

Major Event: The Church

Lesson 7: Spiritual Gifts of the Body of Christ

Central Texts: Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 4:10-11

Suggested Subjects for Teacher to Cover:

Seven Spiritual Gifts are Revealed in Romans 12:4-8.

Romans 12:4-8 - For just as we have one body with many members, and the members do not all have the same function so in Christ we are many in one body and each member belongs to one another having different gifts according to the grace which he has given to us. If **prophecy**, (*let him use it*) according to the proportion (agreement) of faith, if **service**, in his serving, or the one **teaching**, in his teaching, if **encouragement** (exhortation, comforting), in his encouragement, he who **gives**, with liberality, he who **leads**, with diligence, he who shows **mercy**, with cheerfulness.

Romans 12 Gifts:

1. Prophecy- προφητεία [*propheteia*]: New Testament prophets provided edification, exhortation, and comfort to the church (1 Cor. 14:3 “But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.”). They revealed direct revelation from God to the church while the biblical canon was still incomplete.
2. Service- Διακονία [*diakonia*]: Although all Christians should serve the body, God gifted certain believers with this particular gift. This gift ministers to the needs of others, including material needs.
3. Teaching- διδασκαλία [*didaskalia*]: This is not a gift that reveals *direct* revelation from God, but is a gift that functions in the explaining of truths already written in Scripture. We should all be teachers of truth, but not necessarily in the formal sense in the church (cf. Hebrews 5:11-12 with James 3:1). There were clearly those who exercised this gift in the local church (1 Tim. 5:17).
4. Encouragement- παράκλησις [*paraklesis*]: We should all be encouragers (Hebrews 10:25). However, God has gifted certain believers to specialize in this area of service. This gift should be based on encouraging others based on the truth of Scripture (e.g. 1 Thes. 4:18).
5. Giving- μεταδίδωμι [*metadidomi*]: All Christians should give (2 Corinthians 9:7; Galatians 6:6-7). However, there are those who have the spiritual gift of giving. Giving is important in the body of Christ, and the Bible puts emphasis on giving with the proper motivation.
6. Leadership- προϊστήμι [*proistemi*]: The reference is to any position involving superintendence. This word is used for leaders in the church who manage and rule (1 Thes. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:4, 5, 12; 5:17).
7. Showing Mercy- ἐλεέω [*eleeo*]: All Christians should show mercy (James 2:12-13; Jude 23). God has given a special gift of mercy to some believers in the body of Christ. This gift often focuses on ministering to the sick and especially needy.

The Gifts are Reflective of God:

1. Prophecy: Deuteronomy 18:15 - “The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among you, from your countrymen, you shall listen to him.”
2. Service: John 13 - Jesus washes the disciples feet as an act of humble servanthood.
3. Teaching: Matthew 7:28 - When Jesus had finished these words, the crowds were amazed at His teaching;
4. Encouragement: John 16:33 - “These things I have spoken to you, so that in Me you may have peace. In the world you have tribulation, but take courage; I have overcome the world.”
5. Giving: Mark 10:45 - “For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”
6. Leadership: John 8:12 - Then Jesus again spoke to them, saying, “I am the Light of the world; he who follows Me will not walk in the darkness, but will have the Light of life.”
7. Mercy: Luke 6:36 - “Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”

Principle: When Christians are functioning in their spiritual giftedness, the character and purpose of God is being represented and reflected in the body of Christ.

Principles from Romans 12:4-8:

- Believers in the body of Christ are compared literal parts of the human body to illustrate the importance of spiritual gifts and the necessity and interdependency of each individual part to benefit the whole.
- All believers are members of the body of Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12-31), with the **primary** focus being that each member functions to serve the body, not the body to serve the members.
- Spiritual gifts are not designed for selfish use, but to serve the members of Christ’s body.

Suggested Attributes and Characteristics of God:

Humility- Even though God is above all, He still sent His Son to serve us (John 13:1-17).