



The Gifts of the Spirit

Lesson Four

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation"
(Romans 12:6,7,8...)

THE GIFT OF TEACHING (Part One)

Just as the gift of pastoring reminds us of the earthly shepherding ministry of Jesus, so is Jesus our example as the **Master Teacher**. In the Gospels, 60 times Jesus is called **teacher**, showing He placed a high priority on the ministry of **teaching**. His commission to the church was "*Go ye therefore, and teach all nations ...teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you*" (Matt 28:19,20). This general **teaching** by all Christians should be done in our homes, churches, marketplace, and in every other place where it is possible to have a good influence in **teaching** others about Christ. Yet, it is evident in scripture that certain individuals in the church were **specially gifted** of the Holy Spirit for **teaching**.

Leslie B. Flynn wrote, "The **Gift of Teaching** is the supernatural ability to explain clearly and apply effectively the truth of the Word of God." This definition contains four concepts for us to study:

- 1) **Supernatural ability**
- 2) **Clear communication**
- 3) **Effective application**
- 4) **Body of truth**

1. Supernatural Ability:

If a person is capable of teaching, will they automatically have the *Gift of Teaching* when they become a Christian? The answer is, **not automatically**. However, it is more likely than not that the Spirit will bestow the *Gift of Teaching* on one whom already has the talent of teaching. But, not always. All the courses one may take in graduate educational schools can never spark the divine plus that makes the difference between natural talent and the supernatural gift. On the other hand, a person without formal education can become a *Spirit-gifted teacher* of spiritual truth. This fact helps to explain why many qualified secular teachers do not do well as Sunday school teachers and how an uneducated person has a very anointed teaching ministry.

2. Clear Communication:

Teaching requires communication and language that people understand. The possession of this gift does not guarantee polished ability to communicate. For most, this gift needs to be continuously developed. Until a student has grasped the meaning of a Biblical truth to the extent they can share that truth's meaning with someone else, they have not learned. Therefore the teacher has failed in conveying that meaning. That is why the *Gift of Teaching* is far more than reading the lesson aloud.

3. Effective Application:

The *Gift of Teaching* requires an offer of application. If one learns the fact that Jesus calmed a storm on the sea for the disciples, but is not offered how that truth can be applied to their personal life, the *Gift of Teaching* has not reached its full potential.

I used to pride myself that no one could tell the story of Bernie's Barrel as emotional and theatrical as I. You could almost feel the snow falling on a hot Texas day as I shivered, pulling my coat around me as I portrayed Bernie crawling into his barrel at night during a ragging snow storm. One day I asked a little girl what the story meant to her. She said not to sleep in a barrel at night or you would die. Although I was a great story teller, I totally missed teaching the application.

4. Body of Truth:

Teaching is not only delivering facts, and offering an application, but in this world of technology and intellectual affluence, it is extremely important to convey through instruction the simplicity of Truth. Because Christianity cannot survive apart from a body of truth, Jesus' Great Commission made teaching, instructing and guiding an integral part of evangelizing the world. No wonder that immediately after the conversion of the 3,000 on the day of Pentecost, "*they continued steadfastly in the apostles' teachings*" (Acts 2:42). We must learn "*precept upon precept, precept upon precept and line upon line, line upon line; here a little and there a little*" (Isa 28:10).

THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GIFT OF TEACHING

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are not earned, neither are they deserved by anyone. Spiritual gifts are enablings of grace-unmerited privileges for ministry bestowed on Christians according to the will of God. Along with the *privilege* of having the *Gift of Teaching* comes a big *responsibility*. This responsibility is to God. God will judge teachers more strictly due to the importance of the task (Jam 3:1). There are many areas of responsibility of a teacher. I will mention three.

1. The responsibility of - Living a Godly life.

We have all heard the cliché, “Your actions speak so loud, I can’t hear what you are saying.” How can you teach on loving your neighbor, if you are always gossiping about someone in the church? Or teaching on Christian discipline if you don’t pay your tithes? Teachers must be role models to those they teach, not only in word, but in character, integrity and example.

2. The responsibility of - Being Prepared.

Teaching God’s Word is a very serious thing, as you will discover in the DBR. It matters not if you are teaching the nursery, Sr. adults, or any age in between. You are literally taking God’s Word and instilling it into another.

My heart hurts as I sit in so many SS classes where the teacher is not prepared and reads verbatim out of the SS quarterly or other study books. Recently I was talking to a man, “he called himself a teacher,” who said he didn’t use quarterlies or study books. He said the Lord always gave him a scripture on his way to church for that week and the Holy Spirit filled his mouth with what to say. This is extremely dangerous. The gifted teacher has a burning desire to study for facts, cross references and applications to all scripture. Their spirit is always open to receive insights and takes notes on their findings for future lessons. Their delight is finding applications to the truths they are presenting. The gifted teacher usually preparing for the lesson finds much more material than they have time to teach.

3. The Responsibility of - Reproducing Teachers.

Teachers are challenged to reproduce themselves in the lives of their students. Teachers become teachers by modeling themselves after a favorite teacher. If you are a teacher, what are you doing to develop teachers, preachers or missionaries in your classroom? Is your class structured in such a way that you give room for nurturing a gift someone may have? If you are a teacher make this one of your goals. You may have a Billy Graham in your class.

**Teaching is a partnership with God.
You are not molding iron
Nor chiseling marble;
You are working with the Creator of the universe
In shaping human character and determining destiny.
-Ruth Vaughn**

THE GIFT OF EXHORTATION

The original meaning of the word *exhort* is to *comfort, console, entreat, implore, and counsel*. In essence, it is *encouragement*. Its noun form is a title for both the Holy Spirit, the *Comforter* (John 4:16) and Jesus our *Advocate* (1 John 2:1).

The *Gift of Exhortation* involves the supernatural ability to come alongside *to help, to strengthen the weak, reassure the wavering, buttress the buffeted, steady the faltering, console the troubled and encourage the halting*. Just as the Holy Spirit is an instrument of help, so the Spirit uses this gift to make us instruments of *encouragement* to our fellow saints.

The *ability to exhort* is a gracious ability. It doesn't use so much sharp admonition as it does tender healing words. It works with compassion, not a pointing finger. This gift is not so much exercised through public discourse, although it can be, as it is through continual personal counseling. It takes time and patience to encourage new believers, comfort the ill, counsel the withdrawn and strengthen the backslider.

Though many disciples possessed the *Gift of Exhortation*, Barnabas stands out above the rest. Every time he appears in scripture he is encouraging someone. By looking at the characteristics of his life it will help us to see this gift in operation.

1. He helped needy saints by giving tangible substances as well as verbal comfort. (Acts 4:36, 37)

2. He endorsed the unwelcome convert Paul who had been rejected by the Sanhedrin and the disciples after his conversion. The Lord spoke to Barnabas and he took a risk in going to get Paul and bringing him before the apostles. Barnabas stood by Paul's testimony of his conversion. (Acts 9:26, 27)

3. He accepted alien believers at Antioch, who were not Jews, when the disciples sent him to investigate their conversions. If he had been narrow-minded, he might not have realized what God was doing among the Gentiles. (Acts 11:19-24)

4. He enlisted a promising teacher by his ability to see potential in people. Barnabas went to Tarsus to encourage Paul to come to Antioch and start his ministry under his guidance. Paul went and the rest is history. (Acts 11:25-26)

5. He developed a gifted assistant to become the leader while he himself became the assistant. Barnabas took Paul with him on a missionary journey, but the expedition soon became the journey of “Paul and Barnabas,” instead of “Barnabas and Paul.” This was without envy. When a Christian can become an assistant to his own assistant, he has reached a place of maturity many never reach. (Acts 13:7, 46)

**“It takes more grace than I can tell
To play the second fiddle well.”**

6. He restored the youthful deserter Mark even if it temporarily strained the friendship of Paul and Barnabas. Can you imagine the encouragement Mark must have felt to think Barnabas had that much confidence in him? Mark could have been a wasted, rejected life had not Barnabas taken the risk of a second chance. (Acts 12:25; 13:13; 15:35-39; 2 Tim 4:11)

Had Barnabas not used his *Gift of Exhortation* we might be missing half of the New Testament books. Through salvaging Mark we got one of the four Gospels and through his cultivation of Paul we got 13 epistles. Through his encouragement two men wrote 14 of the 27 New Testament books.

Ray and I attended the funeral of an elderly saint. There were several former pastors who spoke at the funeral. Every one of them without exception talked about what an encourager this lady had been to them. As young ministers she urged them on. Although poor herself she would bring them food if she knew their finances were low. She would tell them how good they preached when they felt they had flopped. When it seemed others of the church were against them, she was loyal to her pastor and never would allow anyone to say anything negative about ‘her pastor’ in her presence.

If laity could only realize what an important ministry the *Gift of Exhortation* is in the body of Christ. I think if there was any one gift we should all strive for, it should be the gift of exhortation.

THE HUMAN TOUCH
Tis the human touch in this world that counts, the touch of your hand and mine,
Which means far more to the fainting heart than shelter and bread and wine;
For shelter is gone when the night is o’er, and bread lasts only a day,
But the touch of the hand, the sound of the voice
Sing on in the soul always.
---Spencer Michael Free

DAILY BIBLE READING

(Part Two)

R-read scripture **U**-underline scripture
Yellow-God **R**ed-Jesus **P**urple-Holy Spirit
Blue-praise **G**reen-myself **B**lack-Satan
Brown-Sin, temptation, sinners
W-write in your journal () is cross references
Scriptures are **King James Version**

Day

(Jesus, the Master Teacher)

1. If Jesus is our example of teaching, how should we teach according to **Matt 7:28, 29** & **Mk 1:22**?
2. **R** the story of one of Jesus' first teachings in **Lk 4:15-30**. What was the result of His teachings in **v:28,29**? Has this ever happened to you? Maybe not physically but perhaps emotionally?
3. Where did Jesus often teach in **Matt 13:54; Jn 6:59; Jn 18:20**?
4. **R** the disciple's test of Jesus' teachings in **Jn 6:59-69**. Did everyone always agree with the Master Teacher? What crucial question did Jesus ask them in **v:67**?
5. Although **Matthew chapters 5-7** are called the Sermon on the Mount, they are actually Jesus' teachings to the disciples. Each day this week read a portion of these teachings.

(Other Biblical Teachers)

6. **MEMORY VERSE #14 - 2 Tim 2:15**
7. What three distinctive gifts does Paul refer to himself as having in **1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11**? Can you define the difference in these gifts? If not, refer to Lesson Two and Lesson Three.
8. **R Acts 18:1-11** of Paul being called from preaching to Jews to teaching the Gentiles. What was the immediate result?
9. What did God command Moses in **Deut 4:5, 14**? In turn what did Moses command the Israelites in **Deut 4:8-10**? From **Deut 6:6-9**, how and when was this to be done?
10. **R** the account of Samuel teaching the Children of Israel in **I Sam 12:6-25**. In what way did Samuel feel he could sin against God in **v:23**? How fervently do you pray for your students?
11. In **2 Chron 17:1-13** King Jehoshaphat trained 16 teachers and sent them out to teach in all the cities of Judah. What did they teach in **v:9**? What did the king reap because of his teaching in **vs:10-12**?
12. **R** about a great SS class in **Neh 8:1-12**. From **v:12** real teaching does not take place until what happens? Does this happen in your class?

(A Teacher's Commitment)

13. **MEMORY VERSE #15 - Matt 28:19**
14. From **Matt 28:20**, what are we to teach all nations?
15. If we pray the prayer of **Ps 51:7-12**, what will be the result of our teaching in **v:13**?

16. According to **1 Peter 4:11**, if a man speaks or teaches, what are they instructed to do? For what reason?
17. What did Paul exhort Timothy to do in **2 Tim 2:2**? What is one of the fruits of being a teacher to faithful men? Have you ever trained anyone to be a diligent teacher?
18. Let us refresh our memory for the purpose of the gifts according to **Eph 4:12-16**.
19. What did Paul declare concerning his preaching and teaching in **I Cor 1:17**?
20. **MEMORY VERSE #16 - 1 Cor 1:25**
21. What can we as teachers learn from Paul's own testimony in **1 Cor 2:1-5** concerning our own ability in teaching God's Word?
22. What are teachers to rely upon, even if they have all kinds of quarterlies, commentaries and Biblical helps according to **2 Cor 2:9-16**? (*If you are a teacher, type these verses on a 3x5 card and place in the front of your Bible. R it each week before you start studying your lesson.*)
23. What is the purpose of the *gift of teaching* in **Col 1:28**?
24. What action should a teacher follow from **Ezra 7:10**? How can you do this?
25. As a teacher, from **Ps 119:18** what must our daily prayer be?

(The Gift of Exhortation)

26. **MEMORY VERSE #17 -Heb 10:24**
27. What was the result of Peter's testimony and exhortation in **Acts 2:36-41**?
28. R Paul's strong farewell speech and exhortation to the elders at Ephesus on his final visit in **Acts 20:17-38**.
29. R **Acts 15:22-33**, the letter of exhortation sent from the apostles to the Gentiles telling them they did not have to become Jews to be saved. If you had received the letter, what words would you find comforting? Who delivered the letter and who stayed to continue to be an encouragement?
30. How many times does the form of the word exhortation or comfort appear in **2 Cor 1:3-7**? Why are we comforted? When was the last time you comforted or encouraged someone else? The best way to encourage yourself is to encourage others.
31. From Jude 3, what is one of the tools you can use to exhort another person?

I consider my ability to arouse enthusiasm among menthe greatest asset I possess, and the way to develop the best that is in a man is by appreciation and encouragement. There is nothing else that so kills the ambitions of a man as criticisms from his superiors. I never criticize anyone. I believe in giving a man incentive to work. So I am anxious to praise but loath to find fault. If I like anything, I am hearty in my appreciation and lavish in my praise.

----Charles Schwab