

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to the book of Romans 12

Once again, we are continuing our verse-by-verse study through this life changing letter that the Holy Spirit inspired the Apostle Paul to write to a group of believers in Rome and to us today – about the fundamentals of the Gospel of Grace

Paul has given us foundational doctrine in the first 11 chapters –

That or justification, sanctification and glorification is all by God's grace –

A work that He is doing and continues to do in the life of those who put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ

And now, Paul exhorts us to respond to that grace

The application portion of his letter –

We are to willfully and completely present our bodies as a living sacrifice – that is our reasonable service

And as we abide in Jesus and lean on the Holy Spirit

Our lives will be transformed by the renewing of our mind

We will begin to think like Jesus

We will begin to walk like Jesus

We begin to do the thing that Jesus

And we will begin to fulfill God's perfect will in our lives – through the power of the Holy Spirit.

His will for us -

“To know Him and make Him known”

But in order to for this to be accomplished we have to have the right perspective –

Of whom, God is

Who, we are in Christ

And the right perspective of those around us – those that God has gathered – His church – this fellowship – we are one body - Calvary Santa Cruz

A collection of messed up individuals

Different backgrounds

Different personalities

Different issues

Everyone of us, unique in our own way

And God brings us together – equips the believer with different spiritual gifts to show us that we are not independent of one another but interdependent of one another and interconnected with one another.

Every genuine believer – God has equipped with a spiritual gift

There is no such thing as an ungifted believer

Different functions given to us by grace

And in our gifting, we still continue to be unique

I will always be me and you will always be you – that is how God wants to use us.

The key – being content with the gifting that God has given to us –

Embracing our calling and not aspiring to do something that we were not called to do – because that will only lead to disappointment and disaster.

So – in our text this morning – we are going to begin to look at the 7 gifts that God has gifted the believer to serve His church - to encourage one another – to help build one another up - in Christ –

And my prayer is that as we go through these spiritual gifts over the next few weeks – that the Holy Spirit may reveal to each of us – not only what our spiritual gifting is but also that we may respond to His motivation to use them.

Let's pray...

**Read Text – (3-8)**

So, we are going to be looking at spiritual gifts

Again – God has equipped every single believer with at least one of these spiritual gifts.

For some of us, God in His grace, has gifted with more than one of these 7.

Some of us here – might not even be aware of the spiritual gifting that God bestowed upon us.

Some of us – might be aware of our spiritual gifting – but we are not using it / them.

Some of us might be intimidated by gifts or not fully understand spiritual giftings because we have had bad experiences of abuses of spiritual giftings in the church.

So – as we look at these seven gifts –

We are going to look at them individually

We are going to look at what the gift looks like in the life of the one who has been gifted with that gift

We are going to look at how that particular gifting manifested itself in the New Testament and in the life of Jesus and how it operates within the church and also some things to watch out for – as we exercise those spiritual gifts.

Because in each of the giftings – we kind of have the bad habit of leaning on the flesh instead of the Holy Spirit – and I will provide us with examples.

**[Rom 12:6-8 NKJV] 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, [let us use them]: if prophecy, [let us prophesy] in proportion to our faith;**

Spiritual gifting differing according to the grace that is given to us –

It is ok to look at somebody else and their gifting – and say, “their gifting is different from the gifting that God has given me and that is alright”

We looked at the illustration that Paul used last week –

The church – one body

We all have different functions –

God didn't gather a bunch of toes together in this fellowship

Some are toes, some are livers etc...

So – Paul is encouraging us to do what we have been called to do.

Turn with me to Ephesians 4

Here in Ephesians 4 – Paul is writing about the gifts – to the church in Ephesus.

And we have other spiritual gifts that Paul provides in 1 Cor 12-15

But all these gifts fall under the seven that Paul provides for us here in Romans 12

**[Eph 4:11-15 NKJV] 11 And He Himself gave some [to be] apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head--Christ—**

Church,

God is telling us here – to grow up spiritually.

There is a lot of maturity to be had in our lives –

Individually and as well as collectively as a church – to grow up / to prepare us for what God has ahead.

Every single one of us - we have areas where we need to grow – it doesn't matter if we have been a believer for 2 years or 50 years – we all need to grow up spiritually

We all need to be in the Word

We all need to be prepared

We all need to be strong

It is time to take the next step

It is time to no longer be dabbling in spiritual immaturity – where we are tossed by every wind of doctrine.

So we need to grow up

Embrace the gifting that God has given to us

We all need to know what our gifting is

But also, we all need to know where to plug in and how to use them

We need to exercise our spiritual gifts

Now – it is important to know what our spiritual gift / gifts are –

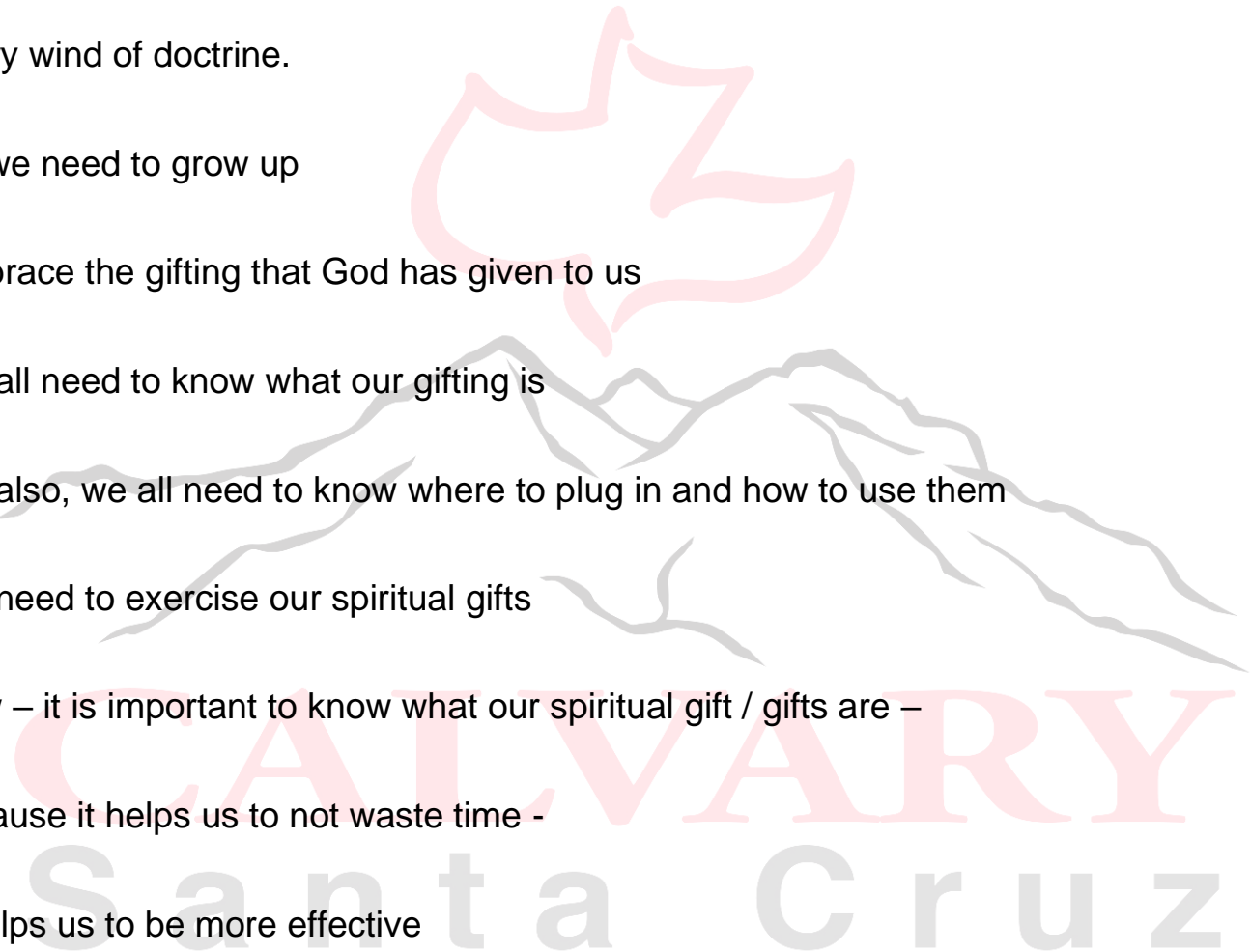
because it helps us to not waste time -

It helps us to be more effective

It helps us to not be frustrated

Because we are doing what God wired us to do –

So the first of the seven gifts –



## Gift of Prophecy

The definition of this first gift – one who declares the truth

It means - To shine

It is a supernatural ability to take God's word cause it to shine in a person's life.

It is the gift that allows the believer to be able to hear from God, take His word and cause it to shine in a person's life.

Don't confuse the gift of prophesy with the office of the prophets that we see in the Old Testament –

Elijah, Jonah, Isaiah and the other prophets – “Thus saith the Lord...”

Those were individuals who were called by God and use in foretelling future events.

But within the church, the gift of prophesy is not for foretelling future events (God has already revealed to us exactly what is going to happen – He has given us His perfect word. He is not adding chapters to His word) –

What we see in the church is more of forthtelling – where the individual gives forth the word of God in someone's life.

Here is an example

Let's say someone in the church is going through something.



They are struggling, they need clarity in a situation – so they pray and wait.

There is another believer in the fellowship – they are praying too. And as they are praying, the first individual comes to mind – and as they are praying, the Lord put a certain verse to share with them.

It doesn't make sense to them.

So, the believer goes to the first person and says, "Hey dude - the Lord gave me this verse to give you – and they share it."

And the first person responds – "That is the answer to my prayer"

The person with the gift of prophesy will receive this impression / this Word / this exhortation / this correction along with a person it was intended for.

Sometimes God will give us a name and sometimes – just a face.

Go tell that person –

And so we respond in obedience.

It is just the individual being obedient to the leading of the Spirit

It is not weird

It is not scary

It is very natural

So the gift of prophesy is very important in the body of Christ today

It is very important that we have men and women serving with this gifting

It is being a channel to where the Lord may speak a fresh word to someone

The gift of prophesy doesn't make us a prophet

We are simply speaking forth the word of God

Turn to 2 Peter 1

**[2Pe 1:19-21 NKJV] 19 And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts; 20 knowing this first, that no prophecy of Scripture is of any private interpretation, 21 for prophecy never came by the will of man, but holy men of God spoke [as they were] moved by the Holy Spirit.**

Here is one of the abuses with the gift of prophesy

A brother or a sister in the fellowship may know that they have this spiritual gifting, they exercise it – they are obedient.

And then a trial happens to someone in the church family

And so we rely on the flesh to come up with the words to say

The abuse happens when we lose sight that sometimes the Lord doesn't speak to us but we feel that we have to speak.

If it is the gift of prophecy – God is going to give us the right verse

We don't need to find it or look for it. God is going to give it to us.

It is a moving of the Spirit.

It becomes private interpretation – when the Spirit is not moving in our life and we try to make something happen in the flesh.

God begins something in the Spirit and we want to perfect it in the flesh – very dangerous.

We just can't go out on our own and make stuff up – Peter tells us this in verse 20,21

We think we always have to have an answer – not if God hasn't given it to us.

It is Spirit lead.

**[1Co 14:1, 3 NKJV] 1 Pursue love, and desire spiritual [gifts], but especially that you may prophesy. ... 3 But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men.**

The person who exercises this gift has a work in the church that builds up – through God's words, exhorts and moves on – through God's word and brings comfort.

God, puts people in the church to do this – to remind us of His faithfulness.

People who are going to come at the right time to remind us that things are going to be ok.

Those that are going to be able to use the word of God and build us up

Turn with me to Luke 4 –

Going to show you Jesus – using the gift of prophecy

**[Luk 4:16-21 NKJV] 16 So He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up. And as His custom was, He went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood up to read. 17 And He was handed the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when He had opened the book, He found the place where it was written: 18 "The Spirit of the LORD [is] upon Me, Because He has anointed Me To preach the gospel to [the] poor; He has sent Me to heal the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to [the] captives And recovery of sight to [the] blind, To set at liberty those who are oppressed; 19 To proclaim the acceptable year of the LORD." 20 Then He closed the book, and gave [it] back to the attendant and sat down. And the eyes of all who were in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture is fulfilled in your hearing."**

Remember what I said the gift of prophecy was –

It is a supernatural ability to take God's word cause it to shine in a person's life.

Jesus reads God's word (Isaiah 61:1-2)

He puts the scroll down

They stare at Him

And then He says – this is what is happening right now –

You have read Isaiah 61 your entire lives – here it is.

The same thing happens to those with the gift of prophecy

We share the word that that God has impressed in us for them and we say –

This is what is happening right now.

And we are edified and exhorted and comforted just as much as they are because we have been obedient to the gifting that God has given to us.

Another example we see in the scriptures is when Paul and Barnabas were sent out –

The Holy Spirit impressed upon certain prophets and teachers to separate Paul and Barnabas for the work that God had called them to do – for them to be sent out to the Gentiles.

And we are told that they fasted and prayed, laid hands on them and sent them away.

Just like they did to me and my family when we came down here to start this fellowship

Taking God's word and shining it upon an individual.

**7 or ministry, [let us use it] in [our] ministering; he who teaches, in teaching;**

Second gift –

Gift of ministry or service.

If the gift of prophecy is declaring the truth

Then - The gift of ministry is practicing the truth

Those with this gift – serve

They wait on table – we get the word deacon from the Greek word that Paul uses here for ministry.

That's what deacons do – serve – wait on tables

So God has given some in the church, the supernatural ability to serve and to serve and to serve and serve

It come naturally

They hear of a need – they fill it

They see a need – they fill it

A person with the gift of ministry – often finds his or her joy in meeting the need of others.

There is a tremendous love and attachment to support people

They don't even have to be told to do it.

They just do it.

And one of the dangers of those who are gifted in ministry is that they are so concerned in meeting the needs of others that they neglect their own needs.

We need to be careful to have the balance between meeting the needs of others as well as our own needs.

How did this gift manifest itself in the life of Jesus?

Turn to Mark 10

**[Mar 10:42-45 NKJV] 42 But Jesus called them to [Himself] and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. 44 "And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. 45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."**

Jesus is teaching His disciples how the kingdom of heaven is different than how the world operates.

It is a whole different ballgame – in Christ

We want to be great in His kingdom – we serve

We want to be super great – then, we super serve

We serve without any expectation – we do it all unto the Lord

Don't say we are a servant – be a servant. Serve

Don't talk about servanthood. Do it.

The church of Jesus Christ is not like the world

The church is to be filled with servants – not only serving one another but serving this world

Because Jesus didn't come to be served – He came to serve and to give His life a ransom for many.

Jesus also gives us the perfect example of this by washing the disciples feet.

Think about this -

God in human flesh, taking the position of the lowest servant to wash His disciples feet.

Jesus saw a need –



It was a need that none of His disciples decided to fill and instead of looking around and appointing one of them to do it – we see the gift of ministry flowing through Him as He sees the need and fills it.

His disciples should have done it

One of them should have recognized the need

Maybe they were waiting on someone else to do it

But none of them did

Jesus did.

So loved ones – we are called to serve

To exercise the gifts that He has given to us

It is not striving for a position or a title or getting noticed or being up front

We simply serve

And here is the thing to understand loved ones -

Serving flows from knowing who we are in the Lord.

Understanding that we are His servants

We serve not because we are called to serve – we serve because that is who we are in Christ

You don't understand pastor – God has called me to great things -

“I am not called to do that pastor”

“I am not called to do that pastor”

Remember what Paul exhorted us at the beginning of the chapter – to be soberly minded. To not think too highly of ourselves or too lowly of ourselves.

We are called to be servants – that is our calling

And whatever God has placed in front of us – He wants us to be faithful in it.

My calling is to obey God

My calling is to serve and to love and to care

That is what connects with people

To use the gifts that He has given to me and just serve people and love them

I want to end with this -

The gift of ministry -

An example of this in the early church is when the seven men of good reputation were appointed to serve – they waited on tables -

**[Act 6:7 NKJV] 7 Then the word of God spread, and the number of the disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.**

And loved ones – this is what happens when we do things God's way, with God's giftings and God's timing.

God spreads His word, people's lives get changed and disciples multiply.

Amen!

Let's pray...

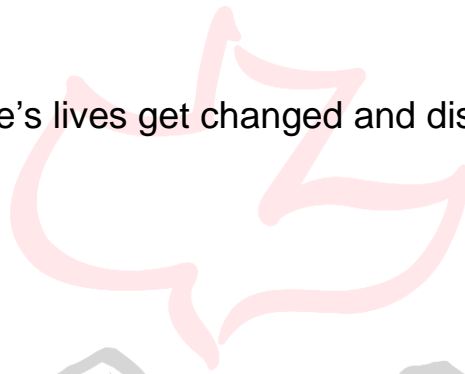
To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.



CALVARY  
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Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

An Old Dead dude - John Wesley

Do all the good that you can,

by all the means that you can

in all the ways that you can

in all the places that you can

at all the times that you can

to all the people that you can

as long as you ever can

The days are short church – the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is at hand – and until He returns, my prayer is that we may found busy in our Father's business. Exercising the gifts that He has bestowed upon us by grace.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

