

Sermon for FBC Jan. 28, 2018

God Gives Gifts

Good morning!

Today my message title is “God Gives Gifts”!

We started the year 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 and last week to what belonging to this family is all about.

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 gives us gifts to use for Him and His work on earth.

Hebrews 2:3b-4 NIV

3b *This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him.*
4 *God also testified to it by signs, wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will.*

Notice how even the idea of gifts is prefaced with Salvation, the greatest gift God gave us. Also, God chooses which gifts to Give each of us – we do not get to pick and choose for ourselves.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, we find a long list of “gifts” followed by verse 11 which tells us that the Spirit gives out the “gifts”, as He determines.

1 Corinthians 12:11 NIV

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and He gives them to each one, just as He determines.

Again, we read that gifts are from God as He determines the need for the family. Your gift is not for you, it is to be used for the family and to lead others to Christ.

What is a “Gift”?

Ephesians 4:11-13 NIV

11 *It was He (Christ) who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,*

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 fullness of Christ.*

A “Gift” comes from God through the Holy Spirit, to prepare us to do the work that Jesus started in building this body we call “the family of God”. To become strong and secure in God’s love and grow in faith.

Many types of “gifts” are listed in the books of the New Testament (since Christ came), particularly Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. Also, 1 Corinthians chapters 7 & 13, Ephesians 3 & 4. You can say that all the needs of God’s family should be met by all exercising their particular gifts. This includes gifts used to reach out to the world around us.

All Gifts are for ministering. And these ministering gifts can be classified under ‘speaking’ and ‘serving’ gifts.

Speaking gifts are Apostleship (Missionary), Prophecy, Evangelism, Pastoring, Teaching, Exhorting, Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Tongues, Interpretation.

Serving gifts are Ministration, Helps, Giving, Government (Administration), showing Mercy, Faith, Discernment, Miracles, Healing.

I personally think that there are many more gifts that were not listed individually, but still need to be seen as gifts.

Things like visiting, greeting, making cards and flower arrangements, doing the bookkeeping, counting the offering, running the sound and video for services, editing sermons for putting on the website, preparing the coffee, cleaning the church, encouraging others, listening to others, fixing ‘owies’ and giving hugs (like only a Grandparent can), repairing Bibles and Hymnals, sorting the mail, assisting those with walkers and wheelchairs get in and out of church, helping people move and many more.

Who receives these “gifts”?

1 Corinthians 12:27-28 NIV

27 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

28 And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues

Romans 12:6-8 NIV

6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.

7 If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach;

8 if it is encouraging, then let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, then let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Today we have discovered that God gives gifts to all who follow Him in faith. God gives those gifts through the Holy Spirit to build up the family of God.

I am ending with this last passage as a lead into next week’s sermon. We will be looking at how to know you have gifts and which gifts you have.

1 Peter 4:10-11 NIV

10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.

11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so 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.

Bibliography:

New International Version (NIV)

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

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