

Meeker Christian Church  
Pastor Jim Pelley  
3-16-25  
Spiritual Gifts 2

A few months into this ministry I ask: what does this fellowship of believers want to be known for? And followed up with this - Mark gives us one possible answer in Mark 12:30-31

*30 And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. 31 And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."*

That answer followed with another question: "How are we to express that love?" The old fisherman Peter gave a good answer in 1 Peter 4:7-11 *7 But the end of all things is at hand; therefore be serious and watchful in your prayers. 8 And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." 9 Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. 10 As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11 If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.*

The focus of today's subject comes from verses 10-11 and this time I read them from NIV 1 Peter 4:10-11 *Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 11 If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.*

Peter taught us to be a church determined to use the persons & their gifts that GOD has placed in this place at this time for His divine plan, purpose and glory - and NOT to be a church that says God we want You to bless what we want to do, -rather- God we want to be a blessing by doing what YOU want us to do!! i.e. not to do church for the sake of form and tradition, but to be church for the sake of functioning under the guidance of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of the spirit.

Spiritual gifts are not a mystery, but a living reality for every Christian. Colossians 3:17 *And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.*

David, in his asking for forgiveness had understanding of the ministry of the Holy Spirit in his life some 1,000 years Before Christ recorded for us in, Psalm 51:10-11 *Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. 11 Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.*

Throughout the O.T. we see Israel time and again being involved in church worship of rites, rituals, religious orders, rules and regulations and this is what the prophet Amos was given to convey to them about those activities: 750 BC Amos 5:21 *"I hate, I despise your feast days, And I do not savor your sacred assemblies. 22 Though you offer Me burnt offerings and your grain offerings, I will not accept them, Nor will I regard your fattened peace offerings. 23 Take away from Me the noise of your songs, For I will not hear the melody of your stringed instruments. 24 But let justice run down like water, And righteousness like a mighty stream.*

Later in Bible history Jesus came on the scene and the book of Acts records the explosion of the New Testament church as it equipped persons for life and service to glorify God through kingdom service, and not try and exist by rites, rules and rituals. Then what happened?

A wonderful explosion of the gospel of Jesus to the world, especially the gentile world. Salvation through Jesus, kingdom gratitude and service by the Holy Spirit... Then the N.T. church repeated exactly the same mistakes of the Hebrew church of old. The church became form without function. Then the Protestant Reformation 1517-1648 which led to a tremendous dissemination of the gospel of Jesus. But alas that faltered and this congregation is a result of the Restoration movement of 1790-1840 that began in the United States during the Second Great Awakening of the early 19th century.

Today Mega churches, and fellowship churches of every kind from virtually every denomination, and many new planted churches are leaving denominational ties in favor of seeking unity in kingdom service and reaching the lost with the gospel message. It is so interesting here to note that the pledge to the Christian Flag illustrates this:

I PLEDGE ALLEGIANCE TO THE CHRISTIAN FLAG AND TO THE SAVIOR FOR WHOSE KINGDOM IT STANDS, ONE BROTHERHOOD UNITING ALL CHRISTIANS TO SERVICE AND LOVE. The Christian Flag and Pledge were first conceived on September 26, 1897 at Brighton Chapel on Coney Island in Brooklyn, New York, United States. The superintendent of a Sunday school, Charles C. Overton

These 200 years into the Restoration Movement it behooves us to examine ourselves so that we do not get caught up in doing the same thing all over again and become more form than function! Here is a thought to test that hypothesis: are we doing things because of a sense of duty rather than delighting ourselves in the Lord?

If duty is a greater motivation than doctrinal delight then form has become important over function. A second test is if church is a job instead of a joy then form has become more important than function.

The Pentecostal gifting of the Holy Spirit in Acts about 33 AD awoke and empowered the followers of Jesus. We come together as a church patterned after the gospel message of Jesus epitomized by the church model empowerment in Acts who were given to identify and recognize that a life inspired by the gospel of Jesus and His saving grace was manifest in culture by the utilization of the unique and divinely inspired gifts of the Holy Spirit in each of the believers lives. In that first century it reclaimed the world through righteous living and service, it dealt with the pain and suffering of discouragements in life, and taught righteousness in Jesus so everyone became an equal partner in the labor of the Lord on earth. That is our heritage!!!

We desire to function as a training post, model and facilitator for holy Living. The word Holy defined is = presence of God. == i.e. Living with the presence of God through His earthly presence, the Holy Spirit. The purpose this morning is to encourage you to identify your spiritual gifts and use those gifts in the teamwork of continuing to build this body of believers to equip others in their growing faith, to impact our lives, those of our families and loved ones into the community and beyond. We function as a church determined to use the persons and their spiritual gifts that God sends us for His purpose and glory. Even though the Bible has a lot to say about gifts, the Bible does not attempt to exhaustively list the spiritual gifts. So instead of searching the Bible for something you could select to do from a list,- rather we are to search the Bible for righteous values to guide us into identifying your special spiritual gift(s).

Other ways you will recognize your spiritual gifts are the things you feel strongly about that can be used to help and encourage others in their walk with Jesus. That is a realization of church being a joy, not a job. And a delight and not a duty. Another way of recognizing your spiritual gifts is when someone suggests they see in you a gift, knack or talent.

As an example, our church board receives ideas presented and praying through and following through with functioning by using their combined spiritual gifts. Even recognizing a concern or problem is a spiritual gift, much less being able to do something about it! Different ones decorate, clean, prepare communion, pray, teach and a host of other things I have not itemized. Those are all indicators of spiritual giftedness prompted and promoted by the Holy Spirit. By the way – training and practice may be prompted by and lead to spiritual gifts, but in themselves may not be a spiritual gift. I may learn how to change a tire, but until and unless that training results in specifically honoring God and His righteousness it is not a spiritual gift.

Spiritual gifts are not so much about what you can do, but it is all about the One in whose name you do it. Colossians 3:17 *And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.*

As an effort to be even more productive in recognizing our individual Spiritual Gifts we are providing an online link [www.spiritualgiftstest.com](http://www.spiritualgiftstest.com) where you can do a survey and get a good idea of your spiritual giftedness. In addition, we are providing hard copies of a similar survey that you can pick up and take home and take the survey for yourself.

BUT PLEASE - to help us be as efficient and productive as possible as a congregation and for your own edification, return to us the top three or four Spiritual Gifts that you identify through this survey. Then start looking around for an application of those gifts in your daily walk with Jesus. Again I ask you to please do this for the church, your self assurance and kingdom service. Also help us to let those who are not here today know about the availability of the survey. As members and attenders of MCC, we are a team. But a team of horses needs equipment to be able to pull together - it is called a harness. That is a way I see the use of Spiritual Giftedness, they are the equipment that enable us to function as one in purpose. {picture of a team of horses with their harness in place, hooked to an implement or wagon}

Matthew 25:40 *And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'*

There is something for everyone when it comes to spiritual gifts. And when we accept that - that is when the HOLY ideas that come into your mind are putting shoes on the bare feet of spiritual gifts! Last weeks and this sermon regarding spiritual gifts all lead to this incredible description in 1 Corinthians 12:12-14 *12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.*

Hear, believe, repent, confess, be baptized, live by utilizing your spiritual gift.