

Passion Fruit

A Study on Spiritual Gifts

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Passion Fruit - A Study on Spiritual Gifts

"Gifts of the Spirit are endowments of grace. Grace upon the grace of salvation. We receive grace and we extend grace. Gifts are part of our currency of receiving and extending." Norm Funk

Why do you want to do a study on spiritual gifts?

I don't know what your reasons are but I wonder if any of them are similar to why I first joined a Bible study looking at this topic. Simply put, I wanted to know what the gifts are and to hopefully find out what mine was. I had made the study of spiritual gifts about me and I didn't even know enough to ask why they are given. By the end of that Bible study I thought I knew everything about spiritual gifts, after all I had studied them for 13 weeks! But the older I get and the more I study, the more I realize how little I actually know.... I had only scratched the surface of understanding the gifts. And this is my promise to you... if you do all the homework in this study you too will just scratch the surface of this vast topic, and by God's grace as you continue to study and pray throughout your life, He will continue to bless you with more knowledge, understanding and wisdom regarding this topic.

When I first studied spiritual gifts, I was blessed to sit under the teaching of a godly woman (my mom 😊) who taught from an inductive Bible study. Anytime someone uses a Bible study written by an individual, the participant is studying the material the author wants you to focus on. It is with this in mind that I realized my personal study of spiritual gifts was one sided and reflected the teachings of one particular ministry. Not that this is wrong, it's just likely incomplete. Thus if you do this Bible study and don't do extra research to look up extra cross-references, Greek word studies, read commentaries and dictionaries, listen to sermons or podcasts from a variety of pastors and teachers, read books, and dialogue with Christians in an attempt to get a well rounded grasp of a particular text...then you too may attain a one-sided view of spiritual gifts. Which may be bang on or may be lacking because there are a wide variety of teachings on spiritual gifts including variations on their definitions, the number of gifts, who can have them, and how they function within the body of Christ.

My goal is to provide you with an opportunity to biblically study spiritual gifts within their biblical context so you are better equipped to know what the Bible teaches, and able to test the teachings of other men and women of God. In this study the Bible is the ultimate authority on the gifts of the Spirit; experience, opinion and church denominations do not have the final say.

You will notice there are times when I have included opportunities to read insights from some pastors and teachers, with whom I may or may not agree with, but all of whom are Jesus followers who know much about this topic. My hope is once you've studied for yourself, you will know why you agree or disagree with others in their interpretation of the Scriptures.

As you study and pray through this study please *be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. As you spend time in the Word of God, the Holy Spirit will teach you, because all Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.* (Adapted from 2 Timothy 2:15, 3:16-17).

So let's begin.

Take a moment to record why you want to do this study.

As you do this study you will notice each week is broken into five or sometimes six days of homework. To complete the homework will likely take an hour. To do it well may take 90 minutes or more. It is up to you how much you complete, but how much you do is directly correlated to how much you will learn.

Some weeks may feel more enjoyable than others. That may be because of the type of lesson, or the topics being covered. Regardless of what you are studying, please don't miss this one important truth: **whenever you study the Word of God you have an opportunity to hear from God.** Do not be in such a hurry or in the mode of *just doing the work* and miss the fact that the Holy Spirit, who inspired every word you will read, wants you to have an intimate relationship with Jesus. He wants to lead you into all truth so you will love, worship and obey the Son. Allow yourself time to ponder and meditate on any truth that grabs your attention. When possible, memorize at least one verse each week. As you get into the Word, let the Word get into you. This will take work, but spending time in the Word of God will be the single most worthwhile thing you do over the next 13 weeks.

Enjoy!

LESSON 1: 1 CORINTHIANS 12

Every day at the beginning of your study time I would like you to pray and ask the Lord two things:

- 1. Does my faith need to be strengthened? Help me to find encouragement and strength in Him through the help of others.*
- 2. Do I need to strengthen the faith of another? If so, how does the Lord want me to do this?*

As we pray this way and as you do your homework, it will become more obvious as to why these prayers are necessary. God may answer you immediately or later as you spend time in His Word, so be ready to listen and record His answers.

DAY 1

Pre-test: I want you to record what you know about spiritual gifts and then at the end of this study, when you do this test again, you will see what you have learned. This is based on your existing knowledge; do not look up any of the answers.

1. Define spiritual gifts.
2. List and define all the spiritual gifts you are aware of. Do not look up anything or write more than a sentence for each gift.

3. What are your spiritual gifts?

The topic of spiritual gifts is found in four main passages (and in a variety of other verses): 1 Corinthians 12-14, Ephesians 4:1-16, Romans 12:1-8, and 1 Peter 4:7-11. As you read these passages it is important to notice the context (which is ultimately the entire letter, but in our case we will look at just the surrounding verses) to understand why Paul or Peter is addressing the gifts. Once we have established the context we will be able to answer specific questions regarding the gifts, including **why they are given, what they are, and how they function**. At the end of this study there is an APPENDIX. There you will see a SPIRITUAL GIFTS CHART (as well as these main passages of Scripture). As you find answers to these questions, or any other pertinent information about spiritual gifts, please add it to the chart.

Today we are doing an **OBSERVATION** of 1 Corinthians 12 by trying to answer the question **what does it say?** If you are new to doing a chapter observation, you may find it helpful to read the information found on this website:

http://walkwiththeword.org/Aids/HowTo/Inductive_2-Observation.html

1. Look in the appendix and locate 1 Corinthians 12-14. Read all three chapters out loud. Do not stop to pause or meditate.
2. Read just chapter 12 marking the key words, contrasts, and lists.
3. Read chapter 12 again and ask the Lord to bring to mind one verse He would like you to meditate on. Spend time meditating on and memorizing this verse. Write it below and record anything you learn about God, the church, spiritual gifts or an application to you.

DAY 2

Pray

Does my faith need to be strengthened? Help me to find encouragement and strength in Him through the help of others.

Do I need to strengthen the faith of another? If so, how does the Lord want me to do this?

Today we will continue observing 1 Corinthians 12. As you observe this chapter it is important to read intentionally by looking for the answers to the **who, what, where, when, why and how questions**. The answers are written directly in the text, do not add your own words or interpretation. Record the verse beside the answers you find.

1. What is the main topic of this chapter?
2. Why is Paul writing to the Corinthian church about spiritual gifts?
3. What did you learn about the Spirit? Jesus? The Father?
4. Why are gifts given?
5. Who gets a gift?
6. Who gives the gifts?
7. When are the gifts given?

8. How are the gifts given?

9. What are the gifts?

10. What metaphor is used to explain the gifts?

11. What is taught about the body?

12. How does this metaphor help you to understand the usage of spiritual gifts?

13. List the contrasts and explain what they teach about spiritual gifts.

14. What did the Lord teach you today?

15. Continue to memorize your verse from yesterday and ask the Lord if He wants you to memorize another verse. If so, write it down and spend time meditating on

and praying through it. Record what you learn about God, the body, the gifts and yourself from this verse.

DAY 3 & 4

Does my faith need to be strengthened? Help me to find encouragement and strength in Him through the help of others.

Do I need to strengthen the faith of another? If so, how does the Lord want me to do this?

To better understand the context of 1 Corinthians 12, you may want some background information about the Corinthian church:

"..the amazing thing about the Corinthian church was they had all the gifts. Chapter 1:7 says, "You come behind no gift." You lack nothing. They had been endowed with all spiritual gifts. They were fully equipped for maturing, they were fully equipped for ministering, they were fully equipped to be Christ-like, but instead there was absolute chaos. There was a failure on the part of the gifted men to do the job they were supposed to do in maturing the saints. There was a failure on the part of the saints to minister the gifts they had been given, instead they were being counterfeited, they were being exploited, they were being neglected, they were being abused, they were being confused, and the result was the terrible chaos that appears in chapter 12 to 14 in the Corinthian church relative to spiritual gifts."

John MacArthur¹

1. According to 1 Corinthians 12, why should you do a study on spiritual gifts?

2. The church in Corinth was manifesting these gifts in great measure but they were ignorant about some things. You too may be using your gifts, but do you understand everything about them? Is there anything you would like clarity on regarding your gift(s)?

¹<http://www.gtycanada.org/resources/sermons/1849/concerning-spiritual-gifts-part-2>

We have **observed** 1 Corinthians 12 and tried to answer the question, **what does it say?** Now we want to **interpret** the text to answer the question, **what does it mean?** For more information about interpreting scripture please check out this website:

http://walkwiththeword.org/Aids/HowTo/Inductive_3-Interpretation.html

3. What is the definition of spiritual gifts from 1 Corinthians 12? Look up the Greek definitions for spiritual (12:1) and gifts (12:4).

*The word *gifts* is italicized because this particular word does not appear in the original Greek text. The only word that appears is spiritual, thus it could be written, "Now concerning spirituals brethren, I do not want you to be unaware."

4. According to verse 4, what are those spiritual things?

5. Who controls the spirituals?

6. Why doesn't God want us to be ignorant of our gifts?

1 Corinthians 12:2-3

7. What were the Corinthians like before they were saved?

8. If someone claims to be saying something by the Spirit of God or using a gift of the Spirit, how can you know if this person is from Jesus?

Because this is not a study on 1 Corinthians, it is difficult to grasp the true nature of what the Corinthians were like when Paul was writing to them. The following information was taken from a sermon from John MacArthur. It is his interpretation on the bigger meaning of verse 2-3, two verses he thinks are commonly overlooked but are extremely important in developing the context of spiritual gifts. Reading this

is optional, but if you want to listen to his complete sermon, it is found on the following link:

<http://www.gtycanada.org/resources/sermons/1849/concerning-spiritual-gifts-part-2>

"Look first at verse 2, "Ye know that ye were heathen." The word Gentile, in its technical sense, means non-Jews. In its non-technical sense it means non-Christians. I can mean Gentile or it can be translated heathen. And a heathen is anybody who does not know God. So it is in a non-Christian sense that the word Gentile is used here, not in a non-Jewish sense. For a comparison you might notice...1 Thessalonians chapter 4 verse 5 uses it in the same way. So he says, "You were pagan." Now let me characterize your paganism. Watch this. "Carried away unto these dumb idols, even as you ye were led." Now you have a picture there of a victim, of somebody in a system of religion who has little or no choice about what is going on there. He is being led, he is being carried away...those two terms...to dumb idols. He is strictly a victim. The word carried away is a verb used frequently in the Bible to speak of leading a prisoner or a condemned person away to prison. You can check it in Mark 14:44 and Mark 15:16, where it is used in both of those occasions.

So the verb then pictures somebody who is caught, shackled, and dragged away to a dumb idol. He has little choice. In fact, he has no choice. This is not something he chose, not something he selected, something that has fallen upon him. "The heathen then...now mark this...are pictured not as intelligent, choosing freely following what their mind has concluded, but they are helpless victims who know no better than to be led away by constraint to a dumb deity. Now this is a picture of the heathen - the ungodly man. He is led away to worship a non-God; he is led away to worship a no-deity. In the case of the Corinthian people they had been led away to their idolatry, god's who were dumb idols. He calls them dumb, that is, dumb in the sense that they couldn't speak, they couldn't answer, they couldn't respond, they couldn't give any direction, they couldn't give any revelation, they can't say anything, authoritative, they can't say anything in response, they utter nothing.

Paul says to the Corinthians then...and I'll paraphrase verse 2..."You used to worship the way the pagans do, led away by demons to ecstasies and enthusiasm that characterize the mystic religions," that's what he's saying. "You have brought those old patterns now into the church and are letting the demons invade your worship. You used to do a certain kind of worship. It was a worship of being led away into ecstasy. It was a victim-type worship. You went there and those demons got you and led you away. They carried you away. You gave up your will, as it were, to them." And he's saying, "That's the way you used to do." Verse 2 says, "You were this way and now you've dragged it into the church." They were unable to distinguish between the usual and the unusual, between the demonic and the divine. Everything was going on in their worship and they couldn't distinguish what was God and what was Satan. There was intrusion, there was corruption, there was chaos. They literally mistook the work of Satan for the work of the Spirit. So Paul is saying this..."The truly spiritual...pneumatika...is not marked by being carried away, it is not marked by being led away.

In verse three it was perhaps a Jewish professing Christian who was speaking because the word Anathema is a Jewish word. And it means devoted to destruction. It's a common Jewish word. In fact, it is the strongest Jewish word for condemnation. It would similar to our saying, "Jesus be damned." That's the strongest term the Jew had; devoted to destruction. You say, "Well why would they say that about Jesus?" Well it was no doubt something that the Jews said frequently because of Deuteronomy 21:23, which said, "Cursed is he that... what? ...hangeth on a tree." And much of the Jewish criticism of Christianity might have been, "How could you claim that that man was the messiah when He was hanged on a tree?" "Cursed is such a one." So it may have been a rather common statement, "Jesus is accursed." We don't accept a crucified messiah. He's accursed." So perhaps it was not uncommon for them to pronounce curses on Jesus. It was certainly not uncommon for the Apostle Paul who tried to chase Christians down. That's what he tried to do to them in Acts 26:11.

So here was a Jewish person who had picked up the curse and was cursing Jesus. But this one was one professing to be a Christian, doing it in the church, so it was accepted as the Holy Spirit." John MacArthur

1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11

The source of spiritual gifts

9. List everything you learn about "Spirit", "Lord" and "God".

10. Look up the following Greek definitions from 1 Corinthians 12:4-7.

Varieties

Gifts

Service (Ministries)

Activities (Effects)

Manifestation

11. What are spiritual gifts for?

12. 1 Corinthians 12:7, who are the "each"?

13. Look up the Greek definitions in 1 Corinthians 12:11.

Empowered (Works)

Apportions (Distributing)

Individually

14. From what you have studied thus far, write out a definition of spiritual gifts, include who gives them, who gets them, and how they are to be used.

Continue to memorize your verse from yesterday and ask the Lord if he wants you to memorize another verse. If so, write it down and spend time meditating on it and praying through it. Record what you learn about God, the body, the gifts or yourself from this verse.

"He gives gifts and ministries for two reasons: to manifest Himself and to help us do good to each other in the church. Gifts are for the glory of God and the good of the church." John Piper²

DAY 5

Does my faith need to be strengthened? Help me to find encouragement and strength in Him through the help of others.

Do I need to strengthen the faith of another? If so, how does the Lord want me to do this?

Today is a day of review.

1. Re-write 1 Corinthians 12:1-7, 11 by using the definitions of the words you looked up, in place of writing just the word.

2. What is the message Paul is trying to explain regarding the Spirit, our gifts, their ministries and effectiveness?

3. Write what you have memorized this week.

² <http://www.desiringgod.org/messages/living-in-the-spirit-and-in-the-body-for-the-common-good>

4. What have you learned about the Spirit, the spirituals or yourself this week?

5. Write down all the gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12 and any other pertinent information on the SPIRITUAL GIFTS CHART in the appendix.

As you have prayed this week...

Does my faith need to be strengthened? Help me to find encouragement and strength in Him through the help of others.

Do I need to strengthen the faith of another? If so, how does the Lord want me to do this?

...What has the Lord said to you?