



HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT

Preaching and Teaching Resources

ADRIAN ROGERS





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How to Discover Your Spiritual Gift

SERMON REFERENCE: Romans 12:1-8

LWF SERMON NUMBER: #2203

A spiritual gift is not a natural talent. It is a supernatural ability.

To begin to understand what our spiritual gifts are, we must first and foremost make ourselves living sacrifices to God. We must voluntarily give Him all that we are and take our hands off of our own lives, which we now recognize do not belong to us—rather, first belong to Jesus, and then to one another.

We cannot be afraid to present ourselves as living sacrifices to Him. As a people who belong to Jesus, we must stay put on the altar through discipline and devotion. Only then is there a complete transformation. Jesus becomes our inner nature, working from within.

We will never understand our spiritual gifts without the mind of Christ—a renewed mind. Only then can we know our individual spiritual gifts. When He renews our minds—we must think with it. And then...begin.

We do not have to know the answers before we begin to serve—just as one cannot steer a ship if it is not moving. No one has all the gifts, but every Believer has at least one. This is a shared participation, and if we are not each fulfilling the purpose for which God put us in this Body, we are harmful and hurtful to it.

We must begin somewhere and learn to be busy with the faith we have, before it has a chance to grow.

LIFE APPLICATION

Today, begin. Decide to ask what your church's greatest need is, and how you can be of best use. As you are exploring and figuring out where you fit in the Body, be open to things you may not see as "glamorous."

As Dr. Rogers says, "Availability is the greatest ability." Seek out opportunities to serve, and get activated. It is in this activation that we will receive settled confirmation—proof of God's will and the assigned spiritual gift in our hearts.

As we learn more about these gifts, and watch how God uses them in us to serve one another in the Body, we will want to give even more of ourselves back to Him, seeing their true values in a much deeper way.

This is how God is glorified and the church is strengthened.



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1) INTRODUCTION

- a) Romans 12:6
 - i) Every believer has at least one spiritual gift.
 - ii) We each have different gifts.
 - iii) No one has all of the gifts.
 - iv) God has wrapped these gifts within us, and we need to unwrap our spiritual gifts.
- b) A spiritual gift is not a natural talent.
 - i) A spiritual gift is a supernatural ability.
 - (1) It may be married to a natural talent, but it goes beyond natural talents.
 - ii) A spiritual gift is a grace gift.
 - (1) The Greek word for grace is “charis.”
 - (2) Spiritual gifts are also known as charismatic gifts.
- c) We are gifted because God has gifted us.
 - i) We should not put on false humility and claim we do not have a gift.
 - ii) God has gifted each of us.
- d) At the judgment, we will each give an account of what we did with our spiritual gift; our stewardship of that gift.
 - i) It is vital that we discover our gift and learn what that gift is.
- e) Romans 12 will help us learn how to unwrap our spiritual gift.

2) A SACRIFICIAL PRESENTATION (Romans 12:1)

- a) Romans 12:1
 - i) The apostle Paul is writing by divine inspiration.
 - (1) To “beseech” someone means to plead with that person.
 - (a) Since Paul is writing for God Himself, it is almost as if God is pleading with us.
 - ii) Consecration is not giving to God anything; it is taking our hands off of that which already belongs to God.
 - (1) By His mercy, God sought and saved us; we are bought with His blood.
 - (2) We are not our own; we are bought with a price and are to be a living sacrifice.
- b) What does it mean to be a living sacrifice?
 - i) It is different than any animal sacrifice in the Old Testament.
 - (1) No animal sacrifice ever volunteered.
 - (2) We are to volunteer; we present ourselves.
 - (a) We are to present all that we are and all that we hope to be to God: all of our hopes, plans, goals, possessions.
 - (b) In modern-day America, we want to take our Christianity and tack it on to our regular life.



- ii) A sacrifice in the Old Testament was slain; therefore, it had no plans of its own.
 - (1) Since it was a bloody sacrifice, it had a tendency to slip off the altar.
 - (2) Two flesh hooks would be used to hold the sacrifice on the altar.
 - iii) There are two hooks that will hold us on the altar when we tend to slide off:
 - (1) Discipline
 - (2) Devotion
 - iv) A sacrifice in the Old Testament was burned; it was consumed.
 - (1) We can never truly worship God until we are consumed with the holy fire of God.
 - c) Many Christians are afraid of what God might ask them to do if they fully present themselves to Him as a living sacrifice.
 - i) God loves us; there is no reason to fear.
- 3) A SPIRITUAL TRANSFORMATION (Romans 12:2)
- a) The word “transformation” in the Greek is related to the word “metamorphosis.”
 - i) The word “metamorphosis” means a change of form.
 - ii) When we present ourselves to God as a living sacrifice, we will go through a metamorphosis.
 - (1) Our inner nature will come to the surface.
 - iii) This word was used when Jesus was transfigured on the Mount of Transfiguration.
 - (1) Matthew 17:1-5
 - (a) The inner nature of Jesus is glory.
 - b) When we are saved in Jesus Christ, our inner nature is Jesus.
 - i) When we present ourselves a living sacrifice to Him, a spiritual transformation takes place where the Jesus hidden in us becomes the Jesus revealed in us.
 - ii) This divine change gives us the mind of Christ.
 - (1) We are renewed in the spirit of our minds.
 - (2) We will never really understand our spiritual gift without the renewing of our minds.
 - c) Unless we present ourselves a living sacrifice to God, our minds will not be renewed and we will not know our spiritual gift.
 - i) We should never be afraid of the will of God.
 - (1) It is the highest, happiest and holiest place for us.
- 4) A SOBER CONSIDERATION (Romans 12:3)
- a) The word “think” is used three times in Romans 12:3.
 - i) We are to “think” with a renewed mind.
 - b) How are we to think of ourselves?
 - i) We are not to think more highly than we ought; we are not to assume that we have a gift that we don't have.
 - (1) This is false, or sinful, exaggeration.
 - ii) We are not to think in false humiliation.
 - (1) We are to think soberly.
 - (a) The word “soberly” comes from two Greek words meaning “to save” and “the



mind.”

(i) I am what I am by the grace of God.

(2) We are not to say that we don't have a gift.

(3) False humiliation is just as bad as sinful exaggeration.

(a) Saying that we have a gift is not pride.

(b) Denying we have a gift is unbelief and rebellion.

(4) To think soberly is to think honestly.

iii) We are to think in sober estimation.

c) Below are some principles to help us take inventory of ourselves in sober estimation:

i) The principle of enlightenment.

(1) The Holy Spirit of God within us will enlighten our minds.

(2) The Holy Spirit will speak to our hearts.

ii) The principle of enjoyment.

(1) When we obey the Holy Spirit's prompting, we enjoy it.

(2) We need to be careful in our churches to place people in areas of service that God has equipped them and gifted them to do.

(a) We have a tendency, instead, to try to tone people down in an area where they're strong and to try to strengthen them in areas where they're not gifted at all.

(3) God has given each of us a particular gift, and we will find enlightenment and enjoyment in this gift.

iii) The principle of encouragement.

(1) Other people will encourage you in your gift because they are being blessed by it.

iv) The principle of enablement.

(1) God will enable us to do what He has gifted us and called us to do.

(2) 1 Timothy 1:12

(a) The apostle Paul knew that he could not do what he did in the ministry without the enablement.

5) A SHARED PARTICIPATION (Romans 12:4-5)

a) When we present ourselves to the Lord Jesus, we are also presenting ourselves to one another.

i) The church is His body.

(1) The church is not an organization with Jesus Christ as the president.

(2) The church is a body with Jesus Christ as the head, and we are members in that body.

(a) It is arrogance, pride and conceit that divide us.

(b) It is the Holy Spirit that unites us.

b) Not everyone's gift is as obvious as another's gift.

i) Each gift, though, is given to perfect the body of Christ.

ii) If we do not fulfill the purpose God has for us within the body of Christ, then we are harmful and hurtful to the body.

c) Each member of the church is active.

i) Some members are tearing down while others are building up.



- d) No one has all of the gifts; everyone has at least one of the gifts, and we are dependent upon one another.
 - i) God made us different that He might make us one.

- 6) A SPECIFIC ACTIVATION (Romans 12:6-8)
 - a) We will find our gift as we get active within the body.
 - b) Romans 12:6
 - i) God has dealt to everyone a measure of faith.
 - ii) We need to take the faith we have and the gift we have and put them to work.
 - c) Romans 12:6-8 lists seven spiritual gifts.
 - i) The gift of prophecy
 - (1) Romans 12:6
 - (2) Prophecy is declaring truth.
 - (3) Those with the gift of prophecy will likely find themselves involved in mission work or teaching a class.
 - (4) Those with the gift of prophecy will have a desire to be persuasive and move people to action.
 - ii) The gift of ministry
 - (1) Romans 12:7
 - (2) Ministry is another word for service.
 - (3) Those with this gift will find themselves meeting spiritual needs in practical ways.
 - (a) Activities programs at church
 - (b) Those who are ushers at church
 - (c) Nursery workers
 - iii) The gift of teaching
 - (1) Romans 12:7
 - (2) Those with the gift of teaching desire to clarify truth.
 - (a) To search out and validate truth that's been presented.
 - (3) Those with this gift will have a questioning mind.
 - (4) Those with this gift will likely find themselves involved in Sunday school, backyard Bible clubs, neighborhood Bible studies, etc.
 - iv) The gift of exhortation
 - (1) Romans 12:8
 - (2) Exhortation is the desire to stimulate people in their faith; to exhort them to love Jesus better.
 - (3) Those with this gift enjoy personal counseling.
 - (4) Those with this gift may be involved in music ministry, visitation, soul winning, etc.
 - (5) This is the ministry of encouragement.
 - v) The gift of giving
 - (1) Romans 12:8
 - (2) We are all commanded to give, but there is also the gift of giving.
 - (3) The gift of giving means that you're motivated to entrust personal assets to others so



that the work of God may be carried on.

(4) The one with this gift makes good decisions to meet immediate needs.

(a) This person is willing to give and has the ability to accumulate and disperse assets.

vi) The gift of ruling

(1) Romans 12:8

(2) The gift of ruling is not playing the role of a “big shot,” but is the motivation to coordinate things and help others see the big vision and to move them toward that vision.

(a) To coordinate the activities of others for a common goal for the glory of God.

(b) The gift to lead.

(3) The one with this gift also has the gift of vision; he sees where the group ought to go and begins to lead and motivate people in that direction.

vii) The gift of mercy

(1) Romans 12:8

(2) The gift of mercy identifies with people and comforts those who are in distress.

(3) The person with this gift will feel empathy and sympathy for the misfortune and heartaches of others.

(a) This individual will be able to relate to those needs mentally, emotionally and practically.

(4) The person with this gift may find themselves involved in hospital visitation, benevolence and counseling.

7) A SETTLED CONFIRMATION (Romans 12:2)

a) After we discover our gift and get busy and put it to work, then we will prove what is that good, perfect and acceptable will of God.

i) We will have the confirmation in our hearts.

b) When we have that confirmation:

i) We accept ourselves.

ii) We begin to be ourselves.

iii) We begin to give ourselves.

c) We are then blessed, God is glorified and the church is strengthened.

8) CONCLUSION

a) The first step in discovering your spiritual gift is to present yourself to God a living sacrifice.

b) But you must first present yourself to Him as a sinner needing to be saved.

c) Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.

d) Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.

i) Romans 3:23

ii) Romans 10:9-10

iii) Romans 10:13

iv) Acts 16:31



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Take God's Word, find Romans chapter 12, and when you've found it look up here. Now, we're thinking today about spiritual gifts. Romans 12, look if you will in verse 6 of this chapter, "Having then gifts differing," that's all I want to look at, verse 6, "Having then gifts differing." He's talking about different gifts. You have one gift, I have another gift. We have different gifts. No one has all of the gifts. Everybody has at least one of the gifts. You are a gifted child. God has wrapped it up in you. And what we want to do is to help you to unwrap your spiritual gift.

Now, a spiritual gift is not a natural talent; a gift is a supernatural ability. It may be married to a natural talent, but it goes beyond natural talents. It is not natural, it is supernatural. It is a grace gift. The Greek word for grace is *charis*, so we would call it a charismatic gift. Now you are a gifted child, and you may feel unworthy. You may say, "I'm not gifted, Pastor, I'm just a lowly servant. Why I'm not even worthy to lead in silent prayer in the children's department." No, you are a gifted child.

Alexander the Great, the great conquering general, one time gave a very beautiful and priceless golden cup to a lowly servant. When the servant saw the gift he said, "Oh, no, that's too much for me to receive." And Alexander drew himself up and said, "It is not too much for me to give." God is the one who gives the gift, and don't come around with some false humility and say that you do not have a particular gift.

Now what would you think had I put a gift on the table for Joyce with a card and she didn't even bother to unwrap it? Just left it there, would not even unwrap the gift. Well, I would've been disappointed, and she would not have had the joy of receiving what I gave to her. At the judgment seat of Christ, you will give an account of what you did with your spiritual gift, your stewardship of that spiritual gift. So you need to discover your spiritual gift, and today we're going to be talking about how to unwrap your gift. And it's all going to come right out of this twelfth chapter of the book of Romans. And I want to give you some principles and we're going to put them on the screen so you can see them.

Principle number one is a sacrificial presentation. It all begins with a sacrificial presentation. Look if you will, chapter 12 verse 1, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Underscore the word present. Underscore the word sacrifice. And then you'll understand why I'm talking about a sacrificial presentation. Now, Paul is writing by divine inspiration, and he begins by saying, "I beseech you." Do you know what it means to beseech someone? It means to plead with them. And since Paul is writing for God Himself, it is almost as if God is on His knees in front of us, begging us, beseeching us. This is God's prayer to us! Now we pray to God and we say, "Lord, I beseech You, I beseech You, I beseech You, Lord, please, Lord, please." Well, if we won't hear God's prayer to us, why should God hear our prayer to Him? Our Lord is saying, "I beseech you that you present your bodies a living sacrifice." Now why? On the basis of the mercies of God. God is good



all the time, is He not? Oh, thank God for His mercies. When we were rebels, when we were cursed and damned for hell, when we were dark and could not understand, He by His mercy, He sought us, He saved us, He secured us, He keeps us, He satisfies us. We are His. We're bought with His blood. Now listen to me very carefully. Consecration therefore, is not giving to God anything. Consecration is taking your hands off of that which already belongs to God. You are not your own. You just take your hands off of it. You can't say, "It's my life." It is not. You're not your own. You are bought with a price, and we are to be a living sacrifice. What does that mean, we're to be a living sacrifice? Well let me tell you what it means. First of all, it's going to be different than any animal sacrifice in the Old Testament because no animal sacrifice ever volunteered. You volunteer. You present yourself. Have you ever done that? Just say, "Here I am, Lord. I present myself to You. I am a volunteer. All that I have belongs to You."

Wilbur Chapman was a great evangelist. And he asked General Booth, who was the founder of the Salvation Army, he said, "General Booth, what is the secret of your life? Why is it that God has so used you?" And General Booth just took his hand and drew back that lock of white hair. He thought for a while and then this is what General Booth said. He said, "God has had all there is of me. There've been men of greater brains, greater opportunities, but I, from the day I had a vision of what God would do for poor old London," by the way that's where the Salvation Army began, "when I had a vision of what God could do for poor old London, I made up my mind that God would have all there is of William Booth."

Let me ask you a question; have you ever really said that to God? "God, I am here. You can have all there is of me. I present myself, and I present myself as a sacrifice. That means I am expendable. All of my plans, all of my goals, all of my so-called possessions, I sacrifice them, Lord, to Your blood." Does that seem strange to you? It does to the modern American. We want to take our Christianity and tack it on to our regular life. We want to hold on to our lives, our rights.

But do you know, a sacrifice in the Old Testament, let me tell you what happened to a sacrifice. It was slain; therefore, no more plans of its own. It was put on the altar, and since it was a bloody sacrifice, it had a tendency to want to slip off the altar. So in the Old Testament they had two hooks. They called them flesh hooks. And those hooks would be put into that sacrifice that was to be burned, a hook here and a hook here, to hold it on the altar. They called them flesh hooks. Do you know what will hold you on the altar? Have you ever tended to slide off the altar? I have. There are two hooks that'll keep you on the altar: discipline and devotion, discipline and devotion, discipline and devotion, to hold you there a living sacrifice. To belong to the Lord Jesus Christ, this is what you are to do. And most of us don't want those flesh hooks.

Do you know what the average Baptist will say? "I don't want to get bound down. I would teach a class but I don't want to get bound down. I would join a church but I don't want to get bound down. I would make a pledge to the love offering, but I don't want to get bound down. I want to be free." No. This is a sacrifice. And what happened to the sacrifice was this. It was consumed. It was burnt up. Did you know that you have never truly worshipped God until you are consumed? Have you been



consumed with the holy fire of God? This is what Paul is saying.

You say, "Well, well, Adrian, wait a minute, good night, I don't want to do all that. I just want you to tell me about my wonderful gift." Well, Paul's going to tell you about your gift. But you see, first of all, there must be a sacrificial presentation; you present yourself. You say, "Well, Adrian, if I did that, no telling what God would make me do."

Suppose you had a son. How many of you have teenage sons? Teenage sons. Alright, now, suppose your teenage son came to you and said, "Dad, you know I've been thinking. You're so wise, and you're so loving and you're so kind and you have so much experience. Dad, I was thinking in my bedroom the other day, and it seemed to me that the wisest, best thing I could do would be to come to you for advice, and whatever you tell me to do, Dad, I just want to do it with all of my heart. You just tell me, Dad, what you want me to do, where you want me to go, how you want me to study, what you want me to do, who you want my friends to be. Dad, just tell me and I'll do it." You say, "Yeah, fat chance." Well, suppose he did that. Suppose your son did that, and he said, "Here I am, Dad. I really, from my heart, I want to do your will." What would you do? Would you say, "Oh, boy, he'll be sorry he ever said that"? You go to your wife and say, "Boy, have we got him now. Now, what can we make him do? He'll be sorry he ever said that he'll do what we want him to do." No. Chances are if you've been thinking about getting him a new car that might just tip the scales, right? You see, that's his way of saying, "Dad, I know you love me." You see, what does he say? You present yourself to Him a living sacrifice, and you will prove what is that good, perfect, acceptable will of God. Don't be afraid to turn yourself over to Him. Don't be afraid to say, "Here I am, Lord. I give myself to You." Now, that's the first thing, that's the first thing, a sacrificial presentation.

Now here's the second thing. There will be a spiritual transformation. After the presentation, a transformation. Look if you will now in verse 2 of Romans 12, "And be not conformed," that is, squeezed in, "to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." A transformation. The word transformation there is a translation of a Greek word metamorphoo. What word does that remind you of? Metamorphosis. And this is the transformation. You will go through a metamorphosis, like a caterpillar goes into a cocoon and goes through a metamorphosis, and that ugly, worm-like creature that goes into that cocoon comes out a beautiful, glorious butterfly. Why? It has gone through a metamorphosis, which literally means a change of form. And when you present yourself this way to God, friend, you're going to have a metamorphosis. The word literally describes that which happens when the inner nature comes to the surface. What is the inner nature of that caterpillar? It's a butterfly.

Did you know this word was used of Jesus when He was transfigured on the Mount of Transfiguration? Remember the story? He went up to that high mountain, Peter, James, and John. And there the Bible says that He was transformed. He was transfigured. It's exactly the same word that's used here, exactly the same word. In one place they call it transfiguration. Jesus went through a metamorphosis. Now remember what I said a metamorphosis is? That's when the inner nature comes to the surface. What was the inner nature of Jesus? Glory. When He was metamorphized, the glory came to the surface. His face was like the noonday sun. His raiment white as the snow.



The radiance of the Lord Jesus Christ was there. It had been there all the time, but that which was the inner nature went through a metamorphosis and the inner nature came to the surface, like the inner nature of a caterpillar is a butterfly. The inner nature of Jesus is glory.

Now, question: what is your inner nature if you're saved? Jesus, it's Jesus. He is your inner nature. And when you present yourself to Him a living sacrifice, then there's a spiritual transformation. The Jesus that is resident in you becomes the Jesus president in you. The Jesus hidden in you is the Jesus revealed in you. And there is a divine change and you are not squeezed in by this world. And this world, which would camouflage and obliterate and hide your inner nature, those shackles are broken and Jesus Christ comes out of you, and you have a divine change which gives you the mind of Christ. You are renewed in the spirit of your mind. You will never really understand your spiritual gift without the mind of Christ, without a renewed mind. And if you're trying to discover your spiritual gift without making that presentation, that voluntary presentation, that sacrificial presentation, no wonder you don't know your spiritual gift.

Do you know why you don't know your spiritual gift? Because your mind is not renewed. But when you present yourself to Him a sacrificial presentation, then there will be a spiritual transformation and you will, "Prove what is that good, perfect, and acceptable will of God." That's the second step. Have you got it? Nod your head. Ok, ok, good. Now, don't be afraid of the will of God. That's the highest, happiest, and holiest place for you.

Now, number three. Ah, there will be then time for a sober consideration. Now, look if you will in verse 3 of this same chapter. Now, "For I say, through the grace given unto me," and do you know what that word grace is? Charis. The charisma given unto me, "To every man that is among you, not to think of himself," underscore the word think, "not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think," underscore the word think, "but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith," underscore the word think again. Three times in one verse he says what? Think, think, think. Now, didn't we just say that He's gonna renew your mind? Well, what would you do with a renewed mind? May I suggest that you think with it? Do you think that it's wrong to think? Do you think that when you become a Christian you just put your mind in neutral and then you just live by goose bumps and liver shivers? No. God renews your mind so you can think with that renewed mind. We're talking about discovering your spiritual gift, and you're to think. Three times he says, "Think, think, think."

Now how do you think about yourself? I want you now to just do an inventory on you. Forget about Adrian now and just think about you. How are you to think? Well look in this verse again and he's going to tell you, "Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think." Now, don't assume that you have some gift that you don't have, to think more highly than you ought to think. We hear people today say, "Oh, you can just do anything you can think of, you can achieve anything." There's a Greek word for that and it's baloney. That's silly. Now you can't just do anything you want to do. They tell kids anything you want to do. Alright; let's see you take Michael Jordan's place. Let's see you become a NBA basketball star, the greatest that ever lived, just because you think you can. No you can't do it because you don't have the gift; you don't have the physical equipment. That man was born to play basketball. I



mean, he's just got it, right? Sure. Now, just as he has natural talents, you have supernatural talents and abilities, but what you need to do is not to think in sinful exaggeration.

Now, secondly, not in false humiliation. Look at this verse again. Look at it, "Not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly." Now that word soberly is an interesting word. It comes from two Greek words which means "to save" and "the mind." Just think soberly. Just say, "I am what I am by the grace of God." But don't go around saying you don't have a gift. That's just as bad. False humiliation is just as bad as sinful exaggeration. Saying that you have a gift is not pride. Saying that you don't have a gift is rebellion. You think honestly about what you have. To deny your grace gift is not humility, it is unbelief and rebellion.

So, not in sinful exaggeration, false humiliation, but in sober estimation. You just look at yourself; take inventory. "Well, Pastor, that's so nebulous. Would you help me a little bit? Give me some guidance here as to how to think." Alright, let me give you some principles that begin with the letter E, just for remembrance.

First of all is the principle of enlightenment. You see the Holy Spirit of God that's in you will just enlighten your mind. This is the mystical part of it, and there is a mystical part of it. I mean, it's not a mathematical formula. The Holy Spirit of God will begin to speak to your heart. He did when He called me into the ministry. That's the ministry of enlightenment.

Now secondly: the principle of enjoyment, enjoyment. When you feel the Holy Spirit of God kinda moving you to do something, enlightenment, and you do it, and you enjoy it. By the way, I don't know whether it shows or not, but I enjoy what I'm doing preaching, I really do. I mean I can hardly wait to come and preach. I enjoy what I do. And you have to ask yourself, you know, what melts my butter? What do I really enjoy doing?

Did you hear about the animal school? Well the animals had a school, and they were going to be taught running and climbing and flying and swimming. And when the duck enrolled in school, man, he was great in swimming. He was fair in flying. Climbing and running, boy, he was bad in climbing and running. So, since he was so good at swimming, they just didn't give him any more courses in swimming, and they made him work out on the track all day long, running and running and running. After a while he got worse in his swimming, not much better in his running, but everybody else in the school were no longer threatened by the duck. The duck, they just toned him down. Everybody felt a little more comfortable. Now, the eagle. They put the eagle in school. Boy, he was great in climbing. He always got to the top of the tree, but he wouldn't do it the right way. The eagle just had another way of getting to the top of the tree. Well they scolded the eagle for that, and they put the eagle in the swimming classes. The eagle did not like the swimming classes. After a while the eagle got so rebellious about the whole thing, they expelled the eagle from school. And then the rabbit. Boy, the rabbit, he got it, he was great in running. Boy, he loved running, but he wasn't so good in the rest of the things. He was bad in swimming. He hated his swimming classes. He was not a tree climber at all, and after a while, the poor rabbit had a nervous breakdown. And the turtle. Hey, you've got to feel sorry for the turtle. The turtle, he couldn't run, he couldn't swim, he couldn't fly, he couldn't climb. They said he's no good. What's this turtle good for? So, they said, the problem is his shell, so they took the shell



out of him. It helped him just a little bit in the running until the horse stepped on him. Poor turtle, he's gone. I mean, listen, they messed up the whole school. You say, "That's ridiculous." Friend, that's exactly what we're trying to do in churches today. Rather than letting people do what God has equipped them and gifted them to do, why we just try to tone them down in some area where they're strong, and beef them up in some area they're not gifted at all to do. God has given you a particular gift, and you're going to find out that there will be enlightenment, there will be enjoyment in this gift, and then let me give you another thing that there will be in this gift.

There will be the principle of encouragement. You'll find other people encouraging you in your own gift. Why? Because they're blessed by it. That was the amazement to me when I was a youngster in our church and I had surrendered my life to do whatever the Lord Jesus wanted me to do. I just filled in a blank piece of paper and said, "Here I am, Lord, whatever You want me to do." And they asked me to be the youth week pastor. Can you imagine that? Yeah, listen. I was not a good student in school. I was bright, but I wasn't a good student. I can't ever remember even bringing a book home. Really, seriously. Never. If I didn't get it in class, I just didn't get it. I could get it by listening and by faking it. And, you know, I was just going through with average grades, and the last thing I ever thought of myself was doing was preaching. But they asked me to be the youth week pastor, and I got up there petrified. Wasn't afraid of anything that moved on the football field, but I was petrified. And I spoke and people came by and said, "I was blessed by that. That was good. Do it again, do it again." At first I thought, you know, they're just being nice to me. I must have done real bad. But they kept saying that, and they kept saying that, and you know, I liked it. If a preacher tells you, "Oh, I don't like you for you to tell me I did good," he's lying, he's lying. I mean, when you're encouraged that helps. There's that enlightenment. There's that enjoyment. There is that encouragement.

And then there is that enablement. God will enable you to do this. Listen to this verse, put it down. First Timothy chapter 1 and verse 12, "I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath enabled me, in that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." Paul knew he could not do what he did in the ministry without the enablement. There're two things, going back to my high school days, two things that I really enjoyed the least. You know what they were? Speaking and writing. Guess what I do? Guess what I do, how do I do that? Well, God knew that somehow there was latent gift there that He had put into me. And He has enabled me. And so, when God gives you this mind, what do you do with it? Think with it. "Not more highly than you ought to think, but soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

Now, here's the next thing. There is to be a shared participation. Look if you will now in verses 4 and 5 of our chapter, Romans 12, "For as we have many members in one body and all members have not the same office," that is, the same work, doesn't mean the place where you do your work. "So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another." Now we need to learn that when we present ourselves to Jesus, we're also presenting ourselves to one another. There's to be a shared participation. When you belong to Jesus, you belong to me. And when I belong to Jesus, I belong to you. Remember that the church is His body. It's not an organization with Jesus Christ as the president. It is a body with Jesus Christ as the head, and we're all members in that body. And it



is arrogance and conceit and pride that divides us; it is the Holy Spirit of God that unites us. And so, when we find our gift, there's to be this shared participation.

Everyone's gift is not as obvious. I mean, you're seeing more my mind and my voice than you are my liver right now, right? You're not thinking, boy, his liver is really functioning good this morning. No. But if my liver weren't functioning, I wouldn't be up here preaching. You see, look, there're people that are doing things in our churches right now that you're not aware of, but there is a shared participation, and each gift is given to perfect the body of Christ. And if you are not fulfilling, I don't care who you are, you're a member of a church, if you are not fulfilling the purpose for which God put you in the body, you are harmful and hurtful to the body.

"How many active members do you have, Pastor?" Friend, they're all active; some are tearing down and some are building up. They're all active. God put you in the body as it hath pleased Him, and there's to be a shared participation. Nobody has all of the gifts. Everybody has at least one of the gifts, and we are dependent upon one another. God made us different that He might make us one.

I've got to move from that point to the next. Not only a shared participation, but now watch this, a specific activation. Now, begin to read here in Romans 12 verses 6 through 8, and you're going to find out how he comes to sort of a therefore. Now he's talking all these things that go before this. You know, we present ourselves to Him, and, and He renews our mind. And then we find ourselves operating in the body. Now he says, "Having then, therefore, having then gifts differing according to the charisma that is given to us, the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness." Now he mentions here seven gifts, and he says, "Get with it, get activated." You see you want to know your gift? Well just pick out something that you think may be your gift and get busy. It's hard to steer a ship that's not moving. Don't just sit there. God's not going to zap you. You're going to find your gift as you get busy. He says, "Prophecy according to the proportion of faith." That is, you may not have a lot of faith, but He's dealt to every man a measure of faith. Take what you've got and put it into business.

Now, let's look one more time at these seven gifts. See if you can spot yours. Seven right here. There's some more over there in First Corinthians chapter 12. First of all, it talks about prophecy in verse 6. Do you see it? Look at it. Now what is prophecy? Prophecy is declaring truth. If you have the gift of prophecy you're going to find yourself, for example, being used in jail services, mission work. You're going to find yourself perhaps teaching a class. But you're going to find that in your teaching, you're going to have a desire to be persuasive, and you will be persuasive. You will be moving people to action.

And then he mentions in verse 7, service or ministry. Well, that's another word for service. And you're going to find yourself, if that is your gift, meeting spiritual needs in a practical way. That's church work or activities program. I was over in the activities program one day; two of my grandchildren were at basketball games. There goes a Saturday. But, I was going to these basketball games and I'm so blessed to see these coaches over there and these people working for these kids



to build character. The Sunday school is the classroom; the activities program is the laboratory where you kind of work it out. And what a wonderful thing that is. People who work in these offices around here, these wonderful ushers. God bless you, ushers. Thank God for you. The nursery workers, those who drive the buses, those who keep the church grounds. Our church grounds are beautiful. Thank God for that. Those who work in maintenance, those who are working the sound system right now. These wonderful, glorious people. That's the gift of ministry.

And then he mentions the gift of teaching. Look in verse 7. If you have this gift you want to clarify truth. I mean, you'll have a desire to search out things and to validate truth that's been presented. And you'll have a questioning mind and you'll be used in Sunday school and you'll be used in missionary organizations, neighborhood Bible studies, Backyard Bible Schools, and so forth. Now you may use that gift as a mother. I told you before, I believe my precious daughter, Janice, has that gift that she uses with her own children.

And then he mentions exhortation. What is exhortation? That's the desire, in verse 8, that's the desire to stimulate people in their faith, to exhort them to love Jesus better. And if you have that gift you're going to enjoy personal counseling. You're going to be perhaps in the music ministry. That's what our music ministry does this morning. And maybe in visitation, going after those who're lost, strayed, or stolen; soul winning. Just the ministry of encouragement. That's exhortation.

And then he mentions giving. Now we're all commanded to give, but some people have the gift of giving. And what is that? You're motivated to entrust personal assets to others, that the work of God may be carried on. And you make good decisions to meet immediate needs. And you're careful in your giving, but you're willing to give and you have the ability to accumulate and disperse assets. And there're people in our churches who have the gift of giving, and I thank God for that.

Then he mentions ruling in verse 8. Maybe that's your gift. It's the motivation not to be the big shot, but to coordinate things, and to help people to see a big vision and to move them toward that vision. To coordinate the activities of others for a common goal for the glory of God, and that's the gift to preside, to lead, to stand before others. A person who has this gift is also has the gift of vision. He sees where we ought to go, and he begins to lead and motivate people to that.

Then there's the gift of mercy. Maybe that's your gift. Oh how needed that is. Look in verse 8. What is the gift of mercy? You identify with people and comfort people who are in distress. And if you'll feel empathy and sympathy for the misfortune and heartaches of others, and you will mentally, emotionally, and practically relate to those needs. And you'll find yourself in hospital visitation, benevolence, counseling. All of these things. Now, all of these gifts are there.

Now, let's come to the final thing. Now, after there is this activity where you actually get busy, you're going find that it will begin to gel. Now go back up to verse 2. Look at it, again, Romans 12 verse 2, "And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." There will be a settled confirmation. You will prove what is that good, perfect, and acceptable will of God. You will prove it in your own heart. You will have this confirmation and you will say, "Yes, that is my spiritual gift." And once you see that, then number one, you accept yourself. Number two, you begin to be yourself. Number



three, you begin to give yourself. And when you accept yourself, be yourself, and give yourself, friend, then you are blessed, God is glorified, and the church is strengthened. Just look around. What would happen, folks, look, what would happen if the people in the church, I mean all of us, would quit being pew potatoes? A lot of you are. If that hurt your feelings, you come apologize to me and I'll forgive you. You're a pew potato. What would happen, what would happen if you presented yourself a sacrificial presentation, and had a spiritual transformation, and then made a sober consideration? "Lord, what do You want me to do?" Now you know the problem with many of us? The flesh hooks. Hum? We just don't want to get tied down. You say, "Well, yeah, let somebody else do it."

I went to London. I went to see the crown jewels. I told the guard there, I said, "The one thing I want to see is the Kohinoor Diamond," because I'd read about it. So I saw the Kohinoor Diamond. This diamond was 186 carats. Now, ladies, that's a rock. At that time, they said it was worth half the daily expense of the whole world. This is before it was cut and shaped. It's in the crown jewels. It was given to Queen Victoria by a Punjab prince, a youngster, who had it in his possession. He gave it to the Queen of England.

Later, this Punjab prince became a grown man. He went to the tower there where the jewels are kept, and said, "I want to see the diamond." He's a grown man now. He'd given it just as a child. They wondered what does he want? Does he want it back? Is he going to ask to have it back? And they brought it out, though, because he had been the one that had given it. He said, "Would you place it in my hands?" They said, "Uh, oh," but they placed it in his hands. And then he turned and said to the Queen, who was there, he said, "When I was a child, I gave you this. But I had a child's mind. I did not fully understand all that I was doing. And now as a man, more fully understanding the worth of this diamond, one more time, I want to give it to you."

When I heard that, I said, "Lord, You know, when I was a little boy I gave my heart to Jesus. Now I'm a man. I didn't know all I was doing. I meant it. But one more time, I just want to give my life to You." Don't you feel that way sometimes? "That, Lord, because of Your mercies I present myself a living sacrifice." And when you do that, that's the first step in discovering your spiritual gift. I want you to do it. You'll be so glad you did. There're others of you who've never been saved at all. You can't present yourself anything until you present yourself a sinner needing to be saved. And you say, "Lord Jesus, You died to save me, You promised to save me. I trust You to save me. And I promise you, on the authority of the Word of God, if you will trust Him with a childlike faith, today He will save you. He will forgive every sin. He'll come into your heart. He'll make you a new creature, and He'll take you, one day, home to Heaven.

Bow your heads in prayer. Heads are bowed and eyes are closed. And while heads are bowed and eyes are closed, would you begin to pray that many today will say an everlasting yes to Jesus Christ? And if you want to be saved today, may I guide you in this prayer? Pray it like this, "Dear God, I know that You love me, and I know that You want to save me. I am a sinner. My sin deserves judgment and will receive judgment unless I get saved. But Lord, I want to be saved. Jesus, You died to save me. You promised to save me if I would trust You. I do trust You." Tell Him that. "I do right now. Lord Jesus, I receive You as my Lord and Savior. Come into my heart. Forgive my sin. Save me. I believe You're



the Son of God. I believe You paid for my sin with Your blood. I believe that You were raised from the dead. I believe it and I receive it. And now begin to make me the person You want me to be, and help me never to be ashamed of You. In Your holy name I pray, Amen.



PO Box 38300 | Memphis TN 38183-0300 | (901)382-7900