

THINKING BIBLICALLY ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS

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1 Corinthians 12:1-7
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Intro:

Three things today about spiritual gifts...

Note: (12:1) "**brethren**"- we have a tendency to write off other believers that disagree with our positions about controversial doctrines... don't do that.

* We separate from other believers when they "walk" opposite from the WOG.

WE NEED TO LEARN TO HAVE A NEW WAY OF THINKING

I. We need to base our thinking on TRUTH not on our EXPERIENCE (12:1-2)

Note: The big problem facing them was they didn't get the concept of the "body" but thought that the gifts were for the individual.

Today - because we have **a fierce sense of INDIVIDUALISM**. (All about me) (All for me)...

"**How can I use this gift for ME?**" That is the call by many Christians today.

Paul saying, "The gifts are for the BODY".

- **The gifts have no meaning or purpose outside the body for the individual believer.**

1 Cor. 1:9 "God *is* faithful, by whom ye were called unto **the fellowship** of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord."

When we were called- **we were called to a "fellowship" not an "individualized"**

personalized Christianity. There is no such thing. Called to a family, a group!

- * There is NO Christianity (BIBLICALLY) apart from the "Fellowship"!
- * **This is the context of the "gifts"...**
- * So many **today** base their Christianity **on past experience**- key word "experience". (Feelings)

II. We have to learn to base our thinking on a NEW RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD'S SPIRIT. (12:3)

* Paul is reminding them that they had a relationship **with God's Spirit that had replaced the evil spirits** that controlled their lives & controlled them.

Note: **This is fundamental** - without the Spirit of God there is NO SALVATION. Got it ALL!

(Rom 8:9) Factory equipment!

- * 1 Jn 4: (Context) before 1st century was over the Gnostics were a PROBLEM-
- **They were DENYING Jesus' humanity**... like today's "**New Agers**" - "The One"
- * **1 Jn 4:1-3** God became man & died for us- **that is the ISSUE**- whether they confess that Jesus has come in the flesh. (Not just say the words)

Mt 7:21 Jesus saying that it isn't about "words" but "doeth..." LIFE.(Not repeating some words.)

* It is about a belief system that changes the way you live... Based on a FACT of history.

1 Cor 12:3a "Jesus" his human name.

Paul is already combating this issue

* They said the OT states anyone that hangs on a tree is "cursed"- so God came into Jesus after his birth & left him before he died.

1 Cor 12:3b "**Jesus is Lord**..." that is the issue! (Not Christ, Not God...)

- * The message of the NT - that Jesus is God!
- * This is where it all starts- Is Jesus LORD to you?

III. We need to learn to see beyond OUR NATURAL TALENTS & ABILITIES (12:4-7)

Note: A spiritual gift is **NOT** the same thing as a natural talent or ability.

A spiritual gift goes beyond your natural ability- it is Supernatural.

A. 12:4 Specific word "gift" Greek "Charisma"- **a divine gratuity**; by GRACE

1. Different gifts; different administrations; different operations
2. Don't get hung up on this list (9 here) more in other passages & I believe some not listed.

3. Different kinds, different service, different energy (all by the Spirit of God -NOT talents)
- B. Five different terms (v 1, 4, 5, 6, 7) (like a combination lock lots of possibilities)
 1. You may have the gift of teaching but the administration of that gift may be different than somebody else that has the gift of teaching...
 2. You may have a 5 level gift that comes out better than someone that has a 1 talent gift.
- C. Each one of us has a unique contribution to make to the body- all by the Spirit

Conclusion:

1. Do you have the Spirit of God in you?
2. Are you trying to make the Spirit work for you or are you letting Him work in you?
3. Do you confuse your natural abilities with the gift that the Spirit gave you?
4. Have you identified the gift(s) you have?
5. Are you using those gifts to build up the body of Christ?