

ON SPIRITUAL GIFTEDNESS

PASTOR NATHAN ELMS

Lots of teaching on the gifts of the Spirit. I know as a young preacher I was greatly desirous of these Gifts of the Spirit. I want to give you some of the helpful advice I received:

1. Uniqueness
2. Biblical precedent
3. There are four passages of Scripture that lists the gifts (1 Corinthians 12:8-11, 28-30; Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:7-12).
4. Motive Matters
5. Why do you want the gift?
6. Can you be trusted with the gift?
7. If you are pleading for a gift distrust yourself (Take delight in the LORD, and he will give you your heart's desires. Commit everything you do to the LORD. Trust him, and he will help you (Psalm 37:4, 5 NLT).
8. Let spiritual leadership check your motives "Let two or three prophesy, and let the others evaluate what is said" (1 Corinthians 14:29 NLT).
9. There is no gift that removes the need for faith
10. Spiritual gifts do NOT remove us from spiritual authority or accountability. It does not make you equal to your authority...
11. Spiritual gifts are primarily for the believer, and they should primarily edify. If they primarily cause division, rather than edify, the motive is almost always based in vanity. (example... its your fault your kids are sick)

DISCOVERING YOUR GIFTS.

TURN AWAY FROM SELF. SEE THE VALUE OF OTHERS

- We can't love the idea of the church more than the church.
- Bonhoeffer: Few things are more deadly to a community of faith than a romanticized view of life together.
- We are a strange and awkward group of people that do not blend naturally...
- *Romans 12:3: For by the grace given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he should think. Instead, think sensibly, as God has distributed a measure of faith to each one.*

When I am asked about ministry as a vocation I say: If you love people but don't need people, Ministry is a great experience. If you love people but DO need people, Ministry is going to hurt really bad, but you can make an impact. If you NEED people but don't love people, you are a dangerous, dangerous person who should never go into ministry.

FOCUS ON FRUIT MORE THAN GIFTS. THE FRUIT IS THE GIFT.

Christ-like maturity is primarily indicated by the manifestation of the Fruit of the Spirit, not by the presence of spiritual gifts (Galatians 5:22-23). God may choose to shine forth in a spiritually immature baby Christian. However, that does not make the baby spiritual. A spiritual child may say excitedly, "I got the gift of tongues last night and now I'm spiritual!" But, Jesus said: "For by their fruit you shall know them" (Matthew 7:16). **Satan can imitate and counterfeit spiritual gifts, but he is baffled in trying to imitate the Fruit of the Spirit.**

IT CAN BE EASIER TO DISCOVER A CATEGORY OF GIFT THAN IT IS TO DISCOVER THE SPECIFIC GIFT

Establishing Gifts (Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:29): Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Pastor-Teachers. These gifts are used primarily for planting and growing churches.

Supporting Gifts (Romans 12:6-8): Prophecy, Service, Teaching, Encouragement, Giving, Administration/Leadership, and Mercy. These gifts are used primarily to organize and administrate the church so that it may best carry out its responsibilities.

Ministry Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 1 Corinthians 12:27-31): Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Prophecy, Helps, Administration, Leadership, Distinguishing Spirits, Speaking in Tongues, and Interpreting

STOP LOOKING FOR NEEDS. START LOOKING AT WHAT IS IN YOUR HAND

(Loaves and fishes. Don't look at the crowd; what is in your hand?) Needs overwhelm us. The poor you have with you always. What can you do now? Give it to God.