



Global College of Ministry

EQUIP

The Christian & Spiritual Gifts at Work

Unwrapping My Spiritual Gifts

(Adapted from Raymond Woodward's Life Course 301)

“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant”
(1 Corinthians 12:1).

Spiritual gifts are distinctive abilities given to each believer when they receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit, to be used to minister to others and thus build up the Body of Christ. Some of the gifts are supernatural (operated only under the influence of the Holy Spirit), while others are natural abilities enhanced by God’s Spirit. All are important to the Body!

TEN TRUTHS ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Only Christians have spiritual gifts.

“But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned” (1 Corinthians 2:14).

2. Every Christian has at least one gift.

“For I would that all men were even as I myself. But every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner, and another after that” (1 Corinthians 7:7).

3. No one receives all of the gifts.

“Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?” (1 Corinthians 12:27-30).

4. No single gift is given to everyone.

“If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body?” (1 Corinthians 12:29-30).

5. You can’t earn a spiritual gift.

“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ” (Ephesians 4:7).

6. The Holy Spirit decides what gifts I get.

“But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will” (1 Corinthians 12:11).

7. The gifts I’m given are permanent.

“For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance” (Romans 11:29).

8. I am to develop the gifts God gives me.

“Each of you has been blessed with one of God’s many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well” (1 Peter 4:10).

9. It’s a sin to waste the gifts God gave me.

“Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Corinthians 4:1-2). Also read “The Parable of the Talents” in Matthew 25:14-30.

10. Using my gifts glorifies God and develops me.

“Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples” (John 15:8).

THREE PRINCIPLES OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE NOT FOR MY BENEFIT, BUT FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE CHURCH.

“Each one of you, as a good manager of God’s different gifts, must use for the good of others, the spiritual gift he has received from God” (1 Peter 4:10).

“The Holy Spirit displays God’s power through each of us as a means of helping the entire church” (1 Corinthians 12:7).

2. SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE INTENDED TO PRODUCE MATURITY AND STABILITY IN THE CHURCH.

“It was He who ‘gave gifts to men’ ... to build up the Body of Christ so we shall all come together to that oneness in our faith ... and become mature ... Then we shall no longer be children, carried by the waves and blown about by every shifting wind ...” (Ephesians 4:11,13-14).

3. EVERY BELIEVER HAS BOTH A PRIMARY AND A SECONDARY MINISTRY IN THE CHURCH.

- My **PRIMARY** ministry is a ministry that I am gifted to do, and spend maximum time in as a result.
- My **SECONDARY** ministry is a ministry that I am not necessarily gifted to do, but I get involved in simply because I have a servant’s heart.

SIX CAUTIONS ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. **Don't confuse gifts with natural talents.**
2. **Don't confuse gifts with the fruit of the Spirit.**

"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law" (Galatians 5:22-23).

The fruit of the Spirit shows my **MATURITY**, and the gifts of the Spirit show my **MINISTRY**.

3. **Don't confuse gifts with Christian roles.**

For example, just because God has given to you the **GIFT** of pastoring others does not mean He wants you to assume the **ROLE** of pastoring a church. That is a special calling!

4. **Be aware of the "gift projection" tendency.**

This is the erroneous belief that others should be expected to minister the same way you do and even have similar results.

5. **Don't feel your gift makes you superior to others.**

"And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you" (1 Corinthians 12:21).

6. **Realize that using the gifts without love is worthless.**

"I may be able to speak the languages of men and even of angels ... I may have the gift of inspired preaching ... I may have all knowledge ... and all the faith to move mountains - but if I have not love, I am nothing ... it does no good" (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

THREE WAYS TO USE YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. **Through an ongoing ministry**
2. **Through short term projects**
3. **Through spontaneous situations**

HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The key is to just get started! It is much easier to discover your gifts through involvement in ministry than it is to figure out your ministry through studying about your gifts.

SUGGESTED BOOKS:

- ✓ *19 Gifts of the Spirit* (Leslie Flynn)
- ✓ *Your Spiritual Gifts* (Peter Wagner)
- ✓ *So You Want To Serve* (Jack DeHart)
- ✓ *Spiritual Gifts* (David Bernard)

We get our FIVE SENSES at birth, but we learn how to use them as we mature – this is also how SPIRITUAL GIFTS work.

A SHORT LIST OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Bible does not lock us into tight restrictions as to the number of spiritual gifts, or even their definitions. The major listings of gifts given to the church are found in ...

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

¹Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. ²Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. ³Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. ⁴Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord. ⁶And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. ⁷But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. ⁸For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; ⁹To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; ¹⁰To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: ¹¹But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

1 Corinthians 12:27-31

²⁷Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. ²⁸And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues. ²⁹Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? ³⁰Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret? ³¹But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

Ephesians 4:11-12

¹¹And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; ¹²For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Romans 12:3-8

³For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. ⁴For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: ⁵So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members

one of another. ⁶Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; ⁷Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; ⁸Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

1 Peter 4:9-11

⁹Use hospitality one to another without grudging. ¹⁰As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. ¹¹If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God; if any man minister, let him do it as of the ability which God giveth: that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom be praise and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

The lists of spiritual gifts appearing in the New Testament are EXEMPLARY lists, not EXHAUSTIVE lists. You can have many gifts. After reading through the list of gifts cited in the above Scriptures, do you see/recognize any of your own character traits or actions? Do you see any you would like to have? Talk to God about it . . . for He is THE GIVER OF GIFTS.

Study Questions

1. Write a brief explanation of Spiritual Gifts. _____

2. List ten (10) truths about spiritual gifts, with a Scripture reference for each one.
 - 1) _____
 - 2) _____
 - 3) _____
 - 4) _____
 - 5) _____
 - 6) _____
 - 7) _____
 - 8) _____

9) _____

10) _____

3. What are the three principles of spiritual gifts?

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4. Explain the difference between your **primary** and **secondary** ministry. _____

5. List six (6) cautions about spiritual gifts.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

6) _____

6. The major listings of spiritual gifts given to the church are found in what five (5) passages of Scripture.

1) _____

2) _____

3) _____

4) _____

5) _____

7. We get our five _____ at birth, but we learn how to _____ them as we _____. This is also how _____ works.

8. It is much easier to discover your gifts through _____ in _____ than it is to figure out your _____ through _____ about your gifts.

Teaching About Spiritual Gifts in the Church

(Adapted from Raymond Woodward's Life Course 301)

“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant”
(1 Corinthians 12:1).

There are many different ways to categorize spiritual gifts, because the gifts and roles God has placed in His church tend to overlap in several areas. For the sake of clarity, we will use the following basic categories ...

GIFTS THAT STEER THE CHURCH

- Gifts that Expand the Church
Preaching, Evangelism, Missions, Apostleship
- Gifts that Edify the Church
Teaching, Leadership, Pastoring, Administration

GIFTS THAT SUPPORT THE CHURCH

- Gifts that Build Up God's People
Mercy, Encouragement, Intercession
- Gifts that Build Up God's House
Craftsmanship, Music, Hospitality
- Gifts that Build Up God's Work
Service, Helps, Giving

SUPERNATURAL GIFTS

- Gifts of Revelation
Discernment, Knowledge, Wisdom
- Gifts of Communication
Prophecy, Tongues, Interpretation
- Gifts of Demonstration
Healing, Miracles, Faith

GIFTS THAT STEER THE CHURCH

Gifts that Expand the Church ...

PREACHING – Ephesians 3:7-8, Col. 1:25-28

This is the ability to publicly communicate God's Word in an inspired and anointed way that convinces unbelievers, and both challenges and comforts believers. The ability to persuasively declare God's will.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

EVANGELISM – Acts 8:26-40, Ephesians 4:11

This is the ability to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ to unbelievers in such a way that they become His disciples. It involves the ability to sense opportunities to share the gospel and lead people to respond with faith.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

MISSIONS – 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Acts 13:2-3

This involves the ability to adapt to a different culture in order to reach unbelievers and help believers from that culture. It includes the ability to use whatever other spiritual gifts one has in a second culture.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

APOSTLESHIP – Romans 15:20, Ephesians 4:11

This gift uses the ability to start new churches, assume oversight for their development, and exercise leadership with authority in spiritual matters that is spontaneously recognized and appreciated by those churches.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

Gifts that Edify the Church ...

TEACHING – Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Cor. 12:28

This is the ability to educate God's people by clearly explaining and applying the Bible in a way that causes them to learn and grow in their relationship with God. It helps equip and train other believers for ministry.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

LEADERSHIP – Hebrews 13:7, 13:17

This gift is the ability to clarify and communicate the purpose and vision of a ministry in a way that attracts others to get involved. It includes the ability to set goals in accordance with God's purpose for the future, then communicate these goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish them for the glory of God.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

PASTORING – 1 Peter 5:2-3, James 5:14-16

This is the ability to care for the spiritual needs of a group of believers and help equip them for ministry. It involves the ability to nurture a small group in spiritual growth and assume long-term personal responsibility for their welfare.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

ADMINISTRATION – Romans 12:8, 1 Cor. 3:10

Using the ability to understand clearly the goals of leadership and to devise and execute effective plans for the accomplishment of those goals. This is the ability to coordinate many details, manage people, and organize resources and time for maximum effectiveness in ministry.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

GIFTS THAT SUPPORT THE CHURCH

Gifts that Build Up God's People ...

MERCY – Luke 10:30-37, Romans 12:8

This is the ability to feel genuine empathy and compassion for individuals (both Christian and non-Christian) who suffer distressing physical, mental or other problems, and to translate that compassion into practical and cheerful deeds that reflect God's love and alleviate the suffering.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

ENCOURAGEMENT – Acts 14:22, Romans 12:8

This involves the ability to motivate God's people to apply and act on Biblical principles, especially when they are discouraged or wavering in their faith. It is the ability to bring out the best in others and challenge them to develop their potential, or to speak words of comfort and counsel in such a way that they feel helped or healed.

- I'm pretty sure I have this gift.
 I may have this gift.
 I don't think I have this gift.

INTERCESSION – Col. 1:9-12, Romans 8:26-27

This is the ability to pray for the needs of others for extended periods of time on a regular basis, and see frequent and specific answers to one's prayers, to a degree greater than that expected of an average Christian. Also, it is the ability to persist in prayer and not be discouraged until the answer arrives.

- I'm pretty sure I have this gift.
 I may have this gift.
 I don't think I have this gift.

Gifts that Build Up God's House ...**CRAFTSMANSHIP – 1 Chr. 28:21, Ex. 31:1-11**

This covers the ability to build, maintain or beautify a place of worship for God's glory and the facilitation of ministry. Also, it is the ability to develop and utilize one's skills to express worship through a variety of art forms.

- I'm pretty sure I have this gift.
 I may have this gift.
 I don't think I have this gift.

MUSIC – Colossians 3:16, Psalm 40:3

This is the ability to celebrate God's presence through anointed music, either vocally or instrumentally, in such a way that an atmosphere of participatory worship is created for the believer and a powerful sense of God's presence is experienced by the unbeliever.

- I'm pretty sure I have this gift.
 I may have this gift.
 I don't think I have this gift.

HOSPITALITY – 1 Peter 4:9-10, Hebrews 13:1-2

This is the ability to make others, especially strangers, feel warmly welcomed, accepted and comfortable in the church family. It is the ability to coordinate factors that promote fellowship

between the saved and unsaved, whether it be within the church, in one's own home, or at some other location or event. It includes the ability to graciously accommodate those in need.

I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

I may have this gift.

I don't think I have this gift.

Gifts that Build Up God's Work ...

SERVICE – Romans 16:1-2, 1 Corinthians 12:22

This is the ability to recognize unmet needs in the church family or in a task related to God's work, and take the initiative to provide practical task-oriented assistance promptly, cheerfully, and without a need for recognition.

I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

I may have this gift.

I don't think I have this gift.

HELPS – Acts 6:1-7, 1 Corinthians 12:28

This involves the ability to invest one's talents in the life and ministry of another member of the Body, thus enabling the person helped to increase the effectiveness of their own gifts.

I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

I may have this gift.

I don't think I have this gift.

GIVING – Romans 12:8, 2 Corinthians 8:1-7

This is the ability to generously contribute material resources or money beyond one's tithe so that the Body may grow and be strengthened. It is the ability to earn and manage money so it may be given to support the ministry of others, particularly through the local church.

I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

I may have this gift.

I don't think I have this gift.

SUPERNATURAL GIFTS

Gifts of Revelation ...

DISCERNMENT – Acts 16:16-22, 1 Cor. 12:10

This is the ability to know with assurance whether the source of an experience is God, Satan, or merely the human spirit. It is the ability to distinguish between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error, and to give an immediate evaluation based on God's Word.

I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.
 _____ I don't think I have this gift.

KNOWLEDGE – 1 Corinthians 12:8, Daniel 1:17

This is the ability to receive specific information from the Holy Spirit that meets a particular need. It is also the ability to comprehend and clarify a large amount of information and provide it when needed for effective decision-making, in such a way that an individual believer or the entire church family is benefited.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.
 _____ I may have this gift.
 _____ I don't think I have this gift.

WISDOM – 1 Corinthians 2:6-16, 12:8

This is the ability to know the mind of the Holy Spirit and receive supernatural insight into how given knowledge may best be applied to specific circumstances. It is also, the ability to understand God's perspective on situations and share those insights in a simple, understandable way so that God's guidance can be given to others.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.
 _____ I may have this gift.
 _____ I don't think I have this gift.

Gifts of Communication ...

PROPHECY – 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:3

This is the ability to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to his people through a divinely anointed utterance given in the language of the speaker and hearers.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.
 _____ I may have this gift.
 _____ I don't think I have this gift.

TONGUES – 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:21-22

This involves the ability to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to his people through a divinely anointed utterance in a language one has never learned.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.
 _____ I may have this gift.
 _____ I don't think I have this gift.

INTERPRETATION – 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:27-28

This is the ability to make known, in the vernacular of the hearers, the message of one who gives a public anointed utterance from God in an unknown tongue.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

Gifts of Demonstration ...

HEALING – 1 Corinthians 12:9, Acts 3:1-11

This is the ability to pray in faith specifically for people who need physical, emotional, or spiritual healing and see God restore health apart from the use of natural means, to bring glory to His name and attention to the gospel.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

MIRACLES – 1 Corinthians 12:10, Acts 28:1-6

This is the ability to pray in faith specifically for God's supernatural intervention in an impossible situation and see God powerfully alter the ordinary course of nature to bring glory to His name and attention to the gospel.

_____ I'm pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

FAITH – 1 Corinthians 12:9, Romans 4:20-21

This is the ability to trust God, or to inspire trust in God, for what cannot be seen and to act on God's promise, regardless of what the circumstances indicate. It is also the willingness to risk failure in pursuit of a God-given vision, expecting God to handle the obstacles.

_____ pretty sure I have this gift.

_____ I may have this gift.

_____ I don't think I have this gift.

No matter what gifts you do or do not possess, God is still the GIVER OF GIFTS. Open your heart, tell Him about your desires, and trust Him to pour out His gifts to you and yours.

Study Questions

1. There are many different ways to categorize _____ gifts, because the _____ and roles God has placed in His _____ tend to overlap in several areas.

2. To be simple and clear, what three basic categories of spiritual gifts are used in this lesson?
- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
3. List the two (2) divisions of Gifts that Steer the Church, as outlined in this lesson.
- 1) _____
- 2) _____
4. List the three (3) divisions of Gifts that Support the Church, as outlined in this lesson.
- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
5. What are the three (3) divisions of Supernatural Gifts, as outlined in this lesson?
- 1) _____
- 2) _____
- 3) _____
6. Given the following definitions/explanations of spiritual gifts, write the name of the gift being described in the blank.

_____ The ability to publicly communicate God's Word in an inspired and anointed way that convinces unbelievers, and both challenges and comforts believers.

_____ The ability to feel genuine empathy and compassion for individuals (both Christian and non-Christian) who suffer distressing physical, mental or other problems, and to translate that compassion into practical and cheerful deeds that reflect God's love and alleviate the suffering.

_____ The ability to understand God's perspective on situations and share those insights in a simple, understandable way so that God's guidance can be given to others.

_____ This is the ability to receive specific information from the Holy Spirit that meets a particular need.

_____ This is the ability to pray in faith specifically for people who need physical, emotional, or spiritual healing and see God restore health apart from the use of natural means, to bring glory to His name and attention to the gospel.

_____ This is the ability to pray in faith specifically for God's supernatural intervention in an impossible situation and see God powerfully alter the ordinary course of nature to bring glory to His name and attention to the gospel.

_____ This is the ability to make known, in the vernacular of the hearers, the message of one who gives a public anointed utterance from God in an unknown tongue.

_____ This is the ability to know with assurance whether the source of an experience is God, Satan, or merely the human spirit.

_____ The willingness to risk failure in pursuit of a God-given vision, expecting God to handle the obstacles.

_____ It is the ability to earn and manage money so it may be given to support the ministry of others, particularly through the local church.

_____ The ability to persist in prayer and not be discouraged until the answer arrives.

_____ This is the ability to recognize unmet needs in the church family or in a task related to God’s work, and take the initiative to provide practical task-oriented assistance promptly, cheerfully, and without a need for recognition.

_____ This is the ability to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ to unbelievers in such a way that they become His disciples.

_____ This gift uses the ability to start new churches, assume oversight for their development, and exercise leadership with authority in spiritual matters that is spontaneously recognized and appreciated by those churches.

_____ It is the ability to coordinate factors that promote fellowship between the saved and unsaved, whether it be within the church, in one’s own home, or at some other location or event.

_____ This involves the ability to invest one’s talents in the life and ministry of another member of the Body, thus enabling the person helped to increase the effectiveness of their own gifts.

_____ This covers the ability to build, maintain or beautify a place of worship for God’s glory and the facilitation of ministry.

_____ This involves the ability to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to his people through a divinely anointed utterance in a language one has never learned.

_____ It is the ability to bring out the best in others and challenge them to develop their potential, or to speak words of comfort and counsel in such a way that they feel helped or healed.

_____ This is the ability to celebrate God’s presence through anointed music, either vocally or instrumentally, in such a way that an atmosphere of participatory worship is created for the believer and a powerful sense of God’s presence is experienced by the unbeliever.

Additional Notes

Using Spiritual Gifts: You Can Go for it Or Run from it!

“...And grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word,
By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of
thy holy child Jesus.

And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and
they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness”
(Acts 4:29-31).

It is time for us to wake up to the need of Spiritual Gifts and ask, “Why can’t I have them?
Why can’t I have them now?”

In the Word of God the church is often compared to the natural body. We are the “Body of Christ.” Gifts are as essential to the Body of Christ as our natural members are essential to our bodies. If we are going to live and work for God, we must move with and in the Spirit.

The Early Church was designed for total participation. Participation in church meetings was the responsibility of everyone present. Persecution weeded out all who were not strong and serious. Today there is not a lot of participation in the church. We listen quietly, sing when we are told, and follow others as they dance before the Lord. We say “Amen” to someone else’s praying and respond with an occasional “Preach It!” when someone is preaching. We need to return to being more active in the church.

“Throughout Christendom in the Fourth Century, we professionalized the local church and turned over our Sunday services to the professionals, leaving them to do almost everything while we sat and watched. Laymen found themselves stripped of initiative and power, like newly captured slaves. Laywomen were quietly relieved of what little responsibility and leadership they had. All the laity suddenly found Sunday worship to be more distant from their personal lives and concerns. They fell into Spectator Christianity, where loneliness doesn’t end at church--it starts there” (James H. Rutz, the Rebirth of the Church, page 3).

If you always do what you have
always done you will always get
what you have always gotten.

The church in Acts 2 had total participation. Paul in 1 Corinthians 14 admonished us all to participate when we meet together for church so everyone can be encouraged. I am suggesting that an “every member ministry” is the Biblical mandate for the church.

We can:

1. Lead in praises and worship.
2. Be used in the Gifts of the Spirit.
3. Pray for those in need of the Holy Ghost.
4. Be friendly to visitors.
5. Testify of God's goodness.
6. Be sensitive to the Spirit.
7. Be a Prayer Warrior.
8. Lay hands on people.

The church in the Book of Acts could be defined as a close association of friends, ministering to the needs of each other, and interacting as a body.

When you become active in the local assembly you become part of the action. As you are led by the Holy Spirit, you experience the power of God and the great joy of watching the body at work.

God has given the fivefold ministry (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers) to perfect (equip) the members for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:11-12). This is to build up the Body of Christ. The ministers were called to enable us to be settled in the truth of God's Word; become spiritually established, and matured in Christian attitude.

The Early Church existed for 300 years without a church building; yet they turned their world upside down. 3,000 people were added to the church over night and they were taken care of by meeting house to house. For about 1,700 years pastors have been doing all the church work. This is not the way it was in the Book of Acts. It is as if all the responsibility of world evangelism is upon the pastor. This should not be the case. We too should share in the work load as God planned. If we do not become active in the church it is easy to backslide or become bored with church. We must be trained to do something for God. We need to be right in the center of what God wants to do in the Church. We must break through our tradition and return to the body ministry.

We are a sick body without the Gifts of the Spirit because we will not be working properly. Gifts of the Spirit in correct operation denote a healthy church. Gifts should not be the exception but the rule; the order of the day. It is the natural consequence of the Spirit moving through and in the church. It means all the members are moving correctly. Paul shows us this through the analogy of the body.

We should be excited when we see the body in operation. When one member is working the other members of the body do not get jealous. They perform their function. When one member is glorified then the whole body rejoices.

The Gifts help us to see the things of God, and perceive the power of the devil and spiritual wickedness in high places. It is time for us to allow the Head of the Body to control the Body. Will you allow Him to move? We can cripple Him by our reluctance. Every member can have at least one gift. We all have a work to do. We need to work according to the way we have been placed in the Body. If we are able to reach the place of obeying the supernatural world then the supernatural world will obey us.

The prerequisite to be used in the Gifts of the Spirit is the obedience to Gospel plan of Salvation. That is repentance, baptism in Jesus' name, and Holy Ghost baptism. Once you have done this, you are in a position to do something for the world. The salvation plan is designed to straighten your life out. After that you can turn the world upside down.

God will not come to you or your church unless He is given the opportunity to do something. Jesus was always going places and doing things. God is spontaneous and moves quickly.

When God speaks to you to do something for Him you must act quickly and according to what He has told you. Do not add to or take away from what God says.

God wants you to find your place in the Body Ministry. It is time for a lot of little people to do great things (Daniel 11:32). When God gives you a ministry, you should stay in it, let it grow and expand. Step out in faith.

We need to develop our gift/ministry. Use it. Exercise It. Perfect It. Gifts are given for the growth of the church. You can go for it or run from it!

Study Questions

1. Describe how the Early Church was designed for total participation. _____

2. What are some of the things members can do within the church service? _____

3. How can the church in the Book of Acts be defined? _____

4. Who is included in the fivefold ministry of the Church? _____

5. What is the purpose of the fivefold ministry? _____

6. What is the responsibility of the ministry according to Ephesians 4? _____

7. When did the Early Church start using church buildings? _____

8. Why are Gifts given to the Church? _____

9. What do the Gifts help us see and perceive? _____

10. What is the prerequisite for being used in the Gifts of the Spirit? _____

Being a Man the Devil Knows

“Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth.

And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and chief of the priests, which did so.

And the evil spirit answered, and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?”

(Acts 19:13-15)

That would have been an interesting sight. Name forgers had an evil spirit insult them, jump on them, beat them up, and they escape by running down the street naked and wounded.

Dutch Sheets, in his book *Intercessory Prayer*, related a story concerning a bodybuilder who visited Africa. The village chief asked him what he did with all of his muscles. He proceeded to give the chief an exhibition of his strength by flexing his biceps, triceps, and his bulging calves and thighs. After admiring this muscle man for a few moments the chief asked, “What else do you use them for?”

“That’s about all,” answered the muscular man.

“That’s all you use those huge muscles for?” inquired the chief, visibly puzzled.

“Yes,” replied the man flexing his bulging muscles.

“What a waste,” muttered the chief in disgust. “What a waste.”

We have been well equipped to deal with the devil and should never be like this bodybuilder.

Spiritual Bodybuilders Needed

“...And exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things...” (1 Timothy 4:7-8).

We need to develop spiritual biceps, triceps, and muscles by completing our spiritual exercises. Once building up our muscles in the Spirit we cannot just stand around flexing our muscles in competition and never attack the adversary of our souls.

Spiritual Exercises

1. Be born again (Acts 2:38).
2. Wrestle (Ephesians 6:12).
3. Put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:11-17).

4. Pray (Ephesians 6:18).
5. Fast (Matthew 6:16;17:21; Mark 9:29).
6. Have faith (1 Thess. 5:8; Hebrews 11:1).
7. Challenge Satan by using Jesus' name (Acts 4:12; 16:16-18).
8. Study the Word of God and use it (Ephesians 6:17; Psalm 119:11,16).
9. Pray in the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:15).
10. Cast out Devils (Matt. 10:1; Mark 16:17; Acts 5:16; 16:18; 19:12).
11. Plead the blood of Jesus.
12. Pray for the Gifts of the Spirit to be manifested in your life. Remember, they are the power tools of the church (Acts 4:29- 33; 10:38; 1 Corinthians 12:7-11).
13. Use spiritual weapons (2 Cor. 10:4-5).
14. Resist the devil; submit to God (James 4:7).
15. Live your life committed to truth and righteousness (Romans 12:1-2).

"Blessed be the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight" (Psalm 144:1).

Through these spiritual exercises and disciplines we will make sure that our names are written in heaven and also are recognized by the devil.

Please Beware: After completing these exercises one will become a man the devil knows and fears. "Devil, my life is a danger zone!"

We will be a man that both God and the devil know.

We Have an Enemy

The name "Satan" is used 52 times in the Bible and means "adversary." Satan is our enemy. There are three enemies that we must overcome and conquer.

- The Flesh
- The Devil (god of this world)
- The World

We Are Not Ignorant of His Devices

"...For we are not ignorant of his devices" (2 Corinthians 2:11).

A Woman's Guide to Spiritual Warfare highlights a personal experience of co-author Ruthanne Garlock. She had visited an ancient city in Antigua, Guatemala. The Mayan Indians had inhabited this area years before. These Indians had fought with bows and arrows and were considered to be very fierce. Spanish soldiers had an advantage because they wore armor, had horses and used guns. Horses were unknown to the Mayan Indians and when they saw the swift animals with the armored soldiers on their backs, they thought it was all one creature.

They aimed their bows and arrows at the horse, not knowing that their real enemy was on the horse. They were able to kill a lot of the horses with their arrows but the soldiers just jumped off and shot the Indians with their guns. The Mayans were killed by the hundreds. They did not realize that the real enemy was riding on the horse's back.

Today, Christians do the same type of thing. We shoot at each other instead of fighting the devil. The devil is crafty (Genesis 3:1); a deceiver (Genesis 3:13); a liar and father of lies (John 8:44); the accuser of the brethren (Rev. 12:10); and the tempter (Matthew 4:3; I Thess. 3:5).

The enemy in battle would not like for you to understand much about him and his location. He will use deceit, lies, and tricks to create a false understanding of his position and battle plans. We are not ignorant of the devil's tactics, plans, and his weaknesses. He would like to deceive us, tempt us until we fall, and then accuse us.

1. What is the opposite of "up"?
2. What is the opposite of "light"?
3. What is the opposite of "good"?
4. What is the opposite of "God"?

In question number four did you answer "the devil or Satan?" Satan is not the opposite of God. God is distinct and has no opposite. Satan is the opposite of angels like Michael and Gabriel. He lost his job because he wanted to exalt himself to be like God. He wanted to enter God's office and sit at his desk and control everyone (Isaiah 14:14).

I have another question to ask, "Where is the devil at right now?" Did you say "in hell"? The devil is not in hell. Many people believe that Satan goes down into the fire and burns there for awhile and comes back up to check things out on the earth. He is not in hell now, but he is going to hell. Hell was created for the devil and his angels. Satan is the "god of this age" (2 Corinthians 4:4); "the ruler of the kingdom of the air" (Ephesians 2:2); and is walking around like a roaring lion seeking who he can devour (1 Peter 5:8).

We Are in a Battle

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12).

However, many of us stop the Scripture at, "We wrestle not!"

"Or else how can one enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? And then he will spoil his house" (Matthew 12:29).

We learn in Mark 3:27 and Matthew 12:29 that spiritual conflict against Satan involves three aspects:

1. Declaring War against Satan.
2. Entering Satan's house (anywhere he has a stronghold).
3. Carrying away his possessions and setting the captives free.

We Will Win the Battle

"And it came to pass, when they brought those kings unto Joshua, that Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings, And they came near, and put their feet upon the necks of them. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of good courage, for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight" (Joshua 10:24-25).

The armies had been defeated and their five kings had hidden in a cave. They were captured and brought to "Joshua" (the Hebrew equivalent to the name of "Jesus" in the New Testament). Joshua is an Old Testament type of Jesus whose job was to bring "many sons unto glory." (Hebrews 2:10) Tradition dictated that those captured lie down on the ground, and that the victor would place his foot upon their necks in order to symbolize the victory. In this case, Joshua called for his captains to place their feet upon the necks of the Canaanite kings. He was transferring the authority to his captains much like Jesus has done to us. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis 3:15).

"And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it" (Colossians 2:15).

"And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly..." (Romans 16:20).

"Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven" (Luke 10:19-20).

It is time to declare war. One man said, "Mr. Devil, I have some thoughts for you to think about.

The Lord is going BEFORE ME, the blood of Jesus is OVER ME, the everlasting arms of God are UNDER ME, and His goodness and mercy are BEHIND ME, following me all the days of my life."

"Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4).

Don't Give an Inch to the Devil

It is sad when we allow the devil to be the one to place his foot upon our neck. "Neither give place to the devil" (Ephesians 4:27). Do not allow him to have a foothold in your life!

Our Ultimate Goal

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God..." (Acts 26:18).

To be spirit-empowered you must first be spirit-filled (Acts 1:8).

Study Questions

1. What did the village chief find to be the problem with the muscle man? _____

2. What is a better exercise than body exercise? _____

3. Name seven spiritual exercises:
1) _____
2) _____
3) _____
4) _____
5) _____
6) _____
7) _____

4. What does the name "Satan" mean? _____

5. What three enemies must we overcome? _____

6. Where do many people stop when they quote Ephesians 6:12? _____

7. What is significant about the name "Joshua" as compared to "Jesus"? _____

8. How is the story in Joshua 10:24-25 significant when it comes to spiritual warfare with the devil? _____

9. In the story of the Mayan Indians, why did so many of the Indians fall in the battle? _____

10. What are some of the characteristics of the devil (that he would like to hide from us)? _____

11. Who is the opposite of "God"? _____

12. Where is the devil now? _____

Additional Notes

Satan, Your Kingdom is Coming Down

“...They came unto the iron gate that leadeth unto the city; which opened to them of his own accord; and they went out, and passed on...”

(Acts 12:10)

“And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one’s bands were loosed”

(Acts 16:26).

What do gates and doors have in common? Both are designed to keep the unwanted out and the wanted in. In most cases they help us keep the good in and the bad out. However, in the two cases given above they were designed to keep the good in. Gates, doors, fences, and walls also represent boundaries and are usually easy to see. They bear an unwritten message:

“THIS IS MY PROPERTY . . . KEEP OUT!”

These boundaries also exist in the spiritual realm but they are just more difficult to see.

“And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

Wrapped up in this one verse is the purpose, plan, mission, and vision of God. This was the reason why Jesus came to the earth. He came to “build His church” and He still continues to build it through us.

Many times when we read this verse we picture hell on the attack and the church on the defensive. We picture ourselves almost sunken under the pressure of hell’s onslaught and God finally is able to bring together enough forces to overcome the wicked one. That is not the picture portrayed here at all. Have you ever seen a person attack with gates? No, a person does not attack with gates, he defends with gates. Do you get the picture? Jesus and His mighty army (the church) are attacking and the devil is on the run. Let us go back into history and get a clear picture. In this case “history” will become “His-Story.”

One of God’s leaders in the angelic realm was Lucifer, the “son of the morning,” (Isaiah 14: 12-17; Ezekiel 28:12-17) who tried to overthrow God in a coup. He became God’s adversary (enemy). Because of this, Lucifer moved from being one of God’s archangels to God’s archenemy. Revelation 12:4-9 tells us that Lucifer tried to get all the angels to follow him, but only one third of the angels joined him in the coup attempt against God. They were cast down and had to organize their own kingdom. Two thirds remained in heaven.

The Bible is a battle between “good” and “evil”. When you look at the back of the book you see who wins. Until then we will constantly be in battle against Satan and his demons. 1 John 5:19 allows us to know that our world lies in the power of the evil one. We are looking for a “breakthrough.” We must pull the seat out from underneath Satan. It is true that Satan is our enemy and we are coming against the gates of his kingdom.

The gates of hell cannot withstand the mighty army of Jesus Christ! Satan’s gates are being pulled down and his doors kicked open. Hell represents Satan’s entire domain and the church is aggressive and triumphant against it.

**The church shall prevail
against the gates of hell.**

“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force” (Matthew 11:12).

The New International Version says that it “was forcefully advancing and forceful men lay hold to it.” God is looking for people who will take things by force. We need to “be strong” like Joshua and remember that no one can stand before us all the days of our lives. The Apostles were powerful men who dominated wherever they went (Acts 17:6). They were overcomers (John 16:33). The church is to free Satan’s powerless captives (Revelation 10:11; 14:6).

“The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it” (Luke 16:16).

We are pressing our way into the kingdom of heaven. We have knocked down the gates of hell in our lives, in our cities, in our country, and in our world. We are pressing into the kingdom.

“...I have written unto you, young men, because ye are strong, and the word of God abideth in you, and ye have overcome the wicked one” (1 John 2:14).

“Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world” (1 John 4:4).

Satan is the god of this present world. He controls it along with his demons and evil spirits. He has organized the world into political, cultural, and religious systems that at times, stand as gates to the kingdom of God and prevents people from believing the truth. Although Satan has a powerful kingdom, Jesus came to destroy the works of Satan (1 John 3:8) and free us from his dominion. God has enabled us to enter into spiritual warfare with Him. He has given us powerful weapons and a promise that “no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper...” (Isaiah 54:17).

“(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God...” (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

No matter what the gates of hell are in our lives, homes, and city; we can knock them down with the weapons provided. Whatever demonic powers are in effect in our lives; we can knock them down.

Our weapons are mentioned in Ephesians 6:10-17. In Ephesians 6, we see the enemies that we face; the armor that we are to use; and the weapons that are available to us. They are given so that we can “stand against the wiles of the devil” (Ephesians 6:11).

They are given to us to wrestle against principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. We will win the battle and knock down the gates of hell with the “whole armor of God.” It includes:

Spiritual Armor and Weapons

- ✓ Loins girt about with TRUTH.
- ✓ Breastplate of RIGHTEOUSNESS.
- ✓ Feet shod with the preparation of the
- ✓ GOSPEL OF PEACE.
- ✓ Shield of FAITH.
- ✓ Helmet of SALVATION.
- ✓ Sword of the SPIRIT (Word of God).

We are an army that is marching through the land. We have a made up mind. We will not and cannot retreat. God has meant for us to move forward; therefore, none of our weapons are designed for a soldier to retreat.

“Blessed be the LORD my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight” (Psalms 144:1).

Put On Jesus

First of all we must “put on Jesus Christ.” (Romans 13:12,14; 1 Corinthians 1:29-31). According to Galatians 3:27, we can do this through water baptism in Jesus name.

We can also use the name of Jesus to speak to the enemy and resist him (James 4:7); You must first submit before you can resist.

Power in the Blood

The blood of Jesus is another powerful weapon. We can plead the blood of Jesus. When we plead the blood of Jesus we are applying Jesus' shed blood as protection against the enemy. In Exodus 12:1-13 when the death angel saw the blood on the doorposts he passed over that home. When we plead the blood we are telling Jesus that we trust Him and we are telling Satan that he cannot touch us as long as we are under the blood.

In one country there is a song that says,

"I'm going to dive right inside the blood.
I'm going to dive right inside the blood.
Where the devil can't do me any harm!"

- We can also bind the strong man (Matthew 16:19; Mark 3:27). This will stop him from continuing his destructive activities.
- We have been given authority to bind the devil (Matthew 18:18). The devil is strong but the church is stronger!

Prayer is another weapon that should not be forgotten. This is called "Prayer Warfare."

Prayer

Daniel prayed and fasted in Daniel 10 and God sent an angel to answer. The angel revealed that God had heard him on the first day but that he had been in battle with the Prince of Persia for twenty-one days. This prince had withstood him but Michael had come to his assistance. It is just a matter of time before we "possess our possessions."

Promises for Possession

"That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heaven, and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies" (Genesis 22:17).

"... and the house of Jacob shall possess their possessions" (Obadiah 17).

"Fret not thyself because of evildoers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity. For they shall soon be cut down like the grass, and wither as the green herb" (Psalm 37:1-2).

"Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto _____, saying, not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Who art thou, O great mountain? Before _____ thou shalt become a plain..." (Zechariah 4:6, 7).

There are so many Scriptures that promise us that we will "possess". Have you ever looked up the three words "possess the land" in your Bible? According to Eastwood Anaba in Breaking

Illegal Possession, the word “possess” means “seize, capture, take hold of something by legal right and by military violence. In terms of legal right, Jesus bought the land for us with His blood.”

It is true that the enemy has built his gate very close to where we live. “I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith...” (Rev. 2:13).

Satan tries to hinder the preaching of the gospel. It is his desire to hide the truth from people. He knows that there is one God and trembles.

“But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them” (2 Corinthians 4:3-4).

“Or else how can one enter into a strong man’s house, and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man? And then he will spoil his house” (Matthew 12:29).

“To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace” (Luke 1:79).

According to Ephesians 6:12, Satan seems to have a highly organized kingdom on the earth:

- ✓ Principalities (series of leaders)
- ✓ Powers (Authorities, demons placed over assigned territories.)
- ✓ Rulers of darkness of this world (princes of the age)
- ✓ Spiritual wickedness in high places. (Destructive with only wickedness in mind.)

We must use our spiritual might to put out the enemy who occupies our territory illegally. We can possess the land. It is ours!

“...Let us go up at once, and possess it; for we are well able to overcome it” (Numbers 13:30).

Promises to Those Involved in the Battle

“When thou goest out to battle against thine enemies...be not afraid of them: for the Lord thy God is with thee, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt...ye approach this day unto battle against your enemies: let not your hearts faint, fear not, and do not tremble, neither be ye terrified because of them. For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you” (Deuteronomy 20:1-4).

“... for the battle is the Lord’s...” (1 Samuel 17:47).

1. What is the purpose, plan, and vision of God? _____

2. What are gates and doors used for? _____

3. Explain what took place in Lucifer's life in order for him to be cast down from heaven? _____

4. Prove using the Scripture that it is us (the church) that is coming against the gates of Satan.

5. Who is the "god" of this present world? _____

6. What did Jesus come to destroy? _____

7. What do our spiritual weapons enable us to do according to 2 Corinthians 10:4-5?

8. What are six weapons and/or pieces of spiritual armor that is given to us? _____

9. Why does Satan blind the eyes of people? _____

10. Why was Daniel's answer to prayer delayed in Daniel 10? _____

