

How a Church Works
Discovering and Implementing Your Gifting Part 3
Ephesians 4:7-8

This morning we want to get back into what it means to discover and implement your gifting. It has been several weeks since we began looking at this so I think a quick review is needed this morning before we move on.

Before I get started I wanted you to sing a simple song with me. This little light of mine.

This song of course is based upon **Matthew 5:14-16**, **“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”**

How do you let your light shine? What are some examples?

All these and by knowing and operating in your gifting. Look with me at our key scripture found in **Ephesians 4:7-8**, **“But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Therefore it says, “When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives and He gave gifts to men (and women).””**

According to this verse, if you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior you have received a special gift. Whether you know it or not, whether you use it or not, you have received a special spiritual gift and one of the ways you let your light shine is by knowing what that gift is and operate in it.

When we don't know or operate in it, that is like taking the gift Jesus gave you and putting it under a basket, never to be seen, felt or to impact the world around you.

Here at the Community Church we want each and every person to be operating in the fullest way possible in their God given gift. It is how the church as a whole demonstrates the power of God and influences society for His kingdom.

Ephesians 4:15-16, "...but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body is being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love."

The body, the body of Christ, this local body called Wiggins Community Church, is fitted and being held together by what every joint, every working part, every person, man, woman and child and the Holy Spirit inside of them supplies. And when this is occurring properly, with each doing their part, it causes growth of the body, not just numerically but in spiritual health as well.

The impact of this body of Christ in this community is directly related to you knowing what your spiritual gift is and how it is to be applied in ministry. Your own joy and fulfillment as a Christian depends on how well you know and are functioning in your gifting.

If this is stirring you, and I pray that it is, please get on our web-site and look under the sermon tab for the sermons entitled, Humility begins with Christ, Humility 101, How a Church Works and How a Church Works Part 2. Read this, pray over them and the questions that are asked within them.

I am praying about setting up a time, possibly a couple of Fridays, that if you are interested in learning more about spiritual giftings. We will review these sermons and work back and forth together, helping us to have a deeper understanding of them and how they work.

I wanted to say again that I am by no means an expert on the spiritual gifts. There is a lot of teaching out there, some good and some bad. So just a quick word of caution.

I know a lot of people are excited about the prospect of finding out and operating in their spiritual gifts but we need to be careful. When a person is researching the gifts that person wants to be very careful, very prayerful in their approach. They want to be sure to see the giftings from a full biblical perspective, not taking anything out of context, taking a line or two and claiming something that is not there.

These Sunday morning teachings are not going to be exhaustive but I believe it will point us in the right direction and with the Holy Spirit's help we can all experience the fullness of this life God has in mind for us.

Now in our last sermon on the gifts we identified that,

There are two categories of giftings. General Support Ministries & Working Gifts.

General support ministries are the ones found in **Ephesians 4:11**, “**And He (Christ) gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists and some as pastors and teachers...**”

We broke these down in our last sermon on this series and again, check out the web-site for those sermons.

The main point for us this morning to review is that the primary function of what is called the five-fold ministry, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers is found in verse 12 of Ephesians 4.

Look with me. **Ephesians 4:12, (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors & teachers are given to the church) for equipping the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ.”**

The ministry of the church was never designed for the pastor, the apostle or the prophet to do all on their own. You didn't hire me to do all the ministry myself although I must admit I do like doing it.

But if we are following the biblical guidelines of what God put in place, the church hired me to help equip and build you up so you can do ministry. So we all can do ministry together. This is God's design for His church, for the body of Christ with Jesus as the head.

There are some here who may have the apostolic calling, the prophetic calling, an evangelistic calling, a pastoral or teaching calling. As we work together, these individuals are used to hone and sharpen you, to sharpen us so we can be pushed out of the nest and go from being babes in Christ to mature Christians who God uses in miraculous ways.

Now let's briefly this morning look at the passage where most of the gifts are listed.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, “Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”

The first thing to affirm in this passage is verse 7. “But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”

Manifestation means what is spiritual, in the spirit realm, will come out and be seen in the physical realm. Your gift is given to you through the Spirit but as you function in it, it will impact the physical world around you for the common good of the people.

Before we go into the different gifts mentioned in chapter 12 lets look into some of the things mentioned in in verses 4-6.

Again, if you want to get a deeper understanding of this teaching you need to see it as a whole, not in the bits and pieces of what we are doing here on Sunday mornings. I do not have enough time on any given Sunday to cover the complete spectrum of everything that leads into understanding and implementing the spiritual gift you have received from the Lord.

1 Corinthians 12:4-6, “Now there are a variety of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.”

Look with me at three statements made here.

There are a variety of gifts
There are a variety of ministries
There are a variety of effects

The teaching you are about to hear is one that is needed to be heard at the beginning of this teaching on the gifts and at the end if we are going to, in the best way possible, understand what the giftings are and how they are to operate.

There are a variety of gifts. That there are a variety of gifts is obvious when you read through the list found in 1 Corinthian 12 and Romans 12.

Here is the list.

1. There are a variety of Working Gifts:

1 Corinthians 12: Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Working of Miracles, Prophecy, Distinguishing of Spirits, Various kinds of Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues.

Romans 12: Service, Teaching, Exhortation, Giving, Leadership, Mercy

There are sixteen giftings mentioned in these scriptures. Some of them overlap and some of them are stand alone giftings. Next week I will give a brief description of each of these.

These are the giftings. Next we read there are a...

2. There are a variety of ministries. A ministry is the area in which a gift is performed or the group among which it is performed.

It is where the spiritual gift is implemented. Take for example the gift of teaching. For some their gift of teaching is implemented in teaching children, youth or adults. Some are given the ministry of teaching women or men. The gift of teaching is not used in the same way. It is what is meant by a variety of ministries in which the gift can be used.

Or take for an example the gift of evangelism. Peter and Paul both had the gift of evangelism. They both had a heart to share the Good News to everyone they could but Peter was called to evangelize who????? Jews. While Paul was called to evangelize who????? Gentiles.

They both were given the gift of evangelism but it was expressed through them in a different way.

- 3. There are a variety of workings. A variety of workings means that God will take the gift that is being used in ministry and it will have an impact in various ways, depending on what His plan is.**

This is important for us to understand and to keep aware of.

This is something that I have to keep in front of me all the time. When I preach, the preaching that occurs doesn't always hit everyone the same. Sometimes people will come up to me and say wow, that was great. But others might not be moved at all. While I wish everything I do has a great spiritual impact upon everyone that is not always the case and it is not my deal. My deal is to be faithful to sow the seed and have the faith that God will take what was done and use it for His good.

We so want to have the emotional feeling and affirmation that what we are doing is having a great impact and when it doesn't we begin to question ourselves. This is what I struggle with at times anyway.

In Acts, after the Spirit was poured out and Peter preached, three thousand people came to Christ. It would have been easy for Peter to say, man, this is how God works through me. Every time I preach there should be thousands of people who come to Christ. But you know what? I bet that didn't happen. I bet there were times when Peter preached and taught and no one came to the Lord.

The effect of the workings of our gifting is not our deal. Our deal is for us to know what our gifting is, to have a ministry where that gifting is being utilized and to leave the results to God. It is His gift He gave you, it is His power that works it in and through you, and the results are entirely up to Him.

This takes us back to where we started this teaching on spiritual gifts.

4. To know and operate properly in the gifting God has given us takes humility and intimacy with the Lord. If humility and intimacy are not operating then things can get pretty messy.

That is what Paul was teaching about in Ephesians, in 1 Corinthians and in Romans 1. Things were messy in the churches in Ephesus, Corinth and other places. It was because they lost sight that all their giftings were from God, empowered by God and the results were His.

Giftings are from God, empowered by God and the results are His.

Something for us to remember as well.

I would like to continue but this is a good place to stop. Next week I will give a brief definition of the working gifts we have mentioned and how you can see what your gifting is and if it is working properly. I will also announce a specific time when we can get together and hammer this out some more. A time when you can ask questions and interject what God has shown you.

It is exciting to see what God has done here in the last year but what He has done is nothing in comparison to what He is going to do in and through this church.

This little light of ours, we're gonna let it shine...Amen?

Let's pray

Announcement of committees