

2. Secondly, how do I use my gift in the Spirit's energy?
  1. Pray to God to cleanse your life and use you.  
I Thes. 5:17
  2. Yield yourself as an instrument of righteousness.  
Rom. 6:12-13
  3. Be filled with the Holy Spirit, allow him to permeate every part of your being, each thought, each decision, each attitude. Eph. 5:18
  4. Walk in the Spirit Gal. 5:16. Align yourself with God and walk one step at a time with Him.

## **AN INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL GIFTS (1)**

The subject of spiritual gifts is one of the most exciting studies you and I can enter into. And now that we have seen the origin of the body and the nature of the body, it is time to see the gifts of the body to understand how the church must function.

I really believe that the church is to be supernatural in operation. Jesus Christ said when He left this earth, the Holy Spirit would be sent to replace Him. And when He came, He would fill, energize, and give gifts to believers. So a distinction should be made at the outset: The gift of the Spirit is the Spirit himself (I Corin. 12:13). But the gifts of the Spirit are bestowed supernaturally upon each Christian.

It is these gifts of the Spirit that we need to take a close look at today.

### **I. WHAT ARE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?**

1. Spiritual gifts are special God-given abilities which God entrusts to His people in order to involve them in the task of advancing His Kingdom through the Church. A spiritual gift is a God-given capacity through which the Holy Spirit supernaturally ministers to the body. The spiritual gifts God has given His people are supernatural gifts.
2. They are special endowments for service. Every single believer in this church has one or more spiritual gifts. They are bestowed on individual believers to enable the church as the body of Christ to perform the ministry to which God has called it. These gifts are functional and congregational.
3. Paul states this in Eph. 4:7. He says two things here. One is that the gift of the Holy Spirit for ministry is given to every true Christian. Also, each Christian is given the power by which that gift is exercised. It appears that, in

the early church whenever anyone was saved one of the first things he was taught was this tremendous truth.

4. They were taught that not only had the Holy Spirit imparted to them the life of Jesus, but He also equipped them with a spiritual gift or gifts which they were responsible to discover and use in the Church. (I Peter 4:10)
5. You have a gift. It may be lying dormant and unused. You may not know what it is, but it is there. And you must discover it, for your usefulness as a Christian will be determined by the degree to which you use that which God has given you.
6. But how can I distinguish between a talent I have and a spiritual gift? Let's look at the list of gifts in the Bible. These gifts are listed in Rom. 12:4-9, I Corin. 12:8, Eph. 4:11, I Peter 4:10-11.

## **II. WHY DO WE HAVE GIFTS?**

1. Spiritual gifts are the basis for allowing the Holy Spirit to minister through you to the fullest potential. (I Tim. 4:14) Spiritual gifts are the basis for ministering to other according to a wise use of our time and priorities. (I Peter 4:10)
2. Spiritual gifts help us in discerning motivation and joy in our ministry and service (Rom. 1:11) the motivation: for I long to see you expressed in ministry: that I may impart some spiritual gift resulting in an effect: to the end that you may be established.
3. Spiritual gifts are for the purpose of ministering to others and allowing the Holy Spirit to produce the results. (I Corin. 12:7) Your spiritual gifts are for the body, not for your own edification. The Holy Spirit has divided up the gifts in a beautiful balance so that we can all minister to

each other and complement each other. So here's the bottom line: if you're not using your gift, someone is getting cheated!

4. That's why it is so vital to understand the church as the body of Christ. If my hand isn't functioning, my body is crippled. If my legs aren't functioning my body is paralyzed. It all has to work together and help each other. That's how God wants His church to function. Simply put, non-functioning members hurt, hinder, and cripple the rest of the church.

## **III. WHERE DO I EXERCISE MY GIFT?**

1. Some people will say, "I want to get involved, but there aren't any openings". Oh, yes there are. If you have the gift of helps, go help someone. If you have the gift of teaching, find a class and teach it, or start a new one, or find someone that needs to be taught, and teach him.
2. If you have the gift of exhortation, go visit our non- active and backslidden members and exhort them. You don't need the church organization to minister your spiritual gifts. So many people just sit around without ministering their spiritual gifts while the body of Christ is craving for someone to minister to them.
3. Don't wait for the organization to fit you into a slot----go find someday and exercise you gift! The Spirit didn't give it to you to put it on a shelf.

## **IV. THE HOW OF THE GIFTS**

1. First, how do I know my gifts?
  1. Study the lists of gifts
  2. Pray and ask the Holy Spirit for leading.
  3. It will be something you will enjoy doing.
  4. It will be confirmed by other members of the body