

New Covenant - the Gifts of the Spirit -Part 6

by Zac Poonen

The gifts of the Spirit are for the common good, to build up the body of Christ and to bless others, and every believer has equal opportunities to be used by God.

Duration: 9:00

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:7, 1 Corinthians 14:4-5, 1 Corinthians 14:12, Ephesians 4:11-12, Ephesians 4:16

Topics: "Spiritual Gifts", "Church Edification"

Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of using spiritual gifts to serve others in the body of Christ. It highlights the need for believers to seek anointing and guidance from God, focusing on building up the church and blessing others through various manifestations of the Spirit. The message encourages repentance from laziness, cultural hindrances, and traditions that may obstruct the work of God in the church, urging believers to actively participate in edifying the body of Christ.

Transcript

I mean, why do you need the gifts if you have no interest in serving other people? It's only somebody who has a passion to do something for others. Lord, I need to be anointed. I need to have a word from above.

If you can come to a meeting where everybody is invited to share, like some of our Wednesday meetings, and you come there and say, well, I'm not interested in blessing anybody. I just want to hear lazy, selfish way you come to the meeting. Well, God's not going to give you anything in a hundred years.

No. And you'll be a useless member of the body of Christ. You'll be a part of the body like a hand, but a paralyzed hand.

A lot of Christians are like paralyzed hands. They're being carried around absolutely useless. God doesn't want you to be like that.

Everyone is given some manifestation of spirit for the common good. It could be a word of wisdom. It could be a word of knowledge.

It could be a faith healing. I don't have time to go into all these gifts, what they mean. It could be speaking in tongues.

I remember when I sought God for the gift of tongues, I said, Lord, it says here in 1 Corinthians 14, verse 5, that he who speaks in a tongue edifies himself. 1 Corinthians 14, verse 4. One who speaks in a tongue builds himself up. Oh.

I said, Lord, I want to build myself up. I mean, I want to build myself up through reading the Bible. I want to build myself up through fellowship.

I want to build myself up through prayer. I want to build myself up through listening to messages. And I want to build myself up spiritually.

One more way of doing it, speaking in tongues. I want it. Why? For the sake of others.

Remember, gifts are for others. So I didn't want the gift of tongues just to get some sensational feeling myself. That's how some people seek it.

And that's why sometimes they get a counterfeit gift or don't get it. I wanted it for others. You say, how for others? I said, Lord, I always want to be fresh, 24 hours a day.

I never want to be dry in my life, even for one single day of my life. I don't want to be dry for one minute. Any time, morning, noon or night, if somebody meets me, I want to be fresh.

And if speaking in tongues will help me to be fresh, I want it. And thank God he gave it to me. And that's why Paul said in verse 5 of 1 Corinthians 14, I wish you all spoke in tongues.

But if you had a choice, I wish you all prophesied. That's much better. Because you'll bless other people.

It's good to edify ourselves. But if you can speak in a way that will bless others. And I want you to notice the gifts God has given in the church in 1 Corinthians 12 verse 28.

Who are the ones whom God has placed number one in the church? Not the healers. It's very important to know that. Because today Christendom goes after the healers.

I want you to see your healers are number four. We need to recognize God's order. Number one are the apostles.

Apostles are those who plant churches and who are elders to the elders of those churches. Prophets. Prophets are those, not those who prophesy, all prophets.

Prophets are those who speak God's word with encouragement, conviction, building up power. That's number two. Third are teachers.

Those who explain the word of God. You read the Bible and a teacher reads that same verse and you say, Hey, I never saw that before. That's a teacher.

So those are the first three gifts in the order in the church. It's written first, second, third. Apostles, prophets, teachers.

Then number four is all the rest. All the rest. He doesn't say four, five, six, seven.

All the rest. Then miracles, healings. Then healings, helps, administration, various kinds of tongues.

We don't know who's four, five, and six, but they're all out there. He just mentions one, two, and three. It's very important for us to understand that because today a lot of people don't seem to recognize that the gift of the ministry of the word, the teaching of the word, is the primary gift with which the church is built up.

And I believe there's a great need in the world today, and I want to encourage young people, young brothers and sisters, to really seek God for the gift of prophecy. That is how the body of Christ is built. Now let's turn to Ephesians chapter 4. In Ephesians chapter 4 we read, and verse 11, Jesus Christ, when he ascended up to heaven, he gave some as apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors, and some teachers.

Pastors means shepherds. We need all those gifts in the church. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, those who reach others to the gospel, shepherds who take care of the sheep, and teachers.

These are the five primary gifts for building local churches. And why were they given? They were given so that these people can equip all the other believers. Notice that.

Verse 13. It's very important to see verse 11 and 12 together. Very important for you.

You may not be an apostle, prophet, evangelist, shepherd, or teacher. Fine. There are very few of them.

But when God gives a man the gift of being an apostle, prophet, shepherd, evangelist, teacher, the purpose is that he equips all the other 200 people sitting in the church, so that, verse 12, they, listen to this, they build the body of Christ. Did you notice that in verse 12? It's not the apostles who build the body of Christ. It's not the prophets.

It's not the shepherds. They equip the saints, and the saints go out and build the body of Christ. If you don't do that, you're failing in your duty.

You can't leave it to the apostles. Read verse 11 and 12 carefully. And thus we all attain to the unity of the faith, to the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.

And like that, the whole, when every, the last part of verse 16, in closing, with the proper working of each individual part, the body grows for the building up of itself in love. And so we see in the New Covenant, it's not outstanding people like Jeremiah and Elijah and all that. It's each person.

And every ministry is for the building up of the body of Christ. In the Old Testament, all the great prophets, you know, they never brought life to people. Everyone, Jeremiah preached for 40 years, and the Israelites still went to Babylon.

Now and then there'd be miracles. Miracles to fight the enemies, kill the enemies, stop the sun, all types of things, but never to bring life to people. Whereas in the New Covenant ministry, every gift is to build up the body, to give life.

Wherever you go, you must give life to people. Rivers of living water, water of life flowing out through you. Every believer needs that.

That's ministry. And there's a lot more that could be said on that line, but I want you to think about that. This is New Covenant ministry, and this is what the New Covenant is all about.

Far superior to the Old Covenant. All of us are equal and have equal opportunities. Let's pray.

So, if you have been stirred, according to your need today, I want you to respond to the word of God that you have heard, and to say, Lord, I'm sorry that I've been so lazy, that I've been fooled by my tradition and culture, and I have actually hindered your work in the church, because of my tradition. Repent of it. Make up for it in the coming days.

Because of my culture. Because of my prejudices. Because of my laziness.

You can hinder the body of Christ in many ways. Because of your tradition, because of your laziness, because of your culture, because anything. Lord, I want to repent of all that.

That means I want to turn around from all that. And I want to respond to your word. Make me an effective member of the body of Christ.

Thank you, Father. Do it, Lord, in these closing days of time. I pray in Jesus' name.

Amen.

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