

Spiritual Gifts Series: **From Willingness to Giftedness**

Sermon title: **The Patron of the Gifts**

Scripture: **1 Corinthians 12:4-11**

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Clearwater Bay International Baptist Church

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We begin a new series today on spiritual gifts called, *“From Willingness to Giftedness”*. We will be digging into the chapters of 1 Corinthians 12, 13, and 14. I would encourage you over the next month to be reading those chapters, perhaps in your daily Bible reading, and ask the Lord to speak to you.

Our vision here at CBIBC is that we will all: **BEHOLD** God daily; that we will all seek to know him deeply. That we will **BELONG** to one another in a deep way...and we do that by building one another up with our gifts. That’s why we are doing this series. We also want to **BE SENT** as his witnesses both locally to our family, neighbors, co-workers and friends....and sent globally to the unreached peoples.

The topic of spiritual gifts is an interesting one and a confusing one. Before the 20th century there was very little written or little discussion about spiritual gifts.

Since the birth of the Pentecostal movement in the early 20th century, it has been a hot topic.

Let me say that you might be disappointed if you are looking for me to break down all of the gifts and what they look like in this series. I am not going to do that.

We want to find out a few things in this series. It is my hope that you will:

- (1) Grow to hunger more for the Holy Spirit's leadership in your life.
- (2) Move closer to knowing what your spiritual gift is.
- (3) Grow in your desire and knowledge of how to use your gifts.

● Let's pray together and ask for God's help.

We want to talk about God today. He is the patron of the gifts of grace/the spiritual gifts. He is the supplier and the giver. We need to start with him and I think it might help us if we think about God's greatness a little. His excellence. His majesty. His power. Because if God means little to us or is small to us....then we probably won't appreciate his gifts.

Isn't it true that our value of the gift received is in proportion to the greatness of the giver?

I'll give you an **example**: You see this coin in my hand? What is it? It's a Hong Kong 1 dollar coin. It's worth 1 dollar. Well, what if I told you that this coin was given to my father by Bruce Lee? Would that change the value of the coin? Would you use it to pay for your bus?

What about this Bible? What if I told you that this Bible was one of Billy Graham's bibles? That he gave it to my father as a gift. Would you carry it around and use it for study?

The value of the gift received is in proportion to the greatness of the giver.

So, let's talk about God for moment...the patron or giver of spiritual gifts.

Isaiah 40:18-26

To whom then will you liken God, or what likeness compare with him? 19 An idol! A craftsman casts it, and a goldsmith overlays it with gold and casts for it silver chains. 20 He who is too impoverished for an offering chooses wood that will not rot; he seeks out a skillful craftsman to set up an idol that will not move. 21 Do you not know? Do you not hear? Has it not been told you from the beginning? Have you not understood from the foundations of the earth? 22 It is he who sits above the circle of the earth, and its inhabitants are like grasshoppers; who stretches out the heavens like a

curtain, and spreads them like a tent to dwell in; 23 who brings princes to nothing, and makes the rulers of the earth as emptiness. 24 Scarcely are they planted, scarcely sown, scarcely has their stem taken root in the earth, when he blows on them, and they wither, and the tempest carries them off like stubble. 25 To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him? says the Holy One. 26 Lift up your eyes on high and see: who created these? He who brings out their host by number, calling them all by name; by the greatness of his might and because he is strong in power, not one is missing. God created the universe. God rules over every molecule in the universe. *Hebrews 1* tells us that Jesus Christ, God the Son, *is the heir of all things, through whom also he created the world. He is the radiance of the glory of God and upholds the universe by the word of his power.*

The universe, the Bible says is being held up by the power of the word of Jesus. The entire universe!



- the earth is spinning counter clockwise on its axis at 1000 mph.
- The earth is orbiting the Sun at 70,000 mph.
- The Sun and our solar system is in an orbit around the Milky Way galaxy and it's all traveling together at 500,000 mph...taking 250 million years to go around once.

- Our Milky Way galaxy is 100,000 light years in diameter. At the speed of light....100,000 years to cross it! And compared to other galaxies, our is puny.
- How many stars in our galaxy? No one knows. Cosmologists estimate 100 billion stars in the Milky Way. The European Space Agency has a space observatory called GAIA that is mapping the galaxy and they have counted and marked 1 billion to date. In our puny galaxy.
- How many galaxies in the universe? God alone knows. Hubble Space telescope estimates 100-200 billion.

And this book called the Bible that we hold in our hands says that this being called God....made it.

He is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. He is eternal, infinite, and unchangeable in his power and perfection, goodness and glory, wisdom, justice, and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will.

This is the being that has given every Christian a gift.
Amazing.

Now let's turn to this God's written word to us in
1 Corinthians 12.

In verse 1 you see that it says, "Now concerning spiritual gifts".....Literally....grace gifts. Paul is writing in response to something they have written to ask him. He responds in

1st Corinthians to various questions they are asking marriage, singleness, food to idols....(chapters 7 and 8) and now spiritual gifts or grace gifts. I want you to see first of all that....

I. God has given a grace gift to every believer.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

Let's break this phrase down:

God has given a grace gift to every believer.

God has given grace gifts: Notice that these gifts are from the Spirit, from the Lord, From God.

- God empowers them (verse 6)
- All these are empowered by one and the same
- Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. (verse 11)
- God arranged. (verse 18)
- God chose. (verse 18)
- God so composed. (verse 24)
- God has appointed. (verse 28)

The trinitarian God decided to give you and I a gift when we were born again. We don't get to choose the gift. We don't get the gift we want. He does the distributing. He empowers. He apportions. By his will. He arranges. He chooses. He composes. He appoints.

Like a conductor or maestro of an orchestra he has designed a symphonic masterpiece and hand picked who will play each instrument and what each instrument's role is. God dishes out the gifts... by his grace.

To every believer.

Verse 4 says there are varieties of gifts, varieties of service and varieties of activities. God empowers them all in everyone. Everyone. Verse 7 says..“To Each” is given....we all have one. Verse 11 says again that ‘each one’ is given a gift. The whole point of Paul’s instruction here is that no one and no gift is better than the others. **God gives a grace gift.....to all believers.**

II. Every gift is needed.

Now there are two dangers when it comes to spiritual gifts. One, is that people think that they're gift is so small that it has no use. Two, is that people think that everyone needs to have their gift or that everyone needs to be like them.

In [verses 14-20](#)....we have the 'lowly...I am not needed' group. In verses 21-26 we have the 'proudful...I am so blessed' group. But Paul is going to make it clear that 'every gift is needed'. The grace gifts are from God and distributed by God and all are needed.

1 Corinthians 12:14-20

14 For the body does not consist of one member but of many. 15 If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? 18 But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. 19 If all were a single member, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

“I am not....this....I am not...that. God doesn’t need me. The church doesn’t need me. I can’t teach. I can’t sing. I’m not a leader. You have no need of me.”

The Bible says you have a gift from the sovereign holy God of the universe by his grace. You have a part to play. Don’t get sucked into the trap that says you are not needed.

Find your gift & and get busy using it.

1 Corinthians 12:21 says...

21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.”

“You’re not like me! You’re not doing the things I appreciate. Why don’t you teach? Why don’t you lead? Why aren’t you an eye? We need lots of more people like me!”

Look at **verses 24-30** to see gain the right perspective. **But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, 25 that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.**

27 Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. 28 And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? 30 Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?

What's the point he's making?

We are not all the same. The gifts aren't all the same. Don't think your gift isn't needed and don't think everyone needs to have your same gift. Don't look down on people who don't have your gift. Blame God. He's the one who gave them out.

We are to avoid both extremes and instead find our gift and use it.

That's the final point.

1. The almighty God has graciously given a gift to every believer.
2. Every gift is needed for the body to function properly.
3. **Find your gift and use it in the body.**

Think about it...if God....the creator and sustainer of the universe has given you a spiritual gift (if you're a Christian), don't you want to know what it is?

The value of the gift received is in proportion to the greatness of the giver!

It's a big deal when God gives you a gift.

Well, how do you find out what your gift is?

We will talk about that next week and the weeks to come.

In closing, I think I don't need to overplay spiritual gifts too much. Cause there is a greater gift that God has given to us, much more precious than a gift of grace to 'build up the body of Christ'...and that gift is Christ himself. God gave us the gift of an eternal relationship. He has reconciled us to himself through Jesus Christ's death on the cross for sin. And God raised him from the dead. He's alive and well and we can know him.

Ephesians 2

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God.”

Romans 3

“You are made right by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an atonement by his blood.”

If you are not a Christian today, believe on Jesus Christ and receive the gift of salvation...the gift of forgiveness... the gift of eternal life.

If you are a Christian, God has given you another grace gift....as a way to bless the church. Let's find it and use it.