying it clear. So here was this couple who were this kind of person and such a blessing in the early church.

Dave Ray, and he wouldn't mind me using his name, was an alcoholic for 37 years. He was a kind, however, that went to work every day and made a normal living and drank every day. You know people like that, but an alcoholic.

When he went on a holiday, he and his friends would get together and come up to Canada from Akron and they would go up to Golden Lake or Bob's Lake or someplace like that out in Northeast Canada. And they would sit out on the lake for 10 days and drink beer the entire time. It's a wonder they didn't all drown and go to hell.

But God had his finger on Dave. Dave said he'd come home one night, he was so drunk that he went right through a triangular place, knocked the signs down, almost killed himself. But somehow he stayed alive, went to work every day and made a living.

He was friendly, outgoing, loving, never met a stranger, a good communicator, a bold salesman and worked for 23 years for a dry goods company. He came to Christ through evangelistic home Bible studies. God set him free from his alcohol almost overnight.

He became a personal soul winner and a very good evangelistic home Bible study teacher. His appointment book was filled with hungry hearted people. I've looked at his appointment book and had more people in it than mine.

And I was a full time pastor. He started and ran a successful business and at the same time developed and led a visitation and home Bible study ministry in our church in Akron, Ohio. David always had the motivational gift of exhortation or encouragement.

But when he gave his life to Christ, this gift was greatly blessed and used for the Lord. In closing tonight, listen to the testimony of Don and Katie Fortune. This is their testimony.

It was in 1974 that friends of ours invited us over to their home to share with us what they had learned about motivational gifts during the Advanced Basic Youth Conflict Seminar taught by Bill Gothard. We

were excited as Glenn went through his notes. We could suddenly see why we were so different from one another, that is, husband and wife.

It helped us to understand things about ourselves that had eluded us before. Ah, Don said to Katie, now I understand why you are always trying to organize everything in this house, including me and the kids. She had the gift of administration.

Aha, Katie replied, and I see why you are always telling everyone to look for good in every situation. Totally different gift. Katie soon recognized that administration was her primary gift.

For the first time in her life, she understood why she always felt such zeal for whatever she was involved in. She could see that it was all right for her to prefer to delegate tasks instead of doing them herself. She could at last release herself from the self-imposed guilt for not measuring up to the ideal homemaker.

She felt relieved that her interest in pioneering projects outside the home was within the range of expected and acceptable behavior for her particular gift. She also recognized some of the problem areas of her life as being characteristic of the administrator. Now she would be able to work on them with greater understanding.

Don identified his primary gift as that of exhortation. He could see why he was so eager to give advice to people, sometimes when they didn't ask for it. He realized that the Lord had equipped him to be an encourager, to build people up in the body of Christ, that he needed to persevere in doing so even when no immediate results were visible.

They began also to recognize the unique giftedness in each of their three children. Just to understand how different they were from either of us. Linda is a classic compassion person.

David is a teacher. Dan is a prophet. Now can you imagine? You've got a house in which there's an administrator, an encourager, one with a gift of mercy, a teacher, and a prophet.

Somebody has to understand what's going on here. Bring up a child in the way he is bent, and when he is old he will not depart from it. But of course many do not understand that.

How much fun it was to see their personalities grow and blossom as we allowed them to be what God created them to be. It helped us to know better both how to discipline and how to encourage. We became sensitive to the gifts of friends and colleagues too.

We could better understand why some of our actions caused a reaction rather than a response in others, and why we sometimes felt threatened by certain people. Former personality conflicts diminished and in some cases disappeared. Finally, it all began to make sense.

I was talking to God about this this afternoon, just quietly in prayer, and talking to God about this whole series. And you know how sometimes the devil will jump in there and throw in a little doubt or something. And I said, Lord, is all this stuff I'm teaching every Sunday, is this important? And then, you know what the Lord did? He just flooded my mind with the scriptures.

I mean, the scriptures started going through my mind, all this stuff that I'd studied, and all this that the Bible had to say about, whole chapters on it. And God said, so what do you think? And I said, that's enough. It's important.

You wouldn't have put it in there. And you wouldn't have gone to all that trouble by the Holy Spirit to put it in your infallible word. So, exhortation, encouragement, consolation, comfort.

What a warm, wonderful gift. If you're blessed with it, give it to God. Give it totally to God and ask him to fill you with the Holy Spirit so he can bless and use it.

Amen?

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Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/9/SID9483.mp3>

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