



# ELEMENTS

Week 8: Spiritual Gifts

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## RECALL

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### DISCUSS YOUR EXPERIENCE:

Last week we discussed how God uses our story to share His story with others. In the homework section you were asked to write your story in your own words and submit it to your LifeGroup leader. During this process, did you learn anything new about yourself and your relationship to Christ? You were also given the opportunity to read testimonies of others in your group; was there one testimony that especially moved you?

### ICEBREAKER:

Write the Scripture, Romans 12:4-5, **two times** on a piece of paper and cut the verses into the suggested segments below. Be sure to keep the two sets of verses separate. Divide the group into two teams and give each a complete cut up version of Romans 12:4-5. Without using their Bibles, have the teams work together to determine which can re-assemble their verse segments into the correct order first.

**Now as we / have many parts / in one body, / and all the parts / do not have the same / function, / in the same way / we who are many / are one body / in Christ / and individually / members / of one another**

The truth presented in Romans 12:4-5, along with the exercise of working together, demonstrates the importance Christ places on utilizing our unique, individual spiritual gifts. By joining our gifts together with the other members of the Body of Christ we can accomplish the mission of His Church.

### FOCUS:

This week we will be studying spiritual gifts and how they are to be used within the church. First, we need to understand that the church is not a human institution. The church is a living, breathing organism, designed by God, with Christ as the head. It functions on the basis that each member is to use their gifts in order to strengthen and support the body of Christ. Therefore, as Christians, we must seek to understand the gifts God has given us and use them for His glory.

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## REVEAL

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### PRAY FOR GUIDANCE:

Now take a few moments and ask God to help you understand, grasp and apply the spiritual truths of this week's selected Bible passages.

Romans 12:3-8 (HCSB)

<sup>3</sup> "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. <sup>4</sup> Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, <sup>5</sup> in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another. <sup>6</sup> According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the standard of one's faith; <sup>7</sup> if service, in service; if teaching, in teaching; <sup>8</sup> if exhorting, in exhortation; giving, with generosity; leading, with diligence; showing mercy, with cheerfulness."



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1 Corinthians 12:1-11 (HCSB)

<sup>1</sup> “Now concerning what comes from the Spirit: brothers, I do not want you to be unaware. <sup>2</sup> You know that when you were pagans, you used to be led off to the idols that could not speak. <sup>3</sup> Therefore I am informing you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is cursed,” and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit. <sup>4</sup> Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup> There are different ministries, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> And there are different activities, but the same God activates each gift in each person. <sup>7</sup> A demonstration of the Spirit is given to each person to produce what is beneficial: <sup>8</sup> to one is given a message of wisdom through the Spirit, to another, a message of knowledge by the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another, faith by the same Spirit, to another, gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another, the performing of miracles, to another, prophecy, to another, distinguishing between spirits, to another, different kinds of languages, to another, interpretation of languages. <sup>11</sup> But one and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each person as He wills.”

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## REFLECT

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### UNDERSTAND THE CONTEXT:

As a group, utilize your study bibles or on-line resources to help you answer as many of the following questions about the selected passage as you can. Keep in mind, these questions are intended to be a guide and you may not be able to find all of the answers or have time to address each one in the group.

1. Who? Who wrote the book and/or passage? Who was the intended audience? Who are the main characters in the story?
2. What? What are some of the key words and their meanings in the passage?
3. When? When was the book or passage written? What was historically occurring at the time?
4. Where? In what geographic location did the story take place? What was the setting?
5. Why? Why was this book or passage written? What was the main purpose?

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## RECOGNIZE

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### KNOW THE TRUTH(S):

Keeping in mind the context of the selected passage (see **Reflect**), read the Scripture as a group and carefully take note of the truth(s) and/or promises God provides. Look for God’s promises, plans, provisions, & purposes. What did it mean? What does it mean? What meaning is unclear?

Over the years, as churches have endeavored to biblically teach on spiritual gifts, there has existed a wide range of interpretation and application. This has many times led to misunderstanding and disunity. Therefore it is vital to the life and health of the church to handle the subject carefully.

The Scriptures speak about at least 22 different gifts that have been given to the body of Christ. The Church on Rush Creek recognizes all these gifts, as long as they are practiced according to the Scripture’s teaching. Therefore, we do not exercise the so called “sign gifts” in any of our public or ministry settings in order to avoid conflict and confusion.

Nowhere in Scripture do we find a road map for recognizing our spiritual gifts. However, the Bible is clear that each of us has at least one gift and that we should use it for God’s glory. Each of us must ask two simple questions. First, “What is my spiritual gift?” Second, “Where can I use this gift in service to others?”

### How to Discover Your Spiritual Gift(s):

1. Examine Your DESIRES - Ask what do I enjoy?
2. Examine the OPPORTUNITIES - Ask what is available? Look to see what is needed to benefit the body.
3. Examine the EVIDENCE - Ask a friend, LifeGroup Leader or Pastor if they see evidence of the gift in your life.
4. Take a Spiritual Gifts Analysis



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### 10 Truths About Spiritual Gifts

1. Only believers have spiritual gifts .....1 Cor. 2:14
2. Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift .....1 Cor. 7:7
3. No one receives all of the gifts .....1 Cor. 12:27-30
4. No single gift is given to everyone .....1 Cor. 12:29-30
5. You can't earn or work for a spiritual gift.....Eph. 4:7
- 6 The Holy Spirit decides what gifts I get.....1 Cor. 12:11
7. The gifts I'm given are permanent .....Rom. 11:29
8. I am to develop the gifts God gives me .....1 Tim. 4:14
9. It's a sin to waste the gifts God gave me.....1 Cor. 4:1-2
10. Using my gifts honors God and expands me.....John 15:8

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## RESPOND

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### **TAKE ACTION:**

You've now prayed asking God to **R**eveal Himself and help you understand the selected passage; you've **R**elected on the context in which the passage was written; you've **R**ecognized God's timeless truths; and now you must **R**espond. To help determine your response, as a group, discuss the following questions:

1) Natural talents, such as a propensity for the arts, sports, or academics, are many times misinterpreted as spiritual gifts. Both believers and non-believers possess natural talents, which can be used to serve God or serve others. However, God gives spiritual gifts only to believers for the specific purpose of building up His church. These spiritual gifts may be aligned with natural talents, or they may be different. Name some natural talents you possess that may not be aligned with the spiritual gifts God has given to you? Name some that are aligned. Are you using your spiritual gifts to build up His church? Why or why not?

2) Galatians 5:22-23 says, "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faith, gentleness, self-control. Against such things there is no law." The fruits of the Spirit are attitudes of Christ, which we should model as His followers. In what ways do the fruit of the Spirit attitudes complement our spiritual gifts?

3) A natural question a Christian might ask is, "Why does the Spirit give gifts only to believers?" There is a two-part answer to this question. One is to continue the earthly ministry of His Son through Christ followers. The second is for Christ followers to use their gifts synergistically to help the church grow. In what specific ways do the spiritual gifts make a difference within the church? How do the spiritual gifts influence the world? If all of our church members knew and used their spiritual gifts, how could this change our community?

4) The bottom line is that the use of spiritual gifts within our church is critical for our long-term health. In particular, the gift of evangelism is essential for reaching the lost. Each of us is called to be a witness for Christ. In our church we call this being contagious. In what ways are you being contagious for Christ? What relationships are you building with those far from God? How can you increase your sphere of influence to include more people who are un-churched?

### **THIS WEEK:**

Your assignment this week is to ensure that you are involved in a ministry, which utilizes your spiritual gifting. If you are not, work with your LifeGroup Leader to get connected to one. If you are unsure about your spiritual gifts take a Spiritual Gifts Analysis. Your LifeGroup Leader can assist you with this process. Be prepared to share your primary spiritual gifts with your LifeGroup next week.

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