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✦ THE BASICS OF CHRISTIANITY | PART 8

Knowing Jesus: The Vital Role of Spiritual Gifts



THIS WEEK'S STUDY IN OUR CONTINUING series on Knowing Jesus relates to ascertaining and practicing your spiritual gifts. Jesus had all the spiritual gifts. Today, His body is comprised of individual believers who possess certain allotments or portions of them. It follows then that only when we know and practice our gifts in unity does the world see Christ in the capital; when we don't, they don't.

What is/are your spiritual gifts? Are you practicing them? Let's study on.

Ralph Drollinger

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WEEKLY BIBLE STUDIES

CABINET: 7:00 AM Wednesdays, location undisclosed, refreshments served.
 SENATE: 8:00 AM Tuesdays, rotating offices, hot breakfast served.
 HOUSE: 7:45 AM Thursdays, The Capitol Hill Club, hot breakfast served.

The views expressed in each Bible study are those of the author, and do not necessarily reflect the position of any individual Bible Study Sponsor.



MINISTRY UPDATE

Local Government Ministries



Distinguished statesman Rick Perry is inviting local government officials across the United States to read the Capitol Ministries Bible studies that he valued so much as a national leader of our nation.

The former U.S. Secretary of Energy who also served as Texas governor is spearheading CapMin's effort to reach the 500,000 city and county elected and appointed public servants in 40,000 incorporated local communities.

By email invitation, Secretary Perry is offering to send one Bible study per week in the year-long, 52-study Oaks-in-Office; Biblical Essays for Political Leaders series to those who request them.

These are the same studies that Ralph Drollinger, President and Founder of Capitol Ministries led in three separate Bible studies to members of the White House Cabinet, U.S. Senators, and Representatives in Washington, D.C.

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I. AN INTRODUCTION TO SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Body of Christ functions as intended by Christ only when believers come into contact with another and practice their spiritual gifts; therein Jesus ministers via His chosen ones in His Body: Accordingly, this week's study is a select overview of the spiritual gifts in a given body of believers. As 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 states (*see page 3*), God diversely and supernaturally gifts (at the time of salvation) all who have placed their faith in Him. It is therefore important for one to understand, discover, and practice what God intends for him to focus on for the purpose of building-up the body of Christ, not only in one's home district, but in the place where God has sent him—to the Hill or in the capital.

1. How does Ephesians 5:17 underscore the above?

"So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is."

2. What does Matthew 5:15-16 state in this regard?

"Nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven."

Note that spiritual gifts differ from talents. Believers and unbelievers alike all share natural abilities. An atheist or agnostic can be a talented speaker, lawyer, painter, or rocket scientist. Spiritual

gifts on the other hand differ: They are present only through salvation; and they uniquely equip only believers specifically so they may minister to others. Every believer excels and achieves in his personal ministry to the extent he practices what God, in His sovereignty, has especially equipped him to do. Post salvation, every believer has his or her own special, limited, spiritual capabilities with which God has empowered him or her to minister most effectively to others.

In speaking of spiritual gifts, Romans 12:4-5 states: *"For just as we have many members in one body and all the members do not have the same function, so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another."*

3. What does 1 Corinthians 12:11 state in this regard?

"But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills."

What then are these spiritual gifts? The following is a comprehensive list of biblically-described spiritual gifts categorized into three areas:

Speaking	Serving	Signing
Prophecy	Leadership	Healings
Knowledge	Helps	Languages
Wisdom	Giving	Interpretations
Teaching	Mercy	Miracles
Exhortation	Faith	
	Discernment	

In that this week's study is not intended to be a comprehensive investigation of all the above gifts, three verbal and three serving gifts will be the focus with the



intent to provide more than an ample picture of how God has designed His Church, the body of Christ, to grow people into His likeness. God has provided a means by which we can increasingly *know Jesus*—and it is not solo.

II. AN OVERALL PERSPECTIVE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Before specifically examining six of the gifts, further perspective will prove helpful:

A. THE GIFTS ARE NOT NEATLY PACKAGED

Notice that this week’s memorization passage incorporates a threefold usage of the word “variety.” Properly understood, the gifts are akin to a palette of primary colors from which the Lord amalgamates, empowers and paints one-of-a-kind masterpieces.

1. What does Ephesians 2:10 state in this regard?

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

There are many degrees and combinations of giftedness. Remember 1 Corinthians 12:11 says He distributes *“to each one individually just as He wills.”*

2. What does 1 Peter 4:10 state in this regard?

“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”

B. THE GIFTS ARE INTENDED TO BENEFIT OTHERS

First Corinthians 12:7 states that the spiritual gifts are *“for the common good.”* *Good* (*sumpheron*) means “to bring together” or “to confer a benefit.” In the memorization verse the word *ministries* (*diakonia*) can be translated as “services.” So the big idea is that spiritual gifts are intended by Jesus to serve others.

1. Why did Jesus, according to Mark 10:45 come into the world?

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

One’s spiritual gift(s) is/are intended for another’s benefit. To complete 1 Peter 4:10, *“.. employ it in serving one another.”* Think unselfishly about your spiritual gift(s): God gives one or more of them to you, but not for you; they are to be used by you to serve others and build them up. To the degree you do this you will possess a high degree of inner peace and fulfillment.

C. THE GIFTS ARE TO BE PRACTICED IN HUMILITY

At the conclusion of 1 Corinthians 12, Paul states *“but you earnestly desire the greater gifts, and I show you a still more excellent way.”* *Earnestly desiring* (*zeloo*) could be translated as “pridefully.” In context, one could fall into the trap of wanting certain spiritual gifts in order to be like another. The “more excellent way” however is not having a self-centered attitude about giftedness, but rather to want to love and serve others in a way best suited for them—not yourself.

VERSE OF THE WEEK

1 Corinthians 12:4–6

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.”



God’s various expressions of power are in action everywhere and others are depending on you to exercise your gift(s)!





MINISTRY UPDATE

Continued from page 2

Capitol Ministries studies are “in-depth, theologically sound, and they drill deep in Scripture,” Secretary Perry wrote. “They helped us all understand more about God, biblical truths, and what God expected of us as leaders.”



Numerous local officials have already accepted Secretary Perry’s invitation and have begun reading the studies that provide a progressive faith journey to help create a strong spiritual foundation, shape character, increase faith, as well as examine crucial policy issues through the timeless lens of God’s Word.

Secretary Perry is heading the effort in keeping with one of CapMin’s long-established objectives.

“A mission of CapMin is to reach every elected leader every year with the gospel of Jesus Christ,” Drollinger said. “Secretary Perry will eventually send an invitation to all 500,000 local government leaders. We

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First Corinthians 13 immediately follows the context of Paul’s above admonition. Notice that chapter 13 is stated in contrast to the conclusion of 1 Corinthians 12 (chapter divisions were not a part of the original manuscripts).

“If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. For we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.”

One is to employ in a spirit of humility whatever it is that God has given him so as to build His glory into the lives of others.

D. SUMMARY ON PERSPECTIVE

To the degree one can know and ascertain the Biblical content of each gift is the degree to which he or she can entertain the possibility of a personal fit.

This is critically important so that one best understands what role he need take on in achieving God’s big plan! Spiritual maturity—*knowing Jesus*—means one need grasp how God specifically intends to use him in the building up of His body.

- 1. What does Ephesians 2:22 state in this regard?

“In whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.”

III. THE SPEAKING GIFTS

In the overview of spiritual gifts, this study will examine those ones listed in Romans 12:6–8:

“Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”

What follows first are the speaking gifts that are mentioned in the passage: **prophecy, teaching, and exhortation.**



A. THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

The Greek word for *prophecy* (*propheteia*) literally and simply means “speaking forth” or “to proclaim” and can best be understood as the present-day gift of preaching. In 1 Corinthians 14:3, Paul said, **“But one who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.”** Therefore, the gift of prophecy today has everything to do with the *forth-telling* of God’s Word. In essence, it is the gift of being God’s public spokesman; a very sobering and important empowerment by God’s grace that some Church leaders and some Christian legislators possess.

At times, God has used His public spokesmen to not only *forth-tell* but *foretell* future events and give new revelation. But now that the Scripture is complete and the canon is closed it seems to follow that the gift of prophecy is manifest primarily through one who proclaims God’s will via the enunciation and heralding of His written Word.

1. How does Revelation 22:18–19 limit our understanding of prophecy to forth-telling only?

“I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.”

More understanding of this is perhaps in order. Those who believe that the *foretelling* element of this gift no longer exists are known today as “Cessationists.”

They believe the elements of the gift to predict and provide new revelation as seen in the Old Testament (OT) and during the Apostolic time no longer remain operational today. Those who believe that *foretelling* elements of the gift do remain operational are known as “Continuationists” and within Evangelicalism are known as “Charismatics” or “Pentecostals.” Arguing either position requires complex theological discussion beyond the purpose of this study. Personally I tend to see this the way Calvin did, that those gifted with prophecy are instruments of God to make known *His Word* with power, clarity and authority. Calvin said, “prophecy at this day in the Christian Church is hardly anything else than the right understanding of the Scripture, and the peculiar faculty of explaining it.” Suffice to say that I see no reason for the Body of Christ to divide over this issue—especially in an outpost for Christ like the capital. Both theological camps would agree with the following:

The Gift of Prophecy and Your Maturity

The practice of the gift of prophecy is enormously beneficial in maturing people in Christ. Ephesians 4:11 states that, **“And He gave some ... as prophets ... for the equipping of the saints ... to the building up of the body of Christ.”** Unfortunately, there are too few excellent preachers in our land today. The wise person places him or herself in a ministry setting where there is one! The benefit is enormous! One cannot underestimate the value of belonging to a body of believers where there is excellent, weekly ex

George Washington



Washington Crossing the Delaware by Emanuel Leutze, 1851 (The Metropolitan Museum of Art)

“I now make it my earnest prayer that God would ... most graciously be pleased to dispose us all to do justice, to love mercy, and to demean ourselves with that charity, humility, and pacific temper of the mind which were the characteristics of the Divine Author of our blessed religion.”

— George Washington, first president of the United States; commander-in-chief of the Continental Army; member of the Continental Congress; president of the Constitutional Convention, ‘Father of His Country’, judge.

George Washington, *The Last Official Address of His Excellency George Washington to the Legislature of the United States* (Hartford: Hudson and Goodwin, 1783), p. 12; see also *The New Annual Register or General Repository of History, Politics, and Literature, for the Year 1783* (London: G. Robinson, 1784), p. 150.



MINISTRY UPDATE

Continued from page 4

would greatly appreciate it if you would join us in praying that God would direct and bless this effort.”

A related goal is for CapMin to establish weekly Bible studies in local communities where leaders may study the Bible face to face. If you wish to lead a study or be a part of one as a government leader, visit capmin.org. Secretary Perry said the study would greatly



benefit the seeker who wants to learn more about God, or the seasoned Christian who desires to grow in his or her faith.

“I can’t wait for you to see what is waiting for you,” he wrote. “I know that this experience will enrich your life as it has mine.”

position of God’s Word. Spiritually, it is a decision between digesting long-term a junk-food diet versus the regular consumption of solid meals. Our spiritual health is dependent on the decisions we make to associate with the God-given gift to build up His called-out ones. Take advantage of the gift!

B. THE GIFT OF TEACHING

The Greek word for *teaching* is *didaskalia*. This word relates to both what is taught and the act of teaching it. The English word “didactic” means “a moral teacher.” *Kaleo* is even easier to transliterate; meaning “to call.” The believer possessing this divine enablement has the ability to interpret and present God’s truth in ways understandable.

1. How did the Apostle Paul evidence his possession of this gift in Acts 20:27?

“For I did not shrink from declaring to you the whole purpose of God.”

The teaching gift is the ability to “give systematic and regular instruction of God’s Word.” Characteristic of the first-century Church was strong, regular teaching.

2. What does Acts 2:42 state was characteristic of the first-century Church?

“They were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

The gift of teaching is vitally important to the growth of the body of Christ in that fulfilling the Great Commission “teaching them to observe all that I commanded you” is synonymous with “Go and make disciples” (cf. Matthew 28:19–20). For the body of Christ to be obedient to its primary marching orders, there must be the systematic teaching of God’s Word. If you follow my logic above, without that gift being practiced, there is no disciple-making, and there will exist fewer mature agents of salt and light in the capital as a result! (And one need add that William Penn said that good hearts are the basis of good laws.) It follows that if one is serious about becoming a disciple he will align himself with someone or others who possess this gift! Why refuse opening a gift?

3. What is the difference between the gifts of prophecy and teaching?

Here’s a hint: It is not one of content, rather ability. The former is gifted to proclaim, the later to systematically and regularly instruct. In Acts 17 one sees Paul’s gift of prophecy in his one-time address in the midst of the Areopagus to the citizens of Athens. And as noted previously in Acts 20 his gift of teaching is on display: He had previously spent three years building up the Ephesian elders (cf. v. 31). Both gifts are needed to mature the body.

4. In Luke 24:27 and 32, how do the two disciples on the road to Emmaus illustrate the life-changing effects these gifts?

“Then beginning with Moses and with all the prophets, He explained to them the things concerning Himself in all the Scriptures They said to one another,



“Were not our hearts burning within us while He was speaking to us on the road, while He was explaining the Scriptures to us?”

Finally, one who is a leader in God’s work must be able to teach. Note 1 Timothy 3:2 in this regard:

“An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach ...”

Be wary of anyone who functions as a spiritual leader in some way and is not in a Bible-teaching function. Spiritual leadership which lacks Bible teaching tends to drift away from God’s Word. A ship without a steady directional rudder in the end makes no measureable progress and disciples are not made—nor at the end of the day will there be strong agents of preservation and illumination (salt and light) in the capital.

C. THE GIFT OF EXHORTATION

The Greek word for *exhortation* (*parakaleo*) is a combination of two words, *para* which means “along side” and as previously seen *kaleo* which means “calling.” Literally, this person is gifted, called to “come along another’s side.” Characteristic of the person with this gift is his or her propensity to be able to get close to people in order to encourage, advise, strengthen, warn, and/or comfort them. The gift is manifest by the ability to walk along side someone who is hurting, discouraged, or depressed. It is the supernatural ability to carry one-another’s burdens.

1. In Acts 14:21–22, how do Paul and

Barnabas portray this gift?

“After they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging them to continue in the faith, and saying, ‘Through many tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God.’”

The gift of exhortation is underscored in Hebrews as well, where the writer admonishes believers to *“consider how to stimulate one another to love and good deeds, not forsaking our own assembling together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another ...”* (10:24–25). Do you possess a divine enablement to encourage other in the capital? Do you practice it?

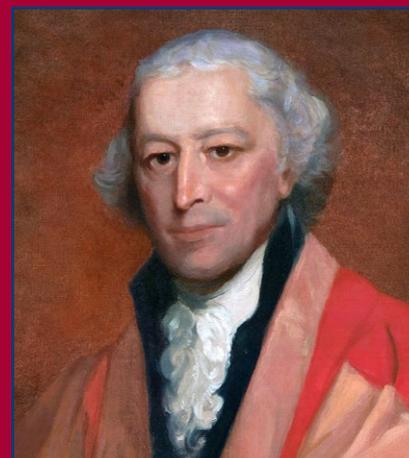
Such a gift is critically important to practice in the capital, especially in an ideologically gridlocked congress where little is accomplished.

Those who hold to biblically based values and policies need to be constantly encouraged to stand strong by other believers who possess this gift!

D. SUMMARY ON THESE THREE SPEAKING GIFTS

Whereas the gift of *prophecy* proclaims the truth of God’s Word, *teaching* systematizes it and makes it simple to understand. Finally, the gift of *exhortation* helps one to integrate the truths of God’s Word. The exhorter calls others to obedience and faithful lifestyles consistent with the proclaimed-and-taught truths of Scripture. Each of these speaking gifts

William Samuel Johnson



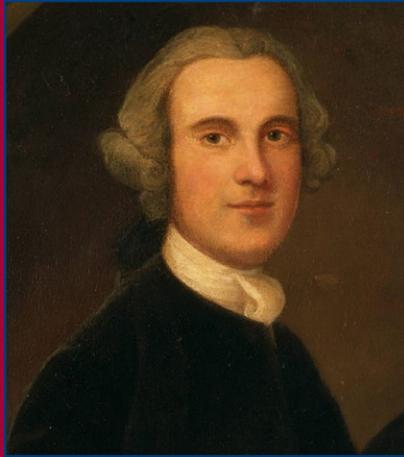
“...Acquaint yourselves with Him in His word and holy ordinances ... [G]o forth into the world firmly resolved neither to be allured by its vanities nor contaminated by its vices, but to run with patience and perseverance, with firmness and [cheerfulness], the glorious career of religion, honor, and virtue. ... Finally, ... in the elegant and expressive language are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things”—and do them... ”

— William Samuel Johnson, signer of the Constitution; member of the Continental Congress; judge; framer of the Bill of Rights; president of Columbia College; U.S. senator.

E. Edwards Beardsley, *Life and Times of William Samuel Johnson* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin and Company, 1886), pp. 141-145.



Richard Stockton



Richard Stockton (“The Signer”), Class of 1748, (1730-1781), Princeton University

“...I think it proper here not only to subscribe to the entire belief of the great and leading doctrines of the Christian religion, such as the being of God; the universal defection and depravity of human nature; the Divinity of the person and the completeness of the redemption purchased by the blessed Savior; the necessity of the operations of the Divine Spirit; of Divine faith accompanied with an habitual virtuous life; and the universality of the Divine Providence; but also, in the bowels of a father’s affection, to exhort and charge [my children] that the fear of God is the beginning of wisdom, that the way of life held up in the Christian system is calculated for the most complete happiness that can be enjoyed in this mortal state, [and] that all occasions of vice and immorality is injurious either immediately or consequentially—even in this life.”

— Richard Stockton, signer of the Declaration of Independence; judge.

The will of Richard Stockton, dated May 20, 1780.

is necessary in order to mature believers in Christ! As with Paul, sometimes these three gifts exist and are beautifully blended in a variety of combinations within the same person. No matter what your degree of giftedness may be, let us all be mature in our use of them!

- 1. What did Paul say to the believers in the Imperial Capitol of Rome per Romans 12:11 in context and regards to their practice of their spiritual gifts?

“Not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord.”

IV. THE SERVING GIFTS

What follows next is an examination of three of the serving gifts listed in the home passage of Romans 12:6–8: *leadership*, *service*, and *giving*:

“Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, each of us is to exercise them accordingly: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”

Do you possess one or more of these gifts? If so how do you employ it/them in the arena to which God has called you to minister at home and on the Hill or in the capital?

A. THE GIFT OF LEADERSHIP

The Greek word for *lead* (*proistemi*) listed in Romans 12 means “to stand before.”

This word is found elsewhere to refer to headship in the family, (translated into English here as the word “manages”) in 1 Timothy 3:4; 5, 12:

“He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity” ... “(but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?) ... Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households.”

In the listing of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12, Paul refers to this same gift, yet uses another word, *kubernesis*, which means, “to guide.” That word, found elsewhere in the New Testament (NT), refers to a helmsman: “A person who steers a ship.” (Cf. Acts 27:11 and Rev. 18:17.)

Perhaps the best way to explain the spiritual gift of *leadership* is to illustrate what God’s people look like without it. In Paul’s first letter to Corinth, he makes no mention of the operation of this gift. Accordingly, anarchy—serious spiritual and moral degeneration—characterized the Church.

- 1. In the Judges 21:25 there is a siren verse depicting Israel’s void of leadership in this period of their history. What resulted?

“In those days there was no king in Israel; everyone did what was right in his own eyes.”

Both Corinth and the period of the Judges illustrate what happens when the gift of leadership is nowhere practiced in the body today.



2. What did Paul say (when speaking to the Church at Rome in Romans 12:8) that one who possesses this gift should practice?

“Or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”

The word for *diligence* (*spoude*) means “earnestness and zeal.” It is used this way in Mark 6:25 where Herod’s brother’s wife’s daughter (I.e. Herod’s dancing girlfriend) asks for the head of John the Baptist. The passage states, *“Immediately she came in a hurry (Lit.: spoude) to the king and asked, saying, ‘I want you to give me at once the head of John the Baptist on a platter.’”* In Luke 1:39–40, one reads, *“Now at this time Mary arose and went in a hurry (lit.: spoude) to the hill country, to a city of Judah and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth.”*

3. What does the above word usages suggest should be characteristic about one who possesses this gift today?

If one has this gift, he need get after the task. This person will know what God wants and needs to accomplish and he will be able to get others to follow him in the task. There is hustle in his step; he will be void of procrastination and idleness! Although there are many despicable qualities in the life of **General Patton** (not the least of which was his theology) he vividly possessed the attribute of tenacious constancy, earnestness and zeal for an objective. A burning, compelling desire to achieve a goal will characterize all with this gift.

The mature spiritual gift of leadership is distinguished by achievement of objectives near to the heart of God—which includes winning souls and building God’s kingdom in ways strategic.

A passion to *lead* in the body of Christ and steer the ship should stem not from motives of self-glory. Rather, this self-forgetting drive germinates from the sobering reality that people who know not the Savior are headed to an eternity without God. Oh that we might reach more on the Hill or in the capital with the saving gospel of Christ! Oh that we might plant 50 ministries in our 50 state Capitols, thousands of ministries in city and county government and 200 ministries in 200 foreign federal capitals in the next 20 years! This needs to be a team effort!

B. THE GIFT OF SERVICE

The spiritual gift of *service* (*diakonia*) is described with the same root from which we derive the church office of deacon or woman deacon. These offices are portrayed in 1 Timothy 3:8–13. While not everyone with the gift of *service* will hold the office of a deacon, the scriptural investigation of the office will shed light on one’s understanding of this gift:

“Deacons likewise must be men of dignity, not double-tongued, or addicted to much wine or fond of sordid gain, but holding to the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience. These men must also first be tested; then let them serve as deacons if they are beyond reproach. Women must likewise be dignified, not malicious gossips, but temperate, faith-

General George Patton

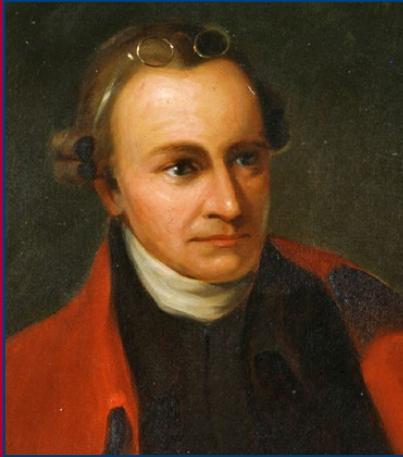


General George Patton wearing his 4-star service cap in 1945. U.S. Army photo.





Patrick Henry



“Righteousness alone can exalt [America] as a nation ...Whoever thou art, remember this; and in thy sphere practice virtue thyself, and encourage it in others.”

— Patrick Henry, Revolutionary War general; legislator; ‘The Voice of Liberty’; ratifier of the U.S. Constitution; governor of Virginia.

Patrick Henry, *Patrick Henry: Life, Correspondence and Speeches*, William Wirt Henry, editor (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1891), Vol. II, p.632, addendum to his resolutions against the Stamp Act, May 29, 1765.

ful in all things. Deacons must be husbands of only one wife, and good managers of their children and their own households. For those who have served well as deacons obtain for themselves a high standing and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus.”

In Acts 6:1–6, the Church was growing so fast that the leadership could not keep up with all the practical demands.

“Now at this time while the disciples were increasing in number, a complaint arose on the part of the Hellenistic Jews against the native Hebrews, because their widows were being overlooked in the daily serving of food. So the twelve summoned the congregation of the disciples and said, ‘It is not desirable for us to neglect the word of God in order to serve tables. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of good reputation, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may put in charge of this task. But we will devote ourselves to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ The statement found approval with the whole congregation; and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. And these they brought before the apostles; and after praying, they laid their hands on them.”

1. How did the Church leaders respond to these needs?

Seeing this distinction, notice that in 1 Timothy 3:8–13 the only difference between the qualifications of an elder or overseer in the Church (1 Timothy 3:1–7) and a deacon is the ability to teach:

“It is a trustworthy statement: if any man aspires to the office of overseer, it is a fine work he desires to do. An overseer, then, must be above reproach, the husband of one wife, temperate, prudent, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not addicted to wine or pugnacious, but gentle, peaceable, free from the love of money. He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?), and not a new convert, so that he will not become conceited and fall into the condemnation incurred by the devil. And he must have a good reputation with those outside the church, so that he will not fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.”

Accordingly, God gifts His body with certain men and women who serve to free-up those gifted to proclaim, teach, and exhort the body (the three speaking gifts mentioned earlier). They do this by taking on all serving tasks necessary to keep the speaking gifts fully operative—gifts that require serious, long, private hours of preparation in order to be effective. The result of this symbiosis is a growing, flourishing body of believers whose spiritual and practical needs are met in abundance.

Lastly, the gift of *service* is wide in its application. (It is similar to the gift of *helps* described in 1 Corinthians 12:28.) It is a practical gift motivating those possessing it to take care of the small things, which often seem less important to others. Those with the gift are unseen, and quite content to not be recognized. In whatever they do, they do all for the glory of Jesus Christ (cf. Colossians 3:17) and Him alone. Accordingly, they are



overjoyed in their behind-the-scenes humble service.

C. THE GIFT OF GIVING

Another gift which God gives is the gift of **giving** (*metadidomi*). The Greek word means “to share and give that which is one’s own.” Those possessing this gift are motivated to give of their time, talent, and treasure sacrificially—and do so with great joy. Paul illustrated this gift when he expressed to the Church at Thessalonica, “Having such a fond affection for you ... we were well-pleased to **impart** (*metadidomi*) not only the gospel of God but also our own lives, because you had become very dear to us” (2:8). John the Baptist said, “**Let the man who has two tunics share** (*metadidomi*) **with him who has none**” (Luke 3:11).

In describing this gift, Paul said, “**Instruct them to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous and ready to share**” (1 Timothy 6:18). The word **liberality** (*haplotes*) came to mean “generosity.” Says one commentator; **liberality** is “open heartedness which is untainted by affectation or ulterior motives.” The gift of **giving** does not give for one’s self, but of one’s self.

1. How is the opposite of the spirit of this gift displayed in Matthew 6:2 and by whom?

“So when you give to the poor, do not sound a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets, so that they may be honored by men. Truly I say to you, they have their reward in full.”

The saints with the gift of **giving** often possess the ability to acquire resources

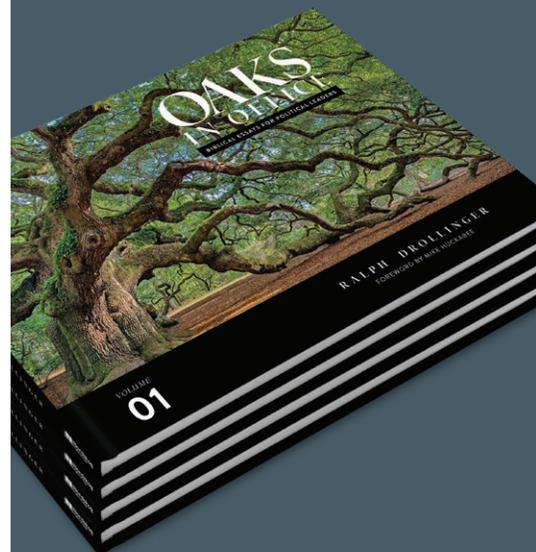
and create wealth. God does not intend for the wealth He gives to be hoarded by the one possessing the gift. Rather, those so endowed need view themselves as stewards of God’s possessions. As a venture capitalist carefully studies his or her investments—where might they attain the greatest return on investment—the one gifted in **giving** asks, “Where can I invest in God’s work to bring the greatest return of souls and the strategic long-term advancement of God’s kingdom?” This is the serious responsibility of the one possessing this gift—often wisely coupling resources with the gifts of **leadership** and **proclamation** to advance God’s work on earth.

V. SUMMARY OF THE GIFTS

This brief study on the gifts (it occurs to me that you might not think this to be brief!) has hopefully provided insight as to how God intends His body to function not only in terms personal maturation, but witness.

Over my years of ministry in the capitol community I have noted that some public servants who name the name of Christ in their district “keep their religion to themselves” in the capital community; for whatever reasons they mistakenly remain silent in D.C. Such a position, while perhaps politically expedient, directly contrasts Jesus’ instruction in the Sermon on the Mount. Note Matthew 5:14–16:

“You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden; nor does anyone light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all who are in the house. Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”



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True followers of Christ need to remember:

God has called you to D.C. for more than legislative purposes!

Be diligent therefore to fulfill your calling! When you leave office will you have achieved ultimate impact relative to the huge sacrifices you are making in order to be here? Will you be able to say like the Apostle Paul at the end of his service, ***“I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith”*** (2 Timothy 4:7)? God has placed you in D.C. to make a difference—not just legislatively but spiritually in the lives of others. It follows that you should make a concerted effort to practice your spiritual gifts here and have a spiritual impact! Such an emphasis will inevitably lead to a greater legislative impact. Think about it.

1. What did Paul tell Timothy to do in 2 Timothy 1:6?

“For this reason I remind you to kindle afresh the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”

In order for the body of Christ to flourish, all believers need use, often refresh, hone, and focus their ministry purposes and emphases. Remember, others are depending on you to exercise you gift(s)! God designed it that way! So use them!

cm

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