

**Pastor Mark Mikels - December 29,
2019**

“SPIRITUAL ‘GIFTINGS’ FINALE”

(Romans 12: 1-8; Philippians 2:14-16; John 13:12-15; Colossians 3:16;
Hebrews 3:13; 2 Cor. 9:7; 1 Corinthians 6:2; Jude 1:22)

Intro ... Today we come to our wrap-up message on the **Seven Spiritual ‘Giftings’** of Romans Twelve.

Here’s the **Key Concept** with which we began ...

SERIES KEY CONCEPT...

Every Christian has been **GIFTED** by the Spirit of God at spiritual birth with one of seven spiritual “**GIFTINGS**” (perspectives/motivations) by which and through which the **BODY** of **CHRIST** is intended to be **BUILT UP.**”

This for me is not only a **key concept** but a **key conviction** ...

I really believe that God in His infinite wisdom has ordained that the Body of Christ be so structured and ordered.

Such a structure requires believers to join themselves together for no single member possesses any more than one of these necessary ‘giftings.’

Such a structure also holds open the possibility that the fullness of Christ’s life will continue to be seen in the midst of this fallen, sin-filled world as His Church collectively lives out that life.

Through the past seven weeks we have examined each of these ‘giftings’ in some detail ... We have delved into the meaning of them as best as we can ... We have seen how each of them brings great and necessary benefit to the Body of Christ. We have certainly sensed how, working in tandem, they cover all the bases and keep the Church of Jesus Christ balanced and productive. We have (no doubt) each sought to determine our own particular ‘gifting’ so that we might best serve Christ here in this Body of Believers.

I trust that it has been a profitable time for all of us. It's certainly been a very stimulating and refreshing time of study for me.

This morning as we prepare to move on from this study, I would share with you "**SIX CONCLUDING COMMENTS**" on the subject - comments that might both serve to summarize our study and shape our response - especially for those of you who say ...

"I still don't know what my 'gifting' is."

CONCLUDING COMMENT ONE ...

"**EACH** of the 'Giftings' is also a '**DIRECTED** activity' expected of **ALL** who would follow Christ."

Consider these Scriptural Directives:

(Note the **Final Wording** of the **key phrase** - each 'Gifting's **motivation**)

PROPHECY: "I want to **TELL** them."

"As you **HOLD** out the **WORD** of **LIFE**" - Phil. 2:14-16

SERVING: "I want to **HELP** them."

"I have set you an **EXAMPLE** - do as I have **DONE**" - John 13:12-15

TEACHING: "I want to **ENLIGHTEN** them."

"As you **TEACH** ... one another" - Colossians 3:16

ENCOURAGING: "I want to **ENERGIZE** them."

"**ENCOURAGE** one another daily" - Hebrews 3:13

GIVING: "I want to **MATERIALLY ASSIST** them."

"Each ... should **GIVE** what he has decided ... to **GIVE**" - 2 Corinthians 9:7

LEADING: "I want to **GUIDE** them."

"Are you not competent to **JUDGE** ... things of this **LIFE**?" - 1 Corinthians 6:2)

SHOWING MERCY:

"I want to **RE-ARRANGE** things for the **BETTER** for them."

"Be **MERCIFUL** to those who doubt ... to others show **MERCY** ..." - Jude 1:22

So, in other words, whether it my 'gifting' or not, I am to **Declare** God's Truth, **Serve** those in need, **Explain** the faith, **Encourage** the Discouraged, **Give** of my material resources toward projects and people as my heart prompts me to do so, **Provide Guidance** to those who are wandering, and **Mercifully Intervene** in the lives of those who are floundering.

CONCLUDING COMMENT TWO ...

Every 'gifting' **CONVEYS** a "slice of Christ's own character"- accurate and necessary but **INCOMPLETE** by itself.

No single believer can say ... "*I have it all*" for each believer will inevitably minister from the perspective of his/her gifting.

For example, a prophet who serves will still serve from the perspective of a prophet ...

In the midst of his service, he will be asking himself ...

*"What went wrong here?
How did these people get themselves into this mess?
Do they understand that they have most likely 'brought this
on themselves'? What truth are they missing?"*

A prophet will have to exercise great self-discipline in such a situation lest his "service" turn into a most painful moment for the person being served.

It would be better to have someone with a true "servant's heart" doing the serving.

Concluding Comment #2 leads right into ...

CONCLUDING COMMENT THREE ...

The **CHURCH** of Christ collectively possesses **ALL** of the 'giftings' and it takes all of them to **ACCURATELY** represent Christ and to **AUTHENTICALLY** do his work.

Just think about the example I've just given ...

No doubt the first thing a person in a mess requires is someone with a **servant's** heart who is motivated simply to help alleviate the need ... to put a bandage on the bleeding.

However, there might be the need also for the person (once helped out of the immediate situation) to recognize that doing things differently might keep the situation from happening again (at that point, the **prophetic** voice would be most helpful).

And then the **teacher** might be employed to help the person thoroughly understand how the new information (provided somewhat objectively and analytically by the prophet) can get implemented in his/her life and then the **encourager** might come along and somehow convince the person that this new life change is not only desirable but doable.

In the short run, one with the 'gifting' of **giving** might provide a temporary bail-out while the one who desires to **show mercy** might be the one who actually brings the need to the giver's attention in the first place

And when all is said and done, the one with the 'Gifting' of **Leading** might take the person under his wing (as it were) and guide that person into the fulness of the 'turn around.'

These are all the things that Jesus himself would have done and frequently did do and these are all the things that need to be done if Jesus is going to be accurately represented in the situation.

To the degree that they are all in place and functioning, Christ is accurately **seen** and his work is authentically **done!**

And the Church Body in question gains that desired reputation:
"They sure do take care of their own."

And it will be said of such a Church Body (even as early Church tradition tells us it was said of those early believers):

"Behold, how they love each other!"

Here now is ...

CONCLUDING COMMENT FOUR ...

UNDERSTANDING and working in light of one's own '*gifting*' provides **MAXIMUM** spiritual accomplishment and satisfaction.

"*Being True To Oneself*" is a fundamental maxim of human psychology – the ancient Greeks were the first to espouse it.

Now if it's considered true in the context of a fallen, sin-filled, flesh-driven world, how much more so in the "*re-born world*."

Our Heavenly Father (through the ministry of the Holy Spirit) has planted a very special part of His Son's Own Nature in every single one of His Children. We've been calling it a "***gifting***" from God.

Living in light of that '*gifting*' and functioning consistently within its parameters is a most satisfying way to live ...

When we do so, it seems like we are doing the very thing that God has designed us to do and it feels good and we seem to be '*doing some good*' for those around us.

But what if you're not sure what your own '*gifting*' is?
What if you don't even have a clue?

A process for discovery is suggested by ...

CONCLUDING COMMENT FIVE ...

One's personal '**GIFTING**' can be discovered as one obediently **FOLLOWS** the Scriptural directives and carefully assesses both **INNER** sensations and **OUTER** accomplishments.

Live obediently to the Scriptures ... Inform yourself concerning the way that Christ would have each one of His Followers live.

Respond to each ministry moment that comes your way ...

Share God's Truth to whomever seems to be in need of it;

Help Alleviate Need whenever you encounter it;

Explain Things the best you can to those not 'getting' it;

Seek to Encourage the down-hearted - help restore hope;

Give of your Material Resources when such help is needed;

Provide Guidance to those who seem to have lost their way;

Mercifully Intervene in the lives of those mired in a mess.

And as you do these things “carefully assess” your ***inner sensations*** (in which of these situations do you feel most fulfilled and satisfied) and also assess your ***outer accomplishments*** (in which kind of setting does it seem that you have had some success).

Most likely, the “discovery” will be made and you will recognize the unique “imprint” that God’s Holy Spirit has placed upon your life.

I would have to say that that is primarily the way that I have concluded what my own 'Spirit-Given Gifting' might be.

However, the longer I have been at this “Christian thing” and the more that I have sought to follow all ***seven directives*** and the more I have come to enjoy things that I at one time in my life did not enjoy, the more challenging this identification thing has become.

However, as I “follow the process” – as I assess both my inner sensations and what outer accomplishments might be available for me to see, I conclude that my gifting is that of '***Encouraging.***'

To restore hope in someone – to help someone believe that they can “live this Christian Life successfully” – to issue a call to greater commitment and see people respond is a tremendously satisfying thing to me ...

Actually, only you know whether I am any good at it but

in my heart it is what I feel my '**Gifting**' to be.

Now this **Concluding Message** would not be complete or actually accurate if I did not include ...

CONCLUDING COMMENT SIX ... (a most sobering reality)

"Giftings' can be **SQUELCHED** even as the Holy Spirit can; yielding to the Spirit and **FREEING** oneself from debilitating sin is essential to **FUNCTIONING** freely within one's 'gifting.'

Here I return us to the opening verses of Romans chapter 12 ...
They are critical for our functioning as God's Gifted People.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God. This is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's Will is ... His good, pleasing and perfect Will."

There's the **context** for successful functioning as 'gifted' children of God (and for knowing what our 'gifting' is) - be **yielded** and become **aligned!**

Final Thot ...

A freely functioning "Gifted Body of Believers" is a **WONDROUS** thing to behold. It's just as if **JESUS** Himself were in our **MIDST!**