

Sermon for FBC Feb. 04, 2018

## **How to Know Your Gifts**

Good morning!

Today my message is titled "How to Know Your Gifts"!

This past few weeks we started with a prayer for our community, then looked at God working in us to lead us to discovering Him and accepting the gift of Salvation. From there we looked at the progression from believer to baptism, to belonging to this family, and last week it was God Gives Gifts.

Now we are going to look at the next step when we belong to God's family - how God equips us to work together to tell the world about Him.

God does this by giving each believer gifts, which we are to discover and use for the family.

How do we know the gifts that God has given each of us? Here are some thoughts from an article by Dr. Howard Bixby.<sup>1</sup> Each of us should take the time to go through these steps to discover the gifts that God has given us.

Prayer – prayerfully ask God to help you to recognize your gifts.

Bible – Search God's Word for what Gifts are and how to use them.

Examine – examine yourself for spiritual results. In what gift areas do you feel an inner drive or desire to be involved?

Ask – Ask other people who know you well to evaluate your spiritual gifts. What do Christian people compliment you for in the realm of ministry?

Test – Do people experience change or progress because of your ministry to them? Do you have satisfaction or enjoyment from that ministry?

As we go through these steps of discovery, we need to make sure that what we are looking for is to glorify Christ and the Church, not ourselves.

Dr. Phil Collins made a few great statements about gifts and discovering them.

"Two tremendous benefits are gained when Christians discover their gifts: one, everyone is helped spiritually and two, the church begins to grow." "It would seem that if you would like to know God's will for your life, then you must DISCOVER your spiritual gifts." "You neither choose God's gifts nor do you create them. You do not earn them nor are they a reward. You FIND them!!" <sup>2</sup>

So, we all need to discover our gifts so that we and the church will grow in spiritual and physical health.

***Ephesians 4:12-13 NIV***

**12** To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up  
**13** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fulness of Christ.

Dr. Collins restates this concept: "The spiritual gifts are given, in the body of Christ, for Edifying – that is, for building up and for growth." <sup>3</sup>

Nowhere do we find that gifts make us great – they build the church!

Gordon Crosby calls it "A gift-working, gift-hearing community". (Dr. P Collins, pg. 3)

**1 Peter 4:10-11 NIV**

**10** Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.

**11** If anyone speaks, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God. If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

So what are some of the gifts we are looking for in discovery mode?

List of Gifts from the Bible (*Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; Ephesians 4:11-12*)

Speaking gifts

Apostleship (Missionary)  
Prophecy  
Evangelism  
Pastoring  
Teaching  
Exhorting  
Word of Wisdom  
Word of Knowledge  
Tongues  
Interpretation

Serving Gifts

Ministration  
Helps  
Giving  
Government (Administration)  
Showing Mercy  
Faith  
Discernment  
Miracles  
Healing

Other gifts listed

Celibacy – 1 Corinthians 7  
Martyrdom – 1 Corinthians 13:3

Hospitality – 1 Peter 4:9-10  
Craftmanship – Exodus 28:3  
Missionary – Cross-Cultural – Ephesians 3:7  
Music – 1 Corinthians 14:26

This list is neither exhaustive nor detailed. There are many specific ministry opportunities that fit into each of these listed above. Search God and His Word to discover your gift(s).

When I am discovering a gift for me or a direction from God, I use a three-step approach. I pray, read my Bible, and ask mature Christians who know me and who will pray before giving me guidance. Then I step out into that path and let God lead by opening doors in front of me.

I have discovered, over the years, that I must start moving before God starts directing my path. So after my three step approach, I start moving!

I hope that you have been encouraged to discover your gifts this morning. The church grows in direct association to the growth of each of us. We need to be growing every day, so we do not falter and miss the blessing of the gift God has for us!

Next week we will look at the discovery of “From Gifts to Fruit”.

As we move into Communion, let your mind be on Jesus Christ and the sacrifice He made to give you the opportunity to reconnect with God and become part of God’s family.

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Howard Bixby

<sup>2</sup>Dr. Phil Collins, pg. 1

<sup>3</sup>Dr. Phil Collins, pg. 3

### **Bibliography:**

New International Version (NIV)

Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV® Copyright ©1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

The Experiencing God Study Bible (Broadman & Holman Publishers, Nashville, Tennessee, 1994)

The NIV Study Bible, 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Edition Copyright © (Zondervan Publishing House, Grand Rapids, MI, 1995) All rights reserved

Lawrence O. Richards, The Bible Readers Companion (Halo Press – Ottenheimer Publishers, Owing Mills, MD, 1991)

Henry H. Halley, Halley’s Bible Handbook (Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1959)

Dr. Howard Bixby, How to recognize your spiritual gifts (Church Development Ministries, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 2 page outline to Cassette Tape series "Knowing and Using your spiritual gifts, date unknown)

Dr. Phil Collins, Gifts of the Spirit (Church Growth course notes at BLTS, Calgary, AB, 1976/77)

Gordon Crosby, a phrase quoted in Dr. Phil Collins course notes cited above.

---