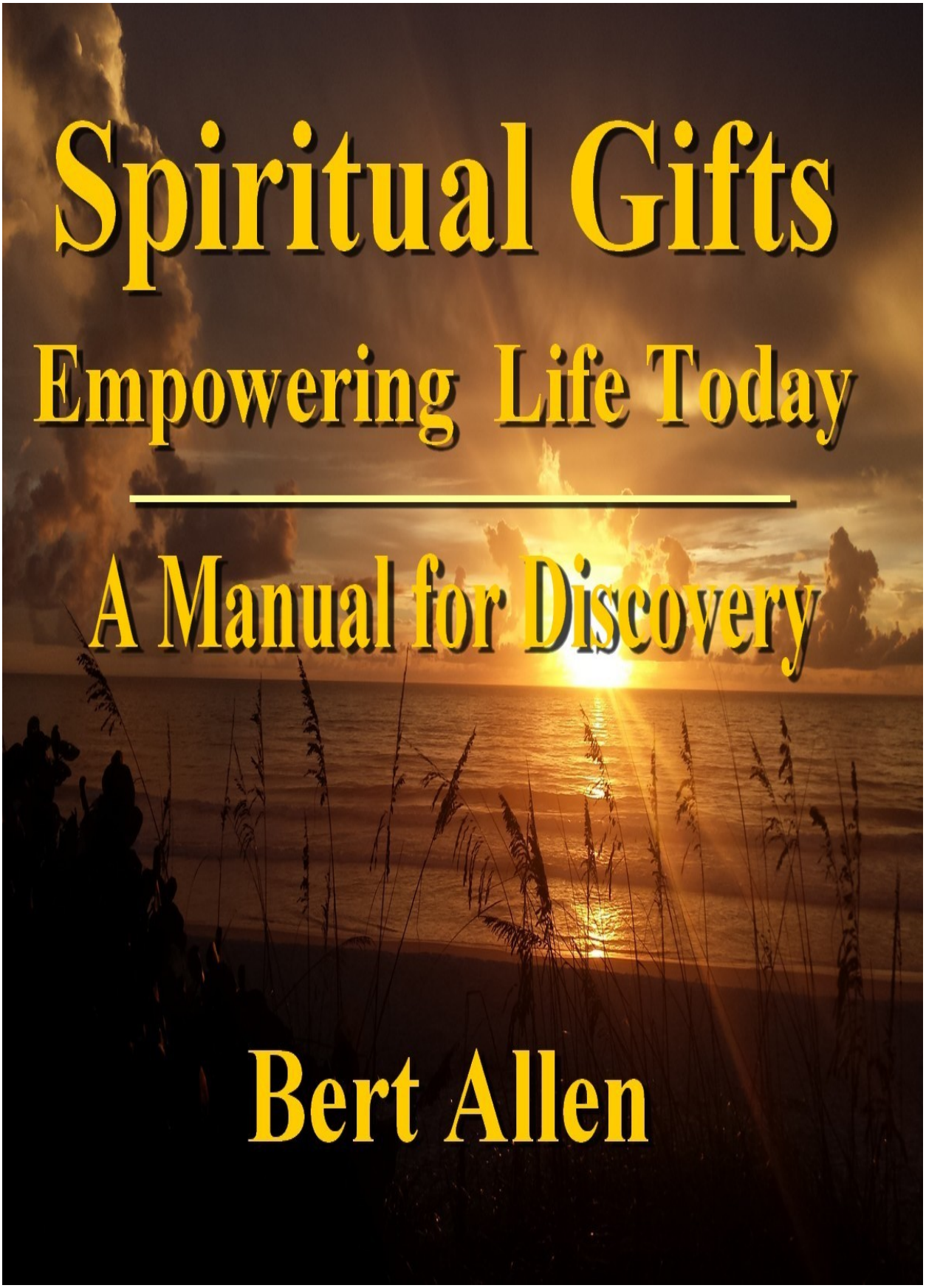
Spiritual Gifts
Empowering Life Today
A Manual for Discovery
Bert Allen

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Introduction

God bestowed spiritual gifts to unify and edify the church and glorify Himself. Yet, I am amazed at how little truth from the Scriptures underlies much of the teaching I have heard regarding spiritual gifts. All kinds of people make all kinds of claims about the scope and function of spiritual gifts, without Scriptural support and, at times, blatantly substituting their own experience wich contradicts Scripture.

In this study, I have focused upon the Greek text extensively. I am not a Greek scholar, or any kind of scholar. I produced this study to help me understand the spiritual gifts and I have largely avoided interacting with works of other people concerning the spiritual gifts. Generally, I focused upon the Greek words associated with the various spiritual gifts, and how they were employed in the New Testament.

I made many choices about how to present the study. They suit my individual preferences, based upon my understanding of the Scriptures. I coined new terms and used some existing terms in new ways. I chose to combine some things under one heading or under one gift, but others may argue that it would be better to separate and explain them more fully.

In the end, I decided to offer this work to stimulate further study of the Scriptures, which provide everything we need for spiritual life and Godliness. I offer this study with my prayer for everyone who reads it directly or benefits from its use otherwise that born again believers may be united in the body of Christ, the church, and by our spiritual maturity and unity present a witness to the world of the loving power of Jesus Christ.

I urge you to have **peace with God**.

March 20, 2019

Table of Contents

I have arranged this study to function as a manual for understanding and discovering spiritual gifts. This table of contents follows several patterns in the New Testament. The spiritual gifts could be ordered in different ways. Some gifts seem to fit into more than one category. So, I have made a grouping loosely based upon Scripture.

Equipping Gifts. In Ephesians 4:11, page 1830, Paul listed five spiritual gifts. These gifts equip the saints for their work of ministry from God and to the Body of Christ. Therefore, I call them "Equipping Gifts." Technically, The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles and The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets form the foundation of the church, with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone, and may be called foundational gifts (Ephesians 2:20, page 1829).

1. **The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles**
2. **The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets**
3. **The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists**
4. **The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds**
5. **The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers**

Revelatory Gifts. In 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, page 1796, Paul provided another list of spiritual gifts. He separated the gifts into three categories, using the terms "hetero" (another of a different kind) and allo (another of the same kind). Although some gifts fit in more than category, I have generally followed the order for revelatory gifts described in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, page 1796.

6. **The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom**
7. **The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge**

Service Gifts. Peter commanded saints to employ their spiritual gifts in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. He then

urged the one with a speaking gift to do so as speaking the utterances of God. He could have been speaking only of the revelatory gifts in the broadest sense (including The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom, The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, and The Spiritual Gift of the Intepretation of Tongues). Apparently, however, he may have also meant that any speaking done in connection with that spiritual gift must also be used with a view that you are speaking the utterances of God. Therefore, I chose to classify some spirutal gifts as "speaking gifts" based upon 1 Peter 4:10-11, page 1898. Following those same verses from Peter, another major classification would be serving gifts, with strength supplied from God to glorify Himself "through Jesus Christ, to Whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen."

8. **The Spiritual Gift of Faith**
9. **The Sprtual Gifts of Healings**
10. **The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers**
11. **The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits**
12. **The Spiritual Gift of Deacony**
13. **The Sprtual Gift of The Giver**
14. **The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier**
15. **The Spiritual Gift of Helps**

Speaking Gifts. As described above, another category of spiritual gifts may be labeled the speaking gifts. Of course, other spiritual gifts involve speaking.

16. **The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter**
17. **The Spiritual Gift of The Leader**
18. **The Spiritual Gift of Navigations**

The Tongues Gifts. Paul placed the tongues gifts in a category by themselves in 1 Corithians 12:10, page 1796, following the "hetero" and "allo" pattern in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, page 1796.

19. **The Spiritual Gift of Tongues**
20. **The Spiritual Gift of The Interpretation of Tongues**

Appendix. I have also added a brief appendix discussing some of the structural elements of the lists of spiritual gifts in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. I found this study fruitful, but it was like licking the skin of the apple, and not delving into the depths of the fruit itself. I look forward to others examining those structures in more detail.

Conclusion

Precis

Spiritual Gifts, Ministries and Effects

Paul described the Trinitarian coordination of the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12. After the Lord Jesus Christ was glorified, God gave the Holy Spirit. Jesus gave gifts to men and baptized them in the Holy Spirit. God distributed those spiritual gifts just as He wished, all to the glory of God. The Father, Son and Holy Spirit all had roles in distributing the spiritual gifts within the Body of Christ (the church).

Gifts

Paul taught about a variety of gifts ("Διαιρέσεις χαρισμάτων"), but the same Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:4). At this point, we should take note of the variety of spiritual gifts. God loves a variety of gifts, but emphasizes that the Holy Spirit unifies the spiritual gifts and the divine power of the Holy Spirit energizes the spiritual gifts.

Ministries

Paul also described a variety of ministries ("διαιρέσεις διακονιῶν"). The ministries relate directly to each spiritual gift. In other words, one spiritual gift produces a variety of ministries. Therefore, two people with the same spiritual gift may have very different ministries. As we look at each individual spiritual gift, we will see from Scripture how one spiritual gift will produce a variety of ministries. Again, Paul emphasized that the same Lord controls the different ministries. Please take notice that both the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit play active roles in the use of the spiritual gifts in the Body of Christ.

Effects

Paul also mentioned a variety of effects ("διαιρέσεις ἐνεργημάτων"). Not only does one spiritual gift produce a variety of ministries, those ministries may produce a variety of effects. The ministry produces the effect. For example, if you have the gift of mercy, you may have a ministry to barren women,

producing a variety of effects (comfort, encouragement, patience) to those barren women. Paul emphasized again that the same God works all things in all persons. Therefore, we see the Trinitarian aspect of the spiritual gifts and their proper functioning in the church. Father, Son and Holy Spirit actively work through the spiritual gifts to produce a variety of ministries and a variety of effects, all to the glory of God and the building up of the Body of Christ.

The Common Good

Paul highlighted the purpose of the spiritual gifts, with the variety of the gifts, the varieties of the ministries, and the variety of effects. God intended varied manifestations of the Holy Spirit for the common good of believers. Those gifts would unify the believers, and also strengthen and mature the believers, all to the glory of God. So, as we study the specific gifts, we must keep in mind the varieties of gifts, ministries and effects to understand the manifestations of the Holy Spirit for the common good of the Body of Christ.

Using This Manual

I created this manual so that you may learn about spiritual gifts, and also provide help in identifying your spiritual gifts. At the end of the discussion of each spiritual gift, I have included a Hallmarks section. You can browse down that section for each spiritual gift and see if you have that spiritual gift.

If you have an interest in an particular gift, then you can focus upon that gift and the various ministries associated with that specific spiritual gift. Please recall that the list of ministries does not cover every ministry for that spiritual gift. God distributed the gifts as He wished, and produced many ministries from just one spiritual gift. In fact, each ministry may produce a variety of effects.

1

The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles

Category of Gift: Equipping

Ephesians 4:11

"And He gave some as the apostles,"

Section One

Introduction to New Testament Apostles

1.1 Apostles Today? Today we see many people calling themselves apostles of Jesus Christ. In fact, some churches talk about a five-fold ministry, referencing Ephesians 4:11 and the five spiritual gifts described there: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Are these churches following New Testament teaching applicable for today? In this study about The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles, we will explore New Testament passages about apostles and learn more about The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles.

1.2 The New Testament Meaning of "Apostle." The term apostle in the New Testament has a variety of meanings. Only careful study of the context of each occurrence of the term “apostle” will help us understand its meanings.

1.3 The Basic Meaning of the Term "Apostle." The term "apostle" basically means a "sent one," usually meaning someone sent on a special mission on behalf of someone else. Below we will look more closely at how the term "apostle" was used throughout the New Testament. Matthew used the term "apostle" only once (Matthew 10:2, page 1516). Mark too only used the term "apostle" once (Mark 6:30, page 1569). Both Matthew and Luke used the term "apostle" to refer to the Twelve disciples. Luke also used the

term "apostle" many times and referred to the Twelve (Luke 6:13, page 1607; Luke 9:10, page 1615; Luke 17:5, page 1634; Luke 22:14, page 1645; Luke 24:10, page 1651; Acts 1:26, page 1700; Acts 2:43, page 1703; Acts 4:35, page 1706; Acts 4:37, page 1706; Acts 5:2, page 1707; Acts 5:12, page 1707; Acts 5:18, page 1708; Acts 8:1, page 1713--all of references in Luke and Acts appear to refer to the Twelve, but the Jerusalem apostles may have included more than the Twelve).

1.4 Jesus the Apostle. Jesus Himself was referred to as an apostle ("ἀπόστολον") (Hebrews 3:1, page 1871). He often referred to Himself as one sent from God (John 17:3, page 1689), to speak the words of God (John 12:49, page 1682), and to perform the works and will of God (John 5:30, page 1663).

1.5 Peter the Apostle. In Matthew 10:2, Peter was listed as first ("πρῶτος") among the twelve apostles ("ἀποστόλων"). Some people seek to establish the primacy of Peter among the Twelve because Jesus delivered the keys of the kingdom to Peter (Matthew 16:13-19, page 1530). Yet, Jesus made the same promise to all the disciples in Matthew 18:18, page 1533. Therefore, any attempt to elevate Peter to a position above the other apostles cannot be supported by Scripture. In fact, Peter's own acts display his weakness (John 18:25-27, page 1692; Matthew 26:69-75, pages 1552-1553) and his hypocrisy (Galatians 2:11-21, page 1821). Anyone who promotes himself as the greatest among the apostles or other believers falls prey to the The Pastoral Heresy.

1.6 Paul as an Apostle. Paul described himself as an apostle "by the will of God" (Ephesians 1:1, page 1827) and declared that he was "not sent from men nor through the agency of man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead" (Galatians 1:1, page 1819). Yet, with Paul, we see a man who was not a part of the twelve original disciples in the Gospels (the Bible books of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John), because Paul became a believer after the resurrection and ascension of Jesus (Acts 9:1-31, pages 1716-1717). In John 13:16, Jesus referred to slaves and masters, and described the sent one ("ἀπόστολος") as not being greater that the one who sent ("πέμψαντος") him.

1.7 Variety of Meanings. The term "apostle" had a variety of meanings in the New Testament. The term first applied to Jesus Christ Himself, and then to the twelve disciples, and later to other believers. The term "apostle" can refer to both the **office** of apostle and also to The Spiritual Gift of The

Apostles. To understand the spiritual gift of "apostle," we first need to understand the different uses of the term "apostle" in the New Testament, starting with Jesus selecting twelve apostles.

Section Two

The Twelve Apostles

2.1 Apostolic Ministry. The ministry of the Twelve apostles changed after the Holy Spirit descended upon the Twelve at Pentecost, which followed the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Just before He ascended to heaven after His death, burial and resurrection, Jesus made a wonderful prophecy and a promise of great power for His disciples (Acts 1:8, page 1699). Jesus declared: "but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth." Just a few days after Jesus ascended, the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples in Jerusalem at the Feast of Pentecost, and they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and great power came upon the Twelve.

2.2 Matthias, the Replacement Apostle. After Judas betrayed Jesus, and Jesus had ascended back to heaven, the eleven disciples chose a replacement for Judas. We may study that passage to learn more about the qualifications of the twelve apostles. When seeking and praying for a replacement to fill the vacancy left among the twelve apostles by fallen Judas Iscariot (who betrayed the Lord Jesus), the eleven apostles gathered together and sought a man to become a witness with them of Christ's resurrection (Acts 1:21-23, page 1700). The eleven apostles put forward two men, Joseph and Matthias, on the grounds that both of them had "accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us--beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was take up from us" (Acts 1:21-22, Page 1700). They prayed, and then cast lots, with the lot falling to Matthias, who was "added to the eleven apostles ("ἀποστόλων")" (Acts 1:26, page 1700). This group of twelve apostles, known in the New Testament as "the Twelve," met the qualifications of Acts 1:21-22, page 1700, and were recognized as a special group of ministers to the Jews and eyewitnesses of the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ (Acts 6:1, page 1709; 1 Corinthians 15:5, page 1800).

2.3 The Office and The Ministry of Apostleship. The Book of Acts chronicles the birth and development of the early church. After Jesus ascended back to heaven, the eleven disciples (Judas Iscariot had betrayed Jesus and died) recognized both a ministry ("διακονίας") and an apostleship ("ἀποστολῆς") from which Judas "turned aside to go to his own place" (Acts 1:25, page 1700). Judas also held the **office** ("ἐπισκοπὴν") as an apostle (Acts 1:19, page 1700). Judas, an unbeliever, never was baptized in the Holy Spirit, because Judas died before Jesus baptized the apostles with the Holy Spirit in Acts 2 at Pentecost. Therefore, we may discern a very strong difference between the **office** of apostle and the **spiritual gift** of apostle.

2.4 The Qualifications of the Twelve Apostles. Jesus always had special people in mind to serve as apostles. Indeed, after the baptism of the Holy Spirit, some men received a special spiritual gift of apostle. During His earthly ministry, Jesus chose twelve men by name. Jesus appointed ("προσκαλεῖται") those twelve men to be with Him, and that He could send them out ("ἀποστέλλῃ") to preach (Mark 3:12, page 1562).

2.4.1 Chosen by Jesus. The New Testament writers recognized different types of apostles. Jesus originally called twelve men to be His disciples and have a special part in His ministry.

2.4.2 Judas Iscariot. Jesus He knew from the beginning that one of the Twelve apostles was a devil (John 6:70-71, page 1667; Matthew 26:23-25, page 1550; Acts 1:2, page 1699) and identified Judas Iscariot as the betrayer (John 13:21-27, page 1683). Therefore, we know that Judas Iscariot was not saved from sins, but remained the son of perdition (John 17:12, page 1689). Because Judas held the office of apostle, as we will see below, we know that an unsaved person may have held the office of apostle, but no unsaved person ever has a spiritual gift bestowed by God after Jesus baptizes the believer with the Holy Spirit.

2.5 The Authority of the Twelve Apostles. Jesus sent them out in pairs to the cities and villages of Israel, but commanded them to avoid the way of the Gentiles and told them not enter any city of the Samaritans. Jesus gave them authority over unclean spirits, and directed them to take no provisions for their journey. As they went into various cities and villages, the Twelve were casting out demons and anointing with oil so that many sick people were healed (Mark 6:7-13, pages 1568-1569). Jesus gave the Twelve specific

power to heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers, and cast out demons (Matthew 10:8, page 1516).

2.6 The Preaching of the Twelve Apostles. The Twelve preached that men should repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand (Matthew 10:7, page 1516). Having returned from their first missionary journey, the apostles ("ἀπόστολοι") gathered together with Jesus and reported all that they had done (Mark 6:30, page 1569; Luke 9:10, page 1615). In Luke 24:10, page 1651, we learn that Mary Magdalene and Joanna and Mary the mother of James, reported to the apostles ("ἀποστόλους") all the things they had seen and heard at the empty tomb of Jesus. Before His ascension, Jesus Himself had given very specific orders to the apostles ("ἀποστόλοις") whom He had chosen ("ἐξελέξατο") by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:2). Following the ascension of Jesus, Jesus commanded the apostles to wait in Jerusalem until they had received power when the Holy Spirit had come upon them and then they would be His "witness both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth" (Acts 1:8, page 1699).

2.7 The Faith of the Twelve Apostles. In Luke 17:5, page 1634, Jesus taught about basic relationships among brothers in Christ. Jesus explained that a believer must forgive a brother who repents and seeks forgiveness, even if the brother comes seven times in one day and seeks forgiveness. The apostles ("ἀπόστολοι") then said: "Increase our faith Lord." The faith of the twelve apostles came from Jesus. Jesus increases faith in His teachings, so that we may live according to the teaching of Jesus Christ. People tend to undervalue the teaching of Jesus, but they are the words of eternal life (John 6:68, page 1667; notice that the teaching of Jesus amazed the people because He taught with authority--Luke 4:32, page 1603).

Section Three

The Apostles and Missionary Work

3.1 Apostolic Tasks. The apostles in the New Testament performed a variety of tasks in a variety of places. I have distinguished between the office of apostle and The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles. The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles produces a variety of different ministries and a variety of different effects. We will now take a closer look at the apostles and missionary work.

3.2 Missionaries. In 1 Corinthians 9:1-7, pages 1791-1792, Paul described himself as an apostle, who had seen the Lord Jesus, and declared that the Corinthian believers were his work in the Lord. Paul further emphasized that the Corinthian believers were the seal of his apostleship to them. Even if others may not have considered Paul an apostle, the Corinthians must recognize Paul as an apostle because of the work he had performed sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them. Furthermore, Paul proved that: (1) he and Baranabas had the right to take along a believing wife, as the other apostles took along their wives (plus the brothers of the Lord Jesus and Peter (Cephas)); and (2) the apostles ("ἀπόστολοι") while on a missionary journey did not need to work (1 Corinthians 9:5-7, pages 1791-1792), although Paul actually worked with his own hands night and day at Thessalonica to avoid being a burden to any of them (1 Thessalonians 2:9, page 1847). As missionaries, the apostles ("ἀπόστολοι") and prophets, in the Spirit, received the mysteries of God (truths not fully revealed in the past, as God in His wisdom, has now revealed those truths to the apostles and prophets--Ephesians 3:5, page 1829).

3.3 Persecution. A great persecution against the followers of Christ arose in Jerusalem after the stoning of Stephen (Acts 7:1-60, pages 1710-1713; Acts 8:1, page 1713). A young man named Saul of Tarsus began to hunt down Christians and persecute them (Acts 1:3, page 1714; Acts 9:1-2, page 1716). As the persecution of believers in Jerusalem caused them to flee into Judea and Samaria, the Gospel of Jesus Christ spread on their lips. Philip the deacon went to the city of Samaria, and many people there came to salvation in Christ Jesus (Acts 8:4-13, page 1714). When the apostles in Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent the apostles Peter and John (Acts 8:14, page 1714). Those apostles laid their hands ("ἐπετίθεσαν τὰς χεῖρας") on Samaritan believers and they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17, page 1714). When they had solemnly testified and spoken the word of the Lord, they started back to Jerusalem, preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to many villages of the Samaritans (Acts 8:25, page 1715). After the conversion of Saul, the church enjoyed a time of peace in Judea, Galilee and Samaria (Acts 9:31, page 1717). Peter evangelized throughout the regions of Judea, Galilee and Samaria, with particular healing of Aenas at Lydda, so that everyone in Sharon and Lydda "turned to the Lord" (Acts 10:35, pages 1717-1718). Peter was also instrumental in the resurrection of Tabitha in Joppa, so that many believed there in the Lord (Acts 10:42-43, page 1718). Through the The Spiritual Gift of the Word of

Wisdom given to Peter at Joppa, Peter understood the mystery that God had cleansed the Gentiles, so that no man should call them unclean. The twelve apostles were all Jews and commissioned originally to go only to the people of Israel, and not the Gentiles (Matthew 10:5-6, page 1516; compare Matthew 15:24, page 1528). Jesus expanded this mission to include the entire world, following a pattern of geographical, cultural and spiritual expansion described in Acts 1:8, page 1699. Jesus emphasized in His commission to them that He gave them all authority in heaven and on earth, so that the twelve would go and make disciples of all the nations ("ἔθνη"), baptizing and teaching them (Matthew 28:18-20, page 1557). He promised them power to be His earthly ministers (Acts 1:8, page 1699), and the Holy Spirit fulfilled that promise and empowered their ministry as they preached, made decisions, performed signs, wonders and miracles, and turned the world upside down for Jesus Christ (Acts 2:14-36, pages 1701-1702; Acts 3:1-10, page 1703; Acts 17:6, page 1733-1734). They ministered primarily in Israel, but they obviously had a deep concern to spread the glad tidings of Christ to the entire world (e.g., Acts 2:7-12, page 1701; Acts 10:34-43, page 1720; Acts 11:19-30, page 1722; Acts 12:25, page 1724; Acts 15:4-29, pages 1728-1730; 1 Peter 1:1-3, page 1893).

Section Four

The Ministry of the

Church-Planting Apostles

4.1 Church-Planting Apostles. God also called some believers to be church-planting apostles. Paul described himself as the apostle (e.g., 1 Corinthians 1:1, page 1782; Galatians 1:1, page 1782) to the Gentiles (Romans 11:13, page 1773; 1 Corinthians 9:2, page 1791; Galatians 2:9, Page 1821; Ephesians 3:8, page 1829; 1 Timothy 2:7, 1852) and their teacher and preacher (2 Timothy 1:11, page 1861). Peter, James and John were known as pillars of the church at Jerusalem (Galatians 2:9, page 1821). Peter ministered as an apostle to the circumcised (Jews) (Galatians 2:9-10, page 1821), as Paul ministered to the Gentiles. The church-planting apostles included Barnabas (Acts 13:2, page 1724; 1 Thessalonians 1:1, page 1846), the friend of Saul of Tarsus and missionary companion of Paul. The church-planting apostles also included Andronicus and Junius (outstanding among

the apostles ("ἀποστόλοις"), who were in Christ before Paul (Romans 16:7, page 1780). Likewise, Sylvanus may be included among the church planting apostles and possibly Timothy (1 Thessalonians 1:1, page 1846; compare 1 Thessalonians 2:6, page 1847). Other passages cast doubt upon whether Paul considered Timothy an apostle, perhaps because Timothy did not see the Lord Jesus--Paul called himself an apostle ("ἀπόστολος"), but referred to Timothy as a "brother" (2 Corinthians 1:1, page 1804; Colossians 1:1, page 1841); Paul also referred to himself and Timothy as bond-servants (Philippians 1:1, page 1835). Likewise, Paul described Titus as his partner and fellow worker among the Corinthians. Paul also mentioned "our brethren" who were messengers ("ἀπόστολοι") of the churches (2 Corinthians 8:23, page 1813). Finally, once the churches had been planted through a group of local believers receiving the free gift of eternal life from Christ Jesus, Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in every church, having prayed with fasting, commending them to the Lord in whom they believed (Acts 14:23, page 1728). Compare the work of Titus, whom Paul commanded to appoint elders in the cities of Crete (Titus 1:5, page 1865).

4.2 Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles. Saul of Tarsus persecuted the church of Jesus Christ and supervised the death of Stephen (Acts 7:58, page 1713; Acts 8:1, page 1713). Shortly after Stephen died, Saul journeyed from Jerusalem to arrest Christians living in Damascus. On the road to Damascus, Jesus personally appeared to Saul and his life changed forever. Saul fell to ground blinded by the great light and Jesus spoke directly to Saul. Saul followed the directions of Jesus, and became a believer who testified to many people about Jesus Christ. Saul of Tarsus became Paul the Apostle of Jesus Christ. Paul described himself as a called apostle ("κλητὸς ἀπόστολος"), set apart for the gospel of God (Romans 1:1, page 1758; 1 Corinthians 1:1, page 1782). Paul recognized himself as the apostle to the Gentiles ("ἐθνῶν ἀπόστολος") (Romans 11:13, page 1774). As a preacher and apostle ("ἀπόστολος"), he was a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth (1 Timothy 2:7, page 1855). Paul also proclaimed that he was appointed ("ἐτέθην") a preacher ("κῆρυξ") and an apostle ("ἀπόστολος") and teacher ("διδάσκαλος") to the Gentiles (2 Timothy 1:11, page 1861). When defending his ministry, Paul declared: Am I not an apostle ("ἀπόστολος") (1 Corinthians 9:1, page 1791)? Paul considered himself least among the apostles (" ὁ ἐλάχιστος τῶν ἀποστόλων"), and not fit to be called an apostle ("καλεῖσθαι ἀπόστολος") because he had persecuted the church of God (1 Corinthians 15:9, page 1800-1801). Yet, he did not consider himself "in the least inferior to the most

eminent apostles ("μηδὲν ὑστερηκέναι τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων") (2 Corinthians 11:5, page 1815). Likewise, in 2 Corinthians 12:11, page 1817, Paul asserted that he was in no respect "inferior to the most eminent apostles ("οὐδὲν γὰρ ὑστέρησα τῶν ὑπερλίαν ἀποστόλων") . . . ." Paul proclaimed that he labored more than the other apostles, through the grace of God (1 Corinthians 15:10, page 1801). As an apostle ("ἀπόστολος"), Paul denied that he had been sent from men or through the agency of men, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father (Galatians 1:1, page 1819). In 2 Corinthians 12:12, Paul defended himself and described the signs of a "true apostle" ("τοῦ ἀποστόλου") which he performed with "all perseverance" ("πάσῃ ὑπομονῇ"), including signs and wonders and miracles ("σημείοις καὶ τέρασιν καὶ δυνάμεσιν") (compare the work at Iconium, where Paul and Barnabas spoke boldly about Christ Jesus and the word of His grace, and God granted "that signs and wonders be done by their hands." Even so, the people of Iconium were divided, with some siding with the Jews and some with the apostles ("ἀποστόλοις") (Acts 14:4, page 1727). Near the end of his life, the Jewish authorities trumped up charges against Paul in Jerusalem, and the Roman government arrested him (Acts 21:27-33, pages 1742-1743). Asserting the legal right of a Roman citizen to be tried by Caesar, Paul was sent to Rome for trial before Caesar and the Book of the Acts of the Apostles closed (Acts 21:34-28:31, pages 1743-1757). Jesus used Paul to plant churches and write letters to the Romans, Galatians, Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Thessalonians, and his friends in Christ, Timothy, Titus, and Philemon (which are now New Testament books because God inspired them). Paul summarized his own life in Romans 1:5 where Paul described himself as having received from the Lord Jesus Christ "apostleship" ("ἀποστολὴν") "to bring about obedience of faith among all the Gentiles for His name's sake." In contrast, Paul described Peter as having the "apostleship" ("ἀποστολὴν") to the circumcised, while Paul had the "apostleship" ("ἀποστολὴν") to the Gentiles, so that Christ worked effectually in Paul (Galatians 2:8, page 1820).

4.3 <u>The Apostles Barnabas, James, Apollos, Andronicus and Junias</u>. Several other people are mentioned in the New Testament as church planting apostles. We will see how they functioned in the church.

4.3.1 <u>Barnabas</u>. In Acts 4:36, page 1706, Joseph, a Levite and Cyprian by birth, was called Barnabas (meaning "Son of Encouragement") by the apostles ("ἀποστόλων"). In Acts 14:4, page 1728, Barnabas and Paul are both

referred to as apostles (compare Acts 13:1-4, page 1724 and Acts 13:50, page 1727). Notice that in Acts 9:27, page 1717, Barnabas brought Saul to the apostles ("ἀποστόλους"), indicating that Barnabas was not one of that group of apostles at that time, and neither was Paul apparently (compare the phrase "Peter and the rest of the apostles in Acts 2:37, page 1702). Furthermore, notice also the crucial testimony of Barnabas that Saul saw the Lord Jesus on the road, and he had talked with Jesus, and how Saul had spoken out boldly in the name of Jesus. Such testimony to the Jerusalem apostles supported Paul's own testimony that Jesus had appeared in person to him and spoke with him (1 Corinthians 9:1, page 1791). Furthermore, at Antioch, Paul and Barnabas opposed some men who came down from Judea, teaching people that they must obey the custom of Moses to be saved (Acts 15:1, page 1728). As a result of the great dissension, the church at Antioch sent Paul and Barnabas and some others to the the apostles ("ἀποστόλους") and elders in Jerusalem concerning these matters (Acts 15:2, page 1728). Notice that Paul and Barnabas again are not referred to as apostles like the apostles in Jerusalem. Paul himself explained that the Jerusalem apostles were apostles ("ἀποστόλους") before him, but then he went away to Arabia and returned once more to Damascus (Galatians 1:17, page 1820). So, by the time Paul visited Jerusalem again after visiting Arabia and Damascus again, he had received the revelation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which Paul did not receive from men, nor was he taught it by men (Galatians 1:11-12, page 1819).

4.3.2 <u>James</u>. In 1 Corinthians 15:7, Paul wrote that the Lord Jesus appeared to James (apparently the brother of the Lord Jesus), and then to the rest of the apostles ("ἀποστόλοις"). Paul also named James, the brother of the Lord Jesus, as an apostle (Galatians 1:19, page 1820; compare Galatians 2:9, page 1821) and he played a leading role in the church at Jerusalem (Acts 12:17, page 1723; Acts 15:13ff., page 1729). With James, the brother of the Lord, one can see that he may not have been with the twelve disciples during their entire time with Christ (John 7:5, pages 1667-1668) and so he may not have been considered to fill the position of Judas Iscariot. But it does show that other men figured prominently in the life of the Jerusalem church, who were also called apostles, but distinguished from the Twelve apostles.

4.3.3 <u>Apollos</u>. Apollos was an eloquent man, an Alexandrian by birth, and mighty in the Scriptures (Acts 18:24, page 1737). Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos preaching about Jesus, but Priscilla and Aquila explained to Apollos

the way of God more accurately, because he was only acquainted with the baptism of John. Apollos played a supporting role to the church-planting apostles by greatly helping those who had believed through grace, for Apollos powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing by the Scriptures that Jesus was the Christ (Acts 18:24-28; see also Acts 9:22, page 1717). After Paul had planted the church at Corinth by his personal visit and preaching, Apollos came to Corinth and "watered" the city with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, resulting in more believers coming to salvation in Christ (1 Corinthians 3:6, page 1784). In 1 Corinthians 4:6, page 1786, Paul described himself and Apollos as stewards of the mysteries of God, and in 1 Corinthians 4:9, apparently called Apollos an apostle (see also 1 Corinthians 3:22-23, page 1785 where we see that Paul and Apollos and Cephas all belong to the Corinthians, who belong to Christ, and Christ belongs to God).

4.3.4 Andronicus and Junius. In Romans 16:7, page 1780, Paul described Andronicus and Junias, as his kinsmen and fellow prisoners, and outstanding among the apostles ("ἀποστόλοις").

Section Five

The Church Messengers as Apostles

5.1 Church Messengers. The apostle Paul described Titus as his partner and fellow worker, and then said that his brethren, apparently traveling with him, were messengers ("ἀπόστολοι") of the churches, a glory to Christ. Therefore, we see that the term "apostles" ("ἀπόστολοι") can refer to men on the missionary team with Paul sent by particular churches.

5.2 Epaphroditus. In Philippians 2:25, page 1837, we learn that Epaphroditus was the brother and fellow worker of Paul, and also his fellow soldier, and the messenger ("ἀπόστολον") and minister ("λειτουργὸν") sent from the Philippian church. Consider also 1 Thessalonians 2:6, page 1847 where Paul spoke concerning the authority of "apostles of Christ" ("Χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι") who came with Paul to Thessalonica to minister there.

5.3 Silvanus and Timothy. Therefore, because of the plural "apostles" reference, Paul evidently was referring to the ministry team consisting of Silvanus and Timothy in addition to Paul (1 Thessalonians 1:1, page 1846). Therefore, it appears that Paul may have considered Silvanus and Timothy

to be apostles of Christ ("Χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι"). Yet, we do not see any indication that Silvanus or Timothy ever met Jesus face to face, as required of the Twelve apostles. So, sometimes the term "apostle" may be a general reference to a person sent by a particular church on a spiritual mission.

Section Six

The Office of Apostle and

The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles

6.1 Judas Iscariot. As we noted above, Judas Iscariot defaulted from his office ("ἐπισκοπὴν") of apostle. In order to distinguish the office ("ἐπισκοπὴν") of apostle from The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles, we must examine the work of the Holy Spirit.

6.2 The Holy Spirit and the Office of Apostle. Both John the Baptist and Jesus prophesied concerning the new relationship of believers to the Holy Spirit.

6.2.1 The Prophecy of John the Baptist. John the Baptist prophesied that Jesus would come and baptize believers with the Holy Spirit and with fire (Luke 3:16, page 1600). Therefore, we know that John spoke about Jesus bringing about a new ministry of the Holy Spirit (baptism and indwelling), separate from the experience of believers with the Holy Spirit in the Old Testament. In the future, each believer would be baptized by Jesus with the Holy Spirit ("ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ").

6.2.2 The Prophecy of Jesus. Just before Jesus ascended to heaven after the resurrection, He told the apostles that they will "be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now" (Acts 1:5, page 1699). The prophecy of both John the Baptist and Jesus concerning the baptism with the Holy Spirit was fulfilled at Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13, pages 1700-1701).

6.2.3 Pentecost. On Pentecost, the Holy Spirit filled the apostles and they spoke with other tongues, as the Holy Spirit was giving them utterance (Acts 2:4, page 1700; Joel 2:28-32, page 1432). Because the baptism of the Holy

Spirit occurred after Jesus had ascended into heaven, we know two important points.

6.2.3.1 Believers and Spiritual Gifts. During the lifetime of Jesus in the flesh, none of the twelve apostles had received any spiritual gift from the the Holy Spirit because those gifts were not bestowed upon men until Jesus had ascended (Ephesians 4:8-9, page 1830; Acts 2:38-39, page 1702) and the Holy Spirit had baptized them and indwelt them (John 14:17, page 1685 and Acts 2:4, page 1700).

6.2.3.2 Unbelievers Can Hold a Church Office. The office of apostle existed before Pentecost and the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Yet, Judas Iscariot, an unbeliever, held the office of apostle (no unbeliever can ever receive a spiritual gift from the Holy Spirit). Therefore, we may safely conclude that the office of apostle remains separate and distinct from The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles.

6.2.3.3 Judas Iscariot and the Office of Apostle. The original twelve disciples all held the office of apostle (including Judas Iscariot, the son of perdition (John 17:12, page 1689)), before anyone received The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles. Only after Pentecost would the Twelve apostles be baptized in the Holy Spirit by Jesus and The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles bestowed. The timing seems very important here. Furthermore, Judas Iscariot could hold the office of apostle, but he never had The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles because he was never baptized by Jesus in the Holy Spirit and never indwelt by the Holy Spirit(John 14:17, page 1685). In contrast, only after Pentecost, do we see the arrival of the spiritual gifts, signaled by the filling of the Holy Spirit and the utterance with various tongues at Pentecost.

6.3 The Office of Apostle. Jesus inaugurated the office of apostle during His earthly ministry. Notice that Judas held the office of apostle, even though he was the "son of perdition" (John 17:12, page 1689). Therefore, before the spiritual gifts were given by the Holy Spirit coming down upon men at Pentecost, the office of apostle had already existed. Therefore, the office of apostle may be distinguished from The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles, as described above. Furthermore, this specific office needed to be filled after the demise of Judas Iscariot (Acts 1:15-26, page 1700). The office of apostle numbered only twelve men, no more and no less. Notice that when Judas Iscariot died, they did not merely appoint all the qualified candidates to hold the office of apostle, but chose only one. Eleven apostles were too few and

thirteen apostles were too many to hold the office. We may safely conclude from this passage that the office of apostle was held only by twelve men who met the qualifications of described in Acts 1. Jesus commanded the apostles to wait in Jerusalem until the Holy Spirit had come upon them with power before they went out to all the world to be His witnesses (Acts 1:8, page 1699). Jesus baptized believers with the Holy Spirit, but did not do so until Pentecost. Notice that Judas Iscariot was never baptized by Jesus with the Holy Spirit. As an apostle Himself, Christ is also the Guardian ("ἐπίσκοπον") of our souls (1 Peter 2:25, page 1896). Jesus not only functions as prophet, priest and king, but He also holds the office of Apostle (Hebrews 3:1, page 1871--notice the coordination of the High Priest (Old Testament office) with Apostle (New Testament office)).

6.4 <u>The Offices of Overseer and Apostle</u>. One may argue based upon Acts 20:28 and similar passages that the Church Office of Overseer now corresponds to the office of apostle, but such a claim falls short because the office of "overseer" is never described as a spiritual gift in the New Testament, but always an office; in contrast, the term "apostle" refers to both a spiritual gift and an office. We see that the Twelve apostles held a special position after the resurrection of Jesus because we read that Jesus appeared to the Twelve apostles (which number included Cephas--1 Corinthians 15:5, page 1800), then later to James and the rest of the apostles (James was a member of a separate group of apostles, not a part of the Twelve apostles--1 Corinthians 15:7, page 1800). Likewise, many people may be apt to teach (e.g, Elders 1 Timothy 3:2), but not all Church Overseers have The Spiritual Gift of the The Teachers. So, not every saint (born-again believer) has The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles. Clearly, the term the "Twelve apostles" had special meaning even after the resurrection and before Pentecost, and the Twelve apostles were distinguished from the other apostles like James the brother of Jesus (James was not even a believer at the time Jesus went to Jerusalem in John 7:5, page 1667). Likewise, many saints may be apt to teach (Overseers 1 Timothy 3:2), but not all Overseers have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers. So, not every person has The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles.

6.5 <u>The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles</u>. Just before Jesus ascended to heaven, He commanded His disciples to wait for what the Father had promised: each of them would be baptized with the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:4-5, page 1699). Jesus further explained that the baptism of the Holy Spirit will provide power to be witnesses of Jesus both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea

and Samaria, and even to the remotest part of the earth (Acts 1:7-8, page 1699). We know from our discussion above that the Twelve apostles had not yet received a single spiritual gift from the Holy Spirit, because Jesus had not yet ascended and Jesus had not yet sent the Holy Spirit upon them (John 16:7, page 1687). For those Twelve original apostles, The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles came upon them through the ministry of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Those Twelve original apostles had held the office of apostle for years before Pentecost and performed ministries as apostles. With the baptism in the Holy Spirit, the Twelve apostles became empowered with The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles to serve as witnesses of Jesus to all the world (Acts 1:8, page 1699; compare the command to wait in Jerusalem until His power had come upon them). While many saints may possess The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles, only the Twelve held the office of apostle. Furthermore, we should keep in mind that The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles ("ἀποστόλους") appears at the head of the list of spiritual gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28, page 1797 and in Ephesians 4:11, page 1830. Any male believer may aspire to the office ("ἐπισκοπῆς") of Church Overseer, but no one may aspire to the office of Apostle (1 Timothy 3:1, page 1856; yet, one may aspire to The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles and other greater spiritual gifts—1 Corinthians 12:31, page 1797). Male believers may be appointed to fill the offices of ("πρεσβυτέρους") and deacon ("Διακόνους") in every city, but only the Twelve may fill the office of apostle, limited to just twelve men meeting specific criteria described in Acts 1:21-22, page 1700. Notice again that the number of apostles holding the office of apostle was twelve, not more or less (Acts 1:15-26, page 1700). Because the number twelve was significant, and required the replacement of Judas Iscariot, we know that the seventy apostles (Luke 10:1-16, pages 1618-1619) did not hold the office of apostle because that number for the office of apostle was twelve and no more and no less. Furthermore, the seventy apostles had a limited mission of going to the specific cities and villages to be visited by Jesus (Luke 10:1, page 1618). They also preached the hopeful message of "The Kingdom of God has come near to you" (Luke 10:9, page 1618). Now we may explore more deeply the office of apostle in the New Testament and The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles in the New Testament.

Section Seven

The False Apostles

7.1 Warning: False Apostles. New Testament writers not only described the activity of prophets from God and apostles of God, they also warned against false prophets and false apostles. In fact, the very existence of false apostles suggests that The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles was bestowed upon many people, and not just a few believers. Otherwise, the false apostles would have been easily discerned because the relatively few saints with the authentic spiritual gift of apostle would have been well known. But I do not claim certainty here, but merely make the suggestion and observation.

7.2 Disguises of the False Apostles. In 2 Corinthians 11:13, page 1815, Paul warned the Corinthians about the false apostles ("ψευδαπόστολοι"), deceitful workers, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ ("ἀποστόλους Χριστοῦ"). Those false prophets preached another Jesus ("ἄλλον Ἰησοῦν"), whom Paul did not preach, and a different spirit ("πνεῦμα ἕτερον") which they had not received, and a different gospel ("εὐαγγέλιον ἕτερον") which they had not accepted, although satan disguises himself as an angel of light (2 Corinthians 11:1-15, pages 1815-1816).

7.3 Testing "Apostles." In Revelation 2:2, page 1915, Jesus commended the Ephesian church for not tolerating evil, and they "put to the test" ("ἐπείρασας") those who call themselves apostles ("ἀποστόλους"), but are not and found them to be false ("ψευδεῖς"). Please notice that each church apparently had the spiritual ability to test apostles and see if they were truly from God. Because these false apostles spread evil in the churches, it certainly shows that many people calling themselves apostles moved into churches. Obviously, if they were one of the Twelve apostles, it would have been easy to identify them. Furthermore, by the time of writing of the Book of Revelation, in the late 80's to early 90's A.D., some apostles must still have been known to the church. The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles may have continued, but John appears to be the last living one of the Twelve apostles.

7.4 The Dangers of the False Apostles. The Gospel of Jesus Christ brings salvation to everyone who receives the free gift of salvation by faith alone (Ephesians 2:8-9, page 1828). False apostles often target the Gospel and proclaim a false Gospel (see 1 Corinthians 15:1-6, page 1800 for a description of the Gospel). Paul warned the Galatians that if an angel from heaven or anyone else appeared preaching a different Gospel than the Gospel Paul preached, that preacher must be accursed! (Galatians 1:6-9, page 1819). Believers must follow the example of the Berean church and examine the

Scriptures with great eagerness to see if the Gospel preached matches in all aspects the Gospel presented in the New Testament (Acts 17:10-11, page 1734; likewise, believers should test the spirits--1 John 4:1-3, page 1907).

Section Eight

The End of The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles?

8.1 The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles Today? Do we have The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles still active today? The answer to that question is both yes and no. So, let me first present the case that The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles is not active today. Then, I will discuss the other side: yes, The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles is active today.

8.2 No, The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles is not Active Today. The key to answering the question of whether The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles is still active today depends upon what you mean by the term "apostle." We know that the **office** of apostle ceased with the death of the last of the Twelve apostles, as described below. The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles may still continue.

8.2.1 The Foundation of the Apostles. Consider the popular argument from Ephesians 2:20, page 1829 that The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles no longer exists. In essence, the argument runs that Jesus, the apostles ("ἀποστόλων"), and prophets are called the foundation of the church, with Jesus Himself described as the corner stone, upon which the entire building is being fitted together, and is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, and a dwelling of God in the Spirit (Ephesians 2:21-22, page 1829). In passing, we know that the New Jerusalem has twelve foundation stones, each bearing the name of the twelve apostles of the Lamb ("τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων τοῦ ἀρνίου") (Revelation 21:14, page 1940). Therefore, because the foundation has been laid, the work of the apostles, at least the Twelve, has been completed, just as the foundational work of Jesus Christ was finished as He ascended to heaven. In my mind, this arguments overlooks that the **office** of apostle has ended with the death of the Twelve, but The Spiritual Gift of

The Apostles may have still continued. Let us first explore the concept that the office of apostle ended with the Twelve apostles.

8.2.2 The Office of Apostle Ended with the Twelve. As we observed above, the office of apostle consisted of only the original twelve apostles, less Judas Iscariot, with Matthias taking his position, so that the number of men holding the office of apostle remained fixed at twelve, not eleven or thirteen (Acts 1:21-26, page 1700). Furthermore, the qualifications of the office of apostle required the candidate to fill the position of apostle vacated by Judas Iscariot. The candidate must also have been with the other apostles all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among them. Furthermore, the candidate must have been with Jesus from the His baptism by John the Baptist to the day of the ascension of Jesus (Acts 1:21-22, page 1700). Therefore, no person alive today meets those qualifications to hold the office of apostle. Notice too that the particular ministry of the Twelve holding the office of apostle focused upon being witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 1:22, page 1700).

8.2.3 The Teaching of the Apostles. The teaching of the apostles forms another basis for recognizing that the work of the office of apostle ended with the death of the last of the Twelve, who held the office of apostle. The office of apostle closed with the writing of the New Testament and ended with death of the last of the Twelve. Yet, through the purpose of God, the mysteries, commandments of Jesus, and the teachings of God continue to bring salvation and blessings to the church by remembering and observing the revelations of God in the New Testament.

8.2.3.1 The Mysteries. The ministry of the apostles included the revealing of the mysteries of God (Ephesians 3:5, page 1829). As we have seen, the term "mystery" refers to something in other generations which was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to His apostles and prophets in the Spirit (Ephesians 3:5, page 1829). The apostles revealed the mysteries to the church and to rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, according to the wisdom and eternal purpose of God which He carried out through Christ Jesus (Ephesians 3:10-11, pages 1838-1839). Therefore, the apostles received special revelation from God which formed the basis of the New Testament. Similarly, the prophets also received revelations from God, which are recorded in the New Testament. Because all the mysteries had been revealed through the prophets and apostles, and those mysteries were

all revealed in the New Testament, the revelatory work of the apostles closed with the last New Testament writer completing his work.

8.2.3.2 <u>The Commandments of the Lord and Savior</u>. The ministry of the apostles also included proclaiming the commandments spoken by Jesus Christ, the Lord and Savior (2 Peter 3:2, page 1902). All believers should remember the words of the prophets and the teachings of the apostles (2 Peter 3:1-2, page 1902). Peter referred to a body of teaching (the commandments of Jesus) already established by Christ and now proclaimed by the apostles. In further support of the miraculous teaching ministry of the Twelve apostles, Jesus promised the Twelve apostles that the Holy Spirit would supernaturally bring to their remembrance all that Jesus had said to them (John 14:26, page 1685). Therefore, any claim that people today function as an apostle must not include a claim that they have received revelation from God, because the New Testament contained all the commandments of Jesus we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3, page 1900; 2 Timothy 3:16-17, page 1864).

8.2.3.3 <u>The Salvation of God</u>. The Lord Jesus spoke about salvation by faith in Him alone (Hebrews 2:3, page 1870). The writer of Hebrews revealed a familiar pattern of: (1) Jesus speaking during His physical ministry on earth; and (2) then the apostles confirmed to other believers what they had personally heard from Jesus and witnessed with their own eyes; and (3) God attested to the veracity of the witnesses with signs and wonders and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will. (Hebrews 2:3, page 1870; compare 1 John 1:1-4, page 1904; 2 Peter 1:16-21, page 1901).

8.2.4 <u>The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles</u>. While I personally have high confidence that the office of apostle terminated with the death of the Twelve apostles, The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles may not have terminated. Let us consider Paul the apostle for a moment. Paul did not hold the office of apostle, because he could not meet the qualifications for the office described in Acts 1:21-22, page 1700. Yet Paul described himself as a "called apostle" ("κλητὸς ἀπόστολος"), set apart for the gospel of God (Romans 1:1, page 1758; 1 Corinthians 1:1, page 1782). Paul also received direct revelation from God concerning the Gospel (Galatians 1:12, page 1819). Paul also saw Jesus after His resurrection (Acts 9:1-9, page 1716 1 Corinthians 15:8, page 1800; Acts 18:9-10, page 1736; 2 Corinthians 12:1-6, page 1817). At any time, Paul also claimed the apostles (including himself) might have asserted their authority (δυνάμενοι ἐν βάρει) (1 Thessalonians 2:6, page 1847). Because we

described various ministries associated with The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles, let us review them briefly below to evaluate whether they continue today.

8.2.5 Office of Apostle Terminated. So, in summary, the office of apostle is not active today and The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles today does not include any revelatory powers. Concerning the revelatory powers of some of the apostles, the New Testament has been written and no need exists for further authoritative, inerrant revelations from God. In the Old and New Testaments, believers today have all the revelation we need for life and Godliness (2 Peter 1:3, page 1900), so that the man of God has been fully equipped by the Scriptures to live for Jesus Christ (2 Timothy 3:16-17, page 1864).

8.3 Yes, The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles Is Active Today. Because the New Testament shows that The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles manifested itself in different ways with different ministries and different effects, we see that some manifestations of The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles have passed away. Please recall that The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have accompanied The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles, so that the apostle may have been able to work miracles, to confirm his apostleship. Yet, not all apostles necessarily had the ability to work signs and miracles. Likewise, The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom has passed away, because the revelation of the mysteries of God has also ended because of the completion of the New Testament. Please recall that one spiritual gift may result in different ministries with different effects (1 Corinthians 12:1-7, page 1796).

8.4 The Ministry of the Church Planting Apostles. The ministry of the church planting apostles focused upon spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to new areas. We see several examples of this ministry of The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles in the New Testament.

8.4.1 Barnabas, Andronicus, Junius, Sylvanus. The church-planting apostles included Barnabas (Acts 13:2, page 1724; 1 Thessalonians 1:1, page 1846), the friend of Saul of Tarsus and missionary companion of Paul. The church-planting apostles also included Andronicus and Junius (outstanding among the apostles ("ἀποστόλοις"), and in Christ before Paul (Romans 16:7, page 1780). Likewise, Sylvanus may be included among the church planting apostles and possibly Timothy (1 Thessalonians 1:1, page 1846; compare 1 Thessalonians 2:6, page 1847). Therefore, The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles

in the sense of someone specifically gifted to go and start churches seems to be a viable gift today. Please recognize that these church-planting apostles did not all receive revelations, and all were not apparently eyewitnesses of the Lord Jesus. Arguably, only Paul was specifically mentioned as receiving such revelations from God, and also the only one specifically mentioned as seeing the resurrected Jesus. One may question whether all the church-planting apostles had seen the Lord Jesus after His resurrection, especially in light on Paul's comment that he had seen the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 9:1, page 1791). We may study that passage for further insight into The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles.

8.4.2 1 Corinthians 9:5-6, Pages 1791-1792. Paul distinguished among several groups when he discussed the rights of an apostle to take along a wife. Paul separated: (a) the rest of the apostles; and (b) the brothers of the Lord; and (c) Cephas (1 Corinthians 9:5, pages 1791-1792). We learn several interesting points here about various people, so let us delve deeper here.

8.4.2.1 The Rest of the Apostles. Paul claimed authority equal to rest of the apostles ("οἱ λοιποὶ ἀπόστολοὶ") (1 Corinthians 9:5, page 1792). Therefore, we may conclude that Paul recognized he was a part of a larger group of apostles. All of these people took along ("περιάγειν") a wife with them when they performed the work of an apostle.

8.4.2.2 The Brothers of the Lord. We know that the Lord Jesus had physical brothers born of Mary: James, Joseph, Judas, and Simon (Matthew 13:55-56, page 1525). Certainly James, the brother of the Lord, was an apostle (Galatians 1:19, page 1820). Therefore, Paul recognized a separate group he labelled the brothers of the Lord ("οἱ ἀδελφοὶ τοῦ κυρίου"), apparently the physical siblings of the Lord Jesus (the Book of Jude was apparently written by a physical brother of Jesus)(Mark 6:3, page 1567; 1 Corinthians 9:5, pages 1791-1792; Jude 1:1, page 1912). Perhaps they were all apostles, but definitely not part of the Twelve, because they were unbelievers in John 7:5, pages 1667-1668. So, in this context of taking along a wife with doing the ministry of an apostle, the brothers of the Lord rank along with Paul. I add a word of caution here that I am not certain one could prove all the points above, but they seem to make the most sense of the context. Furthermore, Paul separated out Cephas from the Twelve, and it may be that the Twelve did not routinely journey as an apostle to plant churches (the apostles stayed in Jerusalem, even as the persecution following the death of Stephen arose--Acts 8:1, page 1713; compare Acts 9:32, page 1717, where

Peter traveled throughout the regions of Judea, Galilee and Samaria, building up the churches there and bringing comfort in the Holy Spirit (Acts 9:32-43, pages 1717-1718; see also Galatians 2:11-21, page 1821, where Peter came to Antioch to preach and visit). We also note that the Jerusalem apostles sent ("ἀπέστειλαν") the apostles John (the son of Zebedee) and Peter (both of the Twelve apostles) to Samaria, where they laid hands upon the new believers and they received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:14-17, page 1714). Notice in passing that all the apostles acted in concert to send Peter and John. Yet, strong evidence exists in Acts 1:8, page 1699, that all of the Twelve apostles were sent into all the world, even to its remotest parts (compare also Matthew 28:18-20, page 1557; Luke 24:46-48, "all the nations").

8.4.2.3 <u>Cephas</u>. Paul put Peter (Cephas) in a separate category here. Notice he did not put Peter first in the list, but last. Peter apparently was not the preeminent apostle, but rather the apostle to the Jews, as Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles.

8.4.2.4 <u>Barnabas</u>. Paul cited Barnabas as an apostle who also had the right to take along a wife (1 Corinthians 9:6, page 1792). As noted above, Barnabas first appears in Acts 4:36, page 1706, who was named Joseph, a Levite of Cyprian birth. Barnabas took Paul and introduced him to the apostles in Jerusalem after Paul's conversion (Acts 9:27, page 1717). Notice that Barnabas was not one of the Jerusalem apostles at that time, and neither was Paul. Later, the Jerusalem apostles sent ("ἐξαπέστειλαν") Barnabas to Antioch to encourage the Greeks who had believed there (Acts 11:21-2, page 1722). After both Paul and Barnabas had ministered for about a year in Antioch, the people of Antioch sent a financial gift by the hands of Barnabas and Paul to the elders at Jerusalem (Acts 11:27-30, page 1722). After Paul and Barnabas returned to Antioch from Jerusalem, the Holy Spirit called ("προσκέκλημαι") and the elders sent (" ἀπέλυσαν") them and the Holy Spirit sent them out ("ἐκπεμφθέντες") to the work of spreading the Gospel and planting churches (Acts 13:1-4, page 1722). Therefore, we know that some work of the church planting apostles like Barnabas existed separately from the work of the Twelve apostles. No record exists that Barnabas saw the Lord Jesus after His resurrection, although someone may claim the same from Paul saying that Paul had seen the Lord Jesus, and then mentioned Barnabas in the same paragraph as an apostle, as described above in 1 Corinthians 9:1-7, page 1791-1792. So, Barnabas stands as a good example of a church-planting apostle, apparently called and gifted by the Holy Spirit to the work

of planting new churches as an apostle. Therefore, taking all the verses together, the Holy Spirit may still bestow the spiritual gift of church-planting apostle upon some men today, but it would not produce identical ministries and effects as seen in the ministries of Paul or the Twelve apostles.

Identification. If you have a ministry of being sent out by the Holy Spirit as part of a team to plant new churches, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles.

8.4.3 Summary of Church Planting Apostles. So, we may conclude that The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles, manifested with the church-planting ministry, may still be in effect today. These men have The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles that moves them to go into all the world to make disciples in new places, bringing the good news of Jesus Christ with them. This spiritual gift will be closely related to The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

8.5.1 The Ministry of the Church Messenger Apostles. As we saw above, Epaphroditus was the spiritual brother and fellow worker of Paul, and also his fellow soldier, and the messenger ("ἀπόστολον") and minister ("λειτουργὸν") sent from the Philippian church (Philippians 2:25, page 1837). Likewise, consider Silvanus and Timothy whom Paul called part of the ministry team of apostles laboring at Thessalonica (see 1 Thessalonians 2:6, page 1847 where Paul spoke concerning the authority of "apostles of Christ" ("Χριστοῦ ἀπόστολοι"); compare 1 Thessalonians 1:1, page 1846). In some cases, the church messengers brought gifts of money (e.g., Acts 12:30, page 1722) or went to investigate a matter (e.g., Barnabas sent to Antioch, Acts 11:22, page 1722).

Identification. If you have a ministry of being sent from one church to another to carry news, bring an offering, investigate a matter, or refresh both churches, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles.

8.5.2 Summary of the Church Messenger Apostles. So, we also conclude that The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles, manifested as a church messenger ministry, may still be active today. These men have The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles that moves them to travel on behalf of a local church to carry messages and encouragement to the missionaries in foreign places and return to the local church with greetings, encouragement, and more from the missionaries.

HALLMARKS OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFT OF THE APOSTLES

Apostles: Understanding the Spiritual Gift. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles ministers to a wide variety of people. As above, the ministry of the believer with The Spiritual Gifts of Mercy may take many forms, and produce a variety of effects. I have listed a few of those hallmarks below.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gifts of The Apostles to see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles.

♦ Apostle-gifted believers do not hold the office of apostle today.

♦ Apostle-gifted believers may have a ministry of being sent by the Holy Spirit and a local assembly to start a new local assembly.

♦ Apostle-gifted believers may have a ministry of being sent as a church messenger from one local assembly to another.

♦ Apostle-gifted believers may bring strength and encouragement to foreign assemblies.

♦ Apostle-gifted believers may have a ministry of traveling to foreign assemblies to investigate a matter.

♦ Apostle-gifted believers may transport gifts from one place to another.

Conclusion

The Office of Apostle ended and The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles continues in Part**.** The office of apostle no longer exists, but The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles may now continue in some ministries. The office of apostle terminated with the death of the last of the Twelve apostles. The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles no longer includes the work of revealing God's Word

contained in the New Testament. Therefore, an apostle like Paul or Peter no longer walks among us. But, the church-planting apostles, like Barnabas, may still be laboring to establish new churches. Likewise, the church-messenger apostles, like Epaphroditus, may still be moving among believers to bring an encouraging and strengthening word to another church or church-planters.

2

The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets

Category of Gift: Equipping

Ephesians 4:11

"and some as the prophets"

Section One

Prophecy Today

1.1 The Claim of Prophets Today. Today I hear many people talking as if they were prophets. They tell me that they died, saw a great light, or felt a warm feeling, or spoke with loved ones who have died. They tell me they no longer fear death, because of what they have seen and experienced. Among Christians, I hear that a person had a word of prophecy for another Christian. So many people claim to be prophets, both within the church and outside the church. Who do you believe and why are so many people claiming to be prophets? We must follow the clear teaching of the Bible regarding prophets and false prophets. We can begin by reviewing the claims by some people that the Bible contains different levels of prophecy.

1.2 The Modern Claims of Different Types of Prophecy. Some people argue today that the New Testament gift of prophecy comes in two types: (1) an authoritative type, where the prophet always speaks the truth; and (2) a non-authoritative type, because the prophet speaks some truth, mixed with error. If you read the Bible carefully, you will see that the entire Bible only contains information about only one type of prophecy, and God only speaks the truth, never mixed with error or lies. According to Jesus, lying means that you are not speaking the truth (John 8:44-45, page 1672). Prophets from God never produce prophecies containing lies (a lie is not speaking the truth). Therefore, any claims about different types of New

Testament prophecy deny the truth of the Bible. God has no mixture of truth with error in Himself. In contrast, the devil has no truth in him and moves men (including believers) to speak lies for him (John 8:44, page 1672; Matthew 16:23, page 1530). The person claiming to speak prophecy, but actually mixes truth with error, is a false prophet.

1.2.1 <u>The Modern Claim that Agabus the Prophet Was Wrong</u>. Some people claim that Agabus was wrong about his prophecy, and so use his prophecy as an example of lower level prophecy that contains some errors and some truth. This group of people promoting non-authoritative prophecy distort the Scriptures by claiming a mixture of truth and error in the prophecies of Agabus. In contrast, Agabus himself specifically said he was quoting the Holy Spirit: "This is what the Holy Spirit says:" (Acts 21:11, page 1742). So, let us examine their claim that Agabus prophesied with some errors.

1.2.1.1 <u>First Claim of Error: Agabus Erred by Stating that The Jews Would Bind Paul</u>. First, the opponents of true prophecy claim that Agabus erred in prophesying that the Jews would bind Paul. What did Paul himself testify to about the incident leading to his binding? Paul himself actually testified that the Jews "laid hands on him" (Acts 21:27, page 1743). So, you can believe the Holy Spirit, Agabus, Paul, and Luke or those opponents of prophecy who claim prophetic error.

1.2.1.2 <u>Second Claim of Error: Agabus Erred by Stating that Paul Would Be Delivered into The Hands of the Romans</u>. Second, the opponents of true prophecy claim that Agabus further erred in prophesying that Jews would deliver Paul into the hands of the Romans. Should you believe the opponents of true prophecy or Luke the author of Acts, writing under inspiration of the Holy Spirit? Luke stated that the Jews "rushed together, and and taking hold of Paul, they dragged him out of the temple . . . ." (Acts 21:30, page 1743). Having seized Paul and dragged Paul out of the temple, with an intent to kill Paul outside the temple, those same Jews relinquished their custody of Paul to the Romans who came to take Paul into their custody (Acts 21:31-35, page 1743). So, you can believe the Holy Spirit, Agabus, Paul, and Luke or those opponents of prophecy who claim prophetic error.

1.2.2 <u>Luke Never Claimed a Prophetic Error</u>. In answering those two claims of prophetic error, we must note that those humans are now calling

God a liar for putting such accounts in the Bible and presenting them as true revelations from the Holy Spirit. Of course, in the alternative, first we must observe that the Bible contains no indication that Luke or any other human author of the bible considered the prophecy incorrect in any way. Should you believe Paul or the humans who charge Agabus and God with error? Agabus specifically said he was quoting the Holy Spirit: "This is what the Holy Spirit says:" (Acts 21:11, page 1742). Now regarding the false claim that Agabus erred regarding the fact that the Jews delivered Paul to the Romans, consider the words of Paul himself: "Brethren, though I had done nothing against our people or the customs of our fathers, yet I was delivered ("παραδώσουσιν"--same Greek word Agabus used for delivered ("παραδώσουσιν") (Acts 21:11, page 1742)) as a prisoner into the hands of the Romans" (Acts 28:17, pages 1756-1756).

1.3 The Warning Concerning Prophetic Utterances. In 1 Thessalonians 5:20, page 1850, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians not to despise prophetic utterances. We must be very careful to obey this command and examine the doctrine of prophets and prophecy in the Bible.

Section Two

Testing the Prophets

2.1 The Testing of Prophets. In the last times (which began in Acts 2 at Pentecost), many false prophets will arise who will deceive many people (Acts 2:16-17, page 1701; Matthew 24:11, page 1545). Those false prophets will even perform signs and wonders, in order to lead astray, if possible, the elect (Mark 13:22, page 1585). Every prophet should be tested against the Scriptures. As background, Deuteronomy 13:1-5, page 309, provides the death penalty under the Mosaic Law (now fulfilled in Christ) for every dreamer or false prophet who entices people to serve any God but the true and living God of the Bible. Furthermore, the Bible provides in the same passage: "You shall follow the LORD your God and fear Him; and you shall keep His commandments, listen to His voice, serve Him and cling to Him." Therefore, every person who claims to have a prophecy from God should be examined by the other prophets to test whether their claim to have revelation from God agrees with Scripture, God's complete revelation for all men (1 Corinthians 14:28-33, page 1800; 1 John 4:1-6, pages 1907-1908). Every spirit must be tested to see if it is from God (1 John 4:1-3, page 1907).

Identification. If you have a ministry of prophecy, and you welcome other believers to examine your prophecies and test you to see if the Holy Spirit produced your prophecy or if another spirit, not from God, produced the prophecy, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets.

2.2 The Spirit of Anti-Christ and Prophecy. John wrote that many false prophets have gone out into the world. Therefore, John warned believers not to believe every spirit, but to test the spirits to see whether they are from God. Every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God, but is the spirit of anti-Christ. In fact, many anti-Christs were already at work in the New Testament time and they continue their activity today (1 John 2:18, page 1905). Some anti-Christs even came out from among Christians, because those anti-Christs were never Christians (1 John 2:19, page 1905). Jesus warned that many people will seek to enter the kingdom of heaven, calling to Jesus and saying: "Lord, Lord." They will claim to have prophesied in His name, cast out demons in His name, and performed many miracles in His name (notice they hope for salvation based upon their "good" works) (Matthew 7:22, page 1511). Yet, Jesus will say to them: "I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness" (Matthew 7:23, page 1511). Jesus further warned that the false prophets may come to believers in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves (Matthew 7:15, page 1511). Therefore, we must test the spirits of the prophets to see if they are speaking for God or against God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of prophecy, and you do not have the spirit of anti-Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets.

2.3 Caiaphas and Prophecy. Just because someone gave a prophecy that turned out to be true, do not automatically conclude that person is a born-again believer. Even an unbeliever may deliver a prophecy as the Holy Spirit comes upon him. That unbeliever obviously does not possess any spiritual gift from the Holy Spirit, such as The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. As an example of an unbeliever prophesying, consider the prophecy of the high priest Caiaphas. The chief priests and Pharisees convened a council concerning the mighty signs that Jesus was performing among the people. They were determined to stop Jesus. One member of the council disclosed his evil motives for opposing Jesus. First, he feared that the Romans would come and take away the place held by the council (a position of power). Second, he feared that the Romans would take away the Jewish nation (John 11:48, page 1679). In response, Caiaphas declared that "it is expedient for you

that one man die for the people, and that the whole nation not perish" (John 11:50, page 1679). John explained that Caiaphas had prophesied that Jesus was going to die for the nation and that Jesus may gather together into one the children of God who are scattered abroad (John 11:51-52, page 1511). So, believers should be very careful to examine all prophecies and the people who utter them to see if those prophecies agree with the word of God, the Bible. Even unbelievers may speak true prophecies, as the Caiaphas did because of his office as high priest. Before we move into a deeper study of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, let us first understand the New Testament Prophet.

Identification. If you have a ministry of prophecy, and you are truly born again and speaking under the influence of the Holy Spirit, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets.

Section Three

John The Baptist as Prophet

3.1 John the Baptist. John the Baptist provides an example of an Old Testament prophet ministering in the transition period to the New Testament. He never received the baptism of the Holy Spirit described in Acts 2, and so never received The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets bestowed upon church-age believers. Yet, the ministry of the prophets in the Old Testament rested upon revelation from God just as the ministry of the prophets in the New Testament. So, John the Baptist helps us understand the role of the Old Testament prophet, especially as the prophet's work interfaces with the coming of Messiah, Jesus Christ, and His church of believers baptized by Jesus in the Holy Spirit. Jesus said that all the prophets and the Law prophesied until John. (Matthew 11:13, page 1518). With the appearance of Jesus Christ, God took flesh and dwelt among men. Jesus fulfilled the Law of Moses and made a final, complete sacrifice for sins. Jesus also inaugurated the New Covenant and sent the Holy Spirit to indwell believers. Through the Holy Spirit, believers will do greater works than Jesus (John 14:12, page 1685). Jesus declared that John was a prophet, fulfilling the prophecy of Malachi 3 that Elijah would appear, and that John was more than a prophet, because he was the special messenger announcing the arrival of Messiah (Luke 7:26ff., page 1610) With John, we see the transition from the prophetic work of the Law and the prophets of the Old Testament to the

work of the apostles and the prophets of the New Testament; things changed powerfully when Jesus took flesh and dwelt among men.

3.2 John the Baptist--The Transition Prophet. In order to understand The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, we may begin with John the Baptist. Jesus said that the Law and the prophets were preached until John the Baptist, but since then the kingdom of God has been preached (Luke 16:16, page 1633). John the Baptist stands at a turning point in spiritual history, and particularly the spiritual history of prophets.

3.3 John the Baptist Prepared. John the Baptist prepared the way for the ministry of Jesus in the flesh. Jesus proclaimed that no one born of women is greater than John the Baptist; yet, Jesus said that he who is least in the kingdom of God is greater than John (Luke 7:28, page 1610). John the Baptist, however, said he would not have recognized Jesus except that God, who sent John to baptize with water, would identify Jesus as the Messiah. God told John that John would see the Spirit descending and remaining upon Messiah; that One would be the One who baptizes in the Holy Spirit (John 1:33, pages 1654-1655).

Section Four

Prophecy and the Scripture

4.1 God Breathed. In 2 Timothy 3:16, page 1864, God declared that He breathed out all Scripture. Because He breathed it out, all Scripture is "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" (2 Timothy 3:16-17, page 1864). Because of God's intended use for Scripture, He obviously preserved it from any errors in the original autographs. By the term "autographs," I mean the original document written by the author. Today, we only have copies of those autographs, but we have very reliable copies of the original documents for the both the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament prophets spoke of the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. God revealed to those prophets that they were not serving themselves, but New Testament believers, to whom those glad tidings about Christ were announced for salvation. Even angels longed to look into such matters. The prophets themselves made careful searches and inquiries into the revelation of the grace that would come to the New

Testament believers (1 Timothy 1:10-13, page 1894). Therefore, God intended that all believers rely upon Scripture (Old Testament and New Testament) as totally trustworthy, free from all errors, and sufficient to know all matters pertaining to life and Godliness (2 Peter 1:2-3, page 1900).

4.2 Distortions of Prophecy. Peter wrote that Paul wrote letters according to the wisdom given to him. Peter indicated that some of Paul's letters contained matters difficult to understand. Even so, Peter recognized those letters as part of the Scriptures (the Old Testament Books). Therefore, when people distorted the inspired letters of Paul, they were distorting Scripture itself, to their own destruction (2 Peter 3:14-16, page 1903).

Section Five

Revelation and The Prophets

5.1 Direct Revelation from God. Prophecy in the Bible always involved direct revelation from God to the prophet. God never intended that His prophets would write down in the Bible all the prophecies He provided to people on earth. Yet, the Bible contains all the prophecies that God intended to be recorded for the church. With those introductory thoughts in mind, now let us turn to a brief explanation of how revelation works with the prophet.

5.2 God Speaks through the Prophet. God speaks through the prophet by the Holy Spirit moving men to speak for God. (2 Peter 1:20-21, page 1901). The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms all contain prophecies about the life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, return and reign of Jesus Christ (Luke 24:44, page 1652; Acts 13:40, page 1726). Isaiah proclaimed that everyone taught of God shall come to Jesus, because they have learned from the Father (John 6:45, page 1666).

5.3 The Basics of Bible Prophecy. Some people falsely have tried to divide prophecy into various levels of inspiration: True Prophecy and True-False Prophecy. God only speaks the truth and never lies. As we study True Prophecy, we see some characteristics of True Prophecy.

5.3.1 Verbal Inspiration. Prophecy from God always includes a verbal statement from God, whether delivered through a vision, a dream, or other

means. In other words, the content of the revelation was communicated by words. God breathed out those words, and inspired each of those words in the original autographs (Jeremiah 26:2, page 1227; John 14:26, page 1685; 2 Timothy 3:16-17, page 1864; 2 Peter 1:20-21). Verbal inspiration means that God inspired the words in the original autographs of the Bible (the copies of those autographs require careful study). Of course, thoughts come from words, but the exact words God chose for the original autographs really matter. Please keep in mind that the Gospel of John used very simple Greek words and phrases, whereas Paul and Peter used big Greek words and complex phrases to communicate. God placed His words into each writer's minds and hearts and the autograph was inspired as God moved in the author's heart and mind.

5.3.2 Plenary Inspiration. Plenary inspiration means that God inspired all of the words in the original autographs of the Bible. Because God cannot lie (Titus 1:2, page 1865), and never tempts anyone to lie (James 2:13, page 1888), all the words God inspired are completely true, without error of any kind.

5.4. Attacks upon Inspiration. Many people have attacked the inspiration of the Bible. In some cases, they attack the verbal inspiration of the Bible. In other cases, they attack the plenary inspiration of the Bible. At times, they attack both the verbal inspiration of the Bible and plenary inspiration of the Bible.

5.4.1 Attacks upon Verbal Inspiration. People today often attack the words of the Bible.

5.4.1.1 Modern Translators. For example, modern translators laboring in foreign fields use dynamic equivalents (made popular by Eugen Nida who promoted alterations in form to preserve the content), or substitute words, to convey their interpretations of the bible. Instead, these translators should believe the words of the Bible really matter. For example, when translators practice the techniques of Eugene Nida, they produce their own commentaries on the Bible, rather than translations of the Bible, which convey the words of God. Wycliffe Bible Translators and the United Bible Society undermine the inspiration of the Bible by employing dynamic equivalents, without proper concern for the original words of the Bible. God used words to create meanings. Without the inspired words, the meaning belongs only to the translator, and no longer to God as the original author. I

am not suggesting a wooden literalism where every original word must be translated in the same order to be faithful to the text. I am recognizing, however, that if you believe in the verbal, plenary inspiration, you would be interested in retaining to the best extent possible the words of the Bible in their proper context of meaning, and not writing a new book to convey what the translator believed God meant when He wrote the Bible using words He chose. The more the translator interprets the Bible before translating, the worse the final translation will be. God never called translators to be commentators first, but rather every good translation would convey the words, grammar, and syntax of the original languages in a readable form, so that the words God chose would be reflected in the translation.

5.4.1.2 Modern Paraphrases. Many modern paraphrases, sometimes labeled "translations," contain the errors of dynamic equivalents (also known as "functional equivalents" and similar terms). Although some translators would deny it, the term dynamic equivalents means that the Bible translators try to first interpret the text of the Bible, and then translate their thoughts about the proper interpretation. They claim to translate the Bible, but they only translate what they believe the passage means. They shoot for thought for thought translations, instead of word for word translations. All modern paraphrases that pretend to be translations, such as the New Living Translation, the New International Version, and the many other works that people wrongly trust as "Bibles," contain mere commentaries on the text, and so deny verbal inspiration.

5.4.1.2.1 Problems with the Good News Bible/Today's English Version. For example, Romans 8:3, "sending His son in the likeness of sinful flesh, . . ." (New American Standard Bible) becomes "who came with a nature like man's sinful nature" in the Good News Bible/Today's English Version. While the New American Standard Bible conveys no hint that Jesus was sinful by nature, the Good News Bible/Today's English Version clearly suggests that Jesus had a sinful human nature, and so was a sinner. Words really matter.

5.4.1.2.2 New International Version. Likewise, the New International Version ignores words in the original text. The translators of the New International Version, like many other modern commentaries, do not support many Bible doctrines and avoid special words in the original autographs. For example, the New International Version in 1 John 2:2 removes the term "propitiation" and translates the term as "atoning

sacrifice" (see also Romans 3:25; Hebrews 2:17; and 1 John 4:10). Propitiation has a different meaning from the general term sacrifice or atoning sacrifice. Likewise, the New International Version deleted many gender-specific details like "father," "son," "brother," and similar terms despite the clear text of the Bible. Furthermore, the word "saints" does not appear in the New International Version, but words like the the "Lord's people" appear in 1 Corinthians 14:33-34. Similarly, the word "behold" occurs over 200 times in the Greek New Testament, but the New International Version translates it only about 100 times. Also, consider 1 Kings 2:10: "Then David slept with his fathers and was buried in the city of David" (New American Standard Bible). The New International Version translates the verse with both dynamic equivalents and gender bias: "Then David rested with his ancestors and was buried in the city of David." Notice the removal of the gender term "fathers" and the entire idea of "slept" meaning death (compare Jesus using the phrase "fallen asleep" and meaning Lazarus had died (John 11:12-16, page 1677)).

5.4.1.2.3 **New Living Translation**. The New Living Translation also removes gender terms like "father" and opts for "gender-neutral" translations. Ignoring gender means the New Living Translation ignores verbal inspiration. For example, Proverbs 22:6 in the New Living Translation reads "Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it." Notice the gender neutral terms "children" and "they." The glaring problem arises that the original text used the term "child" and "he" (Proverbs 22:6, Page 1033). The New American Standard Bible translates the verse: "Train up a child in the way he should go, and even when he is old, he will not depart from it." The New Living Translation imposes commentary upon the original text and ignores verbal inspiration. The translators for the New Living Translation had a total disregard for verbal inspiration (the words matter). The translators for the New Living Translation substitute their own words and ideas for the words of God breathed out by Him.

Section Six

The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets Distinguished

6.1 Classes of Spiritual Gifts. Because words really matter, we must be careful to study the words used in the Bible. Paul used different Greek words to separate into three classes the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. He separated the groups with the word "another of a different kind" (hetero--"ἑτέρῳ") and distinguished between the gifts of the same group with the word "another of the same kind" (allo--"ἄλλῳ").

6.1.1 Group One (Verse 8)

Word of Wisdom (allo)

Word of Knowledge

6.1.2 Group Two (hetero) (Verse 9-10)

Faith (allo)

Healing (allo)

Miracles (allo)

Prophecy (allo)

Judgment of Spirits

6.1.3 Group Three (hetero) (Verse 10)

Tongues (allo)

Interpretation of Tongues

6.1.4 Special Revelation Gifts. At this point, we can see that Paul placed The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets into the list in 1 Corinthians 12 in addition to his description of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets in Ephesians 4:11,

page 1830 and his reference to The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets in Romans 12:6-8, page 1775 (where it stands first in the list). I gave some thought to separating the spiritual gift of prophecy from The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, but I decided they have much overlap. I leave for further study why this single gift is mentioned in three different passages; perhaps I am correct in distinguishing the spiritual gift of prophecy from The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. They may well have different functions. God used "The Prophets" and "The Apostles" to build the foundation of the church, but The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets and The Spiritual Gift of the Apostles may have changed or no longer be bestowed upon believers (Ephesians 2:20, page 1829—many arguments for cessation of certain spiritual gifts are built upon this verse, but those arguments are not air-tight to me). Even so, I will distinguish some aspects below. Both the spiritual gift of prophecy and The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets provide special revelation from God. Special revelation means that God has revealed something which would not be known through the study of creation, which also testifies to the glory of God. Based upon the grouping above, we can see that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets belongs to the second group of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12. The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets will always involve the prophet receiving direct revelation from God. In other studies, we have examined elsewhere The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom and The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge. Because The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets stands in a different group from The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom and The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets has a different scope than those other two gifts. It also functions differently in the church. All three gifts share the common element of special revelation from God, but the scope and function of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets has more in common with the other gifts in its class (Faith, Healing, Works of Powers, and Judgment of Spirits) than with the Revelatory Gifts (Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge). Likewise, the Tongues Gifts (The Spiritual Gift of Tongues and The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues) have more in common regarding their scope and function with each other than with the other classes of spiritual gifts.

6.1.5 The Relationship between the Spiritual Gifts of Prophecy, Knowledge and Wisdom. In 1 Corinthians 13:2, pages 1797-1798, Paul

wrote that if he had The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets and he knew all mysteries and all knowledge, but did not have love, he was nothing.

6.1.5.1 <u>The Scope and Function of the Gift of Prophecy</u>. The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets includes both the scope of The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom and the scope of The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge. God built the church upon the foundation of The Prophets and The Apostles, with Christ Himself as the corner stone (Ephesians 2:20, page 1829). The scope of The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom primarily includes the revelation of the mysteries of God. The scope of The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge includes the revelation of all matters previously revealed, but now authoritatively explained and applied. This application of the gifts provides the function of the spiritual gift within the church today (including, at times, ministry to the people outside the church through some spiritual gifts). Therefore, we know that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets in the New Testament included the revelation of mysteries (The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom) and the authoritative application of previous revelation (The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge). Apparently, The Prophets and The Apostles (or some of them) possessed The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. Please notice that God specifically used The Prophets and The Apostles to reveal the New Testament Mysteries (revelations in themselves—Ephesians 3:5, page 1829). Therefore, we may benefit from more careful study of the functions and scope of the spiritual gift of prophecy, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles and the relationship of those gifts to the New Testament Mysteries. I have spent time on other issues and tried to produce a limited introduction to spiritual gifts in this book.

6.1.5.2 <u>The Full Measure of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets</u>. Now notice that in 1 Corinthians 13:2, page 1798, Paul explained that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, taken to fullest measure, would allow him to understand all mysteries and all knowledge (compare to The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom (mysteries) and The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knoweldge). As we know, God used various prophets in the Old Testament to provide separate, although related, prophecies to different people at different times. Likewise, prophets in the New Testament delivered revelations at different times to different people, yet forming a cohesive whole for believers of all ages. So, a single person did not deliver the full measure of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, because God in His wisdom

delivered the message primarily through Jesus Christ, but also through the ministry of different men moved by the Holy Spirit who wrote the New Testament.

6.1.6 The Relationship between Prophecy and Faith. In Romans 12:6, page 1775, we see that Paul linked The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets with the proportion of faith. (The Greek phrase "εἴτε προφητείαν κατὰ τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως" provides insight into the meaning of "faith" in this context and its relationship to The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, as described in the text). Faith means that you have assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1, page 1882).

6.1.6.1 Shipwreck, Prophecy and Faith. Therefore, as Paul prophesied that not one soul would be lost in shipwreck, so he believed that God had told him the truth behind the prophecy. Paul proclaimed those words to a crew trapped in a storm and Paul believed God would fulfill that prophecy. Everyone would soon know whether he spoke the words of God or not. Because of his faith, Paul proclaimed the prophecy in the midst of the storm, with every life on board threatened with death (see Acts 27:1-44, pages 1753-1755.) Therefore, the prophet must be the first to believe the prophecy.

6.1.6.2 Jonah, Prophecy and Faith. Jonah, the Reluctant Evangelist of the Old Testament, also illustrated the link between prophecy and faith. In the Book of Jonah, Jonah received a call from God to preach repentance and salvation to the people of Nineveh. Jonah hated the people of Nineveh because it was the capital city of Assyria, the enemy that had destroyed Israel and killed many people of Israel. Jonah knew that if he preached salvation to those people, and they repented and turned to God, then God would certainly forgive them. Therefore, Jonah's hatred drove him away from God and away from Nineveh. But, God used a storm and a great sea animal to change Jonah's mind and send him to Nineveh. Jonah delivered the prophetic warning from God that the city would be destroyed in forty days unless that city repented. Jonah preached, the city repented, and God forgave the enemies of Israel. In dismay, Jonah witnessed the love, mercy and grace of God at work. Jonah had great faith in the prophecy and God Who gave the prophecy. Jonah also believed that God would forgive the repentant sinner who trusted God for salvation. Jonah had great faith in God, but a deep hatred for his enemies. Even so, God used Jonah as a preacher and a prophet. Although Jonah did not possess The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, he was

an Old Testament prophet and demonstrates the relationship of faith in the word of God and prophecy.

Section Seven

The Proper Use of Prophecy

in the Assembly

7.1 Only Two or Three Prophets Speak. Paul also outlined the details of the proper, public use of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. Only two or three prophets should prophesy during the meeting of the assembly.

7.2 Other Prophets Pass Judgment. As the prophets present their revelations, the other prophets would pass judgment ("οἱ ἄλλοι διακρινέτωσαν") upon the prophecies given. Interestingly, the word "others" ("ἄλλοι") means others of the same kind, so the meaning would be that other prophets (the same kind of gift) would pass judgment upon the prophet delivering the new prophecy. The same root word term for "discerning of spirits" ("διακρίσεις") referring to The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits underlies the judgment that others in the congregation render about the prophecy. Perhaps a person blessed with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits would also be helpful in determining the nature of the prophecy. Therefore, this limitation as to the number of prophecies and content of the prophecies was subject to the strict control of the church, and not just one prophet leading the entire group. Please note also that the prophets do not lose self-control and slip into ecstatic outbursts. Paul commanded that if another prophet who is seated received a revelation, then the first prophet must keep silent. Again, in some cases, the saint with The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets received the revelation during the meeting of the saints (1 Corinthians 14:29-33, page 1800). Paul essentially commanded order in the meetings, with the Holy Spirit leading the service. The same root word term for "judgment of spirits" ("διακρίσεις") referring to The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits underlies the judgment that others in the congregation render about the prophecy.

7.3 Keep Silent. If one prophet is speaking, and another prophet who is seated receives a revelation, the first prophet must stop speaking and yield

the floor to the new revelation. This procedure emphasized that even prophets may be silenced by new revelation (1 Corinthians 14:30, page 1800).

7.4 Taking Turns. Paul wanted all the prophets to know that all may prophesy one by one, but not all at the same time. Yet, to preserve decency and order in the congregation, the assembly should not be plagued with many voices all speaking at once. God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the assemblies of the saints (1 Corinthians 14:33, page 1800).

Section Eight

Evangelism and The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets

8.1 The Prophetic Ministry to Unbelievers. In 1 Corinthians, Paul developed carefully the doctrine of the spiritual gifts and their proper and orderly use in the church. As he revealed truth about The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, he contrasted The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets with the use of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. He indicated that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets empowered people to come to know Jesus Christ as Savior. We should not be surprised. Jesus used this same power during His incarnate ministry.

8.2 The Woman at the Well. As Jesus evangelized the Samaritan city of Sychar, Jesus began by speaking with a woman at Jacob's well, located near Sychar. He first asked her for a drink, which surprised her because Jews had no dealings with Samaritans. (John 4:9, page 1659.) Jesus then explained to her that, if she would ask Him, Jesus would give her a well of water springing up to eternal life (John 4:14, page 1659.) Jesus then asked her to go and call her husband. She replied: "I have no husband." Jesus then commended her for telling the truth, and then He revealed to her that she had had five husbands, and the one whom she had was not her husband. The woman then replied that she perceived Jesus was a prophet. The woman left her waterpot, went into the city and told everyone that Jesus had “told her all the things that I have done.” She said: "This is not the Christ, is it?" The city then went out to see Jesus. This event characterizes the way that Jesus used prophecy

to spread the Gospel. Jesus knew all things about this woman, and used that revelation to call her to account.

8.3 Declaring that God Is Among You. Paul also described the function of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets as convicting and calling people to account as the secrets of their hearts will be disclosed.

8.3.1 The Convicting Power of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. Paul described the convicting power of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets in 1 Corinthians 14:24. Paul used the word "convicted" ("ἐλέγχεται") which here means the reaction to the revelation of the secrets of the heart which have been revealed and they are not Godly. Just like the woman at the well, the revelation of immorality or sin brings conviction of sin, even secret sins lurking in the hearts of people.

8.3.2 The Calling To Account by The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. Paul also described The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets as calling people to account because of the revelation of the secrets of their hearts. Paul used the word "call to account" ("ἀνακρίνεται") meaning here that the secrets of the heart are judicially scrutinized by the believer exercising properly The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. Just like the woman at the well, after the secrets have been revealed, the believers call to account the unbeliever or ungifted.

8.3.3 The Worship of God after Conviction and Calling To Account. The proper use of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets reveals the secrets of people's hearts, so that they are convicted and called to account before the church. The disclosure of those secrets results in that person falling on his face and worshiping God, declaring that God is certainly among the people in that congregation. Notice here the revelatory character of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets operates on a personal level, with the intention to bring confession and conversion. Notice also that the person recognizes not only the power of the spiritual gift, but also the presence of God in that group of believers.

Section Nine

The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets and Edification, Exhortation, Consolation and Teaching

9.1 Speaking to Men. In 1 Corinthians 14:2, page 1798, Paul wrote that a believer who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, because he speaks mysteries. In contrast, the believer who prophesies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. We can examine more closely each of these three functions of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. Please recall that not everyone who edifies the church, not everyone who exhorts the church, not everyone who consoles the church, not everyone who teaches, and not everyone who preaches has The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. So, never be deceived when someone claims to be a prophet because they are speaking forth a teaching or exhorting the congregation. Without the supernatural element of perfectly truthful direct revelation from God, no prophecy has been made and The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets has not been used.

9.1.1 Edification. The term "edification" ("οἰκοδομὴν") means to build a structure, such as a home or a larger structure, like a tower. Throughout 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul emphasized the greater value of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets over The Spiritual Gift of Tongues (unless an interpreter was present). Paul stated the issue succinctly in 1 Corinthians 14:4, page 1798: "One who speaks in a tongue edifies himself; but one who prophesies edifies the church." Therefore, we know that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets edifies the entire church when used among the congregation. Jesus used the root word for "edify" to describe a king who set about to build a tower, but was unable to complete it (Luke 14:28-30, page 1630). In 1 Corinthians, the term "edification" means to build up believers in their faith (1 Corinthians 8:1, page 1791; 1 Corinthians 14:5, page 1798). A good example of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets providing edification of the church may be found in Revelation 22:1-5, pages 1940-1941, where John revealed that a river of the water of life will come from the throne of God and the Lamb of God, watering the tree of life, whose fruit brings healing of the nations. The curse will be lifted, the bond-servants of the Lamb will see His face and His

name will be on their foreheads, and God will illumine them, and they will reign forever and ever. Happy days await all believers.

9.1.2 Exhortation. The term "exhortation" ("παράκλησιν") has many uses in the New Testament. For a more thorough examination of the different ways the root word for "exhortation" was used in the New Testament, please see the Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter. In brief, that gift means that a person encourages, confronts, comforts, and takes many actions to strengthen other believers. In 1 Corinthians 1:10, Paul wrote: "Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment." This text illustrates how exhortation urges believers to move toward the same goal: "all agree and there be no divisions" by means of "becoming complete in the same mind and in the same judgment." Exhortation means that one believer takes affirmative action to help another believer using words and actions to motivate them and guide them towards spiritual maturity. A good example of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets forming the basis for exhortation comes from 2 Peter 3:10-13, page 1903. In that passage, Peter described the the total destruction of the world with intense heat and the earth and its works will be burned up. Then Peter exhorted: "Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and Godliness, looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat."

9.1.3 Consolation. The term "consolation" ("παραμυθίαν") means to provide comfort during times of adversity. For example, Paul wrote about the consolation of love in Christ (Philippians 2:1, page 1836). At times of death, heartache, and grave problems, the consolation provided by proper ministry of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets produced great results. For example, in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, page 1849-1850, Paul comforted the Thessalonian believers with his prophecy concerning the future gathering of all believers in the clouds with Jesus at a time of resurrection. Paul did not want the believers to grieve as the Gentiles who have no hope, but rather use the prophecy to comfort one another. See also Revelation 21:1-4, page 1939, concerning the new Jerusalem. In that passage, the first heaven and the first earth have passed away. The holy city, the new Jerusalem descends, and God declared that His tabernacle is now among men, and God Himself will be among them. God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; and there will

be no longer any mourning, or crying, or pain; the first things have passed away.

9.2 Teaching. Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:31 also showed that the believers "may learn" ("μανθάνωσιν") and "may be exhorted" ("παρακαλῶνται") through the proper administration of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. If the prophets will speak one by one, and not several at once, then the revelation of each one will first be approved or not by other prophets, and then all the believers may learn and be exhorted. So, we know that revelations were given that believers may learn more about God during meetings of believers.

Section Ten

Desiring Greater Gifts

10.1 Desire that You May Prophesy. Paul urged the believers at Corinth to pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that they may prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:1-5, page 1798). Of course, Paul directed this revelation to the entire body of believers using the plural term. He had also revealed that the Holy Spirit bestows spiritual gifts upon individual believers, at the sole prerogative of God (1 Corinthians 12:11, page 1796). Paul meant that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets edifies the entire church, while The Spiritual Gift of Tongues does not edify anyone except the speaker, unless an interpreter is present.

10.2 The Superiority of Prophecy. Paul also promoted the general superiority of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets over The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. Generally, Paul taught that tongues only edify the speaker, but prophecy edifies the entire church. While Paul wished that everyone spoke with tongues, he wished even more that everyone would prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:4-5, page 1798).

Section Eleven

Prophecy as a Sign Gift

11.1 Prophecy a Sign to Believers. In contrast to The Spiritual Gift of Tongues which functioned as a sign to unbelievers (see Acts 2 and the evangelistic preaching of Peter to the masses concerned about drunken behavior), Paul distinguished The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets as a sign to believers. As above, we have seen how The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets may provide help in evangelism (see John 4--the woman at the well). In 1 Corinthians 14:22, page 1799, Paul emphasized that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets stands as a sign to believers. In the New Testament, a sign ("σημεῖον") often means testimony from God regarding spiritual truth (Hebrews 2:4, page 1870). The sign identifies the revelation of God regarding a person, place or thing. Anti-Christ will also use all power, signs and false wonders (2 Thessalonians 2:9, page 1852).

11.2 Prophecy as a Revelation within the Church. In 1 Corinthians 14:26, Paul listed a variety of ministries inside the assembly. He mentioned that one believer may have a psalm, another a teaching, another a revelation, another a tongue, and another an interpretation. He also commanded that all things be done for edification. We have seen above that one ministry of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets serves to disclose the secrets within hearts, and that revelation takes place within the congregation. Notice here that the believer with the revelation is probably the believer exercising The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets.

11.3 Prophecy: Sign to Believers. In the New Testament, a sign ("σημεῖον") often means testimony from God regarding spiritual truth (Hebrews 2:4, page 1870). The sign identifies the revelation of God regarding a person, place or thing. Anti-Christ will also use all power, signs and false wonders (2 Thessalonians 2:9, page 1852). Therefore, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets functions primarily as a sign to believers, in contrast The Spiritual Gift of Tongues which functions as a sign to unbelievers. Frequently, a sign identifies the prophet as truly speaking from God (2 Corinthians 12:12, page 1817), although false prophets also have the ability to perform signs and wonders (Matthew 24:24, page 1545).

Section Twelve

Some Functions of Prophecy

12.1 Selection for Ministry. In Acts 13:1, page 1724, a group of prophets were gathered together at Antioch. While the group was ministering to the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit directed that they set apart Barnabas and Saul for the work to which the Holy Spirit had called them. This event marks the ministry of the Holy Spirit providing specific guidance through The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets to a group for ministry and the setting apart of men for a particular ministry.

12.2 Direction for Ministry. In Acts 16, the Holy Spirit forbade Paul and his ministry team from speaking the word in Asia (Roman province), and they were not allowed to speak in Mysia and Bithynia (Acts 16:6-7, page 1731). In a vision, Paul received direction to go to Macedonia (compare Deuteronomy 12:7, page 237; Joel 2:28, page 1432). So, we see the Holy Spirit using The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets to direct believers in ministry, both positively and negatively.

12.3 Revelation of Sin. In Acts 5:1, page 1707, we meet a man named Ananias and Sapphira, his wife. Peter exercised The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets in exposing hidden sins and lying to the Holy Spirit. In the early church, believers would often sell their property and deliver the proceeds of sale to the feet of the apostles, so that the needs of all the believers could be met by the proper administration of those funds. Ananias came before Peter and laid money before the apostles' feet. Peter then prophesied several related points: (a) satan had filled the heart of Ananias to lie to the Holy Spirit; and (b) Ananias had kept back part of the purchase price; and (c) Ananias had lied to God, and not men (Acts 5:1-4, page 1797). Peter made it plain that Ananias had no duty to give all the purchase price, but Ananias lied by keeping back part of the purchase price. As a result of that lie to the Holy Spirit, Ananias heard the prophecy and fell down dead. After about three hours, Sapphira came in, not knowing what happened to her husband Ananias. She had full knowledge of the lies of Ananias (Acts 5:2, page 1797). Peter then prophesied to Sapphira: (a) you have agreed together with Ananias to put the Spirit of the Lord to the test; and (b) the feet of those who buried your husband will carry you out (Acts 5:7-10, page 1707). Sapphira also died immediately. Great fear came upon all the church and over all who heard about these things. The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets functioned as a sign to believers.

12.4 Revelation of Famine. Agabus also revealed through the Holy Spirit that a great famine would come over all the world and it took place during the reign of Claudius. As a result of that prophecy, the disciples in Antioch made a contribution to the believers living in Judea and commissioned Barnabas and Saul to deliver the gift to the elders in Judea.

Section Thirteen

The Terms of the

Spiritual Gift of Prophecy

13.1 Not All Are Prophets. Paul indicated that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets would be limited in time. He stated plainly that not all believers have The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets (1 Corinthians 12:29, page 1797: "All are not prophets, are they?").

13.2 Prophecy Shall Be Done Away. While love never fails, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets shall be done away ("εἴτε δὲ προφητεῖαι, καταργηθήσονται"), just as tongues shall cease ("εἴτε γλῶσσαι, παύσονται") and knowledge will be done away ("εἴτε γνῶσις, καταργηθήσεται"). Notice that both The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets and The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge shall be done away. Paul used the same Greek root word in the same tense and the passive voice to describe action of those two gifts being done away. Paul does not emphasize who did away with those two gifts, but he does highlight that they will be done away. Paul, in his epistles, used the root word "to nullify or abolish" in different ways, but Paul used the same root word to describe God acting when the end ("τέλος") comes, and then God will abolish ("καταργήσῃ") all rule and all authority and all power (1 Corinthians 15:24, page 1801). In passing, please note in 1 Corinthians 13:8, the terms “prophecies” (“προφητεῖαι”) and “tongues” (“γλῶσσαι”) are in the plural, and they shall be done away, while knowledge (“γνῶσις”) is in the singular, and it shall be done away. The significance appears to be that prophecies and tongues shall cease (revelatory gifts), and knowledge shall end (revelatory gift). The Spiritual Gift of Tongues and The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues apparently shall cease by their own operations, because of the middle voice here (“παύσονται”). Therefore, we may see that prophecy and knowledge terminate differently than tongues. For all of these

spiritual gifts, God has imposed a time limitation upon them (1 Corinthians 13:8, page 1798). That terminaton time appears to be the time when the perfect comes, which in this context appears tied to when believers know fully and are fully known in 1 Corinthians 13:12, page 1798, which speaks of the day when believers will see face to face with Jesus, yet in the future. We know for sure that prophecy shall cease in the land of Israel just before the Messiah appears to reign upon earth (Zechariah 13:1-9, pages 1491-1492).

13.3 Prophesy in Part. The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets only functioned in part, meaning, that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets never revealed all knowledge or all things (1 Corinthians 13:9, page 1798). So, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets was never designed by God to provide all knowledge and never intended to provide a complete prophetic picture of all things. To be sure, we do have a complete revelation of all things we need for life and Godliness (2 Peter 1:2-4, page 1900).

13.4 The Perfect Comes. When the perfect ("τέλειον") comes, the partial shall be done away ("καταργηθήσεται"). The meaning of this verse has been widely disputed, but in this context it certainly signals a limitation upon The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, so that it fulfills only a temporary role in the life of the body of Christ.

Hallmarks of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets

Prophets: Understanding the Spiritual Gifts. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets provides revelation from God. Every prophet and every prophecy must be tested against the Scriptures. Although it seems likely that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets may not be operative today, if it is operative in some form, then the following hallmarks apply.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gifts of the Prophets and then see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers receive direct revelation from God.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers provide prophecies without error.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers speak revelations from God and welcome testing of their prophecies agains the Scriptures.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers speak prophecies according the pattern provided by the Scriptures as to time, place and order of speakers.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers speak prophecies as a sign to other believers.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers speak to people for edification and exhortation and consolation.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers may provide directions to believers.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers may reveal sin.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers may reveal impending famines.

♦ Prophecy-gifted believers speak to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.

Conclusion

All prophets should be tested to see if they are from God and speak direct revelations from God, without any error. The Scriptures rest upon verbal and plenary inspiration. Therefore, they provide a perfect means to test the words of a prophet. God will not contradict the Scriptures. If people distort the Scriptures, they do so to their own destruction. Within the local assembly, believers should earnestly desire spiritual gifts, that they may prophesy. The believer exercising The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, a sign to believers, may reveal the secrets of the hearts of people, bringing conviction leading to salvation. The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets also provides edification, exhortation and consolation and teaching. Selection for ministry and direction for ministry may be provided through The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. Not all believers are prophets and prophecy shall be done away

with when the perfect comes. Until then, we should not despise prophetic utterances, but examine everything carefully, holding on to that which is good.

3

The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists

Class of Gift: Equipping

Ephesians 4:11, Page 1830

"Some as the evangelists"

Section One

Introduction

1.1 Every Born-Again Christian Has at Least One Spiritual Gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, page 1796). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of ministries ("διακονιῶν"), with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Therefore, if you have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists, that single gift may result in a variety of ministries and spiritual effects. Although not all believers may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists, they should all do the work of an evangelist, in proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people God sets before them (2 Timothy 4:5, page 1864; Matthew 28:18-20).

1.2 Meaning of the Term "Evangelists." The term used to describe The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists in Ephesians 4:11, page 1830 means a believer with a special ability to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Evangelist performs specific services to the church. Many passages in the New Testament describe the work of evangelists. We will focus primarily upon the use of The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

1.3 Evangelism and the Spiritual Gifts. All believers must know and use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God. All believers, not just the pastors

and church leaders, perform the work of evangelism. While all believers must perform the work of evangelism, only some believers have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists, bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon some, but not all, believers as a gift of grace which works according to His power (Ephesians 3:7, page 1829).

1.4 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Evangelist." The Greek term translated as "evangelists" ("εὐαγγελιστάς") has diverse applications in the New Testament. As you read through these varying uses of the term "evangelist" and related words, please keep in mind that I interpret these passages below as examples, on the one hand, of spiritual activities all believers will do at times; but, on the other hand, the saint with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists in the forms described below will have a special gift from God to spread the good news of Jesus Christ. Let us explore some of those uses to gain insight into the different ways God gifts people to serve in His name and in His ministry to the Body of Christ. We will see below that The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists involves different major areas of ministry. We will look at them one at a time.

1.5 The Gospel Defined. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-3, page 1800, Paul described the Gospel that he preached and how it changed the lives of the Corinthian believers. Paul carefully explained the steps involved in the work of the evangelist. Paul described certain articles of faith as of first importance.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, as defined in the Scriptures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

1.5.1 Christ Died for Our Sins. The Gospel centers upon Jesus Christ, and His death for our sins (1 Corinthians 15:3, page 1800). Paul taught that the truth of Gospel was according to the Scriptures, which contained prophecies, contemporaneous records, and historical accounts of the life, death, burial and ascension of Jesus of Nazareth, the Messiah of Israel, and Savior of the world.

1.5.2 Christ Was Raised. The death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ support the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Without a resurrection from the dead, we are still in our sins and of all men the most to be pitied (1 Corinthians 15:4-19, pages 1800-1801).

1.6 <u>The Gospel Preached</u>. Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ (Romans 10:17, page 1773). But hearing requires preachers to go and spread the good news. They can only go if they are sent. So, people can only be converted and call upon the name of the Lord if they have a preacher sent to them, who will faithfully proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Romans 10:5-17, pages 1772-1773). Not everyone hearing will believe, but those appointed by God to salvation will always believe (Acts 13:48, page 1727). Other people hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but repudiate it and judge themselves unworthy of eternal life (Acts 13:46, page 1726).

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you understand that some people will believe to salvation and some people will not, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

1.7 <u>The Gospel Received</u>. Jesus proclaimed that as many as "received" ("ἔλαβον") Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name," (John 1:13, page 1653). Hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ must be united with faith in those who heard (Hebrews 4:2, page 1872). So, merely hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ profits nothing. In fact, if you hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and do not receive Jesus as Savior, then your heart may become hardened, causing you to think lightly of the kindness and patience of God, Who is not wiling for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance and eternal life (Hebrews 4:7, page 1873; Romans 2:4-5, page 1760; 2 Peter 3:9, page 1903). The Gospel of Jesus Christ must be received for what it really is, the word of God, and not the word of men, so that it will perform its work in the believers (1 Thessalonians 2:13, page 1847).

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and it performs its work in the believers, so that they receive it for what is really is, and become saved from their sins, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

1.8 <u>The Gospel Stand</u>. Paul also described believers as people who "stand" ("ἑστήκατε") in the Gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 15:1, page 1800; see also 2 Corinthians 1:24, page 1805). Likewise, because of our faith we stand in the grace of God, and exult in the hope of the glory of God (Romans 5:2, page 1764). Believers must put on the full armor of God to stand firm against the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:11, page 1834). So, believers who stand

firm in their faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ enjoy the blessings of God throughout their lifetime.

Identification. If you have a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you stand firm in your faith, and exult in the hope of the glory of God, while wearing the armor of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

1.9 The Gospel of Salvation. Salvation comes only through receiving Jesus Christ as Savior. No other name under heaven has been given among men by which we must be saved. There is no salvation in anyone else (Acts 4:12, page 1705). Jesus alone is the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through Jesus Christ (John 14:6, page 1684). Jesus alone has the words of eternal life (John 6:68, page 1667). Paul received the Gospel of Jesus Christ by direct revelation from Jesus Christ, and not from men (Galatians 1:11-13, pages 1819-1820). This Gospel of Jesus Christ, preached by the apostles and others, is the word of the LORD which endures forever (1 Peter 1:25, page 1895; John 6:68, page 1667).

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the only Savior for all people, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Two

The Ministry of The Evangelists: Foundations

2.1 Evangelist: The Scope of the Ministries. The single Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may give rise to a variety of ministries. In the New Testament, we see the many people sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a variety of different ways. From those examples, we can learn about some of the ministries people may have as they employ The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists bestowed upon them by the Holy Spirit.

2.2 Jesus the Evangelist. Jesus came as a leader of Judah, a Ruler Who will shepherd Israel, the people of God (Matthew 2:6, page 1502). Jesus fulfilled the prophesy of Isaiah the prophet: "the Spirit of the LORD is upon

Me, because He anointed Me to preach the Gospel to the poor" (Luke 4:18, page 1602). Jesus proclaimed the Gospel of Kingdom and presented Himself as the only Savior, attested by God through His words and works, proven by the Scriptures and the direct testimony of God the Father and the Holy Spirit and John the Baptist, and with the proof to all men by His resurrection (John 5:33-47, pages 1663-1664; Matthew 4:13-17, page 1504; Matthew 17:5, page 1531; Acts 17:31, page 1735). Jesus promised to build His church, and He does so one believer at a time by individual faith--even when multitudes receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ together (Matthew 16:18, page 1530; Acts 2:41, page 1703) A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may often display the compassion of Jesus Christ, and present the good news of salvation to all kinds of people, in all kinds of places.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus with compassion and count upon Jesus to build His church, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

2.3 Other New Testament Evangelists. Jesus taught His disciples to beseech the Lord of the Harvest to send forth workers into the harvest, for the fields were white for harvest (John 4:35, page 1660). Jesus sent forth the twelve apostles as His eyewitnesses of His life and resurrection (Matthew 28:17-20, page 1557; Acts 1:21-22, page 1700; Acts 10:37, page 1720; 2 Peter 1:16, page 1901). Some of His apostles had very unsavory reputations before they received salvation (e.g., Paul the persecutor of the church--Galatians 1:23, page 1820). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have come from a very unGodly background, but now has been saved, cleansed and commissioned by God to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, having been rescued from a past of opposition to God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

2.3.1 Peter the Evangelist. After the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples, just as Jesus promised, Peter and others began to preach. Jesus had described a geographical expansion of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: begin in Jerusalem, then Judea, then Samaria, and then to the remotest part of the earth (Acts 1:8, page 1699). At Pentecost, Peter preached about Jesus and His crucifixion. When the crowd heard the message, they wanted to know what they must do. Peter then explained repentance, salvation, and baptism to them and thousands believed (Acts 2:14-42, pages 1701-1703). Even when

faced with opposition from the religious leaders, Peter continued to preach about salvation (Acts 3:11-26, page 1703-1704; see also Acts 6:7, page 1709). The religious leaders arrested Peter and John, but they continued teaching and preaching (Acts 4:1-31, pages 1705-1706). Peter and John also preached salvation in Samaria (Acts 8:14-25, pages 1714-1715). Later, Peter also preached salvation through the entire regions of Caesarea, Lydda and Joppa (Acts 9:32-10:48, pages 1717-1721).The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people who are hated by other groups of people. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may also travel into new regions, all over the world, to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ as you travel to new regions, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

2.3.2 Stephen the Evangelist. Stephen, one of the seven chosen to be in charge of the ministry of feeding the widows, being full of grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people (Acts 6:8, pages 1709-1710). With great wisdom Stephen proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Jews in Jerusalem and sealed his message by being stoned to death (Acts 6:8-7:60, pages 1709-1713). A great persecution of the church in Jerusalem arose upon the death of Stephen, causing the scattering of many believers, who preached the Gospel to many places, including Phoenicia, Cyprus and Antioch (Acts 8:1, page 1713; Acts 11:19, page 1722). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may give that believer's life as a martyr because that believer did not shrink back from sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to hostile crowds.

Identification. If you have a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you do not shrink back from opposition, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

2.3.3 The Woman at the Well. Jesus met a Samaritan woman at the well of Sychar and presented the Gospel to her. He declared Himself to be the Messiah of Israel. Although the woman at the well did not have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists, she does present a very good example of reaching an entire city through the ministry of one person speaking to an entire city. This woman apparently had a poor reputation in town, because she had five husbands, and the man she was with at the time was not her husband (John

4:7-45, page 1659-1661). Yet, Jesus chose her to be His messenger to Sychar. Today, Jesus chooses people with highly blemished reputations to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to entire cities. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may shortly after salvation begin sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ to an entire city.

Identification. If you have a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to your family, to your releatives and to your entire city, and many people are born-again, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

2.3.3.1 The Ministry of Sowing. Jesus looked at the people of Sychar coming to Him after the woman at the well went and told that city about Jesus. As they came out to meet Him, Jesus taught His disciples that "One sows and another reaps" (John 4:37, page 1660). Jesus meant that He and others had sown the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Sychar, and now some of those people were coming to meet Jesus and receive Him as Messiah and Savior. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have the ministry of sowing the Gospel of Jesus Christ among people so that other believers may reap the fruit of that sowing later.

Identification. If you have a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and reaping where others have sown the Gospel of Jesus Christ before your, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

2.3.3.2 The Ministry of Reaping. Jesus told the disciples they were reaping what they had not sown. Even so, the sower and the reaper would rejoice together over the harvest of souls. Jesus meant that His disciples would harvest the fruit sown by the woman at the well when she went into Sychar and told the people about Jesus (John 4:31-28, page 1660; see also 1 Corinthians 3:6, page 1784).

Identification. If you have a ministry of reaping souls who believed because another believer has sown the Gospel of Jesus Christ earlier among those people, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

2.3.4 The Gadarene Demoniac. Jesus met a Gadarene man possessed by a legion of demons. After speaking to that man, Jesus cast out the demons and the man returned to his sound mind and sat with Jesus. As Jesus got into the boat to leave, the Gadarene man sought to join Jesus in the boat. Jesus

denied the man, saying: "Return to your house and describe what great things God has done for you." So he left and proclaimed throughout the whole city what great things Jesus had done for him (Luke 8:26-39, page 1814). Although the Gadarene man did not possess The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists, Jesus chose this man who broke chains and lived in tombs to receive the gift of eternal life from Jesus, and then proclaim the marvelous grace and love of Jesus to the entire city. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have to confront demons as part of the ministry of evangelism. Furthermore, a believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have been demon possessed previously, but now saved and controlled by the Holy Spirit; that believer may spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people who knew the evangelist as a demon-possessed person.

Identification. If you have a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you once were notoriously demon-possessed yourself and wonderfully delivered by God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

2.3.5 Philip the Evangelist. Philip apparently became known as "the evangelist" because of his preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 21:8, page 1742). Philip went through Samaria, proclaiming Christ to them. He left Judea in a wave of persecution, beginning with the death of Steven (Acts 8:4-5, page 1714). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may go to new places, driven forward by persecution behind them. Upon arrival they begin proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people previously separated by religious cultures and practices.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to different religious groups and different cultures, even where different groups oppose one another, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Three

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

New Fields

3.1 Christ Not Already Named. Paul determined to go where Christ was not already named (Romans 15:20, page 1779). Paul loved to be the first to reach new places and people with the Gospel of Jesus Christ (2 Corinthians 10:14-16, pages 1814-1815). Likewise, only through the word of Christ can a person come to saving faith. A preacher must be sent to unbelievers, who faithfully proclaim the word of Christ, because faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ (Romans 10:15, page 1773). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have a ministry of going to places where Christ has not been preached before.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to new places, where Christ has not yet been named there, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

3.2 Preaching Everywhere. Jesus first sent out His disciples to preach the gospel throughout the villages, and to preach the gospel everywhere (Luke 9:6, page 1615; see the limitation in Matthew 10:5, page 1516--no Gentiles, no Samaritans, only the lost sheep of the house of Israel). During the Tribulation period, God will also reveal an angel, having an eternal gospel to preach to those who live on the earth, and to every nation and tribe and tongue and people (Revelation 14:6, page 1930; compare Luke 1:19, page 1594). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have the ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ everywhere.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ everywhere you go, as a way of life, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Four

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

No Cleverness of Speech

4.1 The Cross Not Made Void. Paul did not make the cross void by preaching with cleverness of speech (1 Corinthians 1:17, page 1782). Paul was determined to know nothing except Christ and Him crucified among the new people hearing the Gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 2:2, page 1783). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have the ministry of preaching Christ and Him crucified, while avoiding cleverness of speech.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, being sure to present Christ and Him crucified as the sole emphasis of your message, and you avoid cleverness of speech, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

4.2 No Persuasive Words of Wisdom. Paul also refused to preach with persuasive words of wisdom like the Greek philosophers, but he preached in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that the new believer's faith would rest not upon the wisdom of men, but upon the power of God (1 Corinthians 2:4-5, page 1783; compare men "forcing" their way into the kingdom of God--Luke 16:16, page 1633). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists will present the Gospel of Jesus Christ in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that the believer's faith would rest not upon the wisdom of men, but upon the power of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in demonstration of the Holy Spirit and of power, so that the new believer’s faith would not rest upon the wisdom of men, but upon the power of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Five

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Not a Contrary Gospel

5.1 The Tradition Paul preached the Gospel which he received as a revelation directly from Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:11-12, pages 1819-1820). The substance of the gospel truly matters. False teachers will come and preach a gospel contrary to the gospel preached by Paul (Galatians 1:6-10, page 1819; see also Acts 13:32, page 1726). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists will never preach a gospel contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ described in the Bible.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and not a contrary gospel (which is no gospel at all), then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

5.2 Entrusted To Preach the Gospel. After Paul returned from his first missionary journey, Paul went up to Jerusalem to confer with the apostles. He confirmed with them that he was preaching the correct Gospel. Jesus had entrusted a ministry of evangelism to Paul for the Gentiles, just as Peter was the evangelist to the Jews (Galatians 2:7-10, pages 1821-1822; Ephesians 3:8, page 1829). A believer with Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have a ministry to a particular group of people entrusted to that believer by God.

Identification. If you have a ministry entrusted you by God of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a particular group of people, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Six

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Joyful News

6.1 Joy in Heaven. Jesus taught that there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety nine righteous persons who need no repentance (Luke 15:7, page 1631). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists will bring good news, causing heaven to rejoice over the sinner who repents.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, knowing that heaven rejoices over the sinner who repents, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

6.2 Joy on Earth. At Pentecost, Peter preached a sermon built upon the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the filling of the Holy Spirit. Peter proclaimed salvation by faith alone. As a result of their salvation, the people devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer (Acts 2:42, page 1703). They also took their meals together with gladness and sincerity of heart (Acts 2:46, page 1703). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists also brings joy on earth to the believers who have been born again and know the joy of sins forgiven, fellowship with God, and fellowship with other believers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, knowing that salvation by faith alone brings the joy of forgivenss of sins, fellowship with God, and fellowship with other belivers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Seven

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Kept Right On

7.1 Suffering Shame. The apostles rejoiced because God had considered them worthy to suffer shame for His name (Acts 5:41, page 1709). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may rejoice when that believer suffers shame for the name of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you rejoice when you suffer shame for the name of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

7.2 Non-Stop. The apostles also kept on preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ even after they were ordered to stop by the Jewish religious council (Acts 5:40-42, page 1709). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may keep on sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, even when ordered not to by religious authorities.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, even after you have been ordered by religious authorities to cease, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Eight

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

The Waves of Persecution

8.1 The Growth of Persecution. On the day that some Jews stoned Stephen, a great persecution arose against the church in Jerusalem (Acts 8:1, page 1713). As a result of that persecution, many believers scattered and began preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ as they fled to new places far

removed from Jerusalem. For example, in Antioch, some believers began sharing their faith with both Jews and Gentiles. The Gentiles believed in great numbers (Acts 11:20-21, page 1722). God blessed the believers at Antioch and Paul and Barnabas ministered there and went out from there on their first missionary journey. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may ride a wave of persecution and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ, even when fleeing persecution.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, while riding a wave of persecution as you flee persecution, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

8.2 The Expansion. As a result of continued persecution, believers began preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to many places throughout Asia Minor and some islands in the Mediterranean Sea (see Acts 14:5-7, page 1727). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may spread the good news to new places, pushed forward by continuing waves of persecution, using a particular place like Antioch as a home base (Acts 13:1-4, page 1724).

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you establish a home base for evangelism, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Nine

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Only Men

9.1 Never Gods. At times, some people hearing a believer spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ may jump to the conclusion that the evangelist is a god (Acts 14:8-18, pages 1727-1728). For example, at Lystra some people identified Barnabas and Paul as the Roman gods Zeus and Hermes. Paul responded that he and Barnabas were just men of the same nature as everyone else and were preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them so that they would turn from those vain things to the living God and receive salvation (Acts 14:13-18, page 1728). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may encounter people who call them a god, but the evangelist must always deny

such claims and continue to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to those people.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you never present yourself as a god and you oppose everyone who calls you a god, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

9.2 Just a Man. Cornelius received an angelic communication to meet Peter. When Cornelius met Peter, Cornelius fell at the feet of Peter and worshiped Peter. Peter replied, "Stand up; I too am just a man" (Acts 10:24-25, page 1719). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may be spiritually directed to meet particular people, who have also been spiritually directed to that same meeting. At times, people may try to worship the believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists. Such worship should be met with a reminder that the evangelist too is just a man.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and God directs you to meet people drawn to that meeting to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Ten

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Ministry Teams

10.1 Jesus and His Teams. Jesus sent out His disciples in ministry teams (Matthew 10:1-11:1, pages 1516-1518; Luke 10:1-24, pages 1618-1619). Jesus instructed them to use their authority to cast out unclean spirits, to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness. They were to preach that the kingdom of heaven is at hand and to prepare for the visit of Jesus in Person (Matthew 10:7, page 1516; Luke 10:1, page 1618). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may serve as part of a ministry team, preparing the way for others to follow, or blazing new trails to plant new churches.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you serve on a ministry team preparing the way for others to follow, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

10.2 The Later New Testament Missionaries. Likewise, the Holy Spirit selected Paul and Barnabas to go on the first missionary journey from Antioch (Acts 13:1-3, page 1724). God also called other people to join ministry teams in various capacities (e.g., John Mark--Acts 16:37, page 1731; Timothy and Erastus, Acts 19:22, page 1738; Peter and John, Acts 8:14, page 1714). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may be called into a ministry team with other believers. That team may have a variety of spiritual gifts present on the same team (Acts 15:35, page 1730; Luke 8:1-2 provides an example of the vital ministries of some women; Acts 9:36, page 1718).

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ as part of a ministry team of men and women with a variety of spiritual gifts, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Eleven

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Compulsion

11.1 Compulsion. Paul wrote that he preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ "under compulsion" (1 Corinthians 9:16, page 1792). Paul explained that if he preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ voluntarily, then he would have a reward; if against his will, then he had a stewardship entrusted to him (1 Corinthians 9:17, page 1792). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists feels a sense of obligation to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you feel a sense of obligation to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

11.2 Woe Is Me. One way or the other, Paul must act to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul summed up the matter: "for woe is me if I do not preach the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:16, page 1792). A believer with The Spiritual Gift

of The Evangelists may be under compulsion to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and to do so voluntarily for eternal rewards, or otherwise because a stewardship has been entrusted to that believer.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you do so voluntarily for eternal rewards, or because God entrusted a stewardship to you, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Twelve

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Not Partial to Any

12.1 Jesus: Not Partial to Any. Even the enemies of Jesus acknowledged that He was not partial to any (Luke 20:21, page 1641). He ministered to a Samaritan woman (John 4:9, page 1659) and a Syrophonecian woman (Mark 7:24-30, pages 1571-1572). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may share the Gospel of Jesus Christ without regard to ethnic or social boundaries.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ without regard to ethnic or social boundaries, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

12.2 Philip Preaching. Philip preached in Samaria and people believed the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. Jesus had previously forbidden His disicples to preach in any city of Samaria (Matthew 10:5, page 1516). After the Holy Spirit came upon the church in Acts 2 and filled them, it was then time for the witnesses of Jesus to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ (see Acts 1:8, page 1699). Philip also preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of Candace, queen of the people of Ethiopia (Acts 8:25-40, pages 1715-1716). Philip was not partial to any, but preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Samaritans and others (Acts 8:4, page 1714; Peter and John also began preaching to many Samaritan villages--Acts 8:14-25, pages 1714-1715). A believer with The

Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people from all over the world, even as they may meet in desert places.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people from all over the world, and you meet some of them in desert places, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

12.3 Apostolic Preaching. Peter and John brought healing in the name of Jesus Christ to a beggar sitting at the Gate Beautiful (Acts 3:1-10, page 1703). Paul and Barnabas preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Sergius Paulus, a proconsul of Rome and a man of intelligence (Acts 13:7, page 1724). After certain Jews deemed themselves unworthy of eternal life, some apostles began preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles (Acts 13:46, page 1726; Acts 14:21, page 1728; Galatians 1:16, page 1820). Like Jesus before them, the apostles also preached the Gospel to the poor (Matthew 11:5, page 1518; Luke 7:22, page 1610; Galatians 2:10, page 1821). Paul also preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to governors (Felix and Festus--Acts 24:1-Acts 25:12, page 1750) and to King Agrippa (Acts 25:23-Acts 26:32, page 1753; see Acts 9:15-16, page 1716; Matthew 10:16-20, page 1516). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may be called to preach the Gospel to the poor, to the intelligent, to the powerful, to crowds, to Gentiles or to Jews; it makes no difference to the evangelist.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the poor, to the intelligent, to the powerful, to crowds, to Gentiles and to Jews, without partiality, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Thirteen

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Holy Spirit Filled

13.1 The Holy Spirit and Evangelism. The Spirit of the LORD was upon Jesus to proclaim the Gospel to the poor (Luke 4:18, page 1602; Isaiah 61:1, page 1167). Jesus proclaimed that Gospel inside and outside of Israel (Tyre and Sidon), to Jews and Gentiles. Even before Jesus was born of Mary the

virgin, prophets longed to know what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow. God revealed to them they were not serving themselves, but believers, who would later receive the preaching of the gospel by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven (1 Peter 1:11-12, Page 1894). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may be filled with the Holy Spirit for the specific purpose of presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ at a specific time and place. We can look at a few examples below.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ while filled with the Holy Spirit for the specific purpose of presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

13.2 Peter at Pentecost. When the Holy Spirit filled the apostles at Pentecost, then Peter filled with the Holy Spirit began proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the multitude (Acts 2:4, page 1700; Acts 2:14-42, page 1701-1702). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may know from the Holy Spirit working within that believer to start preaching to a group at just the opportune moment.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and the Holy Spirit works within you to begin preaching to a particular group at just the right time, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

13.3 Stephen. Stephen, the martyr, was filled with the Holy Spirit, faith, grace and power. The Holy Spirit used Stephen to work great signs among the people (Acts 6:5, page 1709; Acts 6:8, pages 1709-1710). His opponents were unable to cope with the wisdom and the Spirit with which he was speaking (Acts 7:10, page 1710). After giving his defense of the faith and presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the high priest of Israel, being full of the Holy Spirit, he gazed intently into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God. The crowd listening to him stoned him to death (Acts 7:59-60, page 1713). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may speak so that opponents cannot cope with the Spirit and the wisdom they bring, as they share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and opponents are unable to cope with the Spirit and the wisdom

working through you, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Fourteen

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Specific Area

14.1 The Ministry of Jesus. Jesus declared that He must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities of Israel (and beyond), for He was sent for that purpose (Luke 4:43, page 1604; Mark 1:38, page 1559). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have a ministry to a specific geographical area, nation, ethnic group or other specific call.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and God calls you to a specific geographical area, nation, ethnic group or other specific ministry opportunity, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

14.2 The Macedonian Vision. As Paul sat in Troas, the Holy Spirit prohibited Paul and the missionary team from speaking the word in Asia. The Holy Spirit also prohibited them from speaking in Mysia and Bithynia (Acts 16:6-8, page 1731). A man of Macedonia appeared to Paul in a vision standing and appealing for help. Paul concluded that God had called them to go and preach the Gospel to the Macedonians (Acts 16:10, page 1731; see also Romans 1:15, page 1758 and the Damascus ministry of Acts 9:19-30, page 1717). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have the ministry in one place closed, so that God can call the evangelist into another geographic area where the Holy Spirit has prepared hearts to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and moving to another geographical area after one place has closed, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Fifteen

The Ministry of The Evangelists: Today

15.1 The Ministry of Today. God does not desire for any to perish, but for all to come to repentance (2 Peter 3:9, page 1903). As part of the ministry, God fixes a certain time, "Today," to receive the Gospel of Jesus Christ and be saved (Hebrews 4:6-16, page 1873). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have a ministry of proclaiming Jesus today, the right time for salvation.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you proclaim that today is the day of salvation, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

15.2 Peter at Caesarea. God prepared Cornelius, a righteous and God-fearing man, to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ from Peter. An angel directed Cornelius to invite Peter to Caesarea to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to him and others. Upon arrival, Peter found many people assembled, ready to hear all that Peter had been commanded by the Lord. (Acts 10:17-48, pages 1719-1721). Peter preached, the people believed, spoke in tongues, and were baptized (Acts 10:44-48, pages 1720-1721). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel to a specific group of people, assembled by God at a particular location, to hear the message of salvation and be saved that day.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to a specific group of people called together by God to hear you proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and people are saved that day, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Sixteen

The Ministry of The Evangelists:

Crisis

16.1 Philippian Jailer. After Paul received the Macedonian vision, the ministry team went to Philippi, a Roman colony of Macedonia. Paul and Barnabas were arrested and beaten for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ. While in jail, an earthquake opened the doors of the jail, and caused the chains holding the prisoners to became unfastened. The Philippian jailer pulled his sword, ready to kill himself for fear that the prisoners had escaped. Paul declared that all the prisoners were still there. The jailer then asked what must he do to be saved. Paul replied that he must believe in the Lord Jesus, and he will be saved, including his household. The jailer and his household were saved (Acts 15:11-40, pages 1731-1733). A believer with the Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may share the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the middle of a crisis, to ears and hearts ready to receive the good news.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the middle of a crisis, such as your arrest and incarceration, so that the ears and hearts of people ready to receive the good news hear it and believe, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

16.2 Shipwreck. Paul appealed his incarceration to Caesar in Rome. On his transport from Israel to Rome, he endured shipwreck. As the storm grew and the ship began to sink, Paul proclaimed his faith in the Lord Jesus to save the people on board. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists may have a ministry of sharing the faith during very difficult times of crisis.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to others enduring extreme hardships along with you, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

Section Seventeen

Hallmarks of the Spiritual

Gift of Evangelist

Evangelist: Understanding the Spiritual Gift. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists shares the Gospel of Jesus Christ. As above, the ministry of the evangelist may take many forms, and produce a variety of effects. I have listed a few of those hallmarks below.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists and to see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to new fields.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers do not rely upon cleverness of speech, but the power of God.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers do not preach a gospel contrary to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers bring joyful news of salvation.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers keep right on preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers ride waves of persecution.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers never forget they are only men.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers often form ministry teams.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers are never partial to any in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers are Spirit-filled for preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers often labor in specific, geographic areas.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers labor today, for it is the day of salvation.

♦ Evangelist-gifted believers often labor during a crisis.

Conclusion

Believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists share the Gospel of Jesus Christ as the Holy Spirit leads and empowers them. They do so in many different places, to many different groups, at many different times, acting spontaneously and by arrangement. They suffer great hardships and persecution, but God uses them to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ even while riding waves of persecution. They move about and sometimes establish new homebases for spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ to new regions. They never usurp the position of Jesus, but always present themselves as humans serving the living God, bringing His loving message of salvation and eternal life, so that people may know Jesus and the Father who sent Him.

4

The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds

Class of Gift: Equipping

Ephesians 4:11, Page 1830

"some as the shepherds"

Section One

Introduction

1.1 Every Born-Again Christian Has at Least One Spiritual Gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of deaconies ("διακονιῶν"), with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7). Therefore, if you have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds, that single gift may result in a variety of ministries and spiritual effects.

1.2 Meaning of the Term "Shepherd." Paul mentioned The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds in Ephesians 4:11. I prefer the term "shepherd" over "pastor" to describe the spiritual gift because of the other uses of the term "shepherd" as a noun and a related verb. The term "pastor" today has a very negative meaning in the context of the Pastoral Heresy. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds performs specific services to the church. This spiritual gift received much attention in the New Testament, and we have a collection of Pauline works described as the Shepherd Epistles: 1 and 2 Timothy and Titus. Many passages in the New Testament describe the work of shepherds. We will focus primarily upon the use of The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds.

1.3 Deacony and the Spiritual Gifts. All believers must know and use their spiritual gifts. All believers, not just the shepherds and church leaders, perform the work of deacony ("διακονίας"). That "deacony" must continue until all the saints attain the unity of the faith and achieve spiritual maturity. That "deacony" also protects believers from being tossed about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, and the craftiness of deceitful scheming (Ephesians 4:12-13). While all believers must perform the work of speaking, only some believers have The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds, bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon some, but not all, believers as a gift of grace which works according to His power (Ephesians 3:7).

1.4 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Shepherd." In Ephesians 4:11, page 1830, the Greek term translated as "shepherds" ("ποιμένας") has diverse applications in the New Testament. As you read through these varying uses of the term "pastor" and related words, please keep in mind that I interpret these passages below as examples, on the one hand, of spiritual activities all believers will do at times; but, on the other hand, the saint with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds in the forms described below will have a special gift from God to edify believers and build up unity in their ministry as pastor. Let us explore some of those uses to gain insight into the different ways God gifts people to serve in His name and in His ministry to the Body of Christ. We will see below that The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds involves different major areas of ministry. We will look at them one at a time.

1.5 The Pastoral Heresy. Many people believe that they are in command of their local assembly. They think they alone perform the ministry, they have a special "anointing" from God, or they are the CEO. They love titles like "Pastor" and "Reverend" and "Doctor" and "Father." Those people have fallen into The Pastoral Heresy. Beware of such people.

1.6 Jesus the Great Shepherd. The God of Peace brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep ("τὸν ποιμένα τῶν προβάτων τὸν μέγαν"), through the blood of the eternal covenant, Jesus our Lord (Hebrews 13:20). Jesus called Himself the Shepherd ("τὸν ποιμένα") Who would be struck down and the sheep of his flock would be scattered (Matthew 26:31; Mark 14:27). Yet, Jesus would rise from the dead and continue His ministry as Shepherd (Matthew 26:32).

1.6.1 <u>Jesus the Ruler</u>. Jesus came as a leader of Judah, a Leader Who will shepherd ("ποιμανεῖ") His people Israel, the people of God (Matthew 2:6). In the future, Jesus will "sheperd" ("ποιμαίνειν") the nations with a rod of iron (Revelation 12:5; Revelation 2:27; Revelation 19:15; see also Psalm 2:9-10 Jesus will "break" ("תִּרְעֵם") the nations with a rod of iron; Jesus will "shatter" ("תְּנַפְּצֵם") the nations like earthenware.) Therefore, we must keep in mind that shepherding the flock includes the concept of Jesus ruling the flock.

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by following Jesus, and serving as an under-shepherd of Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

1.6.2 <u>Jesus the Guide</u>. Jesus will appear in the center of the throne as the Lamb of God in heaven (Revelation 7:17). Then He will shepherd ("ποιμανεῖ") and lead the innumerable multitude of saints from the Tribulation who serve God day and night in His heavenly temple (Revelation 7:9-15). Jesus will guide them to springs of the water of life, and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes (Revelation 7:17).

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a ministry of shepherding saints, guiding them to the water of life in the Holy Spirit, and wiping away tears from their eyes, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

1.6.3 <u>Jesus the Compassionate Shepherd</u>. As Jesus traveled through the cities and villages of Israel, He felt compassion for the people, because they were distressed and dispirited, like sheep without a shepherd ("ποιμένα") (Matthew 9:36; see also 1 Peter 2:25--sheep continually straying, but now returned to their Shepherd). Jesus then directed His disciples to beseech the Lord of the Harvest to send out workers into His harvest, because the harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few (Matthew 9:37-38; see also Mark 6:34).

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a ministry to the distressed and dispirited by acting as a shepherd and leading them to Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Two

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Foundations

2.1 Shepherd: Basic Meaning. The term shepherd has a broad range of meaning in the New Testament. It includes a person who serves as a guardian, leader, and servant. In all the ministries described below, please keep in mind that the ministries in the church often apply to every saint and are performed by every saint. Some saints have special abilities and responsibilities. Therefore, the ministries described below are rarely exclusive to saints holding The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds. The Church Officers, elders and saints will often perform the same ministries associated with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

2.2 The Office of Overseer and The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds. Many believers mistakenly assume that the terms "overseer, "shepherd" and "elder" mean the same thing. In some cases, shepherds promote themselves as the only "Elder" within a local assembly. Many people fail to understand the proper roles of "shepherds" and "elders" and "overseers." We must study the word of God to distinguish the Church Office of Overseer from The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds and from the elders of the congregation.

2.3 The New Testament Church Offices. In The New Testament, God revealed three church offices: Apostle, Overseer and Deacons (one may argue about the offices of prophet and high priest) and maybe more. The Spiritual Gift of the Apostles remains active in some ministries, but the Office of Apostle has passed away because no one living today can meet the requirements to fill the Office of Apostle (Acts 1:21-22), except Jesus who remains the Apostle and High Priest of our confession (Hebrews 3:1). Shepherd is not an office in the church, and not all people holding the Church Office of Overseer have The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds. Some elders possess different spiritual gifts, such as The Spiritual Gift of the Teachers or The Spiritual Gift of Exhortation. Only males may hold church offices.

2.4 <u>The Church Office of Deacons</u>. Although all believers must deacon other believers and God, God sets some male saints into the Church Office of Deacons. They must meet spiritual qualifications to be set down in a spiritual ministry. Please keep in mind that the seven men in Acts 6:5, were men full of wisdom and the Holy Spirit. They were set sown in a spiritual ministry to the Hellenistic Jews and Hellenistic widows were served food properly. Notice that we see no indication that any of those seven men ever served a single table. Instead, we do see that Stephen had a vital preaching ministry, which resulted in his martyrdom (Acts 7:1-60) and Philip (assuming it was the same man as in Acts 6:5) preached in Samaria (Acts 8:4-40; he was later known as Philip the Evangelist, (Acts 21:8-9). So often today people have no idea what a deacon did in the New Testament. Among other spiritual activities, they were known as preachers and evangelists.

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by relying upon Deacons and Overseers to perform their work in the local assembly, and you recognize that your spiritual service to Jesus comes from The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds, and you do not hold the office of Deacon or Overseer, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

2.5 <u>The Church Office of Overseer</u>. In Acts 20:28, Paul addressed a group of men from Ephesus as part of his farewell tour before leaving for Jerusalem. Paul knew that they would no longer see his face (Acts 20:25). Paul called the elders of the church at Ephesus and referred to that particular group of elders as Church Overseers. Those Church Overseers were men looking over the church. Paul directed Titus to set down elders in every city in Crete, as Paul directed him (Titus 1:5). Some, not all, elders were set down into the Church Office of Overseer. Please take note that the term "elders" in the New Testament may refer to old men, forefathers, members of the Sanhedrin, and other uses. If you compare the term "overseer" in Titus 1:7 with the term "elder" in Titus 1:5, you may understand that some elders were set into the church to occupy the Church Office of Overseer. Not all elders occupy the Church Office of Overseer. Furthermore, the qualifications of the "overseer" in Titus 1:7-9 seem to be virtually identical to qualities of an "overseer" in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, especially when compared to the Church Office of Deacons, with its qualifications, listed in 1 Timothy 3:8-12. Therefore, we see that God sets some elders into the church as Church Overseers to shepherd the church. Overseers perform the work of shepherding, but they do not necessarily have the The Spiritual Gift of Shepherding. As we saw in

Acts 20:28, the work of overseers included acting as a shepherd to the church. Notice that shepherd is not an office, but male saints holding the Church Office of Overseer do the work of shepherding, along with others in the church.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock, and you hold the office of Overseer in the local assembly, and you excel in shepherding the flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

2.6 The Duties of Church Overseers. God set down some elders into the Church Office of Overseer, but not all elders hold the Church Office of Overseer. The Church Overseer has specific functions. First, the Church Overseer had to "be on guard" ("προσέχετε") for (a) themselves and (b) for all the church of God (Acts 20:28). They had to be vigilant, watchful, careful. It conveys the sense of spiritual acuity in spiritual perception. Second, they must shepherd the church. Likewise, because all Church Overseers are elders, we should remember that Jesus instructed elders to shepherd the flock with eagerness, providing examples to the flock (1 Peter 5:1-4). The elders of the church perform the work of shepherding the church, but not all elders hold the Church Office of Overseer and not all elders have The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds. Likewise, not every saint with The Spiritual Gift of Shepherd serves as an elder or holds the Church Office of Overseer. Timothy, for example, was never called an elder. Notice in Acts 20:28 that "shepherd" is not an office, but the Church Overseers perform the work shepherding the church. Therefore, the terms Church Overseer, elder, shepherd and the like should not be considered interchangeably because the Bible gave different meanings to those terms. See below for a fuller discussion of the duties of Church Overseers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock with keen spiritual perception, and you can identify dangers to the flock, and you eagerly protect the flock from dangers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

2.7 The Plurality of Church Office of Overseers. The local church in the New Testament had a group of elders, not just one elder. For example, in 1 Timothy 5:17, we read about the elders who lead (not rule) well. Those elders who lead well should be given double honor. Notice that the term "elders" ("πρεσβύτεροι ") is plural and so indicates that each local assembly

of believers should have a number of elders, not just one. Likewise, we see the plural of Church Overseers and Church Deacons in Philippians 1:1. Furthermore, we learn from 1 Timothy 5:17 that not all leading elders work hard at teaching and preaching. Remember not to equate the Church Office of Overseer with elder or The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds. The term elder referred to a broad group of males in the church performing many spiritual functions. The New Testament knows nothing of any Church Office of Overseer. We know that one qualification for holding the Church Office of Overseer is that the man must be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2). When we combine 1 Timothy 5:17 with 1 Timothy 3:2, we see that although every Church Overseer must able to teach, not every Church Overseer will work hard at teaching and preaching. Likewise, some elders lead and teach, but not all elders lead and teach. Consider The Spiritual Gift of the Leaders for a moment. In Romans 12:8, we read that "he who leads, with diligence." We see that "leaders" is a distinct spiritual gift. Hopefully, every group of elders at a local church has someone who has The Spiritual Gift of the Leader to provide guidance and vision for the future of the various ministries. Notice that "leadership" is a distinct gift in the list of spiritual gifts (see the study of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader). In contrast to the one-man style of leadership prominent in many churches today, Jesus taught that the local assembly should have a plurality of preachers and teachers. The leadership of the church comes from a plurality of sources, including elders, church offices and men with specific spiritual gifts, all working in harmony. This plurality of leadership in the New Testament will safeguard against The Pastoral Heresy by limiting the desire to be the greatest among the flock. The Pastor will no longer be the sole focus of attention, and he may not be the only preacher in the local assembly. In fact, all the saints ideally will be known for their strong work of serving the local saints, and some of the elders will work hard at preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the sheep, and you make sure you are not the sole focus of the local assembly, and you promote the roles of Deacons and Overseers and the need for every believer to use the spiritual gifts given to them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

2.8 The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds Distinguished. In Ephesians 4:11, we read about the distinct spiritual gifts of "shepherds" ("ποιμένας") and "teachers" ("διδασκάλους"). Some people may argue that the terms

"shepherds" and "teachers" refer to the same individual. In support, they often cite the Granville Sharp rule of New Testament Greek grammar holding that two nouns connected by "and" ("καί") refer to the same thing. The problem with this approach is that Granville Sharp limited his rule to singular nouns, not plural nouns as found here in Ephesians 4:11. Therefore, the Granville Sharp rule does not support equating "shepherds" with "teachers." So, not all shepherds are necessarily teachers. The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds differs from The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers. Therefore, we may understand that not all shepherds are teachers. Yet, all Church Overseers should be able to teach (1 Timothy 3:2), but this requirement does not mean that the every Church Overseer has to have The Spiritual Gift of the Teachers. These distinct spiritual gifts help us understand the work of "shepherds," and why not all shepherds hold the Church Office of Overseer. We should be careful to remember that every elder must perform the work of a shepherd regarding the care of the flock, but not every elder has The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds, just like every elder does not have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers. Please recall, however, that the local assembly of all believers must carry out the work of ministry, using their spiritual gifts, and neither a single shepherd nor the elders perform all the work of ministry. Consider for a moment 1 Thessalonians 5:14. In that verse, Paul commanded the entire congregation of believers at Thessalonica to perform three ministries to the other saints: (1) admonish the unruly; and (2) encourage the fainthearted; and (3) help the weak. In addition, all the saints must be patient with one another, especially when performing their ministries. Therefore, the saints use their spiritual gifts to perform specialized and diverse ministries within the church. The shepherds and teachers equip the saints for the work of performing their individual ministries.

Identification. If you have a ministry of equipping the saints for the work of ministry, and you understand that all the spiritual gifts must function properly in the local assembly for it to mature in Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

2.9 The Leadership of the Local Church. God described The Spiritual Gift of The Leaders (προϊστάμενος--present middle participle). The usage of the term "leaders" (προϊστάμενος) helps us understand The Spiritual Gift of The Leaders, as described in this e-book. In 1 Timothy 5:17, we read that the elders who lead (προεστῶτες--perfect active participle, nominative masculine plural) well (καλῶς) are worthy of double honor. In Timothy 3:4

the Church Overseer must lead (προϊστάμενον--present middle participle, accusative masculine singular) well (καλῶς) his own children. In 1 Timothy 3:5 Paul warned that if a man does not how to lead (προστῆναι--aorist active infinitive) his own household then he will not care for the church. In 1 Timothy 3:12, Church Deacons must be good (καλῶς) leaders (προϊστάμενοι--present middle participle, nominative masculine plural) of their children. In 1 Thessalonians 5:12, Paul admonished the Thessalonians to the ones laboring in them and leading (προϊσταμένους--present middle participle, accusative masculine plural) them in the Lord and admonishing them. In Titus 3:8 Paul urged Titus to speak confidently to believers who will be leaders (προΐστασθαι--present middle infinitive) in good works. The term "esteemed ones" ("ἡγουμένοις") of the flock deserve the obedience of the flock, because those esteemed ones keep watch over the souls of the flock, and the leaders will give an account (Hebrews 13:17) (see Appendix A below to understand the translation (esteemed ones).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by encouraging the flock to give obedience to the "leaders" of the flock, because they keep watch over the souls of the flock, and you know those leaders will give an account, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

2.10 Male and Female. God commands females to be silent in the churches; they are not permitted to speak (1 Corinthians 14:34, page 1800). God based that command upon the creation of males and females. God created man first (1 Timothy 2:12, page 1856), and man is the head of the woman (1 Corinthians 11:3, page 1794). Furthermore, the woman was deceived about sin by the devil, and so fell into transgression; the man was not deceived by sin (1 Timothy 2:14, page 1856). Therefore, God did not permit a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet (1 Timothy 2:12, page 1856). God did not limit these commands in 1 Timothy to husbands and wives, but rather to all women who make a claim to Godliness, who must receive instruction with entire submissiveness (compare 1 Corinthians 14:35-35 and 1 Timothy 2:11, page 1855). Females may still serve as pastors to women only, but females should never speak in church when adult males are present, and the females must remain silent in the church when adult males are present.

Identification. If you have a ministry as a female of shepherding the flock without speaking in the church service, or teaching men or exercising authority over men, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Three

The Ministry of The Shepherds:

Shepherd My Sheep

3.1 The Shepherd. Jesus commanded Peter: "Shepherd My Sheep" (“Ποίμαινε τὰ πρόβατά μου”) (John 21:16). Jesus commanded Peter to look after the flock of believers (see also 1 Corinthians 9:7). The background to that command makes a difference. Peter had said he would never forsake Jesus, but Jesus replied that Peter would deny Him three times that very night. Peter not only denied Christ, but he did so with curses (Matthew 26:74). Satan had sifted Peter like wheat (Luke 22:31). Jesus had also told Peter that when Peter was restored, he should strengthen the brethren (Luke 22:32). Jesus still considered Peter useful for shepher service, even after Peter denied Christ with swearing and cursing. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may have a sinful history, but a believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds will always shepherd the sheep.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock of God, even after you have repented of swearing and cursing the name of Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

3.2 The Slave Shepherd. Jesus taught His disciples that basic forgiveness may be compared to a slave coming in from tending the sheep (“ποιμαίνοντα”) (Luke 17:7, page 1634). The slave must first feed the master and tend to his needs, before the slave eats and relaxes from working all day. In contrast to the slave shepherd, the false shepherd cares ("ποιμαίνοντες") only for himself, and takes improper advantage of the sheep (Jude 1:12, pages 1912-1913). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds must always view themselves as a slave of Jesus, gifted to serve the flock.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by serving the local assembly as a slave of Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Four

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Overseer

4.1 The Ministry of Oversight. Every elder should carry out the ministry of overseer, even if they do not hold the Church Office of Overseer. Likewise, every believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds should carry out the work of an overseer of the flock, even if they do not hold the Church Office of Overseer. The Church Overseers look over the flock of believers. The work includes protecting (1) the flock from wolves outside the flock; and (2) perverted men within the flock.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding by carrying out the work of overseeing the flock, even if you are not an elder or a Church Overseer, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

4.2 The Savage Wolves. The Church Overseer must be on guard against savage wolves, who come into the flock, and do not spare the flock (Acts 20:29). The Church Overseer must keep the savage wolves out and protect the flock. Jesus described His own work as the Good Shepherd. The saint with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds will perform the same kind of work as the Church Overseer and beyond. The saint with the The Spiritual Gift of Shepherd should never flee from the wolf, but should lay down His life to save His sheep (John 10:11).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding by laying down your life for the sheep, and you never flee from the wolf coming to attack the flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

4.3 The Perverted Men. The Church Overseer must guard the flock from perverted ("διεστραμμένα") men arising within the flock of believers, for the purpose of drawing disciples after themselves (Acts 20:30). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds includes wise opposition to perverted men within the flock of believers and silencing those perverted men before they can draw disciples away to follow them (Titus 1:10-11).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by preventing perverted men from drawing disciples away from the local flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Five

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Guarding

5.1 The Overseer. All saints, including elders, Church Officers, and saints holding The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds, must perform the work of overseeing the flock. That ministry includes the work of guarding the flock from wolves outside the flock and from perverse men arising within the flock (see Section Four above). As noted above, not all believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Shepherds are elders or Church Overseers, but the work of a shepherd includes the ministry of oversight, which includes guarding the flock.

Identification. If you have a ministry of guarding the flock from wolves and other evil attackers of the flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

5.2 Be on Guard. Jesus commanded that everyone be on guard ("Προσέχετε") that their hearts would not be weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, so that the day of the Son of Man will come upon them as a trap (Luke 21:34). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may help people weighted down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life to be ready to meet Jesus when He shouts His appearance.

Identification. If you have a ministry of guarding the flock from being weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life, and they avoid the day of the Son of Man coming upon them as a trap, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

5.3 Guarding the Treasure. Paul commanded Timothy that Timothy must guard ("φύλαξον") the spiritual treasure entrusted to him (2 Timothy

1:14; 1 Timothy 6:20). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may have the ministry of guarding himself first, and then the members of the flock, from losing the treasure entrusted to them by God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of guarding the spiritual treasure entrusted to yourself and other members of the flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

5.4 Guarding against Opponents. Through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, Timothy must also guard ("φυλάσσου") against people who oppose the work of Christ (2 Timothy 4:15). Likewise, Peter warned that believers must guard ("φυλάσσεσθε") against the error of unprincipled men, causing believers to fall from their own steadfastness (2 Peter 3:17). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may oppose the opponents of Christ and guard the flock from those evil people.

Identification. If you have a ministry of guarding the flock against people who oppose the work of Christ as unprincipled men who cause believers to fall from their steadfastness in Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Six

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Guidance

6.1 The Way of Peace. Jesus shines as a light upon the Gentiles, as they sit in darkness and the shadow of death. The light serves to guide ("κατευθῦναι") the feet of unbelievers into the way of peace (Luke 1:79). Unbelievers need believers to guide them to faith in Christ. Consider the Ethiopian eunuch. He read the prophet Isaiah about the crucifixion of Messiah, but he said he was unable to understand the text except someone guide (“ὁδηγήσει”) him into faith. Philip, an evangelist, preached Jesus to the eunuch, beginning from that Scripture (Acts 8:25-38). Jesus taught that blind men are unable to guide (“ὁδηγεῖν”) the blind, because both of them will fall into a pit (Luke 6:39; see also Romans 2:19). While primarily the work of believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelist centers upon

sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, other believers with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may also perform this ministry of guidance related to evangelism (2 Timothy 4:5).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by guiding unbelievers into the peace of God, and you guide unbelievers using the Scriptures to lead them to salvation, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

6.2 All Truth. Jesus promised that The Holy Spirit would guide ("ὁδηγήσει ") His disciples into all truth (John 16:13). The Holy Spirit performs this ministry by speaking what He hears from God. He discloses the things of Jesus and the Father. The Holy Spirit is God, and God always speaks the truth. The Holy Spirit, as an anointing from God, teaches believers directly about all things (1 John 2:27). Believers with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may also have the ministry of allowing the Holy Spirit to use them to guide others into all truth, primarily through the Scriptures.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock based upon the Holy Spirit working in you to lead believers into all truth, primarily thorugh the Scriptures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

6.3 Springs of Water of Life. Jesus is the Lamb, and He will be the shepherd in heaven Who guides ("ὁδηγήσει ") His flock to the water of life, where God will wipe away ever tear from their eyes (Revelation 7:17). Today, believers with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may help believers look forward to the shepherding ministry of Jesus in heaven when He leads all His flock to the springs of the water of life, and so find hope, comfort and courage to live on earth today.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by building hope, comfort and courage for living today based upon the shepherding ministry of Jesus in heaven when He leads all of His flock to the springs of the water of life, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Seven

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Equipping

7.1 The Church. In the Book of Ephesians, Paul explained the church. He showed that the term "church" referred to born-again believers ("saints"), and not physical buildings (Ephesians 1:1). Jesus blessed the church with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock based upon the truth that God has blessed the saints with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

7.2 The Spiritual Gifts for the Church. The church is a holy temple in the Lord, a dwelling of God in the Spirit (Ephesians 2:22). God builds the church, and it is constantly under construction. Paul described five particular spiritual gifts in Ephesians 4:11: The Apostles, The Prophets, The Evangelists, The Pastors, and The Teachers. God had a special purpose in giving those spiritual gifts to the believers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by emphasizing that the church is constantly under construction as God builds the church through the proper and timely use of the spiritual gifts bestowed upon the saints, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

7.3 Equipping the Saints. God intended for all the saints to use their diverse spiritual gifts to bring maturity to each believer in the church, which is the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12: 27). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds has been gifted for "the equipping" ("τὸν καταρτισμὸν—notice the noun translated as a participle) the saints for the work of ministry. As the believers use their individual spiritual gifts, many good things happen. First, the body of Christ builds itself up (Ephesians 4:12). Second, all believers grow in the unity of faith. Third, the believers' knowledge of the Son of God increases. Fourth, the body of

believers grows into a mature man, to the measure of the stature belonging to the fullness of Christ (Ephesians 4:12-13).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock so that the saints build up themselves through the Holy Spirit working through their gifts until they all supply the things necessary for the spiritual growth and maturity of each saint, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

7.4 No Longer Children. As the gifted believers exercise their spiritual gifts, then the body of Christ matures, particularly in the local assembly where the spiritual gifts promote ministry from Christ among the saints. As a result of that ministry of all the spiritual gifts, the spiritual children grow up to mature men, so that they are no longer tossed about by waves and carried along by every wind of doctrine. They are no longer to be children ("μηκέτι ὦμεν νήπιοι"), subject to the trickery of men, and the craftiness of deceitful scheming (Ephesians 4:14, page 1831). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may be careful to equip the saints so that the saints are no longer children, carried about by every wind of doctrine, and falling for every deceitful scheme and the trickery of men.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by promoting the use of spiritual gifts, so that the saints are no longer tossed about and carried along by every wind of doctrine, and not subject to the trickery of men and the craftiness of deceitful scheming, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Eight

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Separation

8.1 The Sheep and The Goats. One day, Jesus will establish His physical kingdom on earth. He will come in glory and all the angels will accompany Him as He takes His seat on His glorious throne. The nations will be gathered before Him. As a shepherd separates ("ἀφορίζει") the sheep from the goats, He will separate the sheep (the believers) from the goats (the unbelievers).

The believers will reign with Him for a thousand years, and the unbelievers will go to eternal punishment (Matthew 25:31-46).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by reminding the flock that Jesus will establish His kingdom on earth, when He will separate the sheep from the goats, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

8.2 Distinguishing Believers from Unbelievers. Today, many people think they are born-again believers, but they delude themselves because they were never saved. They may hold a church office or have a teaching or staff position in the local assembly. They may have many followers on the internet. All unsaved people need to have the Gospel of Jesus Christ proclaimed to them, so that they may have eternal life and not perish. It may not always be easy to distinguish the unbeliever from the believer, but all believers will always examine the works of the other people to see if they have a profession of faith and a life worthy of Christ Jesus. No life will be sin-free, but believers should bear some good fruit for God. God the Father happily chose to the give ("δοῦναι") the kingdom of God to the little flock ("τὸ μικρὸν ποίμνιον") (Luke 12:32). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds can distinguish the flock of believers from the wolves. The unbelievers need the Gospel of Jesus Christ and salvation. Nothing else will make any spiritual sense to them, but all spiritual things appear to be foolishness to them. The believers need to mature in Christ, and grow up to the full measure of Christ. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds will perform the ministry of distinguishing believers from unbelievers, keenly examining each life for evidence of salvation.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by looking for wolves in sheeps' clothing, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Nine

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Keeping Watch

9.1 The Watchkeepers. The shepherds ("ποιμένες") of the New Testament knew about spending the night in the fields, keeping watch ("φυλάσσοντες") over the flock ("φυλακὰ") (Luke 2:8). Today, pastors will spend time at hospitals, nursing homes, and may other places at night ministering to believers in need, and guarding the flock from savage wolves, and comforting the believers. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds will be keeping watch over the flock, especially during dark times.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by guarding the flock from savage wolves and other dangers both by night and by day, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

9.2 The Shepherd Messengers. Angels announced the birth of Jesus to shepherds keeping watch over their flocks at night (Luke 2:8). Those same shepherds became part of the vanguard of messengers concerning the Child. All wondered as they heard the things spoken ("λαληθέντω") by the shepherds ("ποιμένων") (Luke 2:16-20). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds will also serve as a messenger of the great works God does among His flock.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by serving as a messenger of the great works of God among the flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Ten

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Personal Relationships

10.1 The Correct Entry. Jesus declared: I am the Good Sheperd ("Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός") (John 10:11). He entered by the door of the sheep fold (John 10:1). Robbers and thieves climbed into the fold using some other way of entry. Even so, the sheep followed only the shepherd of the sheep. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds starts and maintains the relationship with a sheep (another believer under the shepherd's care) in the correct way, and not by means of trickery or deceit. He comes with pure motives, to care for the sheep and keep them well-nourished and safe from wolves, thieves and robbers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock so that the sheep hear the voice of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and you avoid all trickery and deceit, and stop others from using those tactics upon the flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

10.2 The Personal Shepherd. The doorkeeper opens the door for the Shepherd ("ποιμήν"), and the sheep hear His voice. The Shepherd leads the sheep out and calls them by name. The Shepherd goes before them, He leads them out, and they follow Him, because they know His voice. The sheep will not follow a stranger, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers (John 10:1-4). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds helps sheep to hear Jesus calling them by name and leading them out. The sheep know the voice of Jesus. The shepherd never gets confused about the sheep listening to his voice, because the shepherd always ensures that the sheep listen only to the voice of Jesus calling them and leading them. Shepherds serve as under-shepherds of Jesus. Every shepherd must first and always be a sheep of Jesus, and never lose sight that the flock has only one Shepherd.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock of being sure that the flock listens only to the voice of Jesus the Good Shepherd, calling

each sheep by name and leading each sheep, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

10.3 The Door of the Sheep. Jesus also proclaimed: "I am the door of the sheep" ("ἐγώ εἰμι ἡ θύρα") of the sheep. All who came before Him were thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. Anyone who enters through Jesus will be saved, and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief came to kill and destroy, but Jesus came to give sheep abundant life (John 10:7-11). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds will build a relationship with a sheep (another believer under the pastor's care) that starts with salvation through Jesus Christ. The saint with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds builds the relationship upon Jesus, so that the believer enjoys the pastures of Jesus, and lives an abundant life in Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock by exalting Jesus as the Door of the Sheep, and helping each sheep in the flock to build a relationship with Jesus Christ, so that each sheep enjoys the pastures of Jesus, and lives an abundant life, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

10.4 The Good Shepherd. Jesus stated: "I am the Good Shepherd" ("Ἐγώ εἰμι ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλός") (John 10:11; see also Matthew 19:17--only One is good ("εἷς ἐστιν ὁ ἀγαθός")). The Good Shepherd lays down His life for the sheep. The hired hand sees the wolf coming, leaves the sheep and flees. The wolf then snatches the sheep and scatters them. The hired hand flees because he works for only for money and is not concerned about the sheep (John 10:12-13).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock so that the sheep grasp the significance of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, laying down His life for the saints because of His great concern for them, so that the wolf does not attack the sheep and scatter them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

10.4.1 Lays Soul Down. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, lays down His soul ("ὁ ποιμὴν ὁ καλὸς τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ τίθησιν") for the sheep. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds will focus upon Jesus laying down His soul for the sheep, and then taking it again. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds will likewise lay down his soul for the sheep (see 1 Thessalonians 2:8).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock so that you lay down your soul for the sheep, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

10.4.2 The Hired Hand. Jesus warned about the hired hand ("ὁ μισθωτὸς"). The hired hand flees from the wolf, and then the wolf snatches the sheep and scatters them. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds must never act like a hired hand, but always stay with Jesus, Who always stays with the sheep.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock and you never flee from the wolf, but stay with Jesus to protect the flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

10.5 My Own Know Me. Jesus explained: "I know my own" ("γινώσκω τὰ ἐμὰ") and "My own know Me" ("γινώσκουσί με τὰ ἐμά") (John 10:14). Jesus knows His sheep, and they know Him. Notice the two-way knowledge. As born-again believers, we know Jesus and He knows us. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds emphasizes that believers know Jesus and Jesus knows them. He knows each of us individually, by name, and cares for each of us (Luke 15:4-7).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding and you demonstrate that you know Jesus as the Good Shepherd and Jesus knows you, and you help the flock to believe and live likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

10.6 Other Sheep. Jesus calls sheep from outside this fold ("ἐκ τῆς αὐλῆς ταύτης"). He calls to them and they hear His voice ("τῆς φωνῆς μου ἀκούσουσιν"). All of the sheep of Jesus form one flock with One shepherd, Jesus (John 10:16). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds brings all sheep, no matter where they are from, to Jesus, so that Jesus may shepherd them all as one flock. Jesus draws no distinctions among sheep and His under-shepherds must do likewise.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock so that they accept all members of the flock equally, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

10. 7 The Love of God. God the Father loves ("ἀγαπᾷ") Jesus because Jesus lays down His soul for the sheep. Jesus lays down His life because both He and the Father love all the sheep. Jesus laid down His own life, on His own initiative ("ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ"). No one took His life from Him. He had authority ("ἐξουσίαν") to lay it down, and to take it up again. Jesus received that commandment from His Father (John 10:17-18, page 1675-1676). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds loves the sheep and conveys the love of God to the sheep. We love because God first loved us. The only people who truly love people are people who know God and have been born of God (1 John 4:7).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock with the love of God, which only God gives to born-again believers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Eleven

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Compassion

11.1 The Compassion Motive. Jesus frequently felt compassion ("ἐσπλαγχνίσθη") for people and then took action based upon His compassion. For example, Jesus saw a large crowd, felt compassion for them, and healed their sick (Matthew 14:14). Likewise, Jesus felt compassion for the multitude because they had been with Him three days and had nothing to eat, so He fed them (Matthew 15:32). Jesus moved with compassion, touched the eyes of two blind men and they regained their sight (Matthew 20:34; see also Mark 1:40; Luke 7:13). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may be motivated by compassion for the flock to minister to their physical and spiritual needs.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock with compassion, so that Jesus uses you as He meets the needs of the flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

11.2 The Distressed and Dispirited. Jesus described some people as "distressed" ("ἐσκυλμένοι ") and "dispirited" ("ἐρριμμένο"), because they had

no shepherd to lead them (Mathew 9:36). The term "distressed" means in this context to be the recipient of harassment, conveying the idea of being thrown down (see also Mark 5:35--why "trouble" Jesus about the dead daughter; Luke 7:6--do not trouble yourself, Jesus). The term "dispirited" in this context means to be put down by disease. The term is also used to describe the process of unloading a ship in a storm by tossing a ship's tackle (essential for sailing) overboard (Acts 27:19). Some of those people suffered from diseases and sicknesses (Matthew 9:35). The people need to hear and accept the Gospel of the Kingdom, proclaimed by Jesus Christ (Matthew 9:35-38, page 1515). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may have a ministry to the sick, who have been distressed and dispirited by their illness, to comfort them with the compassion of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock with compassion and bringing the distressed and dispirited into the flock, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Section Twelve

The Ministry of the Shepherds:

Truth

12.1 Truth and Freedom. The truth sets men free, as they abide in the teachings of Christ (John 8:31-32). Jesus declared Himself to be the truth ("ἡ ἀλήθεια"), and the only way to the Father (John 14:6, page 1684). Saints no longer live in slavery to sin, but now they know the truth, and they experienced the life-changing freedom of Jesus. The saint with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds may have the ministry of speaking the truth ("ἀληθεύοντες") in love ("ἀγάπῃ"), helping the saints to grow up in all aspects into Christ, the head of the church (Ephesians 4:15, page 1831).

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock and speaking the truth in love, so that the flock grows into spiritual maturity, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

12.2 Enemies of the Truth. False teachers spread their heresies among the Galatian churches, including a false gospel imposing obedience to the

Law as a condition of salvation (Galatians 1:6-10; Galatians 3:16-21). Paul reminded the Galatians of the truth of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, centering upon salvation by grace ("χάριτί") through faith ("πίστεως") apart from the works ("ἔργων") (Ephesians 2:8-9). Paul described the Galatians as bewitched by the false teachers, with their insistence upon keeping the law as part of salvation. Paul wrote: "So have I become your enemy by telling you the truth ("ἀληθεύων")?" (Galatians 4:16). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds must tell the truth, and teach the truth diligently, even if it means becoming the enemy of your bewitched friends.

Identification. If you have a ministry of shepherding the flock and defending against a false gospel built upon human works and obedience by telling the truth, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

Hallmarks of The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherdss

Shepherd: Understanding the Spiritual Gift. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds shepherds the flock of God. As above, the ministry of the shepherd may take many forms, and produce a variety of effects. I have listed a few of those hallmarks below.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds and then see if you may have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers must avoid falling into The Pastoral Heresy.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers must understand the difference between the Church Office of Overseer, elders, and The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers perform the work of shepherding the sheep of Jesus.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers oversee the welfare of the flock of believers.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers guard the flock from savage wolves coming into the flock.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers guard the flock from perverse men arising within the flock to draw believers away from the flock.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers guide the flock by explaining and applying the Scriptures.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers equip believers for the work of ministry.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers distinguish the believers from the unbelievers. Only believers are part of the body of Christ, the church.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers keep watch over the flock.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers lay down their souls for the flock.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers have great compassion for the flock.

♦ Shepherd-gifted believers speak the truth in love.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds refers to the work of serving as an under-shepherd of Jesus Christ. The Spiritual Gift of the Shepherds must be distinguished from elders and the Church Office of Overseer in the New Testament. As servants of all, the shepherd should be careful to avoid The Pastoral Heresy. Shepherds are not identical to elders or Church Overseers in the New Testament. The work of the shepherd includes overseeing, preaching, equipping, guarding and guiding the flock.

5

The Spiritual Gift of

The Teachers

Category of Gift: Equipping

Ephesians 4:11, Page 1830

"some as the teachers,"

Section One

Introduction

1.1 Every Born-Again Christian Has at Least One Spiritual Gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, page 1796). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of ministries ("διακονιῶν"), with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Therefore, if you have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers, that single gift may result in a variety of ministries and spiritual effects.

1.2 Teaching Defined. We read about the teaching of Jesus in the synagogues of Galilee (Matthew 4:23, page 1506). Jesus was teaching ("διδάσκων"), proclaiming ("κηρύσσων") the gospel of the kingdom, and healing ("θεραπεύων") every kind of disease ("πᾶσαν νόσον") and every kind of illness ("πᾶσαν μαλακίαν") among the people (see also Matthew 9:35). Very often miracles accompanied the teaching of Jesus and the apostles. Teaching means that you are stating and explaining truth (John 17:17, page 1690). Teaching does not include providing revelation (although Jesus revealed truth as He taught), but teaching today involves explaining

the revelation of God already provided in the Bible. For example, consider the prophets and teachers at Antioch who worked side by side (Acts 13:1, page 1724). The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom, the The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge, and The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets all include new revelation from God. Not every believer has The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers, because the Holy Spirit distributes the spiritual gifts as He desires (1 Corinthians 12:29, page 1797). Yet, every believer has an obligation to teach others (Hebrews 5:12, page 1874; Matthew 28:20, page 1557). Believers should be cautious about accepting any teaching position within the church, knowing that teachers incur a stricter judgment (James 3:1, page 1890). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers explains and applies the revelation already provided. Preaching means the proclaiming of God's truth and a call to action. Because preaching and teaching do not necessarily involve new revelation, they are not revelatory gifts.

Identification. If you have a ministry of studying and proclaiming God's truth found in the Bible, with a call to action, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

1.3 Preaching and Teaching In the New Testament, Paul revealed that God appointed him as a preacher ("κῆρυξ"), a teacher ("διδάσκαλος") and an apostle ("ἀπόστολος")(1 Timothy 1:11, page 1861; 1 Corinthians 12:28, page 1797; Ephesians 4:11, page 1830). The difference between a preacher and a teacher may not always be obvious, because they often go hand in hand (see Acts 28:30-31, page 1757). The word "preacher" ("κῆρυξ") describes a person who heralds, proclaims, announces, and states. Preaching may include urging, comforting, and many other elements, but it focuses upon the proclamation of the truth of God and often a call to action. For example, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand" (Matthew 3:1-2, pages 1503-1504). Although God calls people to preaching ministries, the Bible does not describe preaching as a spiritual gift. Teaching involves the explanation and application of God's revelation. As we will see below, teaching must be done by all disciples to make more disciples (Matthew 28:18-20, page 1557), but not all believers have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers (1 Corinthians 12:29, page 1797).

Section Two

Jesus as Teacher

2.1 Teaching with Authority. Unlike the religious teachers (Pharisees, Sadduccees, priests and scribes), Jesus was teaching ("διδάσκων") with authority ("ἐξουσίαν") (Matthew 7:28-29, page 1512; Mark 1:22, page 1558; Luke 4:32, page 1603). Even at the age of twelve, Jesus sat in the temple in the midst of teachers, both listening to them and asking them questions; all who heard him were amazed at His understanding and His answers (Luke 2:46, page 1599). Teaching with the authority of God distinguishes The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers. Because the Holy Spirit indwells a believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers, the Holy Spirit uses the revelation of God in the word of God, the Bible, to produce the teaching of God with authority. To the degree the believer accurately teaches the Bible, then the authority of God undergirds the teaching. The authority is never the believer doing the teaching, but rather God using the Bible and the lips of the teaching-gifted believer to teach the Bible with its inherent authority.

Identification. If you have a ministry of accurately teaching the word of God based upon careful study of the word of God, and you accurately handle the Scriptures so that you present the teachings of God accurately, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

2.2 Call No Man Teacher. Jesus commanded believers never to call anyone "teacher," except Jesus Himself (Matthew 23:8--Jesus prohibited calling anyone "Rabbi," and then explained that believers have only one teacher ("διδάσκαλος")), and all His disciples are brothers; see also Luke 3:12, page 1600; The Pastoral Heresy). In fact, Jesus warned His disciples to beware the scribes who like to walk around in long robes, and like respectful greetings in the market places, and the chief seats in the synagogues and places of honor at banquets, but devour widow's houses, and for appearance sake offer long prayers (Mark 11:38-39, page 1583). Jesus likened the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees to leaven, which meant that their evil spread to all who followed their practices (Matthew 16:12, pages 1529-1530; Matthew 23:1-39, pages 1542-1544).

Identification. If you teach against people using the title “Teacher,” then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

2.3 Jesus Addressed as Teacher. Jesus Himself was addressed as Teacher ("Διδάσκαλε") by a scribe wishing to follow Him (Matthew 8:19, page 1513); by other scribes and Pharisees seeking a sign from Him (Matthew 12:38, page 1521); by a rich young ruler seeking to obtain eternal life (Matthew 19:16, page 1535; Mark 10:17, page 1577; Mark 10:20, page 1578; Luke 18:18, notice the title "Good Teacher" ("Διδάσκαλε ἀγαθέ"); by some Pharisees and Herodians testing Jesus about paying taxes to Caesar "Teacher ("Διδάσκαλε"), we know that You are truthful and teach the way of God in truth, and defer to no one; for You are not partial to any") (Matthew 22:16, page 1541; Mark 12:14, page 1582; Luke 20:21, page 1641); by Sadducees regarding the resurrection (Matthew 22:24, page 1541; Mark 12:19, page 1582; Luke 20:28, page 1641); by a lawyer regarding the greatest commandment in the Law (Matthew 22:36, page 1542; Luke 10:25, page 1619; Mark 12:32, page 1583); by His disciples as Jesus slept during the storm on the sea (Mark 4:38, page 1565); by a man with a demon-possessed son (Mark 9:17, page 1575; Luke 9:38, page 1616); by John, the son of Zebedee, regarding someone casting out demons in the name of Jesus (Mark 9:38, page 1576); by James and John, the sons of Zebedee, seeking the best seats in the Kingdom of God (Mark 10:35, page 1578); by a scribe not far from the kingdom of heaven (Mark 12:32-34, page 1583); by one of His disciples concerning the beauty of the stones and buildings (Mark 13:1, page 1584; Luke 21:7, pages 1647-1648); by Simon who invited Jesus to dine with him (Luke 7:40, page 1611); by one of the lawyers feeling insulted by Jesus (Luke 11:45, page 1623); by a person seeking his brother to divide the inheritance with him (Luke 12:13, page 1624); by some Pharisees commanding Jesus to rebuke the whole crowd of His disciples, shouting "Blessed is the King who comes in the name of the LORD" (Luke 19:39, page 1639); by some scribes saying Jesus had spoken well regarding the resurrection (Luke 20:27, page 1642); by two of the disciples of John as they followed Jesus (John 1:38, page 1655); by the people who had caught the woman in the very act of adultery (John 8:4, page 1670); and by Mary at the empty tomb (John 20;16, page 1696). Luke described his Gospel as an account of all that Jesus began to do and teach (Acts 1:1, page 1699).

Identification. If you people recognize you as a teacher of the Bible, and in fact you regularly teach the Bible accurately, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

2.4 The Father Taught Jesus. Jesus proclaimed that His teaching was not His own (John 7:16-18, page 1668), but His Father taught ("ἐδίδαξέν") Him what to say (John 8:28, page 1628). Jesus proclaimed that only those willing to do the will of His Father will know if the teaching of Jesus was of God or whether Jesus spoke from Himself. Jesus obeyed the Father by receiving the revelation from the Father and then teaching it to the people. At all times, Jesus was both fully human and fully God. As a man, Jesus did not know all things. As God, Jesus always knew all things. At times, Jesus spoke as a man; at other times, Jesus displayed His divine knowledge. Jesus was the perfect servant of Yahweh, as Isaiah described (Isaiah 53:1-13, pages 1154-1156).

Identification. If you study the Bible and learn from the Father, and you do the will of God, and you have a ministry of teaching based upon your study and learning from God in the Bible, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

2.5 Jesus and Parables. Jesus taught the people of Israel in parables because while seeing, they do not see and while hearing, they do not hear. Jesus fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah regarding the dull heart of Israel. In contrast, Jesus explained the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven to His disciples because it has been granted them to know those things. (Matthew 13:1-17, pages 1522-1523; Mark 4:1-12, pages 1562-1563).

Identification. If you have a ministry of accurately explaining the New Testament Mysteries, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Three

The Ministry of the Teachers:

Apostles

3.1 Apostles Teaching. Jesus provided broad training to the apostles. Jesus first trained them to go into Israel and preach repentance and the Kingdom of God (Matthew 10:7, page 1516; Luke 10:9, page 1618; Mark 6:12, page 1568). Just before His ascension, Jesus sent the apostles out just as the Father sent Him into the world (John 20:21). Jesus also provided a specific

geographical plan for the ministry of the apostles: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the whole world (Acts 1:8). He commanded them to stay in Jerusalem until power had come upon them. Shortly thereafter at Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon them and filled them (see also John 7:39, page 1669). The apostolic preaching and teaching ministry then began in earnest. The early church devoted itself to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread, and to prayer (Acts 2:42, page 1703). Not long after Christ ascended, Paul, born Saul of Tarsus, began his teaching ministry. He traveled over much of the Mediterranean region. At Athens, the Epicureans and Stoic philosophers wanted to hear more about his new teaching and took him to the Aeropagus, where he spoke about their altar to the unknown God; Paul proclaimed Jesus and His resurrection to them (Acts 17:16-34, pages 1734-1735). Later, Paul settled in Corinth for 18 months teaching ("διδάσκων") the word of God among them (Acts 18:11, page 1736). Paul preached ("διδάσκων") everywhere ("πανταχῆ"). Even in Rome, awaiting trial, Paul was preaching ("κηρύσσων") the kingdom of God and teaching ("διδάσκων") concerning the Lord Jesus Christ with all openness, unhindered (Acts 28:31, page 1757). Paul also challenged the teachers, saying: "you, therefore, who teach ("διδάσκων") another, do you teach yourself ("διδάσκεις") (Romans 2:21, pages 1760-1761). Paul knew that his ministry as a teacher would bring profit to the churches (1 Corinthians 14:6, page 1798). As he preached the word, he understood that he must be ready in season and out of season to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, doing all with great patience and instruction ("διδαχῆ")(showing how "teaching" relates directly to preaching, reproof, rebuking, and exhorting)(2 Timothy 4:2, page 1864).

Identification. If you have a ministry of traveling and planting churches, and preaching the Bible accurately, and you are ready in season and out of season to reprove, rebuke, and exhort, doing all with great patience and instruction, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

3.2 Apostles Today? When Jesus ascended to heaven, He left the office of apostle to be filled by twelve men, and only twelve men. Because Judas Iscariot had betrayed the Lord Jesus and died, the office of apostle required one member to fill it and Matthias was chosen. The office of apostle has passed away, because no one can fill that office today based on the requirements of the Bible (Acts 1:21-22, page 1700). Yet, Paul was an apostle, but never held the office of apostle. Others in the New Testament, like

Barnabas, were called apostles, but Barnabas was not one of the twelve apostles holding the office of apostle. Paul and Barnabas, among others, received The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles. In some ministries today, The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles may still be present, although the office has passed away. All the apostles, however, had a special ministry of teaching the Bible, the word of God. For more information on apostles, click this link: The Spiritual Gift of The Apostles.

Section Four

The Ministry of The Teachers:

The Sayings of Jesus

4.1 Holy Spirit Teaching. Jesus promised His disciples that He would send the Holy Spirit, Who would: (1) teach them all things; and (2) bring to their remembrance all that Jesus said to them (John 14:26, page 1685). This promise of divine recall will bless the disciples later. All believers can receive help from the Holy Spirit when they present a defense to tribunals, and also when they have a need to remember Scripture. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching all the things Jesus said, and to let believers know that the Holy Spirit will teach them all the things they need to know (Matthew 28:20, page 557).

Section Five

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Anointing

5.1 His Anointing. The anointing ("τὸ χρῖσμα") of Jesus taught believers about all things, and that anointing abides in believers (1 John 2:26, page 1906). Believers received the anointing from Jesus and it abides in every believer and teaches them about all things. Because of the anointing believers received from Jesus, they have no need for anyone to teach them (1 John 2:27, page 1906). The foundation of the anointing bears careful study for all believers. The anointing is true, and is not a lie. A believer with The Spiritual

Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people about the anointing they received from Jesus and the anointing teaches them about all things.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about the anointing of God, and that anointing teaches people all things, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Six

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Announcing Resurrection

6.1 Mary Magdalene. Mary met Jesus at the empty tomb. Although she had spent time with Jesus, she did not immediately recognize Jesus. At the tomb, Jesus asked her why was she weeping and whom was she seeking. Mary did not recognize the voice at first, and asked where Jesus was taken, so that she could take Him away. Jesus then said: "Mary!" The single word caused Mary to turn and she recognized Jesus: "Rabboni!" Mary Magdalene then went and announced to the disciples that she had seen Jesus, and related the conversation with Jesus (John 20:1-18, pages 1685-1697). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of declaring the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the eternal significance of that event, especially when coupled with personal testimony of salvation.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching and declaring the resurrection of Jesus Christ and the eternal significance of His resurrection, along with your personal testimony of your born-again experience based upon receiving the free gift of salvation by faith alone, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Seven

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Salvation

7.1 Repentance. John the Baptist taught sinners to repent and to bear fruit in keeping with repentance. The tax-collectors and others in the crowd asked him: "Teacher, what shall we do?" The crowds recognized John the Baptist as a teacher (Luke 3:12, page 1600). He gave instruction about the fruit of repentance for tax-collectors, soldiers and the crowd at large. Although he did not have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers, John the Baptist taught people about true repentance and salvation. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of not only proclaiming repentance and salvation, but also teaching people about bearing fruit in keeping with repentance.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about the need to repent and do deeds in keeping with repentance, based upon the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Eight

The Ministry of The Teachers:

The King

8.1 The King Has Come. Jesus gave His life a ransom for all. He lived as a man of sorrows, carrying our griefs. He was beaten, humiliated, and crucified. Yet, just a few days before His crucifixion, He rode into Jerusalem as the God King of this world. The crowds greeted Him and laid down their coats on the road. They shouted : "BLESSED IS THE KING WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD; peace in heaven and glory in the highest." Some Pharisees said to Jesus: "Teacher, rebuke your disciples." Jesus replied that even the stones will cry out if the people become silent. Jesus then taught them that they had not known the things that make for peace. Those things had been hidden from their eyes. Their enemies will destroy the city and all

the inhabitants, including their children, and will not leave one stone upon another. All of those things will come upon the people because they did not recognize the time of their visitation (Luke 19:28-44, pages 1639-1640). Jesus, the God King, had come, but they rejected Him. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people about the God King, Jesus, and His many triumphs and the penalty for rejecting Him.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about Jesus the King, and His many triumphs, and His coming return to reign upon the earth, and the penaly for rejecting Him as King and Savior, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Nine

The Ministry of The Teachers:

The Lordship of Christ

9.1 Jesus as Lord. Just before Jesus died on the cross, He observed the Passover with His disciples. Jesus got up from the supper and washed the feet of His disciples. He then explained to them that they called Him Teacher and Lord, and they were right to do so. He gave them an example to follow. Jesus emphasized the the master will always be greater than the slave, and the sender greater than the one sent (John 13:5-20, pages 1682-1683). Jesus as Lord meant that even Jesus served His disciples, without sacrificing His Lordship. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people about the Lordship of Christ, and particularly about how being a servant fits with being Lord and Teacher.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about Jesus as Lord and Teacher, and you emphasize and demonstrate His humble service to believers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Ten

The Ministry of The Teachers:

The Ways of Christ

10.1 The Ways of Christ. Paul wrote to the Corinthians that Timothy would remind them of Paul's "ways in Christ" (τὰς ὁδούς τὰς ἐν Χριστῷ)(1 Corinthians 4:17, page 1786). Timothy had spent significant time with Paul, learned the ways of Christ from Paul, and so could teach the Corinthians about the ways of Christ. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching the ways of Christ, including the application of the Scriptures to daily ways of living in Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching and demonstrating the ways of Christ to people, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Eleven

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Know the LORD

11.1 Know the LORD. In Hebrews, the author discussed the New Covenant. He mentioned that in the future, the people of Israel and Judah, from the least of them to the greatest of them, will be converted and know Jesus as Savior (Hebrews 8:11, pages 1877-1878). Because that day of the total conversion of Israel and Judah remains yet future, we may understand that believers have a duty today to teach their neighbors "Know the LORD" ("Γνῶθι τὸν κύριον"). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people, and perhaps Jews in particular, "Know the LORD."

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people, with an emphasis upon Jewish people, about the concept of "Know the LORD," then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twelve

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Following Jesus

12.1 Follow Me. One day a scribe came to Jesus and told Him: "Teacher, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus replied: "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head" (Matthew 8:19-20, page 1513). Likewise, Jesus invited men to come and they would see where He was staying (John 1:38-39, page 1655). Jesus also taught His disciples that if anyone wanted to follow Him, then that person must deny himself, take up his cross and follow Jesus (Matthew 16:24, page 1530; Mark 8:34, page 1574; Luke 9:23, page 1616). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers how to deny themselves, take up their crosses, and follow Jesus.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching and demonstrating the life of denying yourself, taking up your cross, and following Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirteen

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Resurrection

13.1 The Resurrection. The Sadducees taught there is no resurrection after death. They questioned Jesus about a woman married to seven men. They wanted to know who had her as a wife in the resurrection. Jesus replied that they were mistaken: they did not understand the Scriptures nor the power of God. In the resurrection, people neither marry nor are given in marriage. They should have known about the resurrection, because God spoke: "I AM THE GOD OF ABRAHAM, AND THE GOD OF ISAAC, AND THE GOD OF JACOB." He is not the God of the dead, but of the living. The crowds were astonished at this teaching (Matthew 22:23-33, page 1541: Luke 20:27-40, pages 1641-1642). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The

Teachers may have a ministry of teaching the glorious doctrine of resurrection, particularly to doubters and schemers seeking to deny the doctrine of resurrection.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people (often doubters and schemers who deny the existence of heaven, hell, eternal life, and the resurrection of Jesus Christ), then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

13.2 Raising the Dead. A synagogue official named Jairus came to Jesus one day and implored Him earnestly to help his daughter at the point of death. Although messengers later came to Jairus informing him that his daughter had died while they were traveling to see her, Jesus taught Jairus about fear and faith. Jesus told Jairus not to fear, but only believe. Upon arrival at the house of Jairus, the crowds laughed at Jesus because He said the daughter only slept. They knew she was dead. Jesus then raised the daughter from the dead, and everyone was completely astounded (Mark 5:21-43, pages 1566-1567; see also Luke 7:11-17, pages 1609-1610). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people about the resurrection, especially to those who scoff at the resurrection power of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people who scoff and laugh about the power of Jesus Christ to raise the dead, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

13.3 Calling from the Dead. Jesus came to visit Mary, Martha and Lazarus, except that Lazarus had been dead for four days when Jesus arrived. Jesus had deliberately delayed His visit so that people would see the glory of God and that the Son of God would be glorified by the resurrection of Lazarus. When Jesus arrived, Jesus first met Martha, and defined both resurrection ("he who believes in Me will live even if he dies") and eternal life ("everyone who lives and believes in Me will never die")(John 11:25-26). In the midst of people grieving over death and lacking faith in the resurrection power of Jesus today, Jesus called forth Lazarus from the dead. Lazarus came forth, and Jesus commanded that Lazarus be unbound. Many believed because of that miracle. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching about the present power of Jesus to resurrect the dead, and to know Jesus as the source of eternal life and resurrection by faith alone.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about the present power of Jesus to resurrect the dead, and how He has exercised that power in the past, and will do so in the future, because He is the source of eternal life and resurrection by faith alone, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fourteen

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Jesus Cares

14.1 Jesus Cares. One evening, Jesus directed His disciples to go with Him to the other side of the Sea of Galilee. A fierce gale of wind arose, with waves breaking over the boat. The boat began to fill with water. Meanwhile, Jesus slept in the stern on a cushion. The disciples woke Him up: "Teacher, do you not care ("οὐ μέλει σοι") that we are perishing?" (Mark 4:38, page 1565). Jesus arose and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Hush, be still." The wind died down, and it became perfectly calm. Jesus then addressed the disciples: "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?" They became very much afraid and said to one another, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?" (Mark 4:35-41, page 1565). Notice in this passage the relationship between fear and faith. Jesus asked two questions, and those two questions revealed that the presence of fear exposes the absence of faith. The disciples feared the storm because they thought they were perishing. They did not have faith in the words of Jesus signalling their destination would be other side of the Sea, not the bottom of the Sea. They also did not believe that Jesus cared about them. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of dealing with the fears of people with no faith. The disciples had some faith about Jesus being the Son of God, but they had no faith that He cared for them in the middle of the storm. They feared while they watched Him sleep through the storm without a drop of fear. They were not trusting Jesus to help them through all storms. They had not begun to trust the loving power of Jesus the Lord. He had the power: "Hush, be still." The fear of death grips some people very tightly, but faith focused on the Person and Power of Jesus will remove fear every time. In the middle of storms, people of fear need to be taught about faith.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people gripped by fear to trust Jesus and His "Hush, Be Still" power over all storms, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifteen

The Ministry of The Teachers:

The Name of Jesus

15.1 The Teacher Says. The disciples asked Jesus where they should prepare for Jesus to eat the Passover. He answered: "Go into the city to a certain man, and say to him, 'The Teacher says, "My time is near; I am to keep the Passover at your house with my disciples.'" The disciples followed those instructions and prepared the Passover (Matthew 26:17-19, page 1550; Mark 14:14, page 1586; Luke 22:7-13, pages 1644-1645). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of preparing the way for Jesus by teaching people about the Name of Jesus. Invoking the Name of Jesus has strong Old Testament Roots.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about the significance of the Name of Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

15.2 The Name of the Lord. Jesus sent two of His disciples to find a certain colt and bring it to Him. He instructed those disciples to say: "If anyone asks you, 'Why are you untying it?' you shall say, 'The Lord has need of it'" (Luke 19:28-35, page 1639; Mark 11:1-10, pages 1579-1580; Matthew 21:1-10, pages 1537-1538). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people about the claim of the Lord Jesus upon their property for use in His purposes.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about the claim of the LORD Jesus upon their property for His use and His purposes, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

15.3 False Confidence. Not everyone who calls Jesus "Lord, Lord" will enter the kingdom of heaven. Only those people who do the will of the Father

of Jesus Who is in heaven will enter the kingdom of heaven. Many will say to Jesus that they prophesied in His name, and cast out demons in His name, and did many miracles. Jesus will say to them, depart from Me; I never knew you who practice lawlessness (Matthew 7:21-23, page 1511; Acts 19:13-20, page 1738; Mark 9:38-41, page 1576; Matthew 24:24, page 1545). Good works, and even miraculous deceptions, will never produce salvation, for only saving faith leads to eternal life, which is to know both the Father and Son. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of warning people that practicing lawlessness while claiming to act in the name of the Lord Jesus will not gain them entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people that good works, even miraculous works, will never gain anyone entrance into the kingdom of God, because sinners practice lawlessness and deserve death as the wages of sin, and you proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixteen

The Ministry of The Teachers:

The Holy Spirit

16.1 Defense. Jesus prophesied to His disciples that they would be brought before synagogues and the rulers and the authorities. He commanded His disciples not to worry about how to defend or what they would say. He promised them that the Holy Spirit will teach them in that very hour what they ought to say (Luke 12:12, page 1624). Notice the teaching before the event happened. Jesus taught them that, in the future, at the moment of need before the tribunals, the Holy Spirit will teach ("διδάξε") them what they ought to say (Luke 12:12, page 1624). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of helping people to rely upon the Holy Spirit to teach them what to say to defend and present their faith before tribunals.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people to trust the Holy Spirit to teach them what to say in the moment of need to defend and to

present their faith before tribunals, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Seventeen

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Spiritual Gifts

17.1 Every Wind of Doctrine. God gave the spiritual gifts to the saints to equip the saints for the work of service. God intended to use the spiritual gifts to build up the Body of Christ. That process of building up would continue until the all the believers attain to the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God. As mature believers, they would attain to the stature that belongs to Christ. Spiritual believers are no longer tossed about and carried away by every wind of doctrine ("διδασκαλίας"), by the trickery of men, and by the craftiness of deceitful scheming. Instead, they speak the truth in love and the whole Body of Christ works properly (Ephesians 4:1-16, pages 1830-1831). All of those wonderful blessings take place when, and only when, believers use their spiritual gifts to build up the Body of Christ. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of building up the Body of Christ by teaching believers how to know and use their spiritual gifts.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people how to identify and use their spiritual gifts, and equip them to use those spiritual gifts, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Eighteen

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Loving God

18.1 Loving God. A scribe recognized that Jesus had answered His religious opponents well. The scribe then asked Jesus what was the greatest commandment. Jesus answered: "YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR

GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH." Jesus then explained that the second commandment is to love your neighbor as yourself. No commandment was greater than these commandments. The scribe responded that Jesus had answered truly and added that those two commandments are much more important than all burnt offerings and sacrifices. Jesus saw that the scribe answered intelligently ("νουνεχῶς"), and Jesus told the scribe that he was not far from the kingdom of God. (Mark 12:28-34, page 1583). Jesus placed a heavy priority upon loving God and loving neighbors. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people to love God and to love their neighbors as top priorities in life.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers to demonstrate the love of Jesus to their neighbors that many others hate and avoid, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

18.2 Loving Samaritans. Jesus revealed that loving God means that you love your neighbor also. A lawyer, putting Jesus to the test, questioned Jesus about loving neighbors. The lawyer, seeking to justify himself, asked: "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus then told the story of The Good Samaritan. A man was travelling on a road, beaten, robbed, stripped, and left wounded. A priest and a Levite passed by and did nothing to help him. A Samaritan came by, felt compassion for him, bound up his wounds, and took him to an inn, where he would be safe. The Samaritan also paid for his lodging. Jews and Samaritans had hated each other for many centuries and generally avoided personal contact. Jesus then asked the lawyer, "Which of these three do you think proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell into the robbers' hands?" The lawyer replied: "The one who showed mercy toward him." Then Jesus said to him: "Go and do the same" (Luke 10:25-37, pages 1619-1620). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people seeking to justify themselves about the mercy of neighbors, who reflect the impartial love of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people who seek to justify themselves about the identification of neighbors, loving neighbors, and reflecting the impartial love of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

18.3 Forgiven Much, Loves Much. Simon the Pharisee requested that Jesus dine with him. After arriving at Simon's home, a notorious sinner came to Jesus, anointed him with perfume and her tears, and was kissing His feet (see the free e-book: The Anointing of Jesus). Simon concluded wrongly that Jesus did not know the reputation of that woman. Actually, Jesus confronted Simon with a parable about debt forgiveness. Jesus asked if a debtor would be more grateful for being forgiven for five hundred or fifty denarii. Simon replied that the debtor forgiven five hundred would be more thankful. Jesus then explained that the woman had been forgiven much, and loved Him much. Simon had not anointed Him or washed His feet because Simon was self-righteous, and not forgiven (Luke 7:36-50, page 1611). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people about being forgiven much and loving God much.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people who criticize Jesus for His loving forgiveness and acceptance for sinners, especially notorious sinners, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Nineteen

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Truth and Faith

19.1 Truth and Faith. As Paul requested prayer with thanksgiving for his ministry in Christ, Paul described the work of Jesus as Mediator between God and man. Giving testimony at the proper time about God's desire to save all men and for them to come to a knowledge of the truth, Jesus gave Himself as a ransom for all men (1 Timothy 2:1-7, page 1855). Truth dominated the life and teaching of Jesus. Likewise, Paul called himself a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and truth. Faith without truth yields eternal damnation. Only by faith in the truth of God about salvation will anyone find eternal life. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching faith and truth about Jesus and God's desire to bring all men to salvation and the knowledge of the truth.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching faith and truth about Jesus and God's desire to bring all men to salvation and the knowledge of the truth, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty

The Ministry of The Teachers:

The Priority of Scripture

20.1 Attention To Scripture. Paul emphasized that Timothy must give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, and to teaching (1 Timothy 3:13, page 1857). The Scriptures not only supply the Gospel of Jesus Christ for salvation, but they also provide the knowledge of Jesus our Lord, whose divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and Godliness, through the true knowledge Him who called us by His own glory and excellence (2 Peter 1:2-3, page 1900). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people to give attention to the Scriptures.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about the importance of reading the Scriptures, and to practice what we read there, and give attention to reading the Scriptures, especially in public, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

20.2 Pay Close Attention to Your Teaching. Paul also commanded Timothy to pay close attention ("ἔπεχε") to himself and his teaching (1 Timothy 4:16, page 1857). Paul meant that they go hand in hand: who you are and what you teach relate directly to each other. You may be a hypocrite, like the Pharisees; or you may be sound in doctrine and sound in your walk with Christ, doing what He says. Today the doctrine of verbal and plenary inspiration of the Scriptures has come under serious attack by some Bible translators, some college and seminary teachers, some popular preachers, and by all kinds of people who claim to uphold the integrity of the Bible, but they claim the Bible does not contain a faithful record of the very words of Jesus. They also believe that God allowed many errors to creep into the Bible, so that it is not accurate historically, morally, or in other matters where it makes claims to truth. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may

have ministry of paying close attention to teaching, and particularly ensuring the integrity of sound doctrine and the truth of Scriptures.

Identification. If you have a ministry of paying close attention to teaching, while emphasizing and proving that the Scripture brims full with historical truth and preserves the very words of Jesus (by the supernatural ministry of the Holy Spirit), and forms the only basis for life and Godliness, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

20.3 Doctrine Not Blasphemed. Paul understood the relationship between doctrine and personal behavior. If you live a corrupt life and still try to teach sound doctrine, people may blaspheme the sound doctrine because of your evil behavior. Paul revealed that slaves must be in subjection to their masters, so that the name of God may not be blasphemed. (1 Timothy 6:1, page 1859; see also 1 Peter 2:18, page 1896). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of ensuring that sound doctrine is not blasphemed because of the evil behavior of some teachers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of seeing to it that evil behavior does not cause the name of God to be blasphemed, and that believers join their doctrine to their own good works which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

20.4 Godly Living. God uses sound doctrine to promote sound, Godly living. Only the doctrine which agrees with the sound words of Jesus Christ will produce doctrine conforming to Godliness (1 Timothy 6:3, page 1859; see also 2 Timothy 3:10-11, page 1863). Young men, especially, must show themselves to be an example in all things, with purity in doctrine and other Godly qualities (Titus 2:6-8, page 1866). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers how God uses sound doctrine to promote sound, Godly living.

Identification. If you have a ministry of promoting sound doctrine that produces Godly living, including young men who show themselves to be examples in all things, with purity in doctrine and other Godly qualities, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

20.5 Exhorting and Refuting Paul commanded Titus to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict the Bible (Titus 1:9, page 1866; see also Titus 2:1, page 1866). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The

Teachers may have a ministry of exhorting in sound doctrine and refuting those who contradict the Bible.

Identification. If you have a ministry of exhorting in sound doctrine and refuting those who contradict the Bible, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers (see also The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter).

20.6 Good Servant of Jesus Christ. In pointing out to the brethren the need to follow the Scriptures, Paul told Timothy that he would be a good servant of Christ Jesus, and constantly nourished on the words of the faith and of the sound doctrine ("τῆς καλῆς διδασκαλίας") which he had been following (1 Timothy 4:1-6, page 1857). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of pointing out the need to follow the Scriptures, being constantly nourished upon the words of faith and of sound doctrine.

Identification. If you have a ministry of pointing out to the brethren the need to follow the Scriptures, and so prove youself to be a good servant of Jesus Christ, and you are constantly nourished on the words of faith and sound doctrine, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

20.7 The Application of Scripture. God declared that He breathed out all Scripture. He made it for the purpose of teaching, reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16, page 1864). Virtually every spiritual gift requires a knowledge and proper application of Scripture. Through the particular spiritual gift, God applies His inspired word for the benefit of people and the building up of the Body of Christ. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of applying the Scriptures so that other believers may understand the inspiration of Scripture and God's intended use of the Scriptures.

Identification. If you have a ministry of using the Scritpures for teaching, exhorting, reproving, correcting and equipping believers for every good work, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

20.8 Ears Tickled. God emphasized that the time will come when people will not endure ("οὐκ ἀνέξονται") sound doctrine

("ὑγιαινούσης διδασκαλίας"). Instead, they want to have their ears tickled. They will turn their ears away from truth and will turn aside to myths. They will accumulate teachers who will fulfill their desires for myths rather than truth (2 Timothy 4:3, page 1864). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching the truth to people who have had their ears tickled by false teachers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching the truth to people who have had their ears tickled by false teachers, and you expose those false teachers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty One

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Astonishing Wisdom

21.1 Astonishing Wisdom. Jesus taught in the synagogue of Nazareth, His hometown. The congregation hearing Him was astonished at His teaching with wisdom and His miraculous powers (Matthew 13:54, page 1525; Mark 6:2, page 1567). Over time, the chief priests and scribes began seeking how to destroy Jesus, for they were afraid of Him (Mark 11:15-18, page 1580). They also feared that the Romans would come and they would lose their place and their nation (John 11:47-52, page 1679; John 18:14, page 1691). Eventually, they arrested Jesus. After questioning Jesus about His teaching, the high priest sent Jesus to Anas, bound and ready for delivery to the Roman governor, Pilate. The religious leaders handed over Jesus to the Romans because they were jealous of Him (Mark 15:10, page 1590). Please recall that The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom (a gift of new revelation) should not be confused with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers (a gift of teaching the Bible). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of proclaiming truth with astonishing wisdom.

Identification. If you have a ministry of proclaiming the astonishing wisdom of God found in the Scriptures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

21.2 Never Educated. As Jesus taught in the temple, the Jews were astonished, saying, "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" (John 7:15, page 1668). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching without having received formal and traditional education.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching the Scriptures, so that people identify you as being taught of Jesus, and yet you have had no formal training in school, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty Two

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Amazing Authority

22.1 Amazing. Jesus went to Capernaum and entered the synagogue and began teaching (Mark 1:21, page 1558). He cast out a demon, and all the people were amazed ("ἐθαμβήθησαν ἅπαντες"), debating among themselves how Jesus brought new teaching ("διδαχὴ καινὴ") with authority ("κατ' ἐξουσίαν"). Even the unclean spirit obeyed Jesus (Mark 1:27, pages 1558-1559). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may teach with the authority of God's word.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching the great authority of Jesus and the Scriptures, and demonstrate that authority when you teach, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

22.2 The Question of John the Baptist. As Jesus was teaching in the temple one day, the chief priests and the elders of the people came to him and asked by what authority Jesus performed miracles and gave teaching, and who gave Him that authority. Jesus answered the question with a question: was the baptism of John the Baptist from heaven or from men? They pondered and knew they were in trouble with either answer. So they refused to answer. Jesus then declined to answer their question. He continued the discussion with them with the parable of the two sons, the parable of the landowner and the parable of the the wedding feast. In all those parables, Jesus directly confronted their own sin and offered them

salvation (Matthew 21:23-22:14, pages 1539-1541; Luke 20:1-18, pages 1640-1641). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry to religious people to confront them with their own sinful pride and self-righteousness, while proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them.

Identification. If you have a ministry of confronting people with their own religious pride, and you teach them from the Scriptures, and proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty Three

The Ministry of The Teachers: Distinguishing the Precepts of Men from the Doctrines of God

23.1 Precepts of Men. Jesus confronted some Pharisees and scribes concerning their sin. Jesus told them that they had transgressed the commandment of God ("τὴν ἐντολὴν τοῦ θεοῦ") for the sake of their traditions ("παράδοσιν"). Those false teachers had created traditions that invalidated the Scriptures. They honored God with their lips, but their hearts were far away from God. They were teaching as doctrines ("διδασκαλίας ") the precepts of men ("ἐντάλματα ἀνθρώπων") (Matthew 15:1-9. page 1527; Mark 7:1-13, pages 1570-1571). Teachers must distinguish between: (a) the commandments of God provided in the Scriptures; and (b) the precepts of men. Human opinions, traditions, and beliefs should never be taught as doctrine. All cults and many "Christian" groups frequently teach the traditions of their groups as doctrine, which are actually the traditions of men. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching the difference between traditions of men and the commandments of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of distinguishing the traditions of men from the doctrine of God found in the Scritpures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

23.2 Commandments and Teaching of Men. Paul wrote the Colossians about people who acted as judges concerning food, drink, special days and festivals. They taught self-abasement and the worship of angels, but they were only standing upon fleshly visions, mere products of their fleshly minds. They did not hold on to Christ, the head of the Church. They sought to impose decrees of do not touch, do not taste, do not handle, which are the commandments and teaching of men, not God. Such matters appear to be wisdom, and teach the severe treatment of the body, but they have no value against fleshly indulgence (Colossians 2:16-23, pages 1843-1844). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people to avoid letting other people sit as judge upon their food, drink and the observance of special days and festivals. Furthermore, believers must be taught to avoid people teaching self-abasement and the worship of angels, because those false teachers stand only upon fleshly visions, and not any revelation from God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of opposing self-abasement and the worship of angels, taught by people who stand upon their own fleshly visions (a product of their own fleshly minds) and impose commands such as do not touch, do not taste, do not handle, and you stand against the commandments of men and proclaim the doctrine of God found in the Scriptures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty Four

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Tax Collectors and Sinners

24.1 The Call of Levi. Jesus went to a tax collector's booth. The Jews generally hated the tax collectors because they worked for Rome, the enemy occupiers, and they often collected more tax than people owed; they became rich by charging too much tax, and everyone knew it. Jesus openly visited the tax-collector's booth, and called Levi, also known as Matthew, sitting in a tax booth. Everyone who paid their taxes to Matthew knew that Jesus had just done something very unusual and unpopular. Matthew got up and followed Jesus. Jesus went to his home and met many tax collectors and sinners who came and dined with Jesus. The Pharisees did not understand why Jesus was

eating with tax collectors and sinners. Jesus explained to them that the healthy do not need a physician, but those who are sick. He then told the Pharisees to go and learn what it means that God desires compassion, and not sacrifice, for Jesus did not come to call the righteous, but sinners (Matthew 9:9-13, page 1514). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with tax-collectors and sinners, and simultaneously teaching others, particularly the self-righteous, that God calls the sinners, not the self-righteous, to salvation in Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of eating with tax collectors, sinners, and other outcasts, while teaching the self-righteous that God calls sinners to repentance and eternal life, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty Five

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Traveling

25.1 Jesus Traveled. Jesus taught throughout the villages and cities, and openly in the world, in the areas of Judea, Galilee and Jerusalem, and with a brief ministry in Sychar of Samaria (John 18:20, page 1691; Matthew 11:1, page 1518). Jesus was teaching ("διδάσκων") in the temple at Jerusalem (Matthew 26:55, page 1552; Mark 12:35, page 1583; Mark 14:49, page 1588; Luke 19:47, page 1640; Luke 21:37, page 1644; John 7:28, page 1669); and in the treasury inside the temple (John 8:20, page 1671); in the synagogues (Galilee, Luke 4:15, page 1602); at Nazareth, pursuant to His custom (Luke 4:16, page 1602); at Capernaum (Luke 4:31-36, page 1603; John 6:59, page 1667; Mark 1:21, page 1558); in the wilderness and on the mountain (Mark 6:6, page 1567); and in the cities and villages, even as He traveled (Matthew 9:35, page1515; Luke 13:22, page 1628). Jesus taught all over Judea, starting from Galilee to Jerusalem (Luke 23:5, page 1648). He taught in the synagogues, in the temple, and by the sea, and in the wilderness. Jesus used travel not only to spread the Gospel to the cities and villages of Israel, but He also proclaimed the Good News beyond Israel and to Samaritans and to Gentiles (Matthew 15:21-28, a Syrophonecian woman; John 4:1-42, pages

1659-1661, a Samaritan woman). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching and preaching by traveling throughout a geographical area, with different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Identification. If you have a ministry of traveling to different geographical and cultural areas, teaching and preaching the Scriptures, and you have a focus upon proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

25.2 People Traveled To Hear Jesus. At least once, Pharisees and teachers of the law came from every village of Galilee and Judea and from Jerusalem to observe Jesus in a home in Capernaum (Luke 5:17, page 1604; Mark 2:1-12, pages 1559-1560). Large crowds from Galilee, the Decapolis and Jerusalem, and Judea and from beyond the Jordan followed Jesus (Matthew 5:25, page 1506). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may face large crowds, that have traveled a long way to hear the teaching. In fact, some in the crowd may have come just to trap or condemn the teacher.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching so that large crowds coming from far distances to hear you teach the Scriptures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

25.3 The Apostles Traveled. Not long after Jesus chose His disciples, they began to travel to other cities and villages, proclaiming that men should repent (Mark 6:7-13, pages 1567-1568; Mark 6:30, page 1569). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching in a specific geographic area about the need for repentance and salvation.

Identification. If you have a ministry of traveling through a specific geographical area, teaching the need for repentance while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty Six

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Home Base

26.1 Antioch. The persecution of Christians arising after the death of Stephen promoted the dispersion of believers into various areas. Some of those believers brought the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles at Antioch. The church there grew dramatically, with great things happening. The church at Jerusalem sent trusted Barnabas to see what was going on at Antioch. Barnabas labored there, and then brought Saul (later called Paul) from Tarsus to use his spiritual gifts there and join the ministry team. Paul and Barnabas, with others, ministered together in Antioch for an entire year (Acts 11:19-26, page 1722). From Antioch, the Holy Spirit sent out Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary journey. After completing the journey, they returned to Antioch and reported on the Lord's work (Acts 13:1-14:28, pages 1724-1728). Antioch became a home base for great spiritual activity, where Paul and Barnabas continued their preaching and teaching after the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15:1-35, pages 1728-1730). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of establishing a home base, like Antioch, for greater teaching, making disciples, and sending out missionaries.

Identification. If you have a ministry of preaching and teaching and establishing and operating a home base for more teaching and missionary activity, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

26.2 Ephesus. Paul found some disciples at Ephesus, but they had only received the baptism of John the Baptist. Paul explained to them about believing in Jesus, and they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they began speaking in tongues. The congregation of the church at Ephesus began with twelve men. Paul spent three months in Ephesus teaching in the synagogue about the kingdom of God. Opposition arose in the synagogue, and he withdrew to the school of Tyrannus, so that for two years, all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. Paul performed great work, teaching publicly and from house to house, so that the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing against evil (Acts 19:1-20, pages 1737-1738; Acts 20:17-38, page 1741). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of proclaiming the Lord Jesus, discipling a small group of men for a few years, overcoming opposition. From one small group of disciples, an entire region may hear the word of the Lord.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching the Scriptures publicly and from house to house, so that the word of the Lord was growing mightily and prevailing, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty Seven

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Crowds

27.1 Crowds. Jesus had crowds ("ὁ ὄχλος") of people coming to Him (Mark 2:13, page 1560). According to the custom ("εἰώθει") of Jesus, He taught the crowds when they gathered around Him (Mark 10:1, page 1577). Jesus also taught in the temple, where crowds gathered to Him (John 8:2, page 1670). Jesus gave the Sermon on the Mount, one of His most famous sermons, to a crowd (Matthew 5:2, page 1506). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may teach crowds of people.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching crowds that come to you, while you travel from place to place teaching the Scritpures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty Eight

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Seaside Sermons

28.1 Seaside Sermons. Jesus preached at the seaside (Mark 2:13, page 1560). At times, He preached from a boat to a crowd on the seashore (Luke 5:3, page 1604; Mark 4:1, page 1563). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a seaside ministry of teaching.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching the Scritpures at the seaside and crowds listen, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Twenty Nine

The Ministry of The Teachers:

The New Self

29.1 Lay Aside. Paul emphasized that he taught the Ephesians that they lay aside ("ἀποθέσθαι") their former manner of life which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit (Ephesians 4:21-22, page 1831). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching the truth in Jesus that every believer must obey the command to lay aside the former manner of life.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers to lay aside their former manner of life which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

29.2 Renewed. Paul also taught that every believer must be renewed ("ἀνανεοῦσθα") in the spirit of their mind (Ephesians 4:23, page 1831). A

believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers how to be renewed in the spirit of their mind.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers to be renewed in the spirit of their mind, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Rooted And Built upon Jesus

30.1 Firmly Rooted. Paul explained to the Colossians that believers must walk worthy of the Lord Jesus after their conversion (Colossians 2:6, page 1843). Part of that worthy walk includes being firmly rooted ("ἐρριζωμένοι ") in Christ. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of helping believers walk worthy of the Lord Jesus by being firmly rooted in Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers to walk worthy of the Lord Jesus, having been firmly rooted in Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

30.2 Established in Your Faith. Paul taught that all believers must be discipled, and established in their faith ("βεβαιούμενοι τῇ πίστει"). Paul linked basic teaching with being firmly rooted and established in the Christian faith. Without sound teaching, the believer will not mature and grow in Christ. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of helping believers become established in their faith.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers as part of a discipleship program to establish believers in their faith, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty One

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Elementary Things

31.1 Elementary Things. The audience of the Book of Hebrews consisted of believers and unbelievers. Some of the believers had not matured in their faith. Instead of being ready teachers, they needed someone to teach them again the oracles of God (Hebrews 5:12, page 1874). They had never moved beyond the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of instructions about washings and laying on of hands, and the resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment (Hebrews 6:1-2, page 1874). Paul urged those backward believers to press on to maturity. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry to slothful believers of grounding them in the foundations of Christian doctrine and teaching them to press on to maturity in Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching slothful believers to be grouded in the foundation of Christian doctrine and teaching them to press on to maturity in Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty Two

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Standing Firm

32.1 Standing Firm. Paul instructed the Thessalonians to "stand firm" ("στήκετε") and "hold to the traditions" ("κρατεῖτε τὰς παραδόσεις ") which they were taught (2 Thessalonians 2: 15, page 1853). With proper teaching, believers may stand upon those traditions which they were taught according to Scripture. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of helping believers learn the traditions from Scripture that will help them stand firm upon those traditions. Likewise, a believer with The

Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers how to stand firm upon those previous teachings.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers to stand upon the traditions of Scripture, and you teach them how to do so, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty Three

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Hope

33.1 Encouragement of the Scriptures God preserved Scripture so that believers may read what happened in earlier times. Those historical accounts in the Scripture provide accurate accounts that God preserved for a particular purpose. God purposed that those Scriptures written in earlier times would bring hope today. That hope comes from the perseverance and the encouragement of the Scriptures written earlier. By reading the Scriptures, God gives perseverance and encouragement to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, so that with one accord believers may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 15:4, page 1778; see also 1 John 1:1-4, page 1904). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of building hope and encouragement based upon the Scriptures, bringing unity in the Body of Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers how to have hope and encouragement founded upon the Scriptures, bringing unity to the Body of Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

33.2 No Craving. God preserved the Scriptures so that we may benefit from the things which happened previously by avoiding the sinful mistakes of some people of Israel. God was not pleased with many of them during the time of Moses. Those things happened as examples for believers today so that believers would not crave evil things as they also craved ("ἐπεθύμησαν"). By learning and applying the truths of Scripture, especially by understanding the cravings of idolatry, we will avoid immorality and grumbling against God.

We face the same temptations earlier generations faced, but God always provides a way of escape, so that we will be able to endure temptation (1 Corinthians 10:13, page 1793). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching the Bible, and emphasizing the prior experiences of people in the Old Testament, so that believers today may learn to avoid craving evil things, and falling into immorality and grumbling against God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching the prior, evil experiences of some people in the Old Testament, so that believers today may learn how to avoid craving evil things, and falling into grumbling and immorality, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty Four

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Prayer

34.1 John the Baptist and Prayer. John the Baptist taught his disciples how to pray (Luke 11:1, page 1620). As a part of making disciples, a believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may teach disciples of Jesus Christ to pray.

34.2 Jesus and Prayer. The disciples of Jesus, at least two of which were first disciples of John the Baptist, asked Jesus to teach them to pray (Luke 11:1-13, pages 1620-1621). Jesus provided careful teaching on prayer, including teaching about the loving Father giving good gifts. Yet, believers do not completely know how to pray, and so must rely upon the ministry of the Holy Spirit as we pray (Romans 8:26, page 1769). Jesus taught prayer through modeling prayer. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may spend considerable time teaching disciples how to pray and how to understand the ministry of the Holy Spirit in our prayer lives.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people how to pray, and model praying to disciples, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty Five

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Crying Out

35.1 Crying Out. At times, Jesus used a loud voice to cry out ("ἔκραξεν"), as He did in the temple at Jerusalem. Jesus proclaimed loudly that people knew Him and where He came from, but they did not know His Father, Who sent Jesus and is true (John 7:28-29, page 1669; compare John 8:14, page 1670-1671). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of loudly proclaiming the truths of God about Jesus Christ and the reasons that God sent Him to earth.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching by loudly proclaiming the truth of Jesus Christ and the reasons God sent Jesus to earth, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty Six

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Perseverance

36.1 Jail. The High Priest and the Sadducees jailed the apostles for their teaching about Jesus and their refusal to obey men. The religious leaders commanded the apostles to stop teaching in the name of Jesus (Act 4:18, page 1705; Acts 5:12-21, pages 1707-1708). During the night, an angel opened the prison gates and directed the apostles to go to the temple and speak to the people the whole message of this life (Acts 5:19, pages 1708). At daybreak, those apostles entered the temple and began to teach, and kept right on teaching, even after being flogged and warned again against such teaching and preaching (Acts 5:17-42, pages 1707-1709). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may teach the whole message of this life even after imprisonment and threats aimed at stopping the teaching.

Identification. If you have been beaten and flogged because of your ministry of sound teaching in temples and before crowds about Jesus Christ, and continue to teach in temples and before crowds, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty Seven

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Impartiality

37.1 The Impartial Jesus. Jesus taught the truth of God with impartiality. Three points deserve attention here in Matthew 22:16, page 1541.

37.1.1 Truthful. Jesus had a reputation for being truthful ("ἀληθὴς"). Even His enemies recognized His reputation for being truthful, even if they thought personally that He was a liar. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers must have a ministry of being truthful and impartial in all things.

Identification. If you have a ministry of being truthful and impartial in your teaching and behavior, and even your enemies acknowledge the same, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

37.1.2 Teach the Way of God. Jesus had a reputation that He "taught the way of God in truth" ("διδάσκεις"). Notice the connection between His personal reputation for truthfulness, and His reputation for teaching the "way of God" in truth. The personal reputation for truth harmonizes with the teaching of God in truth. Teaching and personal testimony must go hand in hand. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers must have a reputation for teaching the way of God in truth and teaching others the importance of harmonizing your personal reputation for truth with teaching the Scriptures.

Identification. If you have a ministry characterized by teaching the way of God in truth and emphasizing the importance of your personal reputation for truth with teaching the Scriptures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

37.1.3 Defer to No One. Jesus also had a reputation for deferring to no one ("οὐ μέλει σοι περὶ οὐδενός"). Jesus had no worries about what anyone thought about Him or His teaching, because He knew He taught the word of God in truth. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers must have a reputation for deferring to no one, because He teaches the way of God in truth, which supersedes all things.

Identification. If you have a ministry characterized by your practice to defer to no one (except God), then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

37.1.4 You Are Not Partial to Any. Jesus had a reputation for impartiality. His enemies observed: "for You are not partial to any ("οὐ γὰρ βλέπεις εἰς πρόσωπον ἀνθρώπων")." Jesus had a reputation for impartiality because of His truthfulness and His teachings of the ways of God. He did not play favorites with anyone or any group. Jesus deferred to no one ("βλέπεις εἰς πρόσωπον"). He was no respecter of persons (Matthew 22:16, page 1541). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers must have a ministry of impartiality, deferring to no one, and avoiding preference based upon appearance.

Identification. If you have a ministry of impartiality, deferring to no one and avoiding preference based upon appearance, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty Eight

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Compassion

38.1 The Sheep. Jesus looked upon a crowd and described them as sheep without a shepherd. Jesus then taught them many things because He felt compassion for them (Mark 6:34, page 1569). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have great compassion for people and crowds, viewing them as sheep without a shepherd, and teach them.

Identification. If you have a ministry to crowds looking like sheep without a shepherd, and you are moved with compassion to teach them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Thirty Nine

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Not Appearance

39.1 Not Based upon Appearance. Jesus amazed people with His teaching. Some even expressed astonishment: "How has this man become learned, having never been educated?" Jesus replied that His teaching was not His, but His Who sent Him. Jesus also explained that only people willing to do the will of God will know whether the teaching of Jesus is from God or whether He speaks of Himself. Jesus was not seeking His own glory, but rather the glory of Him who sent Jesus. One day a crowd marveled because Jesus healed on the Sabbath. Some religious leaders also sought to kill Jesus for healing on the Sabbath. Jesus confronted those evil religious leaders by showing that they circumcised their children on the Sabbath, and yet they were angry with Him for making an entire man well on the Sabbath. Jesus warned them not to judge by appearance, but judge with righteous judgment (John 7:14-24, page 1668). People need to learn to judge with righteous judgment, and not to criticize Jesus who is the Righteous Judge. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people to stop judging by appearance, but rather to judge in righteousness, based upon the Scriptures.

Identification. If you have ministry of teaching people to judge with righteous judgment (render the judgments first rendered by God), and to stop judging by appearance, but to yield to Jesus, the Rightous Judge, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Forty

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Nature

40.1 Long Hair. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: "Does not nature ("φύσις") itself teach you that if a man has long hair, it is a dishonor to him?" In that context, Paul discussed the importance of head covering for women in the church meetings (1 Corinthians 11:14, page 1795). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry that illustrates Scriptural principles also taught by "nature."

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching spiritual truths using illustrations from nature, and consonant with sound doctrine, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

40.2 Olive Tree. Paul also used the term "nature" to describe the natural growth of an olive tree. He used a grafting analogy with an olive tree to contrast (a) the grafting of "natural" (cultivated) olive branches with (b) the grafting of wild olive branches (1 Corinthians 11:14, page 1795; Romans 11:24, page 1774). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of explaining theological truths using analogies from nature.

Identification. If you have a ministry of using analogies from nature to explain correctly theological truths, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Forty One

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Slaves of Righteousness

41.1 Truth and Faith. Paul explained that believers were once slaves of sin, but they became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which they were committed, and, having been freed from sin, they became slaves of

righteousness (Romans 6:15-19, page 1766). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people how to overcome the weakness of their flesh, and live in triumph as slaves of Jesus Christ, through obedience to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people who once were slaves of sin, but now have been born again in Jesus, about the triumph of Christ overcoming the weakness of their flesh, and that they can live in triumphant freedom from slavery to sin, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Forty Two

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Masters

42.1 Slaves and Masters. Born-again slaves must serve their masters and regard those masters as worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and Christian doctrine would not be spoken against. Paul instructed Timothy to preach and teach those principles (1 Timothy 6:1-2, page 1859; see also 1 Peter 2:18, page 1856). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of instructing slaves, soldiers, employees, or others in a position of submission to authority, how to serve those masters as worthy of all honor.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching slaves, soldiers, employees or others in a position of submission to authority how to serve their masters as worthy of all honor, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

42.2 Purity of Doctrine. Bond-slaves must be subject to their own masters in everything, to be well-pleasing, not argumentative, not pilfering, but showing good faith so that they will adorn the doctrine of God our Savior in every respect (Titus 2:9-11, page 1866). Godly doctrine must always wear the clothes of Godly actions. We live our doctrine by how we act each day, all day. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of instructing slaves, soldiers, employees, or others to adorn the doctrine of

God with their good behavior--not pilfering, not argumentative, always showing good faith.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching slaves, soldiers, employees, or others to adorn the doctrine of God with their good behavior-(not pilfering, not argumentative, always showing good faith), then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Forty Three

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Disciples

43.1 Making Disciples. Jesus invited Andrew and another disciple of John the Baptist to "Come and you will see." Those people came and followed Jesus for a lifetime. Andrew in turn found others (John 1:35-51, pages 1655-1656). Jesus commanded believers to make disciples in all the world, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and teaching them to observe all that He commanded (Matthew 28:19-20, page 1557). Discipleship involves one believer teaching another believer the commands of Christ and how to live in the presence of Christ each day. A disciple will never be above his teacher; it is enough if the disciple become like his teacher when fully trained (Matthew 10:24-25, page 1517: Luke 6:40, page 1608). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching other believers the commands of Christ, within the greater context of making disciples in all the world.

Identification. If you have a ministry of making disciples, reaching out to all the world, and teaching them to observe all that Jesus commanded, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

43.2 Multiplying Disciples. Paul commanded Timothy to entrust the things Timothy had heard from Paul to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also (2 Timothy 2:2, page 1862). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching all that Paul taught (Christ revealed to him great truths) with a view of entrusting the message of God to other believers who will teach others also (a ministry of multiplication).

Identification. If you have a ministry of multiplication characterized by entrusting to faithful men the teachings of Christ that you have heard from faithful men, so that they will teach the teachings of Christ to other faithful men also, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fourty Four

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Complete in Christ

44.1 Complete in Christ. Paul proclaimed ("καταγγέλλομεν"), admonishing ("νουθετοῦντες") and teaching (" διδάσκοντες") every man with all wisdom, so that he may present every man complete in Christ (Colossians 1:28, page 1842). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching with all wisdom, so that every man may be presented as complete in Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of proclaiming, while admonishing and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that you may present every man complete in Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

44.2 Christ Richly Dwelling. Paul also commanded the Colossians to let the peace of Christ rule in their hearts and the word of Christ richly dwell within them. He elaborated that the believers must with all wisdom be teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual song, singing with thankfulness in their hearts to God (Colossians 3:15-16, page 1844; 1 Corinthians 14:26, page 1799). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching other believers how to teach and admonish one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching other believers how to teach and admonish one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Forty Five

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Signs and Wonders

45.1 Seeking signs. Some of the scribes and Pharisees demanded a sign from Jesus. Jesus replied that they were an evil and adulterous generation craving a sign. He then explained that they would be given the sign of Jonah the prophet (Matthew 12:38-42, page 1521). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of explaining signs concerning Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching an evil and adulterous generation who seek a sign that God has already given the sign of Jonah the prophet (pointing to the resurrection of Jesus after three days in the heart of the earth), and you explain other signs given by God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

45.2 False Signs and Wonders. In the future, false Christs and false prophets will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect (Matthew 24:21-28, page 1545; see also Matthew 7:22, page 1511). Mature believers must test the spirits, evaluate everything carefully, know and apply the Scriptures, and teach others about sound doctrine and identify false Christs and false prophets. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of identifying false Christs and false prophets, along with their great signs and wonders, so that the elect will not be deceived. This ministry may apply today, but will certainly be more pronounced in the future Tribulation.

Identification. If you have a ministry of identifying false christs and false prophets, along with their great false signs and false wonders, and you help the elect to avoid being deceived by them, you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Forty Six

The Ministry of The Teachers:

All Things Possible

46.1 All Things Possible. A rich young man came to Jesus one day and asked:"Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may obtain eternal life?" (Matthew 19:16, page 1535). Jesus answered that only God is good, implying that the rich young man was not good because he was not God. Furthermore, Jesus explained that the rich young man could obtain eternal life by selling his possessions and following Jesus . The rich young man went away grieved because he was very rich. Jesus taught that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. The disciples were astonished, and questioned who could be saved. Jesus replied that with people salvation is impossible, but with God all things are possible. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry: (a) to the confident rich, calling them to sell all their possessions and follow Him; and (b) to the self-righteous, calling them to forsake all human attempts to keep the Law as the basis for salvation by any type of works. Only by following Jesus will God accept anyone into the kingdom of heaven. With God, all things are possible (Matthew 19:16-26, page 1535; see also Matthew 22:34-40, pages 1541-1542; Mark 9:17-31, pages 1577-1578).

Identification. If you have a ministry to the rich brimming with false confidence and the self-righteous, calling them to forsake their riches and their hope of salvation based upon their own works, and to turn to Jesus and following Him, and forsaking all other means of salvation, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Forty Seven

The ministry of The Teachers:

Doing Miracles in the

Name of Jesus

47. 1 Do Not Hinder. Jesus had just finished teaching His disciples about the Pastoral Heresy and the desire to be first. Jesus had set a child in front of them and told them to be like that child and receive the child as one receives Jesus. The disciples then saw someone casting out demons in the name of Jesus, but he was not following the disciples and Jesus. Therefore, the disciples tried to prevent him from casting out demons in the name of Jesus. Jesus replied to His disciples: "Do not hinder him, for there is no one who will perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me. For he who is not against us is for us" (Mark 9:39-40, page 1576). Jesus taught further that anyone who gave them a cup of water because they were followers of Christ would not lose his reward. Jesus then warned His disciples about causing little ones to stumble, and how unbelievers would suffer greatly in the unquenchable fire of hell (Mark 9:38-49, pages 1576-1577). Jesus educated the disciples about people operating in His name. Jesus knew that evil people could cast out demons to deceive unbelievers, but Jesus also warned His disciples not to hinder people casting out demons in His name.

Identification. If you have a ministry of recognizing that unsaved people work miracles intending to deceive all people, and you also recognize that some people perform miracles in the name of Jesus and will not be able to speak evil of Jesus soon afterwards, and you teach other people to understand how saved people should respond to all such activities, drawing the correct distinctions between different miracle workers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Forty Eight

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Rank

48.1 Rank in the Kingdom of God. James and John, the sons of Zebedee, asked Jesus: "Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask of You." They sought to sit on His right and left hand in His glory. In other words, they wanted the best places of highest honor for themselves. Jesus replied that it was not His to give; but it was prepared for chosen people. Then Jesus explained that anyone wishing to be first in the kingdom of God, must first be a slave of all. Jesus Himself did come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many (Mark 10:33-45, pages 1578-1579). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers that rank in the kingdom of God rests upon being a slave of all and following the example of Jesus, by giving his life in service to God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about rank in the kingdom and how Jesus came to serve and not be served, so that rank in the kingdom rests upon being a slave of all and following the example of Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Forty Nine

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Sight

49.1 The Man Born Blind. Jesus met a man born bind. His disciples questioned whether the blindness originated from the sin of the man or the sin of his parents. Jesus explained that neither explanation was true, but the blindness was so that the works of God might be displayed in him. Jesus healed the man, and then his parents denied knowledge about the healing. The blind man, then seeing, gave testimony to the healing power of Jesus. The religious leaders objected to the healing because Jesus healed on the Sabbath. In the end, the religious leaders expelled the man from the

synagogue, but he continued to speak about Jesus. The religious leaders condemned the man for "teaching" ("διδάσκεις") them about Jesus and His power to heal (John 9:1-41, pages 1673-1675). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people about Jesus by demonstrating that Jesus opened his blind eyes so that people may see the works of God in his life and so glorify God and turn to Jesus for salvation and life.

Identification. If Jesus has opened your eyes to see Jesus as He truly is and you have experienced His saving power, and you have a ministry of teaching others about how Jesus opens the eyes of the blind so that they experience His saving power, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifty

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Foods

50.1 Foods. Believers must avoid being carried away by varied and strange teachings concerning foods. Believers must remember that it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace, not by foods, through which those who were so occupied were not benefited (Hebrews 13:9, page 1886). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers about the value of strange teachings concerning food that do not truly benefit the heart.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers about strange and varied teachings about food, and you teach that it is good for the heart to be strengthened by grace and not by food, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifty One

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Woes

51.1 Woes. Jesus pronounced woes upon the Pharisees because they cleaned the outside of the cup, but inside they were full of robbery and wickedness. They tithed of garden herbs, but disregarded justice and the love of God. Then one of the lawyers said: "Teacher, when You say this, You insult us too." Jesus then pronounced woes upon the lawyers because they laid heavy burdens upon people, but never touched them themselves. They approved the evil deeds of their fathers in killing the prophets. They also had taken away the key of knowledge, they did not enter, and they hindered those who were entering (Luke 10:45-52, page 1623). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching religious people that God has pronounced woes upon them, even though they find the teaching of Jesus insulting.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching which exposes false religious teachers who take away the key of knowledge so that people do not enter the kingdom of God, who practice the evil deeds of their fathers, and who inside are full of robbery and wickedness, and who disregard justice and the love of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifty Two

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Greed

52.1 Greed. A man from the crowd wanted Jesus to act as Judge: "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me." Jesus answered: "Man, who appointed Me a judge or arbitrator over you?" Jesus then explained the problem of greed. According to Jesus, no matter how much a man may have in earthly abundance, his life will never consist of his possessions. People must become rich toward God and not worry about food

and clothing. God loves you and knows the things you need. Seek God first and His kingdom, and all the earthly things you need will be added to you. (Luke 12:13-48, pages 1624-1626). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people about greed, food and clothing. People must seek the kingdom of God first, and all other things will be added to them.

Section Fifty Three

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Sin

53.1 The Purpose of the Law. The Law, and its sacrifices in particular, served as a reminder of how sinful people truly are. They sin and, therefore, they need a Savior, Jesus Christ. Paul explained that the Law was made for the rebellious, for the unGodly and sinners, for the unholy and profane, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers and immoral men and homosexuals and kidnappers and liars and perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound teaching, according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, with which Paul has been entrusted (1 Timothy 1:8-11, page 1854). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry teaching sound doctrine, with a particular emphasis upon exposing and confronting the evil behaviors described above.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching about how the Old Testament Law was made for sinners and not the righteous, and you proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ as an entrusted servant of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifty Four

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Pious Unbelief

54.1 Pious Unbelief. Nicodemus, a Pharisee, a teacher of Israel and a ruler of the Jews, came to Jesus by night and made a five-point declaration to Jesus: (a) you deserve the title "Rabbi;" (b) you have come from God; (c) you are a teacher; (d) you do signs; and (e) God is with you. Nicodemus sounded like a very pious man, steeped in his religion. Jesus answered Him: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus expressed his shock and amazement. Jesus lovingly explained to him the way of salvation by faith in Jesus alone. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching very pious unbelievers that they have not been born again in order to enter the kingdom of God. They must be born again to enter the kingdom of God, no matter how many nice things they believe about Jesus.

Identification. If you have a ministry to religious people who say many nice things about Jesus, but have never been born again, and you teach them about being born again by grace through faith in Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifty Five

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Women, Teaching, Authority

55.1 Not To Allow Women To Teach or Exercise Authority over Men. Paul reminded Timothy that Paul did not "allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet" (1 Timothy 2:12, page 1856). Paul then cited theological reasons for that doctrine. The context of 1 Timothy 2:1-11, pages 1856-1857, contrasts men and women, not husbands and wives as some claim. Paul directed that men should be lifting up holy hands as they pray. He was not focusing upon husbands, but men in every

place (1 Timothy 2:8, page 1855). Likewise, Paul urged the women to adorn themselves with proper clothing, modestly and discreetly, not with braided hair and gold pearls or costly garments, but with good words, as is proper for women making a claim to godliness. Furthermore, a woman must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness (1 Timothy 2:9-10, page 1855). Therefore, Paul did not allow ("οὐκ ἐπιτρέπω") a women ("γυναικὶ ") to teach a man ("αὐθεντεῖν ἀνδρός") or exercise authority ("εἶναι ἐν ἡσυχίᾳ") over a man (1 Timothy 2:12).

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching that women should not teach men or exercise authority over them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

55.2 The Order of Creation. Paul emphasized that Adam was first created, and then Eve. Because of that order of creation, a woman should not teach or exercise authority over a man.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching the order of creation, and the significance of that order when it comes to women teaching or exercising authority over a man, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

55.3 Eve Deceived. In the Garden of Eden, Eve was deceived and so fell into transgression; Adam also sinned, but was not deceived. Because of the woman being deceived, when the man was not deceived, a woman should not teach or exercise authority over a man.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching that Eve was deceived and so fell into transgression, while Adam was not deceived, so that a woman should not teach or exercise authority over a man, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

55.4 Female Ministry. While born-again women have vital ministries in the church because of their spiritual gifts, and are of equal value to men in the eyes of God, God left distinct commands for women to follow regarding their activities in the church. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers about the proper role of women in the church, and the need for women not teach men or exercise authority over men. Women must quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness (see also 1 Corinthians 14:34-36, page 1806).

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching that women have vital ministries to the church using their spiritual gifts, and that those women should use their spiritual gifts without teaching men or exercising authority over them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifty Six

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Disturbing the Religious Establishment

56.1 Greatly Disturbed. Peter and John entered the portico of Solomon one day. Peter preached about Jesus, and was teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. The priests and other religious leaders became greatly disturbed ("διαπονούμενοι") by the preaching. The religious leaders seized them, and placed them on trial before the rulers, elders, scribes and those of high priestly descent. Filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter preached Jesus to them too. The council then threatened them further about preaching and teaching in the name of Jesus, but they replied: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; for we cannot stop speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:12-31, pages 1705-1706). The apostles filled Jerusalem with their teaching in the name of Jesus, and suffered beatings and imprisonment (Acts 5:28, Page 1708). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of preaching and teaching in the name of Jesus, particularly about His resurrection and the free gift of salvation, in the face of stiff opposition and persecution from religious leaders.

Identification. If you have suffered stiff opposition and persecution from religious leaders for proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ and publicly teaching the Scriptures, and you continue your public ministry, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifty Seven

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Opposition

57.1 Jesus and Opposition. Jesus prophesied concerning His death, burial and resurrection (Matthew 16:13-23, page 1530; Mark 8:31, page 1573; Mark 9:31, page 1576; John 7:32-39, page 1669). Death did not surprise Jesus, but He taught His disciples about His death before His hour came. Even knowing that His enemies sought to destroy Him, Jesus continued teaching daily in temple (Luke 19:45-48, page 1640). Previously Jesus had avoided Judea because the Jews there were seeking to kill Him (John 7:1, page 1667). Likewise, Paul and his companions often fled from persecution and moved on to the next city (Acts 9:24-25, page 1717; Acts 12:17-19, page 1723; Acts 14:1-7, page 1727; Acts 14:19-20, page 1728; Acts 17:1-10, pages 1733-1734; Acts 17:13-15, page 1734). Knowing that His time had come, Jesus steadfastly taught daily in the temple, even knowing His crucifixion and resurrection were near. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching in hostile environments, with knowledge about when to flee persecution and when to remain.

Identification. If you have a ministry of publicly preaching and teaching the Scriptures and the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you know when to flee hostile environments and move to the next venue, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifty Eight

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Participating in False Teaching

58.1 Unbelievers Teaching. John warned about teachers who deceive people by denying that Jesus came into the world in the flesh. Such false teachers are the deceiver and the anti-Christ. If anyone does not abide in the teaching of Christ, and brings a teaching contrary to the teaching of Christ, then believers must not receive him into their houses or give him a greeting. If they do greet him, then they participate in his evil deeds (1 John

1:6-11, page 1910). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers to avoid housing or speaking to false teachers who bring teaching contrary to the teachings of Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people not to accept any teaching which opposes the teaching of Christ, and you teach people not receive those false teachers into their homes and not even to give them a greeting, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

58.2 Turn Away. Paul also warned believers to turn away from people who cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the teaching which they learned from the apostles (Romans 16:17, page 1781). Likewise, believers must keep away from every brother who lives an unruly life not according to the tradition received from the apostles (2 Thessalonians 3:6, page 1853). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers to turn away from people causing dissensions and hindrances and to keep away from every brother living an unruly life.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching that believers should turn away from every person who causes dissension and hindrances contrary to the teaching delivered by the apostles in the New Testament, and you teach people to keep away from every brother who lives an unruly life not according to the tradition received from the apostles in the New Testament, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Fifty Nine

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Force

59.1 The Scourge. Jesus entered the temple and drove out the people buying and selling in the temple, and overturned the tables of the money changers and the seats of those selling doves (Mark 11:15, page 1580). Then Jesus began to teach them about the word of God: "My house shall be called a house of prayer for all the nations." Jesus then applied that passage from the Old Testament to the people of commerce in the temple. Jesus taught them: "But you have made it a robber's den." A believer with The Spiritual

Gift of The Teachers may teach after forcefully applying the word of God, drawing upon the Scripture as the authority for forceful action.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching the Scritpures and then forcefully applying those Scriptures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixty

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Strange Doctrines

60.1 Strange Doctrines. Paul urged ("παρεκάλεσά") Timothy to remain at Ephesus so that he may instruct ("παραγγείλῃς") certain men not to teach strange doctrines ("ἑτεροδιδασκαλεῖν")(1 Timothy 1:3, page 1854). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people not to teach strange doctrines.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people not to teach strange doctrines, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixty One

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Demons

61.1 Demon Possession. As Jesus descended from the Mount of Transfiguration, a man approached Jesus and said His disciples were unable to cast out the demon from his son. Jesus answered: "O unbelieving generation, how long shall I be with you? How long shall I put up with ("ἀνέξομαι") you? Bring him to Me." Jesus linked faith in Jesus with the power to overcome demons. As a generation, despite the miracles of Jesus and His demonstrated power over demons, people still lacked faith in Jesus to overcome demons. Jesus also overcame doubts about His power: "If you can? All things are possible to him who believers." The boy's father

responded, "I do believe; help my unbelief." Like the disciples of Jesus in the boat during the storm, the father of the demoniac son had some faith in Jesus, but no faith that Jesus could cast out the demon. Jesus cast out the demon and the boy lived. Jesus explained privately to His disciples that this kind of demon ("οὗτο τὸ γένος") cannot come out by anything but prayer. (Mark 914-29, page 1575; Luke 9:37-45, page 1617; Matthew 17:14-23, pages 1531-1532). Jesus had power over all demons and frequently cast them out. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people with demoniacs in their families, or in their lives, about the power of Jesus to cast out demons, but they must have faith in Jesus and His power. Furthermore, disciples must be taught that some kinds of demons only come out through prayer.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people about the power of faith in Jesus and prayer to cast out demons, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixty Two

The Ministry of The Teachers:

The Doctrine of Deceitful Spirits

and the Doctrine of Demons

62.1 Deceitful Spirits and the Doctrines of Demons. In the later times, some will fall away ("ἀποστήσονταί") from their faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits ("πνεύμασιν πλάνοις") and the doctrines of demons ("δασκαλίαις δαιμονίων") (1 Timothy 4:1, page 1857). Timothy had to stand against such evil forces and evil doctrines. Timothy had to prescribe and teach sound doctrine of Christ, the Savior of all men, especially of believers (1 Timothy 4:6-16, page 1857).

Identification. If you have a ministry of warning people that in the last times, some will fall away from their faith by paying attention to deceitful spirits and the doctrines of demons, and you stand against such evil forces and evil doctrines, and you prescribe and teach the sound doctrine of Christ,

the Savior of all men, especially of believers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixty Three

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Trappers

63.1 Trappers. Certain men in the New Testament thought they might trap ("ἀγρεύσωσιν") Jesus in what He said and taught. Regarding the payment of the poll tax, the Trappers thought they could trap Jesus with any answer He gave regarding paying a tax to the Roman government, which the Jews hated (Mark 12:13-17, page 1582; compare Luke 20:19-26, page 1641). They thought that if: (1) Jesus said pay the tax, then the Jews would hate Him; or (2) if Jesus said do not pay the tax, the Romans would arrest Him for rebellion. With either answer, the Pharisees and Herodians (who promoted the dynasty of Herod, the Jewish ruling pawns of the Romans) thought they had Jesus. So, they asked Jesus: "Is it lawful to pay the poll-tax or not?" They had just said that Jesus was truthful and not partial to any, but He taught the way of God in truth (Mark 12:14, page 1582; Luke 20:19-27, page 1641). Jesus used their question to confront them with their own hypocrisy and to teach them about God. Jesus first asked them: "Why are you testing ("πειράζετε") Me?" He requested a denarius. Holding the coin, Jesus then asked His second question: "Whose likeness and inscription is this?" They replied: "Caesar's." Jesus taught everyone listening: "Render to Caesar to the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's." They were amazed at His answer. They also looked like the hypocrites they were, and they were taken in their own trap. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have the ministry of teaching Trappers who try to trap Jesus, but end up trapping themselves in their hypocrisy and false teaching.

Identification. If you have a ministry of exposing Trappers as hypocrites trying to trap Jesus, and you teach the truth using simple examples illustrating spiritual truths, so that everyone is amazed, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

63.2 Fish Tax. Tax collectors asked Peter if Jesus paid the two-drachma tax. Peter replied: "Yes." Later Jesus asked Peter about the human practice of collecting customs or poll-tax. Peter answered that they collected such taxes from strangers, not their sons. Jesus then said that the sons are exempt. But to avoid offending them, Jesus directed Peter to throw a hook into the sea, take the fish that comes up, open its mouth, find a shekel there, and give it to the tax collectors for both Peter and Jesus (see also Romans 13:1-10, pages 1776-1777). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching the payment of taxes to the government to avoid offending them.

Identification. If you have a ministry of showing people how God provides the means for you to pay your taxes, so that you do not offend the government, and you pay your own taxes, you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixty Four

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Removing Stumbling Blocks

64.1 False Teachers. Jesus wrote to the church at Pergamum that some of the people there held to the teaching of Balaam, and kept the teaching Balak to put a stumbling block before the sons of Israel, particularly to eat things sacrificed to idols and to commit acts of immorality (Revelation 2:14, page 1916). They also had some people who held the teaching of the Nicolaitans (Revelation 2:15, page 1916). They also tolerated the woman Jezebel, who called herself a prophetess, and taught and lead the bond-servants of Jesus astray so that they committed acts of immorality and ate things sacrificed to idols. Some people also held to the deep things of satan, as they called them (Revelation 2:24, page 1917). God promised to bring strong judgment upon her and throw her into great tribulation, along with those people who commit adultery with her, unless they repented of her deeds (Revelation 2:18-29, pages 1916-1917). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of removing stumbling blocks caused by the teaching of false teachers, calling upon people to repent and abandon the false teaching and false teachers.

Identification. If you have a ministry to churches of exposing the false teaching within them and calling them to repentance and the removal of all stumbling blocks, false teachings, and false teachers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

64.2 Teaching Circumcision. Some men came to Jerusalem and taught ("ἐδίδασκον") the brethren that no one could be saved unless they were circumcised according to the custom of Moses (Acts 15:1, page 1728; see also Acts 21:17-26, pages 1741-1743). The Jews even charged that Paul "preaches" ("διδάσκων") to all men everywhere against the Jews, the Law and the temple (Acts 21:27-28). This false teaching of the religious leaders that salvation required keeping the Law undermined the free gift of salvation by grace through faith alone. Paul was not taught The Gospel of Jesus Christ, but received it by revelation directly from Jesus (Galatians 1:12, page 1819). Jesus fulfilled the requirements of the Law for everyone who believes (Matthew 5:19, page 1507). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching the truth about salvation by faith alone, and dispelling any false teaching that believers today must keep the Law of Moses for salvation.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people that they do not need to keep the law to get into heaven, and they do not need to perform any form of works to get into heaven, and that the requirements of the Law were satisfied in Jesus for salvation, and that Jesus is the only Savior, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

64.3 The Sabbath Controversies. Jesus faced opposition from religious leaders who criticized His disciples picking the heads of grain and eating grain on the Sabbath (Luke 6:1-5, page 1606). Likewise, religious leaders also opposed Jesus healing people on the Sabbath, even though they watered their animals on the Sabbath and rescued their sheep from danger on the Sabbath (Luke 6:6-111, page 1607; Luke 12:10-17, page 1627; Matthew 12:1-14, pages 1519-1520; Mark 2:23-27, page 1561). As Lord of the Sabbath, Jesus taught that the Sabbath was made for man, and not the man for the Sabbath (Luke 6:5, page 1606; Matthew 12:8, page 1520 Mark 2:28, page 1561). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching people about freedom from the Law of Moses regarding the Sabbath, and how to embrace the Lord of the Sabbath, and His salvation, by faith alone.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching people that man was not made for the Sabbath and that Jesus is Lord of the Sabbath, and Jesus provided freedom from the Law of Moses, through salvation in Jesus by faith alone, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

64.4 Instructed To Spread Lies. In order to lie about the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the chief priests concocted a story for the soldiers guarding the body of Jesus: "The disciples of Jesus stole His body while we were asleep" (Matthew 28:12-13,page 1557). If anyone asked what happened to the body of Jesus, guarded by the soldiers, they were to tell the lie. The soldiers did as they were instructed ("ἐδιδάχθησαν") and took the money. That lie was spread very widely. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching the truth when faced with many lies about Jesus taught by unbelievers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of confronting popular lies about Jesus and His resurrection, and teaching the truth from Scripture, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixty Five

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Sordid Gain

65.1 Sordid Gain. Some rebellious men, empty talkers and deceivers, proclaiming that one must follow the Law of Moses, were teaching things which were upsetting whole families. They must be silenced. Sordid gain ("αἰσχροῦ κέρδους") motivated them to spew forth false teaching (Titus 1:11, page 1866). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of silencing false teachers who upset entire families, motivated by sordid gain.

Identification. If you have a ministry of silencing empty talkers and deceivers who are upsetting whole families, and exposing those false teachers as motivated by sordid gain, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixty Six

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Preparing for the Future

66.1 Death, Burial, Resurrection. Jesus taught His disciples about His impending arrest, death and resurrection (Mark 8:31, page 1573; Mark 9:31, page 1576). He also told the Jews that they would seek Him, but would not find Him; where He was going, they cannot come. The Jews then asked if Jesus was going to the Dispersion and teach the Greeks (John 7:32-39, page 1669). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus, with an emphasis upon telling unbelievers that they will not go to heaven where Jesus lives.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching unbelievers about the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, and that they will not go to heaven where Jesus and His Father live, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

66.2 Peter's Rebuke. After Jesus explained that He must suffer and die, Peter took Jesus aside and rebuked Him. Peter had just confessed Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus said that flesh and blood had not revealed such knowledge to Peter, but rather the Father revealed His Son, Jesus, to Peter. So often, our interpretations of previous revelations hinder us from grasping further revelations from God. In this case, Peter believed Jesus was the Christ, but, in Peter's mind, the Christ would not die. So, Peter rebuked Jesus when Jesus told Peter that Jesus must die (Matthew 16:13-23, page 1530). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may help believers to understand the revelation of God contained in the Scriptures and overcome their faulty interpretations of Scripture that hinder them from further spiritual growth and development.

Identification. If you have a ministry to believers of helping them overcome their own faulty understandings of Scritpure which prevent them from understanding futher truth revealed in the Scritpures, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

66.3 Future Things. As Jesus was going out of the temple one day, Jesus taught His disciples about the future. Jesus highlighted future events that He placed into three basic time frames: (a) before the Tribulation; and (b) the Tribulation and the ABOMINATION OF DESOLATION; and (c) after the Tribulation (Mark 13:1-37, page 1584-1586; Matthew 24:1-25:46, page 1544-1549; Luke 21:5-36, page 1642-1644). Jesus provided the revelations for the future so that believers today will be on guard, and their hearts will not be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and the worries of life. As believers, we live on the alert, praying for strength. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching about future events, with an emphasis upon living today without worries, while spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of using the Scriptures to teach about future events, with an emphasis upon living today without worries, based upon knowledge of the future and God's glorious triumph, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixty Seven

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Teachers

67.1 Priscilla and Aquila. Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos speak out boldly in the synagogue. He was an Alexandrian by birth, and a man mighty in the Scriptures. He taught fervently and accurately the things about Jesus, but had heard only about the baptism of John. Priscilla and Aquila took him aside, and explained ("ἐξέθεντο") to him the way of God more accurately (Acts 18:25-26, page 1737). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have the ministry of teaching teachers the way of God more accurately.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching teachers about the way of God more accurately, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

67.2 Paul and Barnabas. Barnabas, called the Son of Encouragement, had a vital ministry with Saul of Tarsus, also know as Paul the apostle. Saul of

Tarsus persecuted the church until Jesus appeared to him on the Damascus Road and saved Saul. Saul began to preach Christ in Damascus, in the very synagogue where he was originally going to seek out Christians and bring them bound to Jerusalem. He had previously witnessed with approval the stoning of Stephen for his ministry in the name of Jesus. The Christians who knew Saul feared him as a great persecutor of the Church. Barnabas, however, drew near to Saul, heard about his conversion and preaching in Damascus, and introduced him to the apostles in Jerusalem. Later, Barnabas went to Antioch for ministry. While the ministry at Antioch grew, Barnabas went to Tarsus and brought Saul to Antioch, where they ministered together. From Antioch, Barnabas and Saul went on their first missionary journey. Barnabas taught Paul many things about how to serve Christ, although Paul received the Gospel directly from Jesus Christ (Acts 7:54-14:28, pages 1713-1728; Galatians 1:11-12, page 1819). In turn, Paul also taught Timothy, Titus and many others how to serve Christ. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers how to accept new believers with evil backgrounds, and how to build ministry teams with new believers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers how to accept new believers who were once profound and public enemies of Christ, and how to overcome their fear of such new believers, and how to bring those new believers to join a ministry team, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

67.3 Hypocrites. Paul confronted the religious teachers of his day with a question: "Did they expect that they were immune from the the very judgment they passed upon others practicing the same evil the judges themselves practiced?" (Romans 2:3, page 1760). Paul warned the Jewish teachers that they were hypocrites who taught the Law. Although they taught the immature, they themselves did not keep the Law they taught to others. Those teachers needed to learn about circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, and not by the letter of the Law (Romans 2:17-29, pages 1760-1761). Their hypocrisy posed a significant problem. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have the ministry of confronting self-righteous judges with the fact that they will be judged one day by the righteous standard of Jesus, the Righteous Judge; therefore, they should be gracious and holy today, saved by the blood of Jesus.

Identification. If you have a ministry of confroting unsaved religious teachers with their own hypocrisies, and teaching them how they too will be called to judgment before Jesus, the Righteous Judge, and how they can receive salvation by faith in Jesus as Savior, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Section Sixty Eight

The Ministry of The Teachers:

Elders

68.1 Apt To Teach. Only male believers may hold the Church Office of Overseer in the local church. They must be apt to teach as part of their qualifications (1 Timothy 3:2, page 1856). While the Church Overseer does not have to possess The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers, he should be apt to teach ("διδακτικόν"). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching elders and Church Overseers how to teach and what to teach, so that they will be more effective teachers.

Identification. If you have a ministry to Church Overseers of teaching them how and what to teach so that they fulfill their duties as Church Overseers apt to teach, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

68.2 Double Honor. Not all believers holding the Church Office of Overseer have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers. Yet, all Church Overseers must be apt to teach, as above. Because the local assembly should have a plurality of Church Overseers, and some of elders will work hard at preaching and teaching, they should be afforded double honor (2 Timothy 5:17, page 1858). We learn from that passage that not all elders teach and preach, but they will be using their own spiritual gifts to the glory of God. Perhaps they should be afforded double honor also, but the passage remains silent about such honors for those elders who are not working hard at preaching and teaching. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers may have a ministry of teaching believers about the plurality of elders in the local assembly, and the need to afford double honor to elders who work hard at preaching and teaching.

Identification. If you have a ministry of teaching believers about the need for a plurality of Church Overseers in the local assembly, and teaching that elders who work hard at preaching and teaching should be afforded double honor, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

Hallmarks of the Spiritual Gift of Teaching

Teaching: Understanding the Spiritual Gift. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers explains and applies the Scriptures. This spiritual gift has a very broad scope and many ministries. As above, the ministry of teaching may take many forms, and produce a variety of effects. I have listed some of those hallmarks below.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers and to see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers often preach and teach.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers teach with authority when they teach and apply the Scriptures accurately.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers should never be addressed as "Teacher Joe" or with any other title.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a ministry of teaching the priority of the Scriptures (only Old and New Testaments).

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of the sayings of Jesus.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of announcing resurrection.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about salvation.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about the King.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of the Lordship of Christ.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of the ways of Christ.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of know the Lord.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of following Jesus.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about resurrection.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of Jesus cares.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of the Name of Jesus.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about the Holy Spirit.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about Spiritual Gifts.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about loving God.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of truth and faith.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about the priority of Scripture.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of astonishing wisdom.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of amazaing authority.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of distinguishing the precepts of men from the doctrine of God.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry to tax collectors and sinners.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of traveling.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry with a home base.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of crowds.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of seaside sermons.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of the new self.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of rooted and grounded in Jesus.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of elementary things.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of standing firm.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of hope.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of prayer.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of crying out.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of perseverance.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry with impartiality.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of compassion.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry not based upon appearance.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of nature.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about slaves of righteousness.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about masters.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about disciples.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about complete in Christ.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about signs and wonders.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about all things possible.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about doing miracles in the name of Jesus.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about rank.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of sight.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about foods.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of woes.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about greed.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about sin.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about pious unbelief.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry not to allow women to teach or exercise authority over men.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of disturbing the religious establishment.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry with opposition.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about not participating in false teaching.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of force.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry against strange doctrines.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about demons.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry against the doctrine of deceitful spirits and the doctrine of demons.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry to trappers.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of removing stumbling blocks.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry about sordid gain.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry of preparing for the future.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry to teachers.

♦ Teaching-gifted believers may have a teaching ministry to Church Overseers and elders.

Conclusion

This study of The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers highlights the basics of what is The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers and how would you know if you have it. You must always search the Scriptures to understand any spiritual gift, and then see if you have any of those ministries in your life. We must trust the leading of the Holy Spirit in our lives to help us fulfill our ministries. This study was never intended to be an exhaustive review of all ministries of The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers, but it opens the door to understanding The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers.

6

The Spiritual Gift of

The Word of Wisdom

Category of Gift: Revelation

1 Corinthians 12:8, Page 1796

"For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit;"

The Psalmist tells us that the beginning of wisdom is the fear of the LORD (Psalm 111:10, page 969). Fools despise wisdom (Proverbs 1:7, page 1002), but every believer should seek wisdom from God. God intends for every believer to come to Him for wisdom (James 1:5, page 1887): "But if any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him." God then tied prayer to faith and stated that you will not receive wisdom from God unless you ask in faith, without doubting (James 1:6, Page 1887). This wisdom which God gives to everyone can be distinguished from the spiritual gift called the Word of Wisdom, because the Holy Spirit distributes the spiritual gifts just as He desires among believers (1 Corinthians 12:7, page 1796). Paul spoke of the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12, and provided a list of some spiritual gifts. The way Paul grouped those spiritual gifts within the list provides valuable insight into the gifts themselves and their relationships to one another.

Section One

Classes of Spiritual Gifts

1.1 Classes of Spiritual Gifts. Paul used different Greek words to separate into three groups the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. He separated the groups with the word "another of a different kind" (hetero--"ἑτέρῳ") and distinguished between the gifts of the same group with the word "another of the same kind" (allo--"ἄλλῳ").

1.1.1 Group One (Verse 8)

Word of Wisdom (allo)

Word of Knowledge

1.1.2 Group Two (hetero) (Verse 9-10)

Faith (allo)

Healings (allo)

Works of Powers (allo)

Prophecy (allo)

Judgment of Spirits

1.1.3 Group Three (hetero) (Verse 10)

Tongues (allo)

Interpretation of Tongues

1.1.4 Special Revelation Gifts. Special revelation means that God has revealed something otherwise unknown through the study of creation, which

also testifies to the glory of God. Based upon the grouping above, we can see that the The Spiriutal Gift of The Word of Wisdom and The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge must be related to one another as gifts of the same kind. As gifts of special revelation, they communicate to us knowledge about God and creation which we would we would not have known without special revelation from God. We will see below, The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom enabled the apostles and prophets to receive the mysteries of God and proclaim them in the New Testament. The New Testament Mysteries always include special revelation from God.

Section Two

Wisdom in 1 Corinthians

2.1 Wisdom in 1 Corinthians. In order to understand the use of the term "wisdom" in 1 Corinthians 12:8 concerning The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom, we should be careful to review Paul's use of that term "wisdom" in the First Epistle to the Corinthians.

2.2 **Worldly Wisdom and Godly Wisdom.** Paul wrote the book of 1 Corinthians to a group of people converted to Christ through the preaching of Christ by Paul when he had visited Corinth earlier. Paul stayed in Corinth about eighteen months and he was determined to know nothing among the Corinthians except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:5, page 1783). In 1 Corinthians, Paul distinguished the wisdom of men ("σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων") from God's wisdom ("θεοῦ σοφίαν"), much like James distinguished between the two types of wisdom (James 3:13-18, pages 1890-1891).

2.2.1 Wisdom of Men Defined. Paul defined worldly wisdom and described how worldly wisdom functions in the lives of unbelievers. The people at Corinth, being predominantly Greeks, loved worldly wisdom and searched for it eagerly ("Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom"--1 Corinthians 1:22, page 1783).

2.2.1.1 Wisdom of Men: The Wisdom of this Age. In 1 Corinthians 2:6, pages 1783-1784, we learn that Paul did not preach the wisdom of this age ("σοφίαν δὲ οὐ τοῦ αἰῶνος"). He meant that worldly wisdom is not eternal,

but a product of what people deem wise at the moment and within the changing world systems of the moment.

2.2.1.2 Wisdom of Men: The Wisdom of the Rulers of this Age. In 1 Corinthians 2:6, pages 1783-1784, we also learn that the rulers of this age act upon worldly wisdom. Paul meant that rulers govern with wisdom from the current moment in time, and not the eternal and unchanging wisdom from God. The rulers of this age, and their worldly wisdom, are passing away.

2.2.1.3 Wisdom of Men: Crucified Jesus. In 1 Corinthians 2:8, pages 1783-17844, Paul tells us that if the rulers of this age had understood true wisdom, then they would not have crucified the Lord of glory, Jesus Christ. Paul meant that the rulers of this age, acting with worldly wisdom, make terrible decisions, not only rejecting Jesus as King and Savior, but also crucifying Him.

2.3 God's Wisdom. In contrast to worldly wisdom, the wisdom of God brings great blessings to people. Paul highlights many qualities of the wisdom of God.

2.3.1 God's Wisdom in a Mystery. Paul claimed he spoke God's wisdom in a mystery. The term mystery has a special meaning in the New Testament (see the New Testament Mysteries). Peter confirmed this claim of Paul regarding the inspiration of the Paul's writings.

2.3.1.1 Peter Confirmed that Paul Wrote by Wisdom. Peter linked wisdom to the writings of Paul. Peter wrote: ". . . just as also our beloved brother Paul, **according to the wisdom given to him**, wrote to you, as also in all his letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, ..." [emphasis added] (2 Peter 3:15-16, page 1903). Peter recognized that God gave Paul wisdom to write his letters to the Corinthians. This wisdom represented a revelatory gift of direct communication from God.

2.3.1.2 Paul's Writings Are Inspired Like the Old Testament. Peter understood that God inspired Paul's letters, because Peter wrote: "**as they do also the rest of the Scriptures"** [emphasis added](1 Peter 3:16, page 1903). Peter also recognized that God inspired the revelation given to Paul and recorded in the epistles of Paul. Peter meant that Paul wrote inspired

Scripture in the New Testament just like the inspired Scripture of the Old Testament.

2.3.1.3 Peter and Paul Wrote about Mysteries. Please notice that the "these things" which Peter mentioned, and which Paul wrote about, concern salvation and future events (1 Peter 3:11-16). We see here that the Word of Wisdom involved receiving a revelation from God of something previously hidden (hidden in the sense that it may have its roots in the past, but now it has been fully revealed through the prophets and apostles of the New Testament), but now revealed for our glory. At least some of the mysteries in the New Testament may be comparatively unknown in the Old Testament; others appear to have been completely "hidden" and a secret, as we will see below. For example, in Ephesians 3:5, page 1829, Paul used the phrase that the mystery was not made known to the sons of men in other generations, as it has now been revealed ("οὐκ ἐγνωρίσθη τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων ὡς νῦν ἀπεκαλύφθη") to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit. Because Paul used the term "as" ("ὡς"), it appears to leave room that some roots of the mystery of Christ were known in the Old Testament, but not as the entire mystery of Christ (Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members, and fellow partakers of Christ) has been fully revealed and developed through the New Testament apostles and prophets. As we will see below, God unveiled mysteries by The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom.

2.3.1.4 God's Wisdom to the Mature. God spoke wisdom among those at Corinth who were mature ("τοῖς τελείοις") (1 Corinthians 2:6, pages 1783-1784). Paul carefully distinguished between the wisdom of men and God's wisdom, speaking the latter only to spiritually mature believers.

2.3.1.5 God's Wisdom: Hidden. Paul recognized that he spoke wisdom hidden in a mystery ("θεοῦ σοφίαν ἐν μυστηρίῳ, τὴν ἀποκεκρυμμένην") (1 Corinthians 2:7, page 1784). Paul emphasized the hidden quality of the wisdom of God, which Paul was now proclaiming to the mature. Notice here the wisdom hidden in the mystery. God's wisdom remains hidden until the mystery is revealed.

2.3.1.5 God's Wisdom: Predestined. In 1 Corinthians 2:7, page 1784, we learn that God predestined ("προώρισεν") the revelation of the mystery to the glory of the New Testament saints. Again, Paul emphasized that God controlled the timing, means, manner and procedure of revealing mysteries. He also emphasized one goal of such revelation: the glory of the New

Testament saints. As they benefit from the revelation of the mystery, they glorify God through their actions.

2.3.1.6 God's Wisdom: Previously Unseen, Unheard, Unknown. Paul quoted the Old Testament prophet Isaiah to illustrate the nature of a mystery:

"THINGS WHICH EYE HAS NOT SEE AND EAR HAS NOT HEARD, AND WHICH HAVE NOT ENTERED THE HEART OF MAN, ALL THAT GOD HAS PREPARED FOR THOSE WHO LOVE HIM." 1 Corinthians 2:9, page 1784.

Many believers have heard that verse quoted, and walk away believing that we have not seen, we have not heard, and it has not entered our hearts all that God has prepared for people who love Him. The trouble is, those folks walked away with precisely the wrong meaning. The very next verse, 1 Corinthians 2:10, page 1784, tells us that God has revealed now all those previously hidden things to believers through the Holy Spirit.

2.3.1.7 God's Wisdom: Revealed through the Holy Spirit. As with all mysteries, things hidden for long ages past have now been revealed to us through the New Testament ministry of the the Holy Spirit, and specifically through The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom revealing the mysteries of God to the prophets and apostles for the glory of the New Testament saints. The Holy Spirit searches the depths of God. Through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, we know the things freely given to us by God (1 Corinthians 2:12, page 1784; compare James 1:5, page 1887).

2.3.1.8 God's Wisdom: The Mind of Christ. Paul also indicates that the natural man cannot accept spiritual things, because he relies upon the wisdom of this world and the Holy Spirit does not abide in an unbeliever. As a natural man, the unbeliever cannot accept the things of God, because they are foolishness to the unbeliever. As believers, we appraise all things and have the mind of Christ. Because we have the Holy Spirit working within us and the mind of Christ leading us, we receive and accept the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 2:13-16, page 1784). We have seen that the wisdom of God relates directly to the mysteries God has now revealed. Let us take a closer look at the New Testament mysteries.

2.3.1.9 God's Wisdom: Christ Crucified. Paul also preached Christ crucified to the Corinthians, "the power and wisdom of God" (1 Corinthians 1:24, page 1783). God had chosen the Corinthians believers to be in Christ, as part of His divine plan to shame the wise and strong of this world, and to nullify the things that are, so that no man may boast before God (1 Corinthians 1:26-29, page 1783). By God's action, Christ had become to the Corinthians the "wisdom from God" (1 Corinthians 1:29, page 1783--Christ also became to the Corinthians righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, so that the Corinthians may boast in the LORD).

2.3.1.10 God's Wisdom: The Foundation of Faith. Paul continued his explanation of his preaching of Christ in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5, page 1783. He denied that he preached with "persuasive words of wisdom," but rather His preaching demonstrated the Holy Spirit and His power, so that the Corinthians' faith would rest not upon the wisdom of men, but upon the power of God. Compare the cleverness of speech ("σοφίᾳ λόγου") which Paul disdained in 1 Corinthians 1:17, page 1782. We may learn from this passage that God distinguished between the wisdom of men and the power of God. In the following passage, Paul explained he spoke wisdom to the mature.

Section Three

New Testament Mysteries

3.1 The Mysteries and Revelation from God. Please keep in mind that in the New Testament, a mystery always means some truth not well developed in the Old Testament, but now preached by the apostles and prophets of the New Testament (Ephesians 3:5, page 1829).

3.1.1 Only Believers Can Understand Spiritual Truth. Paul emphasized that only believers, that is, spiritual people born again by faith in Christ Jesus, can accept the things of the Spirit, because they are spiritually appraised. Unbelievers simply treat all things taught by the Spirit as foolishness, and they are incapable of receiving the things taught by the Spirit (1 Corinthians 1:14-16, page 1784).

3.1.2 Jesus and the Mysteries of the Kingdom. Jesus also drew a distinction between the disciples and the crowds: the disciples had been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but the crowds were only

taught in parables (Mark 4:11-12, page 1563; Luke 8:10, page 1612). I understand that in some sense, all the mysteries pertain to the kingdom of God, and we will review the particular mysteries revealed in the New Testament below.

3.1.3 Mysteries and the Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom. So far, we should understand that the Holy Spirit reveals mysteries to spiritually mature believers through the preaching of the apostles and prophets in the New Testament. One of those mysteries relates directly to the wisdom of God, underlying the preaching of Paul at Corinth. Notice that The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom concerns divine revelation of something new and previously hidden. It also involves communicating now that new wisdom hidden from prior generations. Indeed, Paul emphasized that Paul, Sosthenes, Apollos and Cephas should be regarded as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of the God (1 Corinthians 4:1, page 1785). The New Testament reveals several mysteries through the preaching and teaching of the prophets and apostles.

3.2.1 The Definition of the Term "Mystery." In Romans 16:25-27, page 1781, Paul defined the term "mystery." He identified several important elements of a mystery. Briefly, the term "mystery" means: (a) something kept secret for long ages past, (b) but now revealed (c) to the apostles and prophets of the New Testament, (d) all according to the wisdom of God. We will examine those elements more closely below.

3.2.2 Mystery: Always a Revelation from God. In Romans 16:25, page 1781, Paul explained that a mystery ("μυστηρίου") involves the revelation ("ἀποκάλυψιν") of God, and that revelation cradled Paul's preaching of the gospel and his preaching of Jesus Christ.

3.2.3 Mystery: Something Kept Secret for Long Ages Past. A mystery always concerns something that has been "kept secret for long ages past" (Romans 16:25, page 1781--"χρόνοις αἰωνίοις σεσιγημένου"). A mystery always involves new revelation from God, with the same authority of the Old Testament Scripture.

3.2.4 Mystery: Now Manifested. While some people think a mystery means something hidden, actually a mystery in the New Testament means something now manifested ("φανερωθέντος"). Notice too that "the Scriptures of the prophets" God used to manifest the mysteries. Just as Peter

wrote about Paul, God used the Scriptures of the New Testament prophets and the apostles (Ephesians 3:6, page 1829) to manifest the mysteries (Romans 16:26, page 1781).

3.2.5 Mystery: Command of God. God commanded that the mystery has been made known to all the nations, leading to the obedience of faith (Romans 11:26, page 1781). God determined both the time and the manner of the manifestation of the mystery.

3.2.6 Mystery: Obedience of faith. God intended for the New Testament manifestation of the mystery to lead to the obedience of faith. God purposed to produce obedience of faith by means of the mystery. In other words, God revealed specific truths hidden in the past for the New Testament salvation of those who believed the mystery and lived in obedience of faith (Romans 16:26, page 1781).

3.2.7 Mystery: The Only Wise God. Paul again linked the term mystery to "the only wise God" (Romans 16:27, page 1781). The wisdom of God controls all aspects of special revelation, including the timing, manner, and content of the revelation. Men foolishly tend to worship creatures, rather than accept the revelation of God and worship the only wise God.

3.3. The Relationship of Mysteries to the Word of Wisdom. So, we may see that God used The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom to communicate the mysteries of the New Testament. God communicated those mysteries through the apostles and prophets to the early church, to our glory (even the Old Testament prophets eagerly sought to understand what person or time the Spirit of Christ within them was indicating as He predicted the sufferings of Christ and the glories to follow--1 Peter 1:10-11, page 1894; those prophets served us, the church age believers, and even angels longed to look into these things--1 Peter 1:12, page 1894). Now let us look briefly at some of the mysteries communicated by The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom.

3.4.1 The Mystery of the Partial Hardening Jewish Hearts. To the Romans, Paul explained the mystery of the partial hardening of the hearts of the Jews. The Jews had crucified the Lord of Glory, and had rejected the Messiah and His Kingdom. Paul then placed their partial hardening of heart into the larger plan of God. Over three chapters, Romans 9:1, page 1770 through Romans 11:36, page 1775, Paul expounded this mystery of the partial

hardening of Israel, resulting in the time of the Gentiles (and their salvation), to fulfill the greater purposes of God.

3.4.1.1 Never Be Wise in Your Own Estimation. Paul developed the relationship of the Gentiles to Israel and explained that God communicated wisdom to dispel ignorance of God's plans concerning Israel and their partial hardening of heart. God did not want anyone to be wise in their own estimation or uniformed concerning the partial hardening of the people of Israel after Messiah suffered, died and was raised from the dead (Romans 11:25, page 1774).

3.4.1.2 The Larger View of God's Plan for Israel. Paul explained that God's plan for the period the partial hardening of Israel started with Israel's rejection of the Messiah and His crucifixion and ends with His return in the clouds (1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, page 1849-1850). The Gentiles and the whole population of earth then will fall under the severe judgments of God for seven years, and experience tribulation (Matthew 24:1-51; Revelation 5:1, page 1919-19:21, page 1938). Near the end of the Tribulation, Israel will look upon Christ Whom they pierced (Zechariah 12:10, page 1491), and will as a nation turn to Christ and experience the blessings of the New Covenant (Jeremiah 31:27-34, page 1238), with Christ ruling the earth in His millennial kingdom (Revelation 20:1-3, page 1938). Notice particularly Romans 11:33, page 1775, where Paul linked up this revelation to the wisdom and knowledge of God. Remember, both of those spiritual gifts (The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom and The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge) are of the same type in the chart above. They are both gifts of revelation from God.

3.4.2 The Mystery of the Resurrection. To the Corinthians, Paul explained the mystery of the resurrection of all believers (1 Corinthians 15:1-58, page 1800-1803). By means of the Word of Wisdom, Paul received this new and broader revelation of resurrection, mentioned in the Old Testament (for example, Daniel 12:2, page 1411), but not fully developed until God revealed it to Paul, and the Apostles and Prophets of the New Testament preached it to the church.

3.4.3 The Mystery of God's Will. To the Ephesians, Paul declared that in all wisdom and insight ("φρονήσει") God made known to us the mystery of His will, so that we would understand the "administration suitable to the fullness of times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the

heavens and things on the earth" (Ephesians 1:8-10, page 1827). This sweeping revelation allows us not only to know about the redemption we have in Christ, but also the outworking of the plan of God for the Church and His people. God's will controls history and brings history to God's intended plans.

3.4.4 The Mystery of the Gentiles. Also to the Ephesians, Paul described the mystery that Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body of Christ, and fellow partakers of the promise of Christ Jesus through the gospel (Ephesians 3:3-6, page 1829). We see that God now reveals the participation and role of the Gentiles in the program of God. To make that revelation, God used The Spirutal Gift of The Word of Wisdom with Paul, and worked through the vision to Peter at Joppa concerning unclean animals (10:9, page 1718 through Acts 10:48, page 1721), which may be an example of one way God communicates the Word of Wisdom through a vision. Please keep in mind that Paul told the Galatians that he received the Gospel by direct revelation from God (Galatians 1:12, Page 1819). Through Paul, God "brought to light what is the administration of the mystery of which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things, so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places" [emphasis added] (Ephesians 3:9-10, pages 1829-1830).

3.4.5 The Mystery of Christ and the Church. Also to the Ephesians, Paul wrote about the great mystery of Christ and the church (Ephesians 5:32, page 1833). This mystery concerns the way that Christ is the head of the church, and lives as the Savior of the body of Christ, in the same way that a woman submits to her husband (Ephesians 5:22-23, page 1833). In that way, the church should be submissive to Christ (Ephesians 5:24, page 1833). Furthermore, Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify the church, having cleansed her by the washing of the water with the word (Ephesians 5:25-27, page 1833). Christ intends to present the church to Himself in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she would be holy and blameless (Ephesians 5:27, page 1833). Christ loves the church (His body), and nourishes and cherishes her, because believers in the church are members of His body (Ephesians 5:28-30, page 1833). The church began at Pentecost, when Jesus baptized the believers in the Holy Spirit and so constituted a new assembly of believers

called the church (Matthew 3:11, page 1504; John 14:16, page 1685; Acts 1:4-8, page 1699; Acts 2:1-13, pages 1700-1701; 1 Corinthians 12:13, page 1797).

3.4.6 The Mystery of the Gospel. Also to the Ephesians, Paul revealed the mystery of the Gospel and requested prayer for his preaching of it (Ephesians 6:19, page 1834). As Paul taught, the Gospel consisted of the glad tidings of Christ dying for sinners, and being raised from the dead by the power of God, all according the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:1-4, page 1800). For everyone who believes in Christ and receives forgiveness from Him, it is the power of God for salvation, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Romans 1:16-17, page 1758).

3.4.7 The Mystery of Christ in the Gentiles. To the Colossians, Paul preached the mystery of Christ in the Gentiles, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:27, Page 1842). Paul told them that God willed to make known to His saints the riches of His glory, that Christ would be in them. This knowledge had been hidden from the past ages and generations, but now has been manifested to His saints (Colossians 1:25-27, page 1842).

3.4.8 The Mystery of Christ Himself. Also to the Colossians, Paul unveiled the mystery related to the full assurance of understanding God's message, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, which is Christ Himself (Colossians 2:1-2, page 1842). In Christ are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Colossians 2:3, page 1842). So we see again this pattern of the mystery of God being linked directly to the wisdom and knowledge of God, just as The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom and The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge are linked as spiritual gifts of the same kind in 1 Corinthians 12:8, page 1796). Paul considered Himself imprisoned for his speaking forth the mystery of Christ (Colossians 4:3, page 1845).

3.4.9 The Mystery of Lawlessness. To the Thessalonians, Paul warned of the mystery of lawlessness (2 Thessalonians 2:7, Page 1852). This mystery concerned the future and the apostasy preceding the Day of the Lord. Before the Day of the Lord, the man of lawlessness must be revealed. He will oppose and exalt himself above every so-called god or object of worship, so that he takes his seat in the temple of God, displaying himself as being God (2 Thessalonians 2:1-4, page 1852). This mystery of lawlessness is already at work, but is restrained in the present. In the future, when this restrainer will be taken out of the way, he will be revealed. Finally, the Lord will slay him

with the breath of His mouth and bring an end by the appearance of His coming (2 Thessalonians 2:8, page 1852).

3.4.10 The Mystery of Faith. To Timothy, Paul wrote about the mystery of faith (1 Timothy 3:9, page 1856). Deacons must be men of dignity, holding to the mystery of the faith (1 Timothy 3:8-9, page 1856). The Bible describes faith as the "assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1, page 1882). By faith we not only receive Christ, but the righteous shall live by faith (Romans 1:17, page 1758; Galatians 2:20, page 1821).

3.4.11 The Mystery of Godliness. To Timothy, Paul also spoke of the mystery of Godliness in the life, death, resurrection and glorification of Christ Jesus, and the spread of faith in Christ among the nations (1 Timothy 3:16, Page 1856). Paul declared: "He who was revealed in the flesh, was vindicated in the Spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among the nations, believed on in the world, taken up in glory" (1 Timothy 3:16, page 1856). Paul proclaimed this mystery as a matter of common confession (1 Timothy 3:16, page 1856).

3.4.12 The Mystery of the Seven Stars. In the Book of Revelation, Jesus revealed to John the mystery of the seven stars. Jesus revealed that the seven stars John saw were in fact seven churches (Revelation 1:20, page 1915). Jesus again reveals Himself, and explains the destiny of the seven churches of Asia Minor.

3.4.13 The Mystery of the Finish. Also in the Book of Revelation, God revealed the finish of the mystery of God, as He preached to His servants the prophets (Revelation 10:7, Page 1925). We see that some mysteries pertain to events today, and some mysteries pertain to events still future. In all cases, the mystery focuses upon knowledge revealed today, for our glory and understanding.

3.4.14 The Mystery of Babylon the Great. Also in the Book of Revelation, God revealed the mystery of Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots and of the abominations of the earth (Revelation 17:5, page 1933). God devoted two chapters to the destruction of Babylon, and disclosed the mystery of her identity and destruction (Revelation 17-18, pages 1933-1936). He speaks of the mystery of the woman and of the beast that carries her, which has the seven heads and the ten horns (Revelation

17:7, page 1934). This judgment upon Babylon, and the related mystery of the woman and the beast, remains yet future, but God wants us to know about it now. See the free E-Book: Revelation: Seeing Jesus Today.

Section Four

Peter and the Mystery of the Gentiles

3.1 The Mysteries and Revelation from God. Please keep in mind that in The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom, God provided revelation of mysteries. Both Paul and Peter received revelation from God that allowed them to proclaim the mysteries of God. Peter received a revelation of the mystery of the Gentiles, and it helps us understand the working The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom.

3.2 Peter's Vision of Animals. In Acts 11:5, Page 1721, Peter the apostle received a revelatory vision that all of the animals were clean to eat. He interpreted this vision to mean the Gentiles were welcome in the kingdom of God. This constituted a significant change in the practice of the early church, and signaled a time of spiritual regeneration for Gentiles, while the Jews were provoked to jealousy (Romans 11:11, page 1774). No longer would the Jewish believers in Christ consider the Gentile believers unclean, but rather fellow members of one people of God in Christ. Peter understood from his vision that God was now incorporating the gentiles into the church, and those gentiles were saved and baptized by Jesus in the Holy Spirit just as the Jewish believers were added to the church. Peter used that revelation concerning the gentile believers to help the Jewish believers welcome the gentile believers into the church. So, we see The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom in action.

Section Five

New Testament Mysteries and

The Spiritual Gift of Tongues

5.1 The Mysteries and Revelation from God. The New Testament identifies the content of the spiritual gift of tongues: mysteries. According to 1 Corinthians 14:2, page 1798, the one speaking in tongues speaks mysteries. Perhaps this instance of the term "mysteries" ("μυστήρια") does not mean what it means in every other instance in the New Testament. I find that conclusion very unlikely. See The New Testament Mysteries for a fuller discussion. Therefore, 1 Corinthians 14:2, page 1498 provides the content of what is spoken during the use of the spiritual gift of tongues. When speaking in tongues, the believer speaks revelation from God (mysteries) to God, and not to men. In doing so, the believer edifies himself, but does not spread the revelation to others because they cannot understand his tongue, unless the message is interpreted by another believer with the spiritual gift of the interpretation of tongues.

Section Six

Summary of the Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom

6.1 Revelation of Mysteries. With all these mysteries, we see how God uses the New Testament apostles and prophets to disclose truths hidden from long ages past to New Testament believers. God predestined the time, manner and goals of the revelation of the mysteries to bring about obedience of faith to the world. God told New Testament believers things we would not have known otherwise, for they are from the depths of God, and revealed by the Holy Spirit. God used The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom, distributed to the New Testament prophets and apostles, to reveal mysteries to the Church and recorded His revelation through the spiritual gift of the Word of Wisdom in the New Testament.

Section Seven

Hallmarks of the Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom

The Spiriutal Gift of The Word of Wisdom concerned special revelation from God to the apostles and prophets of the New Testament. The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom allowed those apostles and prophets to write the New Testament and guide the early church. Because the New Testament has been completed, The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom no longer operates today. The hallmarks below summarize The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom given to the New Testament apostles and prophets. Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gifts of The Word of Wisdom.

♦ The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom concerns the revelation of something hidden from long ages past, but now is proclaimed by the apostles and prophets of the New Testament.

♦ The preaching of Paul rested upon the Word of Wisdom, and The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom was bestowed upon the apostles and prophets to disclose the mysteries of God. The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom always contained a revelation from God, and the content of The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom was equal to the authority of the Old Testament.

♦ The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom allows us to know about Christ, and Him crucified. Jesus forms the very center of God's revelation through The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom, and allows us to see Jesus triumph over sin and evil in all its forms. God predestined this revelation through The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom to our glory.

Conclusion

Through The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom, God revealed to the apostles and the prophets things that were previously hidden. God revealed those things at just the right time, according to His divine wisdom. Because

all beleivers are saints, we benefit from the revelation of God in producing the New Testament and the revelation of mysteries.

7

The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge

Category of Gift: Revelation

1 Corinthians 12:8, Page 1796

"and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;"

Section One

Wisdom and Revelation

1.1. **Introduction**. We know that The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom is the same kind of gift as The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge because of the grouping of the gifts in the list provided in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, page 1796 (for that grouping, see The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom.) The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge concerns the application of revelation so that we know God better, and particularly how to apply revelation to accomplish the will of God by edifying the church. Before we go too far, be sure to understand that the Holy Spirit helps every believer understand the teachings of Christ. Every believer has an anointing from God (1 John 3:27, page 1906). This general anointing to understand and apply Scripture differs from the The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge. The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge gives new revelation from God about how to apply previous revelation from God, resulting in new, completely perfect and entirely authoritative and verbally inspired revelation from God. So, let us begin this study by reviewing key concepts concerning wisdom, knowledge and revelation in First Corinthians.

Section Two

Wisdom and Revelation

2.1 Revelation and Coming To Know God. Paul told the Corinthians that ". . . the world through its wisdom did not come to know ("ἔγνω") God . . . " (1 Corinthians 21, page 1783). In this verse, Paul shows that the world did not come to know God through worldly wisdom. We need to pause for a moment and consider the link Paul drew between wisdom and knowing God. Paul implied that while the wisdom of the world will not help you know God, the opposite is also true: the wisdom from God will help you know God.

2.1.1 Godly Wisdom. Therefore, we may discern a principle: the right kind of wisdom will help us know God and the things freely given to us by God (1 Corinthians 2:12, page 1784). Paul's chief concern for the Corinthians was that they would know Christ, and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:2, page 1783). In 1 Corinthians 1:21, page 1783, Paul told us indirectly that the wisdom of God helps us know God, and by implication, His will. The Corinthian's worldly wisdom was useless because it could never lead a person to know God (1 Corinthians 2:8, page 1784; 1 Corinthians 3:20, page 1785).

2.1.2 Wisdom and The Mysteries of God. In contrast, the wisdom of God contained new revelations of God, called mysteries (see The New Testament Mysteries), which allowed the Corinthians to know God and the things free given to them by God (1 Corinthians 2:6-16, page 1784). Furthermore, the wisdom from God helps the people called of God to know Christ and Him crucified. In turn, Christ becomes the power of God and wisdom of God to believers (1 Corinthians 1:24, page 1783; Colossians 2:2-3, Page 1842). Christ crucified becomes a stumbling block to unbelieving Jews and foolishness to unbelieving Gentiles (1 Corinthians 1:23-25, page 1783). Therefore, the proper application of the wisdom of God transforms the called of God so that they know God. The believers particularly come to know God's power and wisdom in the person of Jesus Christ and Him crucified. In other words, through the preaching of Paul to the Corinthians, God applied the mystery of Christ crucified and it changed the people called by God (1 Corinthians 1:23, page 1783). Paul highlighted the primary change as knowing Christ as the power of God and the wisdom of God. In a nutshell, we have a nice exegetical explanation of the Word of Knowledge right there in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31, and particularly 1 Corinthians 1:21-25. We should

keep in mind that The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge is a revelatory gift, and related directly to The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom because of the grouping of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, page 1796). Therefore, we know that the application of the wisdom of God also concerns revelation.

Section Three

Word of Knowledge Distinguished from Word of Wisdom

3.1 A Closer Look at 1 Corinthians 12:8. In 1 Corinthians 12:8, page 1796, God distinguished The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom from the The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge. Because the Bible has been verbally and plenarily inspired by God, every word in every verse makes a difference.

3.1.1 Through the Holy Spirit. In this case, the Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom is given "through" ("διὰ") the Holy Spirit. As we have seen, The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom was a gift of the revelation of the mysteries of God. The mystery was something hidden in the Old Testament, but now preached and taught by the apostles and prophets (Romans 16:25-27, page 1781; Ephesians 3:1-13, pages 1829-1830). In this sense, the Holy Spirit reveals mysteries through The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom to certain believers, particularly prophets and apostles. The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom focuses upon a new communication from God. It is the message itself God delivers concerning the mystery being revealed now. So we see that The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom was given "through" the Holy Spirit, because the Holy Spirit gave the communication of the mystery to the apostle or prophet. Think of the Word of Wisdom as the message inside the envelope. Once you open the envelope and read the message contained in the envelope sealed up for centuries, you now need to know what to do with that message.

3.1.2 According to the Holy Spirit. The proper use of the message revealed by God is provided according to The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge. The Holy Spirit directs the believer to use the wisdom from God to know God and His will. In this sense, The Spiritual Gift of The Word of

Knowledge is given according to ("κατὰ") the Holy Spirit, because He directs the use of the prior revelation given through The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom. The Spirtual Gift of the Word of Knowledge depends upon the Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom being given first. We open the envelope, read the message provided through the Holy Spirit, and then apply the new message to know God and His will, with particular focus upon Christ and Him crucified. This application of the message in the envelope is The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge.

3.1.3 Two-Step Process of Revelation. Think of the Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge as related to one another in a two-step process of revelation.

3.1.3.1 Step One. The Holy Spirit revealed a mystery to the believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom (God wrote a letter concerning a mystery and sent it to the believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom).

3.1.3.1.1 The Envelope and the Letter. Think of an envelope being opened now after being sealed for centuries, and the letter inside being read for the first time ("the mystery"). The letter itself has been sent to the believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom. The letter said: "You should not call any man unholy or unclean." Signed: God.

3.1.3.2 Step Two. Having opened the letter, after laying sealed in the envelope for centuries, The Holy Spirit now uses The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge to make authoritative application of the letter from the envelope. Therefore, we may say that The Spiritual Gif of the Word of Knowledge enables the use of The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom.

3.1.3.2.1 Authoritative Application of the Letter. In Step One, the Holy Spirit communicated His revelation of the mystery "through" ("διὰ") the letter in the envelope (now opened and read)--think Word of Wisdom. Now in Step Two, the Holy Spirit directs the church to act according to ("κατὰ") the message provided by the letter (Word of Knowledge). The Holy Spirit first revealed to you the mystery so that you have a new message (given "through" the Holy Spirit--Word of Wisdom) and then the Holy Spirit acted according to that revelation (given "according" to Holy Spirit--the Word of Knowledge) so that the church would be free to

evangelize Gentiles and receive Gentile believers into fellowship (edification of the church).

Section Four

The Word of Knowledge in Action

4.1 Peter and the Pigs in a Blanket. As one example of The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge in action, consider the revelation given to Peter at Joppa. Peter had an experience with these gifts in Acts 10. He went up on a housetop in Joppa, and began to pray (Acts 10:1, page 1718). As he prayed, God showed Peter a great sheet lowered from heaven, with all kinds of four-footed animals and creatures of the earth and birds of the air (Acts 10:11-12, page 1719). God told Peter to kill and eat, but Peter responded that he had never eaten unclean animals like them. God repeated this event three times, and told Peter three times "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy." Peter had never eaten pigs nor other unclean animals because of the Old Testament law restricting diet (Acts 10:13-16, page 1719; Leviticus 11:1, page 175 to 11:47, page 178). Let me try to illustrate this passage with a letter in an envelope, or an attachment to an email. First, think of the envelope as having a particular address, such as the believers listening to Peter explain that God revealed to to him that "You should not call any man unholy or unclean." Having read the letter from God ("You should not call any man unholy or unclean"), Peter then had to apply that knowledge to the church (the name and address of the recipient on the envelope). Perhaps a better example would be an email. Peter received an email from God that said: "You should not call any man unholy or unclean." This original email was a mystery, a revelation of something not revealed to previous generations as it was now revealed to Peter. Peter saved that mystery as an attachment (the Word of Wisdom). Now, Peter forwards that attachment to an email to various people living in different locations, with various email addresses. He uses the new email (the Word of Knoweldge) to explain and apply the mystery (attached to the new email). In his new email (the Word of Knowledge), Peter provided God-inspired guidance on how to apply the mystery (the Word of Wisdom) in the church. The mysteries brought radical changes to the believers in the churches. They needed both the letter and the envelope, or in other words, both the original attachment and the new email. You now know God's will, and you must act. So, you take your letter from

God and start showing it to various assemblies and let them know that they should not call any man unholy or unclean.We will walk through Peter's experience briefly below to illustrate the substance and procedure of a mystery first revealed, and then applied to the church.

4.1.1 Gentiles Admitted to Full Fellowship. At Joppa on the rooftop, Peter experienced the use of the Word of Wisdom followed by the use of the Word of Knowledge.

4.1.1.1 Mystery Revealed: God Has Cleansed. God had revealed a mystery to Peter through The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom. What mystery was revealed? Mystery revealed: "What God has cleansed, no longer consider unholy." Now for step two.

4.1.1.2 Application of Mystery: Gentiles in Christ. Peter has already received his knowledge of the mystery through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. Peter moves on to Caesarea, under the leading of the Holy Spirit, and tells many people assembled there: "You yourselves know how unlawful it is for a man who is a Jew to associate with a foreigner or to visit him; and yet God has shown me that I should not call any man unholy or unclean" (Acts 10:28, page 1719). In step two here, the Holy Spirit works according to the prior revelation of the mystery concerning God's cleansing of the Gentiles. That revelatory wisdom must be used to know God's will for the Gentiles, and applied to the churches' programs of evangelism, discipleship and fellowship. The Gentiles were welcomed by God into the church--Word of Knowledge.

Section Five

The Relationship of Prophecy, Mysteries, and Knowledge

5.1 Prophecy, Mysteries and Knowledge. In 1 Corinthians 13:2, page 1797, Paul expounded upon the vitality of love. Without love, we are nothing and have nothing. He links prophecy with knowing all mysteries and all knowledge. As we have seen, The Spiritual Gif of The Word of Wisdom concerns the mysteries, and The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge concerns the application of the revelation provided through The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom. This verse confirms our understanding of the relationship between the revelatory gifts of The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom and The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge. It also opens the door to our understanding The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets.

5.2 Other Uses of the Word of Knowledge. The New Testament also contains examples of The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge used without The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom. In some instances, The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge was used with previous revelations provided through: (a) Old Testament prophets; and (b) New Testament apostles.

5.2.1 The New Testament Application of Previous Revelations. The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge generally concerns the application of previous revelation to a specific situation. The new application amounts to new revelation also. Consider a few examples. We will review the New Testament authoritative application of: (a) Old Testament revelations; and (b) New Testament revelations.

5.2.1.1 The New Testament Application of Old Testament Revelations. The Old Testament prophets had provided revelations concerning the Lord (2 Peter 3:2, page 1902). Peter specifically applied those Old Testament prophecies (revelations in themselves).

5.2.1.1.1 Mockers Will Come. In 2 Peter 3:1-9, pages 1902-1903, Peter illustrated the divine application (Word of Knowledge) of Old Testament

prophecies to the present problem of mockers disparaging God's plans and disturbing God's people. In 2 Peter 3:7, page 1903, Peter explained that the holy prophets of the Old Testament and apostles of the New Testament had spoken about the mockers that would come. The result of Peter's application of Old Testament prophecies amounted to new revelation (Word of Knowledge) for confronting mockers.

5.2.1.1.2 Avoid the Idolatry of Israel. Likewise, in 1 Corinthians 10:6-11, page 1793, Paul authoritatively applied the example of Israel's past actions to the Corinthians so that they would avoid idolatry and immorality.

5.2.1.1.3 The Veil of Moses. In a similar way, Paul also used the Old Testament picture of the veil of Moses obscuring his fading glory from the mountain top experience with Yahweh. Paul applied that Old Testament event to the veil that lies over the face of the Jews when they read the old covenant (2 Corinthians 3:12-18, pages 1806-1807). He expanded upon that application by showing that the Spirit of the Lord provides liberty and lifts the veil, and the Jewish believers are transformed into the same image, from glory to glory (2 Corinthians 3:18, page 1807).

5.2.2 The New Testament Application of Apostolic Prophecies. In this same sense, Jude also demonstrated The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge without reference to The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom. Jude, like Peter, applied the teachings of the New Testament apostles.

5.2.2.1 The Apostles Prophesied about Mockers. Jude applied the prophecies of the New Testament apostles to overcome the present attack upon the church by mockers (Jude 1:17-18, page 1913). His divine application of previous revelation (prophecies of the apostles) pictured The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge in action. Jude declared that the New Testament apostles prophesied that "in the last time there will be mockers, following after their own ungodly lusts."

5.2.2.2 The Application of the Apostle's Prophecies. Jude applied the prophecy of the apostles in several ways.

5.2.2.2.1 The Mockers Exposed. Jude first exposed the mockers as causing divisions, worldly-minded, devoid of the Spirit (Jude 1:18, page 1913). Jude authoritatively applied the revelation previously given to the apostles to the trouble-makers in the local assemblies.

5.2.2.2.2 The Believers Encouraged. Jude then encouraged the believers to be building themselves up in their most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, and to keep themselves in the love of God, waiting anxiously for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ to eternal life. He further encouraged the believers with instructions about helping the weak.

Section Six

Love, Knowledge and "The Perfect"

6.1 **The Tapestry of Love**. In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul developed the theme of love, but intertwined the spiritual gifts into his tapestry of love. We have seen above the link between prophecy, mysteries and knowledge (1 Corinthians 13:2, pages 1797-1798), and Paul also refines our understanding of knowledge, prophesy and "the perfect."

6.2 The Temporal Nature of Some Spiritual Gifts. Paul told us that while love never fails, prophecy will be done away ("καταργηθήσονται"); tongues will cease ("παύσονται"); and knowledge will be done away ("καταργηθήσονται") (1 Corinthians 13:8, page 1798).

6.3 The Partial Done Away. Paul then declared that "we know in part and we prophesy in part; but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away("καταργηθήσεται")" (1 Corinthians 13:9-10, page 1798). He illustrated this teaching with the analogy of growing up. The adult, analagous to "the perfect," has done way ("κατήργηκα") with what the child used to speak ("ἐλάλουν"), used to think ("ἐφρόνουν"), and used to reason ("ἐλογιζόμην") (1 Corinthians 13:11, page 1798). The New Testament, combined with the Old Testament, perfectly equips the man of God for every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17, page 1864). As believers, we may all rest assured that every authoritative application of every revelation from God has been preserved for us in the New Testament, and we may know God, and the things freely given to us by the Holy Spirit.

Section Seven

Key Attributes of The Spiritual Gift of

The Word of Knowledge

7.1 Application of Previous Revelation. So we learn more about the spiritual gift of the Word of Knowledge. The Word of Knowledge concerns the authoritative application of the revelation provided by previous revelation, including, without limitation, the Word of Wisdom, for the edification of the church. The Word of Knowledge produces new, inspired revelation from God, built upon the previous inspired revelation from God.

7.2 The Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge. The preaching of Paul rested upon the Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge. By the wisdom of God, we know God, His plans, and His great love for us. By the Word of Knowledge, we know how to use the revelations of God.

Hallmarks of the Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge. Because this spiritual gift involved revelation from God and produced the New Testament, the Holy Spirit has concluded His revelation of the New Testament and therefore this spiritual gift apparently ended with the completion of the New Testament. When operative, The Spiritual Gift of Word of Knowledge had the following hallmarks.

♦ Word-of-Knoweldge gifted believers receive direct revelation from God.

♦ Word-of-Knoweldge gifted believers render authoritative applications of previous revelation from God.

♦ Word-of-Knoweldge gifted believers bless believers by explaining what to do with the mysteries of God now revealed by The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom.

♦ Word-of-Knoweldge gifted believers bless believers by explaining how previous revelations of God now apply to specific situations.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge works according to The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom. Those two spiritual gifts work in tandem. Even so, the scope of The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge also includes the authoritative application of previous revelation provided through The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. It appears that The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge and The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom passed away with the closure of the New Testament, but I keep an open mind about its use today, provided we test every use against the Scriptures.

8

The Spiritual Gift of Faith

Category of Gift: Service

1 Corinthians 12:9, Page 1796

"to another faith by the same Spirit,"

Section One

Introduction

1.1 Every Born-Again Christian Has at Least One Spiritual Gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, page 1796). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of ministries, with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Therefore, if you have the spiritual gift of faith, that single gift may result in a variety of ministries, producing a variety of effects. Furthermore, if you have the spiritual gift of faith, your ministry may look very different from another believer with the same gift of faith. Your ministries of the same spiritual gift may produce very different effects. So, one gift may result in different ministries, and each ministry may produce very different spiritual effects.

1.2 The Command To Believe. Jesus commanded people to believe in Him. He commanded the Samaritan woman at the well to believe in Him (John 4:21, page 1660). He commanded His disciples, and especially Peter, to believe in Him (John 14:1, page 1684; John 14:11, page 1685;). Without faith, God said it is impossible to please Him (Hebrews 11:6, page 1882). Only by faith can a person receive salvation, be forgiven of sins, enjoy rebirth, and go to heaven to live with God eternally. That faith is a gift of God, so that no one may boast (Ephesians 2:8-9, page 1828). So, what is faith? We will examine that matter below.

Section Two

Faith Defined

2.1 Assurance and Conviction. In Hebrews 11:1, page 1882, we read that "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Faith rests here upon two things: assurance and conviction.

2.1.1 Assurance. The term "assurance" ("ὑπόστασις") means that we have confidence in the hope of salvation by faith alone. A very similar term appears in Hebrews 1:3, page 188 to describe Jesus as the "exact representation" ("ὑποστάσεως") of the nature of God. Taking those two thoughts together, we see that faith provides an exact representation and confidence of the things we hope for. Therefore, faith is the assurance of things hoped for.

2.1.2 Conviction. The term "conviction" ("ἔλεγχος") means verification or certainty, to prove with certainty. Therefore, we see that faith means that I have certainty about the future. Faith is never blind in the absolute sense, because we do believe in things that exist, but we may not see them with our human eyes right now. Therefore, faith is the conviction of things not seen. We see the word of God, and believe the promises of God contained in the Bible. For example, Jesus pronounced blessings upon believers who would believe in Him without seeing the bodily wounds He displayed in person to His disciples (John 20:29, pages 1696-1697).

2.2 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Faith." The Greek term translated as "faith" has diverse applications in the New Testament. As you read through various verses dealing with faith, please keep in mind that I interpret these passages below as examples on the one hand of spiritual activities all believers will do at times; but, on the other hand, the saint with The Spiritual Gift of Faith in the forms described below will have a special gift from God to edify believers and build up unity. Let us explore some of those uses to gain insight into the different ways God gifts people with faith to edify the church. We will see below that The Spiritual Gift of Faith involves different major areas of ministry. We will look at them one at a time.

Section Three

The Ministry of Faith:

Overcoming the World

3.1 The Ministry of Overcoming the World. Jesus outlined that every believer will face serious afflictions from the world, orchestrated by antichrist scheming to deceive everyone, including believers. In the face of these tremendous spiritual attacks, appealing to the boastful pride of life, the lust of the eyes and the lust of the flesh, Jesus reminds us that our faith overcomes ("νικᾷ") the world. In fact, in the power and love of Jesus Christ, we overwhelmingly conquer (Romans 8:37, page 1770). Therefore, a believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry to use his faith to overcome the world in a very special way, beyond the normal practice of every believer.

Identification. If you have a ministry of being able to overcome the world with special spiritual power, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

3.2 The Display of the Gift. Please recall that every believer has faith that overcomes the world, but the believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a special, divine ministry to overcome. When you are around believers exercising this gift, it greatly encourages your heart to have more faith resulting in more victory over the world in daily life. They may demonstrate special faith to overcome the boastful pride of life, lust of eyes, and lust of the flesh. They may live in powerful victory over the evil forces of the world, and have greater confidence in the power of God by faith.

Identification. If you have a ministry of special faith to overcome the boastful pride of life, lust of eyes, and lust of the flesh and you in powerful victory over the evil forces of the world, and have greater confidence in the power of God by faith, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Four

The Ministry of Faith:

Unfailing Strength

4.1 The Ministry of Unfailing Faith. The ministry of unfailing faith means that believers often undergo extremely difficult problems, fail during the trial, and then turn back to Jesus, and have stronger faith that strengthens others after their own failure. Consider Peter for a moment. Peter declared he would never forsake Jesus, even it meant laying down his life for Jesus. Jesus replied that Peter would deny Jesus three times that same night (John 13:36-38, page 1684). Jesus then continued and told Peter not to let his heart be troubled, but to believe in God and to believe in Jesus (John 14:1, page 1684). Peter denied Jesus, cursed the name of Jesus, and fell into sin (Matthew 26:69-75, pages 1552-1553). Please remember that all believers have eternal security in salvation, meaning once saved always saved. Believers also have resilient faith that draws every believer back to Jesus after we have sinned. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry to believe, even after terrible failures, and strengthen the faith of other believers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of helping believers to triumph in their faith and practice, so that they stand firmly in their faith in Christ even after terrible failures and denials, without lording it over them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

4.2 Unfailing Faith Demonstrated. Jesus understood the dangers of satan sifting believers like wheat. Jesus explained to Peter that satan was about to sift Peter like wheat, and seek to destroy his faith (Luke 22:32, page 1646). Later that night, Peter would publicly and notoriously deny Jesus three times, and even utter curses. Jesus prayed for Peter that (1) his faith would not fail; and (2) Peter would turn back to Jesus; and (3) Peter should strengthen his brothers (Luke 22:32, page 1646). Peter turned back to the Lord Jesus, fellowshipped with Jesus after the resurrection, witnessed His ascension, and preached the great sermon on Pentecost, and served as an apostle of Jesus Christ for the rest of his life. Peter strengthened many believers and also wrote 1 and 2 Peter in the Bible. The believer with The

Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry to demonstrate faith, even after terrible lapses in obedience and being sifted by satan.

Identification. If you have a ministry of great faith after you have suffered terrible lapses in obedience and after being sifted by satan, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

4.3 The Shipwreck of Faith. Paul used Hymenaeus and Alexander as examples of people who suffered shipwreck of their faith (1 Timothy 1:19, page 1855). Apparently, they were believers, but they rejected their duty to keep faith and a good conscience. Therefore, Paul handed them over to satan, so that they would be taught not to blaspheme. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry to avoid the shipwreck of faith.

Identification. If you have a ministry of special faith to avoid the shipwreck of your faith, as others crash upon the reefs of sin, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

4.4 The Good Fight of Faith. Paul declared to Timothy that Paul had finished the course and had fought the good fight (2 Timothy 4:7, page 1864). Faith must be kept and it takes spiritual effort and consistency like running a long race with endurance. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of finishing the course of life, and completing the good fight. They never give up and quit in their faith, and they strengthen others to have more faith through their own testimony about faith in Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of fighting the good fight of faith, running the race with endurance, and finishing the course, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

4.5 Standing Firm in Faith. Paul never intended to lord his faith over anyone, but always sought to be a worker with believers in their joy. To that end, he declared that even the Corinthians were standing firm in their faith because they had found spiritual help for so many spiritual problems within their assembly (2 Corinthians 1:24, page 1805; compare also 1 Corinthians 16:13, page 1803, where Paul links being alert, standing firm, acting like men, and being strong--all commands to all believers). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of helping believers, particularly immature believers struggling with their faith and practice, to stand firmly in their faith, without lording it over the immature believer.

Identification. If you have a ministry of helping immature believers to triumph in their faith and practice, so that they stand firmly in Christ, without lording it over them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

4.6 The Stability of Faith. Paul rejoiced over the stability of the faith of the Colossian believers (Colossians 2:5, pages 1842-1843). He linked their stability in faith to their good discipline in the Christian life. The Colossians consistently struggled in their faith for the believers who had not seen Paul in person. The Colossians encouraged the hearts of those believers to be knit together in the love of Christ. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of demonstrating stable faith, without delusion, so that you continue to seek the spiritual welfare of other believers without waivering in your faith.

Identification. If you have a ministry of struggling in your faith for people you have not seen face to face, and encourage the hearts of believers to be knit together in fiath, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

4.7 The Testing of Faith. God never tempts believers to sin, but does test their faith to produce endurance within them (James 1:3, page 1887). As believers scattered throughout the Roman empire bcause of persecution, their faith went with them and spread to other groups. Within each believer, God tested their faith during times of trials. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of withstanding trials, and gaining more endurance by undergoing trials successfully.

Identification. If you have a ministry of faith directed toward helping believers to withstand trials, and to gain more endurance by undergoing trial successfully, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

4.8 Turn-Out-as-Promised Faith. Paul faced shipwreck in a terrible storm that threatened the life of everyone on board (Acts 27:25, page 1754). God sent an an angel to Paul, revealing that God would save everyone on board the ship. With the wind howling and everyone under huge stress, Paul confidently proclaimed his faith that things will turn out exactly like God told him. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of believing God during difficult circumstances, with the wind howling and the storm raging, and share that faith with others to strengthen them.

Identification. If you have a ministry to believers encountering difficult circumstances, with the wind howling and the storm raging, and you share your faith with others to strengthen them, they you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

4.9 Power and Strength Faith. Paul demonstrated profound faith in the surpassing greatness of the power of God and the strength of God's might (Ephesians 1:19, page 1828). Paul prayed that all believers would have the eyes of their heart enlightened, to know the about the huge blessings of God at work in our lives. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of believing, communicating, and praying for the surpassing power of God and the strength of His might to be evident in the lives of all believers.

Identification. If you have a ministry in which you believe, communicate and pray for the surpassing power of God and His strength to be evident in the lives all believers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Five

The Ministry of Faith:

Overcoming Fear

5.1 Faith Removes Fear. Jesus met a synagogue official and went to his home to heal his daughter. On the way, the daughter died. Upon the news of death arriving, Jesus told the father not to fear "any longer; only believe and she will be made well" (Luke 8:50, page 1614; Mark 5:36, page 1567). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of encouraging believers to face death and fear by believing that Jesus Christ will help them get through those tough times.

Identification. If you have a ministry of helping people replace their fears with faith, and only faith, so that they can believe God will do great things in their lives, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

5.2 No Fear of the Wrath of the King. Moses left Egypt without fearing the wrath of the king (Hebrews 11:27, page 1883). Moses endured, by seeing Him Who is unseen. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith has the

special ability to take action without fearing the wrath of government, because the believer knows that they will endure by seeing the Unseen One, God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of helping people trust God, who is unseen, as they fear the wrath of the king, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

5.3 Faith To Overcome Fear during Storms. A strong storm arose while the disciples were in a boat with Jesus. He slept on a cushion while the boat filled with water and the disciples feared for their lives. They awoke Jesus, saying to Him: "Teacher, do You not care that we are perishing?" Then Jesus calmed the storm with His command “Hush, be still,” and said to the disciples: "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith (Mark 4:40, page 1565; Luke 8:25, page 1613)?" The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of demonstrating faith in God even when storms rise and fear of dying grows.

Identification. If you have a ministry of helping people overcome the fear of dying during strong storms of life by trusting God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Six

The Ministry of Faith:

Pure Doctrine

6.1 Pure Doctrine. Paul wrote to Titus about bond-slaves. As bond-slaves, they must act like Christ towards their masters. Part of their service concerned the use of good faith in all their service for their master, so that their conduct will adorn the doctrine of God in every respect (Titus 2:10, page 1866). Paul meant that slaves must be careful because what they do reflects upon the doctrine of God they share with other people. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of helping people serve others well, so that servants adorn the doctrine of God in every respect. Some servants need specific encouragement to make the connection between how

they serve and the doctrine they proclaim as truth. If you do not serve well, why should anyone listen to your doctrine about Jesus Christ?

Identification. If you have a ministry of helping believers to live out their faith, especially by serving their masters (such as employers) well, so that everyone will know that your lifestyle of faith matches the doctrine your proclaim, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Seven

The Ministry of Faith:

Building by Faith

7.1 Faith To Build for the Future. God warned Noah about things not yet seen. In reverence to God, Noah prepared an ark for the salvation of his household and became an heir of righteousness which is by faith. (Hebrews 11:7, page 1882). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of building for the future based upon the present warnings of God. For example, in the local assembly today, a saint with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may heed God's warning about insufficient space and discern God's plans for the future (such as a new building, program, or ministry) and encourage others to be faithful in pursuing such a building program.

Identification. If you have a ministry of building by faith for the future based upon the present warning of God, so that people prepare now to meet the future, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Eight

The Ministry of Faith:

Standing Firm in Faith

8.1 Standing Firm in the Faith. Paul the Apostle helped believers to stand firm in their faith. He came to them without sparing them from his reproof from God. He told them about their sins, and urged them to repent of their sins and turn back to God. He never lorded his faith over them, but explained he was a worker with them for their joy. Because Christ establishes believers, and anointed them (as God does with all believers), dand sealed each believer and gave the Holy Spirit to each of them, Paul said they were standing firm. The believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of helping other believers stand firm in their faith, even after they have sinned, repented, and turned back to the Lord Jesus (2 Corinthians 1:24, page 1805).

Identification. If you have a ministry of building the faith of believers after they have sinned, repented and turned back to the Lord Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Nine

The Ministry of Faith:

Approving Things with Conviction

9.1 Approving Things. Faith remains an intensely personal matter. We may choose to eat vegetables only, or meat and vegetables. God allows us to have individual preferences in food. The problem arises when others disagree with our personal choices. If the Bible does not command the matter, but allows freedom, then God has allowed freedom on that issue and no man should strip another man of that freedom of choice. The problem arises with the man if he condemns ("κρίνων") himself in what he approves ("δοκιμάζει"). We must weigh out our own use of freedom in the context of how other believers will react to our freedom. In some cases, our freedom

may cause another believer to stumble. We must be very careful. Paul gave us very clear guidance in Roman 14:1-23, pages 1777-1778. He focused upon our faith. We hold faith, like we hold blood inside our bodies. It flows through us and brings vital power to our minds and bodies. Through faith, we can eat different things without condemning ourselves in our minds. If we doubt when we eat, then we are condemned. Whatever is not from faith is sin. The believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of demonstrating faith that allows them to eat one thing, without any doubt or condemnation. They have faith to eat many things, without self-doubt or self-condemnation, but assurance before God (Romans 14:2, page 1777).

Identification. If you have a ministry of setting an example of faith, such as eating things or doing things without self-doubting or self-condemnation, but with full assurance before God, then then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Ten

The Ministry of Faith:

No Personal Favoritism

10.1 No Personal Favoritism. James described a faith without favoritism. We play favorites when we prefer the rich over the poor, of prefer one person over another person for no good reason. A believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of faith by receiving every person equally, with no show of preference or partiality for anyone. Jesus exemplified this quality of no personal favoritism. Even the enemies of Jesus said: "Teacher, we know that You are truthful and defer to no one; for You are no partial to any, and teach the way of God in truth" (Mark 12:14, page 1582). Like Jesus, some believers will have a reputation for showing no partiality to one person or one group of people, but they pursue ministry among all people, with the same love for each person.

Identification. If you have a ministry of faith by avoiding all partiality among people, but you enjoy a reputation for showing no partiality to one group or one person, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Eleven

The Ministry of Faith:

Enduring Persecution

11.1 Faith in Persecution. In the Book of Revelation, we read about faith under fire. Believers face huge persecution, and often pay with their lives. We read in Revelation 2:13, page 1916, that the believers at Pergamum held firm in their faith and witness for Christ, even when Antipas (a believer) was killed. The saints remained faithful and kept the commandments of God (Revelation 14:12, page 1930). Likewise, the Thessalonians demonstrated perseverance and faith in the midst of their persecutions and afflictions (2 Thessalonians 1:1-12, pages 1851-1852). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of helping others to persevere and with steadfast faith in the midst of persecutions and afflictions. Indeed, God considers our faith more precious than gold, after it has been tested by fire, because it results in the praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:7, pages 1893-1894).

Identification. If you have a ministry of persevering in the midst of persecutions and afflictions, and your faith has been tested by fire, so that it results in the praise, glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twelve

The Ministry of Faith:

Sound Judgment

12.1 Sound Judgment. God linked sound judgment ("σωφρονεῖν") to the measure of faith allotted to a believer (Romans 12:3, Page 1775). God commanded believers not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think, but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of faith, in large measure, that produces sound judgment, without

puffed up thinking. This believer ministers to others by supporting a cause, or defending a position, with God's special help.

Identification. If you have a ministry of faith based upon sound judgment in supporting a cause, or defending a position, without being puffed up yourself, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Thirteen

The Ministry of Faith:

Shield of Faith

13.1 Shield of Faith. Every believer has been equipped for spiritual warfare. Our adversary, the devil, seeks to devour believers and must be resisted. We stand strong and resist the devil when we wear the armor of God. The armor of God includes the shield of faith, which allows believers to quench the fiery darts of the devil (Ephesians 6:16, page 1834). Consider Jesus using the shield of the word of God to defend against satan's temptations (Matthew 4:1-11, page 1505). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of both greater faith and also a greater ability to use the shield of faith to protect himself and others from spiritual attack from the devil. They minister to other believers with the shield of faith.

Identification. If you have a ministry of wearing the armor of God and using the shield of faith, which is the word of God, to protect yourself and others from the spiritual attack of the devil, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Fourteen

The Ministry of Faith:

Good Fight

14.1 The Good Fight. Paul commanded Timothy to fight the good fight of faith (ἀγωνίζου τὸν καλὸν ἀγῶνα τῆς πίστεως) (1 Timothy 6:12, pages 1859-

1860). Likewise, Old Testament believers conquered kingdoms by faith (Hebrews 11:33, Page 1883). In both cases, we read about the power of faith to win both spiritual and physical battles. Therefore, all believers by faith fight battles, both spiritual and physical. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of fighting spiritual battles, with sustained spiritual courage, and providing an example and encouragement to all the believers learning of such spiritual endurance in spiritual battles.

Identification. If you have a ministry of promoting faith that allows you to fight the good fight and helps believers conquer kingdoms, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Fifteen

The Ministry of Faith:

Fellowship of Faith

15.1 The Fellowship of Faith. Every believer enjoys fellowship with God, and often with other believers. Paul wrote to Philemon: I pray that the fellowship of your faith ("ἡ κοινωνία τῆς πίστεώς σου") may become effective ("ἐνεργὴς γένηται"). Paul prayed that the fellowship may become effective through the knowledge of every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake (Philemon 1:6, page 1868). Therefore, Paul taught that the fellowship of an individual's faith means getting to know every good thing which is in you for Christ's sake. Philemon had refreshed Paul and other saints with his love. The fellowship of faith means that we gain an understanding of how God uses our lives and spiritual gifts to refresh other believers, bringing them joy and comfort. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of fellowship of the faith, refreshing other believers, and helping other believers to know every good thing that is in them for Christ's sake. In short, God uses The Spiritual Gift of Faith to help other believers know about every good thing in themselves for the sake of Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of refreshing believers and helping them to know that every good thing within them shows the presence of Christ indwelling them by faith, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Sixteen

The Ministry of Faith:

Eternal Rewards

16.1 Eternal Rewards. All believers will receive praise from Jesus (1 Peter 1:7, page 1893-1894). All the works of each believer will be tested by fire, and then rewards will be bestowed by Jesus at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 1 Corinthians 3:10-15, page 1785; 2 Corinthians 5:10, Page 1809). Therefore, we also know that every believer must have faith that God rewards those who diligently seek Him (Hebrews 11:6, page 1882). A believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry in the area of eternal rewards, by encouraging people to lay up for themselves treasures in heaven and count upon rewards for faithful service. Also, in times of hopelessness and growing weary, the ministry of eternal rewards may lift the despondent believer to an eternal perspective, that God always rewards faithful service, even if the rewards are not apparent right now.

Identification. If you have a ministry focused upon eternal rewards, and helping believers endure through difficult times, knowing that God rewards faithful service to Him, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Seventeen

The Ministry of Faith:

Believing the Word of God

17.1 Believing the Word of God. The Word of God, the Bible, works in every believer to produce many glorious things. It is living, sharp and powerful (Hebrews 4:12, page 1873). It brings encouragement and strength. Through the Bible, we hear the words of life and light, breathed out by God into our lives. Unless we both hear the word of God and believe the word of God, it profits us nothing. A believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have the ministry of helping people believe the word of God so that it works powerfully in the lives of believers (1 Thessalonians 2:13, page 1847).

Identification. If you have a ministry focused upon the word of God, and help people hear and believe the word of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Eighteen

The Ministry of Faith:

Believing the Impossible

18.1 Believing the Impossible. Jesus expects every believer to believe that things impossible with man are possible with God. In fact, all things are possible with God. Jesus did the impossible by casting out a demon after challenging the faith of the boy's father (Mark 9:23, page 1575). By faith, Abraham believed that Jesus could overcome the deadness of Sarah's womb; Abraham grew strong in faith, and gave glory to God (Romans 4:19-20, page 1764). By faith, Sarah, the wife of Abraham, conceived at ninety years of age (Hebrews 11:11, Page 1882) (see Abraham and Sarah: Lessons in Laughter and Faith). By faith the size of a mustard seed, men move mountains, because nothing is impossible by faith (Matthew 17:20, page 1531). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have the ministry of helping believers have faith that the physically impossible things are all possible with God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of believing that God does physically and spiritually impossible things and commands us to believe in Him and His power, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Nineteen

The Ministry of Faith:

Believing in Prayer

19.1 Believing in Prayer. All believers are to pray, and to have faith in God to answer prayers according to His will. In Matthew 21:18-22, pages 1538-1539, Jesus used the barren fig tree to teach a lesson about faith and prayer. Jesus cursed a fig tree because it had no figs, even though it was not the season for figs. Jesus used that fig tree to teach a lesson about the power of prayer and how faith must be joined to prayer. You must have faith in what you pray. The disciples were amazed that the fig tree withered at once. Jesus taught them that faith without doubts can move mountains into the sea. Indeed, "all things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive" (Mathew 21:22, page 1539). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry in prayer, with extraordinary faith and without any doubts, so that what they pray they receive. They also use The Spiritual Gift of Faith to encourage other believers to pray with faith, without doubting.

Identification. If you have a ministry of praying according to the will of God for all things by faith without doubting, and encourage others to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twenty

The Ministry of Faith:

Faith To Overcome Terrible Sin

20.1 Overcoming Terrible Sin. Jesus told Peter that the devil had demanded permission to sift Peter like wheat. Jesus then prayed for Peter, that his faith would not fail, but that once he had turned again, he would strengthen his brothers (Luke 31-32, pages 1645-1646). Jesus also prophesied to Peter that Peter would deny Jesus three times before the cock crowed. Immediately after delivering the latter prophecy, Jesus then gave a series of remarkable commands to Peter: "Do no let your heart be troubled

(John 14:1, page 1684). Jesus used the plural form for "your." He meant that not only would Peter be challenged in hsi faith, but all of them must believe. Jesus continued: "believe in God; believe also in Me" (John 14:1, page 1684). Jesus commands three things in this verse: (1) do not let your heart be troubled, even though Peter will be committing great sin; and (2) believe in God; and (3) believe in Jesus. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have the ministry of helping people turn away from and recover from terrible sin in their lives.

Identification. If you have a ministry of overcoming terrible sin by focusing upon not letting your heart be troubled, but believing in God and believing in Jesus, just as He commanded, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twenty One

The Ministry of Faith:

Alien Faith

21.1 Alien Living. Abraham lived as an alien, stranger and exile upon earth, knowing his citizenship was in heaven, and looking for a better country in heaven (Hebrews 11:8-16, page 1882). By faith Abraham obeyed the calling to go a place to receive an inheritance, not knowing where he was going. He was looking for the city which has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. Although Abraham did not have The Spiritual Gift of Faith, he did exemplify the great faith that caused him to obey God and travel to distant lands, where he lived as a stranger, desiring a better country. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may believe God in moving to distant lands, or any foreign place, to minister for God in that foreign venue. These faith-gifted people live as foreigners, aliens, and exiles upon earth, to the glory of God. They can encourage others to live in obedience to God through the ministry of The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Identification. If you have a ministry of obedience to God in going to alien places looking for an eternal inheritance and a city whose Architect and Builder is God, and you live there as a stranger, desiring a better country, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twenty Two

The Ministry of Faith:

Nourished on Faith

22.1 Nourished. Paul commanded young Timothy to point out the value of sanctified living. In particular, believers may eat all tings sanctified by means of the word of God and prayer (1 Timothy 4:6, page 1857). As Timothy pointed out the truth of living a sanctified life, he himself would be nourished ("ἐντρεφόμενος") on the words of faith ("τοῖς λόγοις τῆς πίστεως") and of the sound doctrine ("τῆς καλῆς διδασκαλίας") which he had been following. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have the ministry of pointing out to believers that they must live sanctified lives, and as they exercise this gift, the gifted believer will be nourished on the words of faith and of sound doctrine.

Identification. If you have a ministry of pointing out to believers that they must live sanctified lives, and you are nourished on the words of faith and of sound doctrine while you use this gift, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twenty Three

The Ministry of Faith:

Sacrificing Precious Things

23.1 Sacrificing. In the Old Testament, Jesus had not baptized anyone with the Holy Spirit, and He had not yet bestowed spiritual gifts from the Holy Spirit upon believers. Yet, Abraham lived by faith. In fact, Abraham offered up his son Isaac, and was prepared to kill Isaac upon the altar when God provided a ram instead. Abraham believed God would resurrect Issac to keep the promise made to Abraham regarding a family inheritance of spiritual blessings. We learn that Abraham had great faith, the kind of faith that motivated him to extreme obedience to God, even to sacrificing his own son by faith in God's command (Hebrews 11:17, page 1883). The believer with

The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of sacrificing precious things in obedience to God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of sacrificing precious things to God in obedience to His command, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twenty Four

The Ministry of Faith:

Blessing Children

24.1 Blessing Children. The Old Testament blessing of children, even adult children, demonstrated the faith of the human father. For example, by faith Jacob blessed his sons Jacob and Esau. Later in his life, as he was dying, Jacob blessed the sons of Joseph, while leaning on his staff. While Jacob did not possess any spiritual gift, he did act by faith. (Hebrews 11:20-21, page 1883). Consider how people brought their children to Jesus, so that He would bless them (Mark 10:13-16, page 1577). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of blessing children for the glory of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of blessing children for the glory of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twenty Five

The Ministry of Faith:

Faith To Die

25.1 Faith To Die. Jacob, also called Israel, by faith worshiped as he was dying, leaning on staff (Hebrews 11:22, page 1883). Jacob not only worshiped, but he also blessed his children, the twelve tribes of Israel. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry involving dying people. Your great faith, a spiritual gift of God, encourages people as they die to worship God and bless others, particularly their children.

Identification. If you have a ministry to people facing death that encourages them to bless God and their families, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twenty Six

The Ministry of Faith:

Risking Death

26.1 Jochobed and Amram. The parents of Moses, Jochebed (father) and Amram, had great faith to hide Moses for three months after his birth from the Egyptian persecutors who sought to kill all the Hebrew babies (Hebrews 11:23, page 1883). His parents were not afraid of the king's edict regarding all the children. They put their own lives in peril to save the life of their son. A believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of helping children escape from the government seeking or allowing the slaughter of innocent children. Abortion today murders unborn children. Believers with this ministry do not fear the government, but prefer to help babies and children survive. At times, they may risk their own death to save the lives of others.

Identification. If you have a ministry of risking your own life to save the lives of others, especially children, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

26.2 Rahab. By faith, Rahab the harlot, who hid the spies at Jericho, risked her own life to help the people of Israel take her own city, Jericho (Hebrews 11:31, page 1883). She did not perish along with all the disobedient of the city of Jericho when God flattened the walls of Jericho. As Israel swept in to Jericho, flowing over the fallen walls, Rahab survived because she had hidden the spies when the evil men of Jericho searched for them. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of protecting people from harm and hiding them from evil ones, even endangering his own life in doing so. He risks his own death to protect and hide other people from evil.

Identification. If you have a ministry of risking your own life to hide other people from evil, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twenty Seven

The Ministry of Faith:

Journey Faith

27.1 Journey Faith. By faith, the people of Israel passed through the Red Sea (Hebrews 11:29, page 1883). This special kind of faith, under the leadership of Moses, required everyone in Israel to exercise faith by walking through the Red Sea. The people walked on dry ground. God performed a miracle in holding the water back so they could pass through the Red Sea safely. God killed the Egyptians who tried follow on the dry ground. A believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of encouraging an entire group of believers to follow the direction of God, so that everyone will act in faith and see God do great things for that group.

Identification. If you have a ministry of leading an entire group of people to trust God and follow the direction of God into impossible circumstances, like walking into a sea with an army chasing you, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Tweny Eight

The Ministry of Faith:

Overcoming Doubts

28.1 Overcoming Doubts. Pleasing God means that we have faith to believe that God is and that God diligently rewards those who seek Him. Without faith, we cannot please God. We must have faith that God rewards believers in order to please God (Hebrews 11:6, page 1882). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have the ministry of demonstrating great faith to other believers to overcome doubts, and to believe that God is and that God rewards those who seek Him.

Identification. If you have a ministry of believing that God will reward those who diligently serve Him, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Twenty Nine

The Ministry of Faith:

Resisting the Devil

29.1 Resisting the Devil. Only with firm faith will the believer be able to resist the devil (1 Peter 5:9, page 1899). As they resist the devil, believers know that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by our brethren who are in the world. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith demonstrates faith by standing firm in the faith, and so resists the devil. In doing so, that believer encourages others to resist the devil, because we all share the same experience of suffering temptations.

Identification. If you have a ministry of standing firm in the faith, and so resist the devil so that he flees from you, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Thirty

The Ministry of Faith:

Administering Well

30.1 Stweardship. While all believers must act as faithful stewards, some believers truly excel at such stewardship. They prosper in their investments and the use of money, time, talent, and all gifts from God. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of administering the gifts of God (even the gifts of unrighteous wealth (Luke 16:11, page 1633)) as a steward of God with great faith (Matthew 25:21, page 1547). They have extraordinary faith in the plans and purposes of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of being faithful as a steward of God, demonstrating extraordinary faith the plans and purposes of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Thirty One

The Ministry of Faith:

Faithfulness to Strangers

31.1 Strangers. As strangers visit a local assembly, we must be careful to send them on their way having faithfully accomplished all that God intended us to do for them (3 John 1:5, page 1911). A believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry of demonstrating great faithfulness to strangers and helping them on their way.

Identification. If you have a ministry of being faithful to strangers and sending them on their way, having faithfully accomplished all that God intended for you to do for them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Thirty Two

The Ministry of Faith:

Faith in Prison

32.1 Prison. At times, God allows the devil to cast believers into prison, for the purpose of testing the faith of believers. God will reward the believers who remain faithful with the crown of life (Revelation 2:10, page 1916). A believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a prison ministry of helping believers remain firm in their faith by demonstrating great faith while suffering imprisonment for their faith.

Identification. If you have a prison ministry of demonstrating great faith while suffering imprisonment for your faith, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Thirty Three

The Ministry of Faith:

Faith for Health

33.1 Health. As you read through Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in the New Testament, you will notice that many people are healed of their physical problems. Jesus often linked faith to miraculous spiritual healing (for example, Matthew 15:28, page 1528; Mark 5:34, page 1567; Mark 10:52, page 1579; Luke 18:42, page 1638). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have the ministry of helping believers believe that God can heal his physical body, as God alone chooses to perform healing (Luke 4:16-30, pages 1602-1603).

Identification. If you have a ministry of believing that God can heal his physical body, as God alone chooses to perform healing, and your faith positively affects other believers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Thirty Four

The Ministry of Faith:

Speaking in Faith

34.1 Speaking in Faith. As Paul recounted his stewardship of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, he explained that he suffered greatly as part of that stewardship. He was constantly being delivered over to death for the sake of Jesus, so that he may proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ and manifest the life of Jesus Christ in his mortal flesh. Because Paul believed in Jesus Christ, He proclaimed Jesus Christ: "But having the same spirit of faith, according to what is written, "I BELIEVED, THEREFORE I SPOKE," so also we speak, knowing that He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and present us with you" (2 Corinthians 4:13-14, page 1808). Therefore, we see the close connection between the spirit of faith and speaking in faith. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a

ministry of suffering persecution for the sake of Jesus Christ and His Gospel, but speaking out boldly even so because of the spirit of faith abiding in him.

Identification. If you have a ministry of suffering persecution for the sake of Jesus Christ and His Gospel, but speaking out boldly even so because of the spirit of faith abiding in you, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Section Thirty Five

The Ministry of Faith:

Faith for Preaching and Teaching

35.1 Preaching and Teaching. Some believers went to Antioch and began preaching to the Gentiles and saw many people converted to Christ. As the great news spread to Jerusalem, the church at Jerusalem sent the trusted servant Barnabas to Antioch. Barnabas arrived in Antioch and (1) he witnessed the grace of God; and (2) he rejoiced; and (3) he began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord (Acts 11:23, page 1722). Barnabas was a good man ("ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς") and full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. Considerable numbers were brought ("προσετέθη") to the Lord. Notice that as believers remain true to the Lord, unbelievers turn to the Lord. A believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith may have a ministry from a resolute heart of encouraging other believers to remain with the Lord, with the result that considerable numbers of unbelievers are brought to the Lord.

Identification. If you have a ministry from a resolute heart of encouraging other believers to remain with the Lord, with the result that considerable numbers of unbelievers are brought to the Lord, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

Hallmarks of The Spiritual Gift of Faith

Faith: Understanding the Spiritual Gifts. The believer with the Spiritual Gift of Faith ministers in many ways, helping believers with their hope and conviction. Faith may be enabled, and the faith of others also may

be encouraged. Through this ministry of faith, God produces great works and strengthens beleivers.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of Faith and then see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of Faith.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of helping believers overcome the world.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of encouraging unfailing strength.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of overcoming fear.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of promoting pure doctrine.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of building faith.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of helping believers stand firm.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of approving things with conviction.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of showing no personal favoritism.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of enduring persecution.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of sound judgment.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of using the shield of faith.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of fighting the good fight.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of the fellowship of faith.

- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of eternal rewards.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of believing the word of God.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of believing the impossible.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of believing in prayer.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of overcoming terrible sin.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of preparing for the future.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of alien faith.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of sacrificing precious things.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of blessing children.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of faith to die.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of risking death.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of journey faith.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of overcoming doubts.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of resisting the devil.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of administering well.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of faithfulness to strangers.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of faith in prison.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of faith for health.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of speaking in faith.
- Faith-gifted believers may have a ministryof nourished on faith.

♦ Faith-gifted believers may have a ministry of faith for preaching and teaching.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Gift of Faith rests upon the assurance of things hoped for and the conviction of things not seen. Because of that special gift of faith, many different forms of ministry flow from that one gift. That ministry may include encouraging faith, demonstrating faith, overcoming evil, resisting the devil, preparing for death, blessing others, and many more great effects. In all things, God promised to reward stewards who act faithfully.

9

The Spiritual Gifts of Healings

Category of Gift: Service

1 Corinthians 12:9

"to another gifts of healings

by the one Spirit, ..."

As we have seen in other studies, Paul did not define The Spiritual Gifts of Healings in 1 Corinthians 12:9, Page 1796, but placed The Spiritual Gifts of Healings in a list of other gifts. Therefore, we may understand that Paul meant for us to look at the general ministry of healings to see how God gave some believers special gifts of healings. In fact, God declared that He gave believers "gifts" of healings. Each time a healing takes place shows how special the gift of healings was in that instance. Furthermore, based upon the previous studies, we know that different gifts can produce a variety of ministries, the different ministries of healings from one another, although each ministry uses the same Spiritual Gifts of Healings. We know that different people in the New Testament did different things with their gifts and God produced a variety of effects from the same spiritual gift.

Section One

The Term Healing

1.1 Jesus Healed. Jesus healed people throughout His ministry (Mark 1:34, Page 1559; Matthew 5:23, Page 1506). At times, the people's lack of faith limited the scope of His ministry and the number of people healed (Mark 6:5, Page 1567--Jesus even wondered at the unbelief of His household, His relatives, and his Hometown).

1.2 The Term "Healings." As we have seen with other spiritual gifts, the list itself only mentions the spiritual gift, but does not define the spiritual gift. In this case, the list includes "gifts of healings," but does not define the gift itself. Notice the term "gifts." God used the plural term "gifts" to describe The Spiritual Gifts of Healings. The plural for gifts ("χαρίσματα"), perhaps, implies the diversity of this single gift. Likewise, the term "healings" ("ἰαμάτων") occurs in the plural, implying a diversity of healings (1 Corinthians 12:9, page 1796; 1 Corinthians 12:30, page 1797).

1.3 The New Testament Words for Healing. In 1 Corinthians 12:9, the Holy Spirit chose a particular word for "healing" to describe The Spiritual Gifts of Healings. A brief survey of a few instances of the different terms for healing provides some insight into the New Testament concepts of healing.

1.3.1 Physical Healing. The New Testament writers used two main terms for healing ("ἴαμα" and "θεραπεία"), along with other terms.

1.3.2 Jesus and Physical Healing. Jesus and His apostles healed ("ἐθεράπευσεν") many types of physical problems: (Luke 13:14, Page 1627): (a) Jesus restored ("ὑγιὴς") a withered hand ("χεῖρα ἔχων ξηράν") (Matthew 12:10, Page 1520); (b) Jesus healed ("ἰαθεὶς") a man at Bethesda who for thirty-eight years was "ill" ("τῇ ἀσθενείᾳ") (John 5:5, Page 1662), also called the sick man ("ὁ ἀσθενῶν") (John 5:7, Page 1662) so that he was unable to walk; (c) Jesus healed ("ἰάσατο") a man suffering from dropsy ("ὑδρωπικὸς") (Luke 14:4, Page 1529); (d) a woman with a hemorrhage of blood ("ῥύσει αἵματος") for twelve years could not be healed ("θεραπευθῆναι") by anyone (Luke 8:43, page 1614)--but Jesus said her faith had healed ("σέσωκέν") her (Luke 8:48, page 1614); (e) Jesus healed a women ("τεθεραπευμέναι ") of evil spirits ("πνευμάτων πονηρῶν") and sicknesses ("ἀσθενειῶν") (Luke 8:2, Page 1611). Jesus often healed everyone seeking healing ("θεραπεύοντες πανταχοῦ) while He was preaching the Gospel (Luke 9:6, Page 1615). Jesus also cured people in need of healing ("τοὺς χρείαν ἔχονταςθεραπείας ἰᾶτο") while speaking of the kingdom of God (Luke 9:11, Page 1615).

Identification. If God uses you to restore withered hands, cure dropsy, heal people with evil spirits and sickness, and heal many people at one time, and if people can be healed simply by touching your clothing, then you may The

Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of physical healing and casting out demons.

1.3.3 The Disciples and Physical Healing. Likewise, Philip in Samaria healed the lame ("χωλοὶ") and the paralyzed ("παραλελυμένοι") (Acts 8:6, Page 1714). Different believers performed many healings in many places.

Identification. If God uses you to make the lame walk and the paralyzed walk, and God uses you for healings in many different places, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a traveling ministry of healing people, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them.

1.4 The Causes of Physical Illness. Jesus taught His disciples that not every physical problem resulted from the sin of the person or the parents. For example, the disciples saw a man born blind and asked if the man had sinned or his parents. Jesus replied that neither the man nor his parents sinned, but rather the man was blind so that the works of God might be displayed in him ("ἵνα φανερωθῇ τὰ ἔργα τοῦ θεοῦ ἐν αὐτῷ") (John 9:3, Page 1673).

Identification. If you can distinguish the causes of physical illness, so that you know whether the sickness arose from sin, or the sickness arose without sin, so that the glory of God would be shown in the healing, while you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of identifying the cause of the physical sickness.

1.5 Satan and Demons. Evil spirits also caused physical problems. For example, a woman had a sickness ("ἔχουσα ἀσθενείας") caused by a spirit ("πνεῦμα"--note the original phrase was "πνεῦμα ἔχουσα ἀσθενείας") for eighteen years (Luke 13:11, Page 1627). Jesus appeared and released her from the bond of being bent double ("συγκύπτουσα") and unable to straighten up at all ("μὴ δυναμένη ἀνακύψαι εἰς τὸ παντελές"). Indignant that Jesus had healed the woman, the synagogue official chided the people present and directed them to come during the week and get healed ("θεραπεύεσθε"), but not on the Sabbath, because it was a day of rest. Jesus explained that even the synagogue officials lead their donkeys and oxen to water on the Sabbath, but they objected to Jesus releasing the woman whom satan had bound ("ἔδησεν ὁ Σατανᾶς") for eighteen years (Luke 13:14-17, Page 1627).

Therefore, we know that some sickness results from satan binding people so that their bodies do not function properly and they are sick. Consider also that satan has the power to heal sickness. The beast of Revelation 13:3 was healed of a fatal wound ("ἡ πληγὴ τοῦ θανάτου"), apparently healed by satan (Revelation 13:3, Page 1928; Revelation 13:12, Page 1929).

Identification. If you can identify that satan has bound a saint with a physical sickness, and God uses you to release that person upon command in the name of Jesus Christ from the bondage of sickness inflicted by satan, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of releasing people bound by satan with physical sickness.

Section Two

Kinds of Gifts

2.1 The Kind of Gift. Paul used terms to group together the spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12, separating the groups by the word "hetero" ("ἑτέρῳ"). The Spiritual Gift of Faith and The Spiritual Gifts of Healings form one related group. Therefore, The Spiritual Gift of Faith relates directly to the Spiritual Gifts of Healings.

2.2 The Plural of Gifts. In 1 Corinthians 12:9, Page 1796, Paul used the plural term for "gifts," as he did with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers. The use of the plural for "gifts" may well indicate that Holy Spirit bestows several different gifts of healing, or each healing was a unique manifestation of the same gift.

Section Three

Faith and Healing

3.1 The Lack of Faith. The ministry of healing often required faith. Jesus wondered ("ἐθαύμαζεν") at the unbelief in Nazareth, his hometown, where not even his hometown, nor his own relatives, nor his household believed in Him (Mark 6:4, Page 1567). Because of unbelief, Jesus could do no miracles

there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people and healed ("ἐθεράπευσεν") them.

Identification. If the lack of faith in Jesus as Savior among your hometown residents, your own relatives, and your own household limits the healings that God performs through you in your hometown, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of healing the sick and sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

3.2 Faith for Healing. The New Testament contains records of different ways that faith for healing manifested itself in people.

3.3 Words of Healing. Some people in the New Testament expressed words of faith about the power of Jesus to heal them. For example, the leper said to Jesus: "Lord, if You are willing, You can make me clean" (Matthew 8:2, Page 1512). Jesus healed the leper. Likewise, the woman with the issue of blood was saying to herself words of faith, "If I only touch the fringe of His cloak, I will get well ("σωθήσομαι")" (Matthew 9:21, Page 1515). She touched Jesus and she was healed immediately. Another example concerns two blind men. Jesus asked them specifically about their faith for healing: "Do you believe that I am able to do this?" They replied: "Yes, Lord." Jesus responded: "It shall be done to you according to your faith" (Matthew 9:28-29). In all these examples, we see that people with all kinds of physical problems believed that Jesus could heal them. They spoke words of healing to Jesus, expressing their faith. Today, people can express their faith to Jesus, but we must always remember the words of the leper, "If You are willing." Also, please keep in mind that the people of Nazareth, including the household and relatives of Jesus, did not honor Him. In fact Jesus told the people of Nazareth that just as God only healed Naaman the Syrian of his leprosy in the days of Elisha, so Jesus would not do many miracles in Nazareth because they dishonored Him. Even so, Jesus laid His hands on a few sick ("ἀρρώστοις") people and healed ("ἐθεράπευσεν") them.

Identification. If people speak words of faith in Jesus to you, and God then uses you to heal them based those words or acts of faith, while you are sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of healing based upon perceived words or acts of faith.

3.4 Faith To Be Made Well. In Acts 14:8-10, Page 1727, Paul saw a man at Lystra sitting, because he had no strength in his feet, who had never walked, because he was born lame. The lame man was listening to Paul as he spoke. Fixing his gaze upon the lame man, Paul saw that the lame man had faith to be made well. So, Paul declared with a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he leaped up and began to walk. Notice the phrase that Paul saw the man had faith to be made well ("τοῦ σωθῆναι"). Paul spiritually recognized faith that made the man ready to be made well, and spiritually saved at the same time.

Identification. If you can see that a person has faith to be made well, and then you issue a command in the name of Jesus Christ based upon instant healing, and God uses you to heal that person born so that the lame person leaps up and stands upright, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of perceiving faith for being made well, while you are sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

3.5 Enabling Faith. At times, the faith of others could help people needing healing. For example, the Centurion sent word to Jesus that the Centurion's servant was ill and needed healing. The Centurion did not want Jesus to enter his house, but merely saying the word of healing would suffice. Upon hearing this statement from the Centurion, Jesus observed that He had not found faith in all of Israel like that of the Centurion (Matthew 8:5-13, Page 1512). Likewise, the men carrying the paralytic let him down through the roof in front of Jesus (Luke 5:17-26, Page 1605). We learn that the faith of friends may be invaluable to healing.

Identification. If you have people coming to you for healing, based upon the faith of friends and family in Jesus Christ as Savior that He can heal them, and then God uses you to heal them in the name of Jesus Christ, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of healing people based upon the faith of their friends and family.

3.6 Jesus Healed Them All. Jesus also had mass healing events. For example, as the news of Jesus healing people spread through all Syria, they brought to Him all who were ill with various diseases and pain, demoniacs, epileptics, paralytics and He healed them all (Matthew 4:24, Page 1506;

compare Matthew 12:15, Page 1520). God also used Paul in unusual ways to heal people, so that even aprons and handkerchiefs from Paul were carried from Paul to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out (Acts 19:11-12, Pages 1737-1738).

Identification. If people are bringing to you the lame, the demoniacs, the epileptics, the paralytics, and people suffering from various diseases and pain, while you are sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and God uses you to heal them all, the you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of healing people of many different kinds of physical and spiritual problems.

Section Four

Signs and Wonders

4.1 The Sign Gifts. Jesus always intended for the Gospel of Jesus Christ to be primary and supreme, for it alone brought salvation and eternal life. Therefore, in order to promote the Gospel of Jesus Christ, He granted authority to His disciples to perform signs to demonstrate the authority of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

4.2 The Twelve Disciples. Jesus commissioned His disciples to go forth and proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing ("ἰᾶσθαι") (Matthew 10:1, Page 1516). Jesus gave them authority ("ἐξουσίαν") over unclean spirits ("πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων") to cast them out and to heal ("θεραπεύειν") every disease ("πᾶσαν νόσον") and every sickness ("πᾶσαν μαλακίαν"). Jesus further commanded them to heal ("θεραπεύετε") the sick ("ἀσθενοῦντας"), raise the dead, cleanse ("καθαρίζετε") the lepers ("λεπροὺς") and cast out ("ἐκβάλλετε") the demons ("δαιμόνια"). Jesus emphasized that the disciples had freely received this authority, and they should freely minister with that authority (Matthew 108, Page 1516). Jesus linked the preaching of the kingdom with the ministry of authority and healing ("ἰᾶσθαι").

Identification. If you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and during that ministry you heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse the lepers and cast out

demons, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of authority over all sickness, disease, death, and unclean spirits.

4.3 The Hand of Jesus. Jesus used His hands to touch people and heal them (Matthew 8:3, Page 1512). In Acts 4:24, as the believers lifted their voices to God with one accord saying to God, in part, "while You extend Your hand to heal ("ἴασιν") and signs and wonders ("σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα") take place through Your holy servant Jesus." We see the wonderful way that God described the healing power flowing through hand of Jesus as the apostles healed in the name of Jesus, the holy servant of God. Whenever anyone receives healing, they should always see the hand of Jesus touching them.

Identification. If you proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and during that ministry Jesus extends His hand to heal and to perform signs and wonders, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of Jesus extending His hand to perform healing and signs and wonders.

4.4 False Christs and False Prophets. In the future, false Christs ("ψευδόχριστοι") and false prophets ("ψευδοπροφῆται") will arise and show greats signs ("σημεῖα μεγάλα") and wonders ("τέρατα") in order to mislead ("πλανῆσαι"), if possible, even the elect (Matthew 24:24, Page 1545). Therefore, we see that satan will use signs and wonders to mislead, where Jesus uses signs and wonders to confirm authority and lead people into the kingdom of God.

Identification. If you minister the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the name of Jesus Christ, and with the power of Jesus Christ, and you avoid misleading the elect, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry distinguishable from the ministry of false Christs and false prophets.

4.5 Say to the Sick. As the disciples were to heal ("θεραπεύετε") the sick ("ἀσθενεῖς") in the cities where they went, the disciples were also to link explicitly the healing with the proclamation that the kingdom of God has come near to you (Luke 10:9, Page 1618). The healing of the physical body by the power of God must never stand alone, because the healing must be simultaneously and explicitly linked to the kingdom of God. While many people "speak healing" to people, Jesus commanded His disciples to speak of the kingdom of God while healing people.

Identification. If you speak of the Kingdom of God, and while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ you heal the sick in the cities where you go, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ from city to city, healing people as you go.

Section Five

The Authority of Healing

5.1 The Authority for Healing. As noted above, Jesus gave His disciples authority ("ἐξουσίαν") to heal and to cast out unclean spirits (Matthew 10:1, 8, Page 1516; Luke 9:1, Page 1615). Notice that this authority can be given to a particular person, as a gift for ministry to others. The word "authority" emphasized the power to control and to command. The disciples had power to heal and to cast out demons. The power of God was working through them, and the power of God overpowered all. The Spiritual Gifts of Healings will always be about the power of God overpowering all. The special gift of that power will always be awesome.

Identification. If Jesus has given you the ability to heal and cast out demons in His name, while you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and working through you, the power of Jesus Christ over powers all, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Healings, with a ministry of power to cast out demons and unclean spirits.

Section Six

The Ministry of the Gifts of Healings

6.1 Ministries and Effects. As we have seen before, one spiritual gift may produce a variety of ministries and each ministry may produce a variety of effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Our lives as disciples of Christ should be dedicated, in part, to using the spiritual gifts God has placed within us. We must learn about our spiritual gifts and how God intends to use those gifts in His ministries. Therefore, we may list a few of the ministries of the Spiritual Gifts of Healing.

6.2 The Ministry of Physical Healing. Jesus and the Apostles performed many physical healings. For example, they provided sight to the blind, the lame walked, the lepers were cleansed and the deaf heard. Please notice that as a general rule, they have the ability to identify the faith for healing (Acts 14:9, page 1727). They also have the power to heal every kind of disease and every kind of sickness among the people (Matthew 4:23, page 1506; Acts 5:16, page 1707). The saint with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings may have the ministry of physical healing.

Identification. If God heals many physically sick people using you, and the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed and deaf hear, and you have the ability to discern faith for healing, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry to the physically ill.

6.3 The Ministry of Breaking the Physical Bonds of Satan. The woman bent over for eighteen years by the power of satan provides an example of physical disfigurement cause by satan (Luke 13:13-17, page 1627). The account of the healing contains no explicit record of demon possession. Therefore, although related to casting out a demon, this appears to be a special ministry of releasing a person from the bonds of satan manifesting as some form of physical disfigurement. The saint with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings may have the ministry of releasing people from the physical bonds of disfigurement put upon them by satan.

Identification. If God uses you to break the bonds of satan causing physical disfigurements, while you are sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry to the disfigured.

6.4 The Ministry of Resurrection. Jesus and the disciples performed miracles of resurrection (e.g., John 11:1-46, pages 1677-1679; Acts 9:36-43,

page 1718). The saint with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings may have the ministry of raising the dead.

Identification. If God uses you, while you are sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to raise the dead in the name of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts Healings, with a ministry of raising the dead.

6.5 The Ministry of Casting out Demons. Jesus and the disciples also cast out ("ἐκβάλλετε") demons, as God confirmed the messengers of the Gospel with signs and wonders. The saint with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings may have the ministry of casting out demons.

Identification. If God uses you to perform signs and wonders, and cast out demons, all while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of casting out demons and performing signs and wonders.

Section Seven

The Spiritual Gifts of Healing Today

7.1 Spiritual Gifts of Healing Today. Many people today claim to perform healings, and many of those people have their own media programs. Often, we learn later that many of those people have been untruthful and fraudulent in their claims of healing. Just as Jesus prophesied, many false prophets and false teachers will arise, and display even supernatural abilities to deceive people. Although we are not living in the Seven Years of Tribulation, even so the devil manifests his supernatural power to deceive. We must be very careful to evaluate everyone claiming to possess the Spiritual Gifts of Healings by the criteria of Scripture.

Identification. If you do not use fraudulent and untruthful means to perform healings, but God actually uses you while you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ to perform healings empowered by Him, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of healing in truth without deception.

7.2 <u>The Evaluation of the Claim of Healing</u>. The Bible presents a list of factors to evaluate the presence of the spiritual gifts of healing. We may apply the criteria to anyone claiming to have the Spiritual Gifts of Healings today. Be certain to distinguish the fact that God used someone to perform a particular healing from a person who claims to have the Spiritual Gifts of Healings.

<u>Identification</u>. If you pass the test imposed by Scripture regarding the healings you perform, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings.

7.2.1 <u>Christ-Centered Ministry</u>. Everyone with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings in the New Testament ministered in the Name of Jesus Christ, and promoted the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Notice the emphasis upon the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Healings were associated with confirming the ministry of believers spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Therefore, a believer with the Spiritual Gifts of Healing will be directly involved with spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They themselves must be born-again believers and confess Jesus Christ as God, Lord, and only Savior. Therefore, the saint with the Spirituals Gift of Healings will be a believer who confesses Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh, and as God, Lord and Savior.

<u>Identification</u>. If you confess Jesus Christ as God, Lord and Savior, and have been born again by the power of God, and God uses you to heal people while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings.

7.2.2 <u>All Healed</u>. As a general rule, everyone with faith who came to a believer with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings was actually healed. Furthermore, the saint with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings often had the ability to perceive faith for healing within people, or the lack thereof. Even without faith, in many cases, everyone who came for healing was actually healed. Therefore, the saint with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings actually heals everyone who comes for healing with faith to be healed, and the saint with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings can often discern such healing faith; even without faith for healing, the saint with the Spiritual Gifts of Healing generally heals everyone who comes for healing.

Identification. If you heal everyone who comes to you with faith for healing, and you have the ability to perceive such faith for healing, and many people without faith also receive healing by God using you, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry of healing everyone in the name of Jesus.

7.2.3 Giving Glory to God. The people healed always understood that God had healed them, often through His human messengers, but the messengers truly from God, using the Spiritual Gifts of Healings, never supplanted God in any way, but always directed all praise and worship for healing back to the source, God Himself. Therefore, the saint with the Spiritual Gifts of Healings will witness many people praising God for the healings God has worked through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and never take such glory to himself.

Identification. If God uses you to heal people and they understand that they were healed by the power of God and then they give glory to God for such healing, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings, with a ministry giving glory to God for His awesome power at work in you.

Hallmarks of the Spiritual Gifts of Healings

Healings: Understanding the Spiritual Gifts. The believer with The Spiritual Gifts of Healings brings the healing power of God to help people with spiritual and physical problems. As above, the ministry of the believer with The Spiritual Gifts of Healings may take many forms, and produce a variety of effects. I have listed a few of those hallmarks below.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gifts of Healings and then see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gifts of Healings.

♦ Healing-gifted believers understand that both spiritual and physical problems may beset believers.

♦ Healing-gifted believers promote saving faith through the proper use of their spiritual gifts of healing.

♦ Healing-gifted believers know that all authority for all healing comes only from God.

♦ Healing-gifted believers may break the physical bonds of the devil.

♦ Healing-gifted believers may cast out demons.

♦ Healing-gifted believers know that all healing must be tested against the word of God, the Bible.

♦ Healing-gifted believers always promote Jesus Christ and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

♦ Healing-gifted believers generally can heal all the people who come to them seeking healing.

♦ Healing-gifted believers may be able to identify people with faith for healing.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Gifts of Healings caused many people to glorify God for His great power and love. The ministry of the Spiritual Gifts of Healings always seemed associated with spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and frequently confirming the authenticity of the messengers sent by God to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The people with The Spiritual Gifts of Healings may perform a variety of different kinds of healings, but everyone with faith for healing must be healed for The Spiritual Gifts of Healing to be truly active. Furthermore, the saint with The Spiritual Gifts of Healings often has the ability to identify people with faith for healing. Many false prophets and false teachers will perform many miracles, some even in the name of Jesus, but they never knew Jesus or His power of salvation. Only born-again believers

have spiritual gifts, and only the Holy Spirit distributes those gifts as He alone wishes. We can praise God for the wonderful Spiritual Gifts of Healings, and carefully evaluate their use today, to see if they are truly present as each case may arise.

10

The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers

Class of Gift: Service

1 Corinthians 12:10

"Works of Powers"

Section One

Introduction

1.1 Every Born-Again Christian Has at Least One Spiritual Gift. You must be born again to understand spiritual truths; click this link now if you do not understand what born again means. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, page 1796). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of ministries ("διακονιῶν"), with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Therefore, if you have the Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers, that single gift may result in a variety of ministries and spiritual effects. Although not all believers may have the Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers, God may display His power in their lives in various ways. At the moment of salvation, God came into your life and brought all of His powers with Him. As you travel through this study, please keep in mind that when I describe various ministries associated with the Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers, I am not making a statement about whether all the ministries of The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers are functioning today, but rather I seek to describe the New Testament evidence of how The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers operated in the New Testament. I remain cautious about each display of works of power today, and each work of power must be examined carefully in light of all the evidence of Scripture.

1.2 <u>The Uniqueness of The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers</u>. The New American Standard Bible translates the spiritual gift as "effecting of miracles." I submit that a more accurate translation, in light of the usages below, would be "works of powers." Not all believers possess "powers" as a spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:29, page 1797). Notice that in 1 Corinthians 12:29 page 12:29, God did not describe the spiritual gift as works of powers (1 Corinthians 12:10, page 1796), but simply as "powers" (notice that the other gifts are referenced by nouns, "apostles", "prophets," teachers"), drawing attention to the believer who had the spiritual gift. Not every believer possesses The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a very diverse ministry of helping different people experience the diverse powers of God. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers should remember that not every believer has the same gift, and so the believer should not get puffed up over the special gift of works of powers.

1.3 <u>Applications</u>. As I went through this study, I continually faced the challenge of what powers could be included in The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers. I quickly concluded that limiting those "powers" to "miracles" did not do justice to the other uses of the term "powers" in the New Testament. But how expansive are those "powers" at work in The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers? I often think of Jesus as the perfect example of the believer's life, and how He demonstrated so many applications of different spiritual gifts. Yet, I was uncomfortable with the idea that a believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers could exercise all of His powers. So, I left that question open. Likewise, English Bibles in some contexts tend to translate the term "power" as ability to do things, or not. I therefore asked myself how those "abilities" intersected with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers. I made choices below about how to apply different terms to The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers, but, of course, please let me know if you see other applications of powers described below within The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers.

1.4 <u>Further Study</u>. This study looks at the New Testament uses of the term "power" as that word was used in the phrase Works of Powers ("ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων") (1 Corinthians 12:10, page 1796). At times, I will characterize the substance of The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers and at other times I will describe the activity of believers possessing The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers. I believe they are directly related.

Section Two

Wonders, Signs and Powers

2.1 Jesus and Powers and Wonders and Signs. Jesus displayed powers, wonders and signs. We know that God used different words to describe miracles, wonders and signs, but God used all three of those things to attest to the identity and mission of Jesus the Nazarene. Likewise, the signs of a true apostle included performing signs, wonders and miracles (2 Corinthians 12:12, page 1796).

2.1.1 Jesus and Powers. As Jesus was about to enter Jerusalem in triumph, the whole crowd of disciples began to praise God joyfully with a loud voice for all the powers ("δυνάμεων") which they had seen (Luke 19:37, page 1639). Jesus had amazed the crowds in different ways during His ministry, including healing people and casting out many demons (Mark 1:34, page 1555).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of displaying powers so that unbelievers may come to salvation.

2.1.2 Jesus and His Signs. Some of the Pharisees asked about Jesus: "How can ("δύναται") a man who is a sinner perform such signs" (John 9:16, page 1673). Many of the works of powers Jesus performed using His hands (Mark 6:2, page 1567; likewise His apostles in Acts 5:12, page 1707; Acts 4:29-30, page 1706).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of performing signs, particularly with his hands, so that unbelievers come to salvation.

2.1.3 Jesus and His Wonders. Peter preached to the men of Israel at Pentecost that Jesus the Nazarene and declared to them that He "was a man attested ("ἀποδεδειγμένον") to you by God with miracles ("δυνάμεσι") and wonders ("τέρασι") and signs ("σημείοις") which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—" (Acts 2:22, page 1701).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of performing wonders so that people may come to salvation.

Wonders

2.2 Wonders. The term miracles ("δυνάμεσι") will be discussed extensively below, but first we we will have a brief look at the term wonders ("τέρασι"). In the New Testament, the term "wonders" ("τέρατα") only appeared in conjunction with "signs and wonders" ("σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα"), but the term signs ("σημεῖα") occurred at times without reference to "wonders" (e.g., Matthew 16:3, Page 1529--signs of the times). The signs and wonders occurred in conjunction with preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ, and confirmed the preaching as from God and created keen interest in the people. In the letter to the Hebrews, we read that Jesus preached about the great salvation, and it was confirmed to the Hebrews by those who heard, with God actively testifying with signs ("σημείοις") and wonders ("τέρασιν") and various powers ("ποικίλαις δυνάμεσιν") and by gifts of the Holy Spirit according to His own will (Hebrews 2:4, page 1870). Therefore, we see that signs, wonders, various powers, and the gift of the Holy Spirit all provided God's testimony concerning the great salvation and the veracity of those people who preached it as followers of Jesus Christ.

2.2.1 Wonders in the Old Testament. Although the terms "wonders" in the New Testament always occurs with the term "signs" nearby, in the Old Testament God did not always link the two terms together. In the Old Testament, God spoke about wonders performed at different times for different reasons. The New American Standard Bible translated several different Hebrew terms with the single word "wonders."

2.2.1.1 Pharaoh. God put the wonders ("הַמֹּפְתִים") into the hand ("בְּיָדְךָ") of Moses to perform before Pharaoh (Exodus 4:21, page 93). We know that those wonders included supernatural events designed to turn the heart of Pharaoh so that he would release the people of Israel. God also spoke: I will multiply My signs ("אֹתֹתַי") and My wonders ("מוֹפְתַי") in Egypt to persuade Pharaoh (Exodus 7:3, page 97). God raised up Pharaoh to demonstrate the power ("τὴν δύναμίν") in Pharaoh, and that the Name of God may be proclaimed throughout the whole earth (Romans 9:17, page 1771, quoting Exodus 9:16, page 101--Hebrew "My power" ("כֹּחִי")).

2.2.1.2 The Jordan. God commanded the people of Israel to consecrate themselves, for on the next day God was going to perform wonders ("נִפְלָאוֹת") among them in crossing the Jordan; they would walk across on dry land (Joshua 3:5, page 150).

2.2.1.3 Manoah and His Wife. God announced the birth of Samson to his parents, Manoah and his wife. The angel of the LORD performed "wonders" ("מַפְלִא") before them and told them that his name was "wonderful" ("פֶּלִאי") (Judges 13:18, page 414).

2.2.1.4 David. David said he would tell of all the wonders ("נִפְלְאוֹתֶיךָ") of the LORD (Psalm 9:1, page 862; Psalm 26:7, page 878; Psalm 40:5, pages 893-894). In fact, David proclaimed that only the LORD God, the God of Israel, performed "wonders" ("נִפְלָאוֹת") (Psalm 72:18, pages 924-925; Psalm 136:4, page 990). The LORD has made His wonders ("נִפְלְאוֹתָיו") to be remembered (Psalm 111:4, page 969) and meditated upon (Psalm 119:27, page 975).

2.2.1.5 Isaiah. Isaiah also gave thanks because the LORD had worked wonders ("פֶּלֶא"), plans formed long ago (Isaiah 25:1, page 1106).

2.2.1.6 Daniel. God revealed to Daniel that great distress will come upon the earth, but Daniel's people written in the book will be rescued. Then a resurrection will take place, some to everlasting life and others to everlasting contempt. Those who have insight will shine brightly and lead many to righteousness. Daniel was told to seal up those words in a book (Daniel 12:1-5, page 1411). Daniel questioned how long it would be until the end of these wonders ("הַפְּלָאוֹת") (Daniel 12:6, page 1411).

2.2.1.7 Joel. The prophet Joel described the wonders ("מוֹפְתִים") in the sky ("בַּשָּׁמַיִם") and on the earth ("וּבָאָרֶץ"), blood, fire, columns of smoke (Joel 2:28, page 1432; Acts 2:17-21, page 1701). In those last days prophesied by Joel, great wonders will take place upon the earth and in sky, before the Lord Jesus returns to earth.

2.2.2 The Power of Wonders. The term "wonders" ("τεράτων") refers to some act so exceptional that it provokes keen attention. The Lord testified to the word of grace preached by the apostles, granting that signs and wonders ("σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα"--wonders always occurred in connection with signs; not all signs were accompanied by wonders) be done by their hands (Acts

14;3, page 1727--notice the hands of God at work in healings (Acts 4:30, page 1706)).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ and God may grant that signs and wonders be done to draw attention the ministry of people sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and making disciples.

Signs

2.3 The Importance of Signs. The term "signs" ("σημείων") means: (a) an event that identifies the authority for certain acts; and (b) a herald of something significant about to happen. At times, a “sign” may function as a preordained timestamp for identification.

2.3.1 Signs and Identification. Jesus turned water into wine. That event was the beginning of signs Jesus did in Cana of Galilee, and He displayed His glory and His disciples believed in Him (John 2:1-12, page 1656). Therefore, we may glean that a "sign" displays the glory of God and causes people to believe in God. False Christs and false prophets may also show great signs and wonders ("σημεῖα μεγάλα καὶ τέρατα") to mislead the elect, if possible ("δυνατόν") (Matthew 24:24, page 1545 and Mark 13:22, page 1585; 2 Thessalonians 2:8-9, pages 1851-1852--man of lawlessness; Matthew 7:22, page 1511-- many miracles ("δυνάμεις πολλὰς") in the name of Christ; see also Romans 8:38, page 1770--evil powers that oppose the love of God; Revelation 13:3, page 1928--the dragon gave the beast from the sea his power ("τὴν δύναμιν αὐτοῦ") to do evil; Revelation 17:13, page 1934--the ten kings receive power and give it to the beast). Angels also have greater might ("ἰσχύϊ") and power ("δυνάμει") than humans, but they do not bring reviling judgments against angelic majesties (2 Peter 2:10-11, page 1902; 2 Thessalonians 1:7, page 1851). Jesus rebuked people for not believing in Him without "signs and wonders" ("σημεῖα καὶ τέρατα") (John 4:48, page 1661).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of seeing signs produced by God to identify the works of God which herald future events and identify God's plans.

2.3.2 Timestamp for Identification. After the future tribulation and after the powers of heaven (" αἱ δυνάμεις τῶν οὐρανῶν") will be shaken ("σαλευθήσονται"), then the sign (" τὸ σημεῖον") of the Son of Man will

appear in the sky, and He shall come on the clouds with power ("δυνάμεως") and great glory (Matthew 24:29-30, pages 1545-1546; Mark 13:24-27, page 1585; Luke 21:26-27, page 1643). Notice the timing here: Tribulation, powers of heaven shaken, sign of the Son of Man appears, then the Son of Man comes on the clouds with power. Similarly, Jesus also said that the high priest, all the chief priests, and the elders would see Jesus, the Son of Man, sitting at the right hand of the power ("τῆς δυνάμεως"), and coming with the clouds of heaven (Mark 14:62, page 1589; Luke 22:69, page 1647). The signs act as a timestamp, indicating the imminent appearance of Jesus.

2.3.3 Unbelief and Signs and Wonders. Jesus traveled to the home of Jairus, a royal official whose daughter was sick. As Jairus implored Jesus to come heal the child, Jesus said to him: "Unless you see signs and powers, you will not believe" (John 4:48, page 1661). Jesus meant in that context that some people only believe in Jesus as Savior if they see signs and powers. Notice the clear connection between saving faith and signs and wonders.

2.3.4 The Power of the Spirit. Paul's ministry was also characterized by the power of the Spirit ("ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος"). At Pentecost, the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles, just as Jesus promised (John 14:17, page 1685; John 20:22-23, page 1696; Acts 1:8, page 1699). The Holy Spirit empowered believers to speak, act and glorify God in many different ways. God placed the members in the Body of Christ just as He desired (1 Corinthians 12:18, page 1797). The Holy Spirit distributed spiritual gifts as He wished (1 Corinthians 12:11, page 1796). At the same time, Jesus gave gifts to men (Ephesians 4:8-9, page 1830). In fact, God has given every believer a spirit of power ("δυνάμεως") and love and discipline (1 Timothy 1:7, page 1861).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of the Holy Spirit empowering the believer to speak, act and glorify God in many different ways.

2.3.5 Stephen and the Power of Wonders and Signs. Stephen, full of grace and power ("δυνάμεως"), was performing great wonders and signs among the people (Acts 6:8, page 1710). Please notice here that grace and power led to performing great wonders and signs.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of performing great wonders and signs among the people, while filled with grace and power.

2.3.6 Philip and the Power of Signs and Wonders. After Jesus ascended to heaven, Philip went down to the city of Samaria, proclaiming Christ to them. "The crowds with one accord were giving attention to what was said by Philip, as they heard and saw the signs ("τὰ σημεῖα") which he was performing" (Acts 8:6, page 1714). Those signs included casting out many unclean spirits ("πνεύματα ἀκάθαρτα"), and many people paralyzed (" παραλελυμένο") and lame ("ωλοὶ") were healed ("ἐθεραπεύθησαν"), and the city rejoiced much (Acts 8:7-8, page 1714). Even Simon, the One Called the Great Power of God ("ἡ δύναμις τοῦ θεοῦ ἡ καλουμένη Μεγάλη"), gave attention to Philip and his words and deeds. Previously, the people of Samaria gave Simon attention because he astonished ("μαγείαις") them with his magic arts ("ἐξεστακέναι") (Acts 8:9-11, page 1714). Philip was preaching good news ("εὐαγγελιζομένῳ") about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ and men and women were baptized. Even Simon himself was baptized, as he observed signs ("τε σημεῖα") and great works of power ("δυνάμεις μεγάλας") taking place, and Simon was constantly amazed ("ἐξίστατο") (Acts 8:13, page 1714).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of traveling to hostile territory and spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, while performing signs and great works of power, so that even magicians are astonished and baptized.

2.3.7 False Witnesses. In 2 Thessalonians 2:9, page 1852, we read about the coming man of lawlessness, whose coming is in accord with satan, with all power ("πάσῃ δυνάμει") and signs ("σημείοις") and false wonders ("τέρασιν ψεύδους").

Powers

2.4 Displays of Power. God displayed His power throughout human history. His power upholds all things.

2.4.1 The Exodus and The Power of Signs and Wonders. Moses performed "signs and wonders" ("τέρατα καὶ σημεῖα") in the land of Egypt

and the Red Sea and in the wilderness for forty years (Acts 7:36, page 712). Although Moses did not have a spiritual gift because the Holy Spirit was not yet given, God performed many signs through Moses, so that everyone would know "I AM the LORD" (Exodus 10:1-2, page 102). Using signs and wonders, God led His people as King of Israel (Exodus 13:21, page 109-110; 1 Samuel 8:7, page 448).

2.4.1.1 The Power of Fire. Some Old Testament saints quenched the power ("δύναμιν") of fire (Hebrews 11:34, page 1883).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of quenching physical fire.

2.4.2 Stephen. Stephen, apparently one of the first deacons, was full of grace and power ("δυνάμεως"), performing great wonders ("τέρατα") and signs ("σημεῖα") among the people (Acts 6:8, pages 1709-1710).

2.4.3 Apostles. Paul wrote to the Corinthians that "The signs ("τὰ σημεῖα") of a true apostle were performed among you with all perseverance ("ὑπομονῇ"), by signs ("σημείοις") and wonders ("τέρασιν") and various powers ("ποικίλαις δυνάμεσιν") (1 Corinthians 12:12, page 1796). Anyone claiming that Paul was not an apostle must contend with the obvious proof of his apostleship, including the signs, wonders and miracles he performed.

2.4.3.1 Paul and Signs and Wonders. Christ worked in Paul to produce the obedience of the Gentiles. Paul's preaching was characterized by words and deeds ("λόγῳ καὶ ἔργῳ"), in the power of signs and wonders ("ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων"), in the power of the Spirit ("ἐν δυνάμει πνεύματος") (Romans 15:18-19, page 1779). The two phrases associated with power help us understand how the power worked. Let us have a closer look at each of those two phrases.

2.4.3.1.1 In The Power of Signs and Wonders. The first phrase, "in the power of signs and wonders," requires special attention. When the messengers started to receive the attention, they carefully and promptly directed the attention back to God and His message (Acts 3:12, page 1704; Acts 14:8-23, pages 1727-1728; compare Acts 12:20-23, pages 1723-1724).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of identifying previous works of powers by God for the purpose of showing His great salvation throughout history.

2.4.3.1.2 In The Power of the Spirit. The second phrase, "in the power of the Spirit," identifies the role of the Holy Spirit producing "power" in the ministry of Paul.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of demonstrating the power of the Spirit, producing all kinds of works of powers in the believer to the glory of God, for salvation and the building up of the body of Christ.

2.4.3.1.3 Paul and The Power of Signs and Wonders. Please notice that Paul ministered in the power of signs and wonders ("ἐν δυνάμει σημείων καὶ τεράτων"). In passing, two spiritual gifts are described as sign gifts: The Spiritual Gift of Tongues (1 Corinthians 14:22--sign ("σημεῖόν") to unbelievers) and The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets (1 Corinthians 14:22, page 1799--sign to believers). Therefore, we know that The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may be accompanied by signs and wonders.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of demonstrating the power of signs and wonders.

Section Three

Meaning of the Terms " "Miracles," "Works" and "Powers"

3.1 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Miracles," In 1 Corinthians 12:10, page 1796, Paul used the term "miracles" ("δυνάμεων")(New American Standard Translation—I prefer the translation “powers”). That exact form of the term “miracles” ("δυνάμεων") only occurs twice outside of 1 Corinthians 12:10. In Luke 19:37, the whole crowd began to praise God joyfully for the miracles ("δυνάμεων") they had seen. In 1 Peter 3:22, after all "powers" ("δυνάμεων") had been subjected to Jesus, He took His seat at the right hand of God in heaven. Notice the translation

"powers." The different terms frequently translated "miracle" occur at times without direct reference to a healing or casting out spirits.

3.2 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Works." The Greek term translated as "works" ("ἐνεργήματα"--noun nominative plural) only occurs in 1 Corinthians 12:10, page 1796). The same root word ("ἐνεργημάτων"--noun genitive plural) appears in 1 Corinthians 12:6, page 1796; there it describes the variety of effects. So, I find it interesting that this spiritual gift only has one other use in the entire New Testament. Paul meant that just as the different ministries produce a variety of effects, so also God produces works of powers. I prefer not to translate "effects" (noun) as a participle ("effecting") because of the structure of the rest of the passage, as discussed above. The word "powers" (genitive plural) described the "works" (neuter plural). The emphasis with the participle gives the idea that the miracles are primary, but the original text emphasized the particular type of works. Therefore, I prefer the translation “works of powers” instead of “miracles” because: (1) God performed many works of powers (more than just miracles); and (2) the structural pattern of 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, page 1796, emphasized nouns and genitives.

3.3 Meaning of the Term "Powers." As we have observed with the other spiritual gifts, Paul did not define the different ministries of each spiritual gift. Therefore, I submit that we can look at the New Testament usage of the terms employed to describe each gift to understand how one spiritual gift may result in a variety of different ministries. Of course, Paul also wrote to people familiar with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers, but God also revealed The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers for us. Therefore, we need to study The Spiritual Gift of Works of Power to understand how it functions in the Body of Christ. The term translated in the New American Standard Bible as "miracles" ("δυνάμεων") in 1 Corinthian 12:10, page 1796, deserves careful study. As above, I prefer to identify the gift as the Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers ("ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων"; see also 1 Corinthians 12:28, page 1797). The term for "powers" has a wide range of meaning and deserves careful study. I also prefer to translate the term as “powers” because of the ministries associated with "powers." The New Testament contains many references to the root word "powers" ("δύναμις"), and the context must determine the best translation. I also expanded this study to include similar words to the root word, as provided below with the Greek words in parentheses. As always, God described the Bible as His revelation, and used particular words to make

His revelation. The words count and all the words really matter (verbal and plenary inspiration). We must pay close attention to each word God chose to communicate with us.

3.4 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Powers." The root term "power" ("δύναμις") occurs many times in various forms in the New Testament. It has a variety of related meanings.

3.4.1 The Ministry of Works of Powers. This study looks at the New Testament uses of the term "power" as that word was used in the phrase Works of Powers ("ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων") (1 Corinthians 12:10, page 1796). At times, I will characterize the substance of The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers and at other times I will describe the activity of believers possessing The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers. I believe they are directly related.

3.4.2 Riches. In the Book of Revelation, the New American Standard Bible translates "power" to mean "riches;" God described Babylon as making merchants of the earth rich by the wealth ("τῆς δυνάμεως") of her sensuality (Revelation 18:3, page 1934). So, the term power may also refer to earthly riches.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of overcoming the power of riches by the power of God.

3.4.3 The Power of Kings. When a king prepares to battle another king, he must first consider whether he is strong ("δυνατός") enough to meet the enemy's larger army (Luke 14:31, page 1630). Please notice that the strength does not mean numerical equality or superiority.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of considering whether a person is strong enough spiritually to overcome a stronger enemy force.

3.4.4 Voice of a Great Multitude. In the future, something like a loud voice of a great multitude in heaven will say: "Hallelujah! Salvation and glory and power ("δύναμις") belong to our God," because the great harlot has been judged (Revelation 19:1-2, page 1936).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of overcoming evil powers by the salvation, glory and power which belong to God.

3.4.5 Able. At times, the term "powers" refers to the ability to do things. The term "powers" occurs as "able to do" and "unable to do."

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping people find and use the ability of the power of God working within them to come to faith and to help believers use and increase their faith so that they stop doing things displeasing to God and start using the power of God to please Him in more and greater ways**.**

3.4.6 Unable. At times, the term "powers" means unable to do something. As we study these individual examples, keep in mind that the power of God may greatly influence what we are unable to do. I have divided these unable to do things into different categories.

Section Four

God and His Powers

4.1 The Powers of God. God exists eternally in three divine Persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They share all the same attributes and are One. They all exist at the same time and occupy the entire universe and beyond. They each have all knowledge (omniscience), all power (omnipotence), and are present everywhere (omnipresence) and never change (immutability). They are all righteous, holy and good, among many other things. They also display their power to make themselves known.

Resurrection

4.2 Able To Raise the Dead. Abraham considered God able ("δυνατὸς") to raise Isaac from the dead (Hebrews 11:19, page 1883).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of raising the dead by the power of God.

Plans

4.3 No Power To Overthrow. Gamaliel warned: if the apostles followed the plan or action of God, then the Council would not be able ("οὐ δυνήσεσθε") to overthrow them" (Acts 5:39, page 1709).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of making plans by the power of God that no human will be able to overthrow.

Power in Salvation

4.4 The Power of God and Salvation. Paul declared that he was not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God ("δύναμις θεοῦ") for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Romans 1:16, page 1758). Closely related to The Spiritual Gift of The Evangelists, The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers involves the power of God for salvation.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of proclaiming the power of God for salvation, and otherwise manifesting the power of God for salvation.

Power in the Cross

4.5 The Power of God and the Word of the Cross. The word of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God (" δύναμις θεοῦ") (1 Corinthians 1:18, pages 1782-1783).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people who think the word of the cross is foolishness, but to those who are being saved, it is the power of God.

Supreme Power

4.6 The Surpassing Power of God. Paul revealed the great persecutions and struggles that he faced as a believer. He lived knowing about the treasure in earthen vessels possessed by all believers. That treasure inside him

provided the surpassing greatness of the power ("τῆς δυνάμεως") of God and not from ourselves; with that power, Paul could do all things and triumph over all persecutions, struggles and afflictions.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of doing all things and triumphing over all persecutions, struggles and afflictions by the power of God.

Unbelievers and the Power of God

4.7 Unbelievers and the Power of God. Jesus told the Sadducees that they were mistaken, not understanding the Scriptures nor the power ("τὴν δύναμιν") of God; God really did raise the dead, as He said: "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." God is not the God of the dead, but of the living (Matthew 22:29-32, page 1541; Mark 12:18-27, page 1582).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of demonstrating the power of God to raise the dead by convincing proofs from the Scriptures.

Mighty Power

4.8 The God of Power. Mary praised: "For the Mighty One ("ὁ δυνατός") has done great things for me; and holy is His name" (Luke 1:49, page 1595).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of doing great things for people by the power of the Mighty One.

Section Five

Jesus and His Powers

5.1 Special Powers. The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers means that God bestows the ability to perform special works of power into the lives of some believers. In all believers, God works His will in our lives using His unlimited powers. Consider Jesus for a moment, with His unlimited powers and full omnipotence at work. He displayed His powers in very focused ways. This entire study illumines some of the powers of Jesus Christ. We should carefully consider how the omnipotence of God works in the life of every believer today, and how The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers displays itself in the lives of some believers. Below we will trace out some of the powers of Jesus, and see the different words associated with the term "powers."

5.2 Jesus and His Powers. As God, Jesus possesses all the powers of God and has all power--He is omnipotent. Jesus displayed all kinds of powers (e.g., Revelation 1:16, page 1915--the face of Jesus was like the sun shining in its power ("ὡς ὁ ἥλιος φαίνει ἐν τῇ δυνάμει αὐτοῦ") and eyewitnesses bore testimony to the power ("δύναμιν") and coming of their Lord Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:17, page 1901)). In one sense or another, they were all divine displays, but they were not all overt manifestations of breaking normal, physical laws. Please consider the following examples.

5.3 The Power of God's Will. Jesus said: "I am not able to do anything on my own" ("Οὐ δύναμαι ἐγὼ ποιεῖν ἀπ' ἐμαυτοῦ οὐδέν") (John 5:30). Jesus explained that He came to do the will of His Father. He illustrated the same concept that we too must depend upon God for all of our words and actions. We must learn that living by faith means that we, as born-again believers, use the power of God to replace our choices with the choices of God. We replace our judgment with God's judgment. Instead of acting on our own initiative to do our own will, we are "not able" to do our our will, but the will of God. In this context, Jesus talked about His judgment, which rested upon doing the will of His Father who sent Him.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping believers realize how to use the power of God to do all things in God's power according to God's purpose, recognizing that we not able to do anything on our own.

5.4 Power In Deed and Word. The powers of Jesus extend to both His words and His actions. Please consider the following examples.

5.4.1 Mighty in Deed and Word. After the resurrection, two men walked with Jesus on the Emmaus Road. They said that Jesus was a "prophet mighty ("δυνατὸς") in deed and word in the sight of God and all the people" (Luke 14:19, page 1651).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of using God's power in both words and deeds.

5.4.2 No Power To Answer. Jesus asked a question: "If David then calls Him 'Lord,' How is He his son?'" No one was able ("ἐδύνατο") to answer Him a word (Matthew 22:46, page 1542).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of speaking with God's knowledge and wisdom so that no one is able to answer a word.

5.4.3 Able To Come out of Nazareth. Nathanael wondered: "Can ("δύναταί") any good thing come out of Nazareth ?" (John 1:46, page 1655). Jesus was able to overcome a hometown atmosphere with a reputation for no good things in Nazareth.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a life of overcoming unbelieving siblings and relatives; they may even come from a place known for its evil practices, and yet be known as a child of God.

5.4.4 Power and Authority over Unclean Spirits. When Jesus went home to Nazareth with His disciples, He entered into the synagogue and a man "having a spirit of an unclean demon" ("ἔχων πνεῦμα δαιμονίου ἀκαθάρτου") cried out to Him. Jesus rebuked him and cast out the demon: "Be quiet and come out of him!" (Luke 4:31-35, page 1603). Fear ("θάμβος ") came upon the crowd, and they said to one another: "What is this message ("ὁ λόγος")? For with authority and power ("ἐξουσίᾳ") He commands the unclean spirits ("δυνάμει") and they come out (Luke 4:36, page 1603). Please notice the link between the message of Jesus and His work of power in commanding the demon to be silent and come out.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of demonstrating authority and power over unclean spirits, in the Name of Jesus, to confirm the message of salvation.

5.5 Taking Offense at Jesus. Before sending the disciples out to minister to different cities, Jesus took them to His hometown of Nazareth. There, in the synagogue, Jesus declared Himself to be the fulfillment of the Isaiah prophecy concerning Messiah (Luke 4:14-37, pages 1602-1603; Isaiah 61:1-2, page 1167). The Nazarenes were astonished at His teaching and questioned from where had Jesus received the wisdom ("ἡ σοφία") and the powers ("αἱ δυνάμεις") (Matthew 13:54, page 1525; Mark 6:2, page 1567). They knew Him as the carpenter's son, with brothers and sisters. They then took offense at Him ("καὶ ἐσκανδαλίζοντο ἐν αὐτῷ"), but Jesus told them that a prophet is not without honor except in his hometown and in his own household (Matthew 13:57, page 1525). Jesus did not do ("οὐκ ἐποίησεν") there many powers ("δυνάμεις πολλὰς"), because of their unbelief (Matthew 13:58, page 1525; see also "unable to do there even one power" ("οὐκ ἐδύνατο ἐκεῖ ποιῆσαι οὐδεμίαν δύναμιν")--Mark 6:5, page 1567).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of doing many powers in many places, but his hometown and his relatives and his household will take offense at him and the wisdom and powers displayed through him, so that they dishonor him and limit the works of of powers in that place because of their unbelief; even so the believer continues fulfilling the will of God for a lifetime.

5.6 Unable To Do Works of Powers. At times, works of powers depend upon the audience. For example, at Nazareth, Jesus was unable ("οὐκ ἐδύνατο") to do ("ποιῆσαι") works of power ("δύναμιν") there, except that He laid His hands on a few sick people ("ἀρρώστοις") and healed them ("ἐθεράπευσεν"--notice the aorist tense--complete healing).

Identification. A believer with the The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of healing people, The Spiritual Gift of Healings. The difference between The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers includes a variety of powerful deeds and words (which may include healings, but includes much more), whereas The Spiritual Gift of Healings primarily focuses upon healings by the power of God.

5.7 The Power To Plunder the Devil. The religious leaders accused Jesus of casting out demons by the prince of demons. Jesus asked: "Or how can ("δύναταί") anyone enter the strong man's house and carry off his property, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house." Jesus cast out demons because He had first bound the devil, the

strongman. (Matthew 12:29, page 1521; Mark 3:26, page 1562). Jesus also indicated that a kingdom divided against itself cannot ("οὐ δύναται") stand (Mark 3:24, page 1562). Likewise, a house divided will not be able ("οὐδυνήσεται") to stand (Mark 3:25, page 1562). Likewise, "if Satan has risen up against himself and is divided, he cannot ("οὐδύναται") stand, but he is finished" (Mark 3:26, page 1562).

5.8 The Power To Cast Out Demons. Jesus met a demon-possessed man living in the tombs. No one was able (" ἐδύνατο") to bind him anymore, even with a chain, because he tore them apart (Mark 5:3-4, page 1565). Yet, Jesus had the power to cast out the many demons from this man.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of plundering the house of the devil in the name of Jesus. This ministry may include casting out demons, breaking the power of the devil in a person's life, and exercising power over the devil in the name of Jesus.

5.9 The Power To Heal. A leper came to Jesus one day and bowed before Him, saying: "Lord, if you are willing ("ἐὰν θέλῃς"), You are able ("δύνασαί") to cleanse ("καθαρίσαι") me" (Matthew 8:2, page 1512; Mark 1:40, page 1559; Luke 5:12, page 1604--"Ἐὰν θέλῃς δύνασαί με καθαρίσα").

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of healing people who know the Lord is willing and able to heal them.

5.9.1 The Religious Audience. One day while Jesus was teaching, some Pharisees and teachers of the law had come from Jerusalem, and from every village of Galilee and Judea. The power of the Lord ("δύναμις κυρίου") was present for Jesus to heal ("ἰᾶσθαι") before that audience (Luke 5:17, page 1605).

5.9.2 Touch Jesus--The Crowd. After Jesus chose the twelve disciples, He came down to a large crowd of His disciples and a great throng of people from all Judea and Jerusalem and the coast region of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear Him and to be healed ("ἰαθῆνα") of their diseases ("τῶν νόσων αὐτῶν"). Those people troubled with unclean spirits ("πνευμάτων ἀκαθάρτων") were being cured ("ἐθεραπεύοντο"--notice the imperfect). And all the people were trying to touch Him, for power

("δύναμις") was coming from Him and healing ("ἰᾶτο") all of them (Luke 6:17-19, page 1607; Mark 6:56, page 1570--just touch the fringe of His cloak and be cured ("ἐσῴζοντο")).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of power going forth from the believer because someone seeking healing has touched a garment worn by the believer.

5.9.3 Touch Jesus--The Woman. Jesus also had the power to heal, as demonstrated by the power ("δύναμιν") going forth from Him which healed the woman with the bleeding problem (Mark 5:30-34, pages 1566-1567; Luke 8:46, page 1614).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of power over physical illness, such as a bleeding problem for many years.

5.9.4 Unable To Stand Upright. In a synagogue, Jesus met a woman who had sickness ("ἀσθενείας") caused by a spirit ("πνεῦμα"). She was unable ("μὴ δυναμένη") to stand upright (Luke 13:11, page 1627).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of power over physical disfigurement, such as the inability to stand upright for many years.

Power To Satisfy

5.10 Able To Satisfy. The disciples asked Jesus: "Where will anyone be able ("δυνήσεταί") to find enough bread here in this desolate place to satisfy these people?" (Mark 8:4, page 1572).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of power to find enough food to feed a hungry crowd and satisfy them with food.

No Power To Speak Evil

5.11 None Able To Speak Evil of Jesus. John saw someone casting out demons in the name of Jesus, and the disciples tried to prevent him because he was not following Jesus. Jesus replied: "Do not hinder him, for there is no

one who will perform a power ("δύναμιν") in My name, and be able ("δυνήσεται") soon afterwards to speak evil of Me" (Mark 9:39, page 1576).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of performing works of powers in the name of Jesus, and will have no power to speak evil of Jesus soon afterwards.

Power To Strengthen Believers

5.12 Strengthen Believers. Jesus strengthened ("ἐνδυναμώσαντί") Paul, because Jesus considered Paul faithful, putting him into service, even though he was previously a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor (1 Timothy 1:12-13, pages 1854-55).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of strengthening believers, whom God considers faithful, so that God may put that believer into service, even though that believer was previously a blasphemer , a persecutor and a violent aggressor.

5.12.1 Stephen. Stephen observed that Moses was a man "of power ("δυνατὸς") in words and deeds" (Acts 7:22, page 1711).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of being powerful in both words and deeds.

5.12.2 No Power To Resist. Jesus promised His disciples that He would give them utterance and wisdom which none of their opponents will be able ("οὐ δυνήσονται ") to resist or refute (Luke 21:15, page 1643).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of speaking for Jesus with such utterance and power that the believer's opponents will not be able to resist or refute.

5.12.3 The Power in Believers. As the Corinthians sought proof of Christ Who spoke in Paul, Paul explained that Christ is not weak, but powerful ("δυνατεῖ") in the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 13:3, page 1818).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of proving that Christ is not weak in believers, but powerful

in them, even when their lives demonstrate problems with immorality, factions, drunkenness, and other sinful practices.

Power To Aid Believers

5.13 Able To Come To Aid. Jesus aids believers during temptations: "For since He himself was tempted in that which He has suffered, He is able ("δύναται") to come to the aid of those who are tempted" (Hebrews 2:18, page 1871).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry to believers facing temptation by strengthening them with the knowledge that Jesus has suffered temptation, and so Jesus is powerful to aid those who are tempted.

Power To Avoid Separation

5.14 No Power To Separate. Paul gave a long list of things believers will encounter, but none of them will be able ("δυνήσεται") to separate believers from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:39, page 1770).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of strengthening believers with the knowledge that nothing is able to separate them from the love of God, which in is in Christ Jesus.

All Things Possible

5.15 All Things Possible in Jesus. Jesus consistently challenged people to believe that all things were possible in God. Furthermore, some things were only possible in God.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of strengthening believers that all things are possible in God.

5.15.1 All Things Possible--Salvation. Regarding who can be saved, Jesus taught: "With people it is impossible ("ἀδύνατον"), but not with God; for all things are possible ("δυνατὰ") with God" (Matthew 19:26, page 1535; Luke 18:27, page 1637).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of strengthening believers with the knowledge that God alone has the ability to save people.

5.15.2 All Things Possible--God's Will. As Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, He said: "Abba! Father! All things are possible for You; remove this cup from Me; yet not what I will, but what You will" (Mark 14:36, page 1587; Matthew 26:42, page 1551).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of strengthening believers to believe that God is their Father, and that He may not remove every difficult path from their way, even one that may lead to death.

5.15.3 All Things Possible--If You Can. The father of a demon possessed boy asked Jesus: "But if You can ("Εἰ δύνῃ") do anything, take pity on us and help us!" Jesus replied, "If You can? All things are possible to him who believes" (Mark 9:22-23, page 1575).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of demonstrating that all things are possible with God, even casting out demons in the Name of Jesus.

Section Six

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

The Scriptures

6.1 The Power of the Sacred Writings. Paul wrote to Timothy that since childhood Timothy has known the sacred writings ("ἱερὰ γράμματα"--

referring to the Old Testament) which are able ("τὰ δυνάμενά") to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus (2 Timothy 3:15, page 1864).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of proclaiming the power of the sacred writings which gives the wisdom leading to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

6.2 The Implanted Word. James wrote that everyone should live, putting aside the all filthiness ("ῥυπαρίαν"), and all that remains of wickedness ("κακίας"), in humility receive the word implanted ("ὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον"), which is able ("ὸν δυνάμενον") to save your souls.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of implanting the word, which is able to save souls, so that a believer may put aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness.

6.3 Powerful in the Scriptures. Apollos was known as an eloquent man, mighty ("δυνατὸς") in the Scriptures (Acts 18:24, page 1737).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of eloquence, being mighty in the Scriptures.

Section Seven

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

The Kingdom of God

7.1 Able To Nest. Jesus described the small mustard seed as growing up to so that "the birds of the air can ("δύνασθαι) nest under its shade" (Mark 4:32, page 1564).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of showing that the kingdom of God grows so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.

7.2 Able To See the Kingdom of God. Jesus told Nicodemus: "Truly, truly I say to you, unless one is born again he cannot ("οὐ δύναται") see the kingdom of God" (John 3:3, page 1657). Nicodemus replied: "How can ("δύναται") a man be born when he is old? He cannot ("μὴ δύναται") enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born, can he?" (John 3:4, page 1657). Jesus answered: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit he cannot ("οὐ δύναται") enter the kingdom of God" (John 3:5, page 1657). After hearing more from Jesus, Nicodemus said: "How can ("δύναται") these things be?" (John 3:9, page 1657).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of speaking to rulers and demonstrating that they must be born again. Through the powerful salvation of Jesus Christ, and Him alone, those rulers may be born again, even when they are old.

Section Eight

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Legal Powers

8.1 Able To Ascertain. Tertullus, a lawyer for the Jews accusing Paul before Felix, opined: "By examining him yourself concerning all these matters you will be able ("δυνήσῃ") to ascertain the things of which we accuse him" (Acts 24:8, page 1748).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of ascertaining facts in order to decide disputes.

8.2 No Power To Hand Me Over. Paul defended himself: "If, then I am a wrongdoer and have committed anything worthy of death, I do not refuse to die; but if none of those things is true of which these men accuse me, no one can ("δύναται") hand me over to them. I appeal to Caesar" (Acts 25:11, page 1730).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of using legal rights to defend against false charges.

8.3 No Power To Prove Charges. Paul told Felix that the Jews were unable ("οὐδὲ δύνανταί ") to prove the charges they brought against Paul (Acts 24:13, pages 1748-1749).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of showing that accusers cannot prove their charges.

8.4 No Power to Account. At Ephesus, the town clerk quieted a riot by requiring the crowd to bring charges before the proconsul. As it was, they were facing an unlawful assembly charge, and they would be unable ("δυνησόμεθα") to account for this disorderly gathering (Acts 19:40, page 1739).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of calming down disorderly gatherings, particularly those riots which break the civil law.

8.5 Able To Know the Facts. Paul defended himself before Felix the Judge. Paul presented a careful timeline to Felix and said: “you are able ("δυναμένου") to know that no more than twelve days ago I went up to Jerusalem to worship” (Acts 24:11, page 1748).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of explaining facts so that a judge may comprehend their importance.

8.6 Able To Be Set Free. Agrippa heard the case against Paul and concluded: "This man might have been ("ἐδύνατο") set free if he had not appealed to Caesar" (Act 26:31, page 1753).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of presenting spiritual truths in the context of a legal defense that gives glory to God.

8.7 No Power To Decide. Paul opposed lawsuits among believers. He directed them to appoint a wise man in the church. He questioned: is there not among you one man who will be able ("δυνήσεται") to decide between his brethren? (1 Corinthians 6:5, pages 1787-1788).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry, based on the wisdom of God, of deciding disputes between his brethren, without going to any civil court.

Section Nine

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Churches

9.1 A Little Power. Jesus wrote to the angel of the church in Philadelphia that they have a little power ("δύναμιν"), and have kept My word, and have not denied My name (Revelation 3:8, page 1917). Please notice here that power is not all or nothing, but may be a measured amount.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping churches keep the word of Jesus, and not deny His name in what they do and say.

9.2 Power and the Open Door. Jesus told the angel of the church in Philadelphia that He had put an open door in front of them, which no one can (" δύναται") shut (Revelation 3:8, page 1917).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping churches walk through open doors, which no one can shut.

Section Ten

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

The Body of Christ

10.1 **No Power to Say--The Eye**. Paul observed: "And the eye cannot ("οὐ δύναται") say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you" (1 Corinthians 12:21, page 1797).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of uniting the body of Christ so that each member understands their need for every other member in the body of Christ.

Section Eleven

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Elders

11.1 **Able To Exhort and To Refute**. Each elder must hold fast the faithful word which is in accordance with teaching, so that he will be able ("δυνατὸς") to exhort and to refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9, pages 1865-66).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry, as an elder, of holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with teaching, so that he will be able to exhort and to refute those who contradict.

Section Twelve

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

People

12.1 Powerful Men. The term "power" at times may refer to people.

12.2 Powerful Jews. Festus told the powerful men ("Οἱ δυνατοὶ") seeking to prosecute Paul that they should come down to Caesarea so that the charges could be considered in court (Acts 25:5, page 1750).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of overcoming powerful men by the powers of God.

12.3 Powerful Believers--Weakness. Paul ordered the powerful believers ("οἱ δυνατοὶ") to bear with the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please themselves (Romans 15:1, page 1778).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping the powerful believers to bear with the weakness of those without strength and not just please themselves.

12.4 Powerful Believers--Not Many. Paul commanded believers to examine their calling, that there were not many mighty ("δυνατοί") called (1 Corinthians 1:26, page 1783).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of urging believers to examine their calling, so that they recognize that not many mighty were called.

12.5 Powerful Believers--Rejoice. With sarcasm, Paul also wrote: "For we rejoice when we ourselves are weak but you are strong ("δυνατοὶ"); this we also pray for, that you be made complete (2 Corinthians 13:9, page 1818).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping believers understand their weakness by using sarcasm about their “power,” and praying the powers of God may make them complete.

Section Thirteen

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Servants

13.1 Commending Ourselves as Servants of Christ. The ministry team to Corinth avoided giving offense, so that the ministry would not be discredited. In everything, they commended themselves ("συνίσταντες") as ministers of God ("θεοῦ διάκονοι"). Paul then listed afflictions, beatings, imprisonments, purity, knowledge, patience, the word, and other ways the team commended itself to God. Paul showed that, in many ways, the ministry team commended themselves, including "in the power of God" ("δυνάμει θεοῦ").

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may be part of a ministry team that avoids giving any cause of offense which might discredit the ministry, but commends itself in power.

Section Fourteen

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

The Spirit and Power

14.1 The Power of Elijah. An angel appeared to Zacharias and prophesied to him regarding his unborn son, John the Baptist: "It is he who will go as a forerunner before Him in the spirit and power ("δυνάμει") of Elijah . . . " (Luke 1:17, page 1594). The ministry of John the Baptist centered upon preparing the way of the Lord Jesus, by turning the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous. To be sure, God only commissioned one John the Baptist.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of power in turning the hearts of the fathers back to the children, and the disobedient to the attitude of the righteous.

14.2 By What Power? After Peter and John healed the lame man, their preaching of Jesus caught the attention of the religious leaders in Jerusalem.

Those religious leaders brought Peter and John before the Jewish Council of rulers, elders, scribes and high priests (Acts 4:1-42, pages 1704-1707). They began their inquiry: "By what power ("δυνάμει"), or in what name, have you done this?" (Acts 4:7, page 1705). People notice "power" and inquire about "power." Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, preached Jesus the Risen Savior to the Council.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of demonstrating the power of God so that opportunities arise to preach Jesus to religious leaders who deny Him.

14.3 The Gift of Grace and the Working of God's Power. Paul wrote that he was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to him according to ("κατὰ") the works ("τὴν ἐνέργειαν") of His power ("τῆς δυνάμεως αὐτοῦ") (Ephesians 3:7, page 1829).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry given to that believer according to the gift of God's grace which was given to that believer according to the works of His power.

Section Fifteen

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Power of the Spirit

15.1 The Power of the Spirit. Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit ("ἐν τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ πνεύματος") (Luke 4:14, page 1602). Jesus began teaching in their synagogues and challenged His hometown of Nazareth to accept Him as Messiah (Luke 4:15-30, pages 1602-1603). After the people of Nazareth rejected Him and tried to kill Him, Jesus went to Capernaum, where He continued His ministry in the synagogue there, casting out a demon from a man. Later Jesus healed Simon's mother and many other people.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may be impelled by the Holy Spirit to move to various geographical areas, where

God will use that person to perform great ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit.

15.2 Powerful Testimony. After Pentecost, the apostles were giving powerful testimony ("δυνάμει μεγάλῃ") to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. Great grace was upon them all (Acts 4:33, page 1706).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry (often as part of a ministry team) of giving powerful testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, with great grace upon all of the ministry team.

15.3 Anointed with Power. God anointed ("ἔχρισεν") Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power ("δυνάμει"). Jesus went about doing good works ("εὐεργετῶν"--verbal participle middle) and healing ("ἰώμενος") all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with Him (Acts 10:38, page 1720).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of doing good works of powers, and healing (see The Spiritual Gifts of Healings) all who are oppressed by the Devil.

15.4 Clothed with Power. Just before Jesus ascended back to heaven, He commanded His disciples to stay in Jerusalem until they were clothed ("ἐνδύσησθε") with power ("ἐνδύσησθε") from on high (Luke 24:49, page 1653). Jesus expanded upon that command by adding that they will receive power ("δύναμιν") when the Holy Spirit had come upon them; then they would be the witnesses of Jesus in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and remotest part of the earth (Acts 1:8, page 1699).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of being a witness of Jesus with power, having been clothed with power from the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation.

Section Sixteen

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Repentance

16.1 The Power of Sin. The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin ("ἡ δύναμις τῆς ἁμαρτίας") is the law (1 Corinthians 15:56, page 1803).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of overcoming the power of sin, which is found particularly in the Law.

16.2 The Power To Defile. Jesus taught that nothing outside the man can ("δύναται") defile him if it goes into him; but the things which proceed out of the man are what defile the man (Mark 7:15, page 1570). Likewise, whatever goes into the man from outside cannot ("οὐ δύναται") defile him (Mark 7:18, page 1571).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of overcoming defilement by the powers of God.

16.3 Works of Power and Repentance. Jesus denounced the cities in which most of His works of powers ("αἱ πλεῖσται δυνάμεις αὐτοῦ") took place because they did not repent. He declared that other cities would have repented if they had seen the works of powers performed in them by Jesus. Because they witnessed the great works of powers, those cities would face more severe judgment (Matthew 11:20-28, page 1519; Luke 10:13-16, page 1619).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of works of powers to bring entire cities to repentance leading to salvation.

16.4 Abound in Hope. Paul prayed that now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you will abound in hope by the power ("δυνάμενοι"--verbal participle middle) of the Holy Spirit (Romans 15:13,page 1779).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of teaching and praying that the God of Hope will fill other believers with all joy and peace in believing, so that they will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Section Seventeen

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Evangelism

17.1 The Ministry of Christ Crucified. As Paul preached at Corinth in weakness and fear and much trembling, he determined to know nothing among the Corinthians except Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1 Corinthians 2:1-3, page 1783) . The Greeks at Corinth searched for wisdom ("σοφίαν") (1 Corinthians 1:22, page 1783), but Paul preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ without superiority of speech or of wisdom ("ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίας"). Paul proclaimed the mystery of God to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 2:1, page 1783; see also The New Testament Mysteries.) His message and his preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom ("σοφίας"), but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power ("πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως") (1 Corinthians 2:4, page 1783). Paul intended the faith of the Corinthians to rest not on the wisdom of men ("σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων"), but on the power of God ("δυνάμει θεοῦ") (1 Corinthians 2:5, page 1783). Paul preached the mystery of Christ crucified and labored for that purpose, according the the power that worked mightily within him (Colossians 1:29, page 1842).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in demonstration of the Spirit and power, so that the faith of the converts would rest on the power of God.

17.2 Preaching the Gospel and the Power of God. Paul declared that his message and his preaching were not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power ("δυνάμεως"), so that the Corinthians' faith would not rest on the wisdom of men, but on the power ("δυνάμει") of God (1 Corinthians 2:4-5, page 1783).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of preaching not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that the faith of the converts may rest not on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

17.3 The Power of the Gospel. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers must understand that the Gospel of Jesus Christ brings great power all by itself into the life of the new believer. Ultimately, only God is the one Who has the power ("ὁ δυνάμενος") to save and destroy, as Lawgiver and Judge (James 4:12, page 1891). A few examples describe the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

17.3.1 Thessalonians. Paul wrote that the Gospel did not come in word only, but also in power ("ἐν δυνάμει") and in the Holy Spirit and with full conviction (1 Thessalonians 1:5, page 1846).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of bringing the Gospel not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit with full conviction.

17.3.2 James. Likewise, James wrote that everyone should live, putting aside all filthiness ("ῥυπαρίαν"), and all that remains of wickedness ("κακίας"), in humility receive the word implanted ("ὸν ἔμφυτον λόγον"), which is able ("ὸν δυνάμενον") to save your souls (James 1:21, page 1888).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of implanting the word, which, when received in humility, is able to save souls, so that believers are able to put aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness.

17.3.3 Galatians. Paul taught that if a Law had been given which was able ("ὁ δυνάμενος") to impart life, then righteousness would indeed have been based upon law (Galatians 3:21, pages 1822-1823).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ by demonstrating that the Law has no power to save anyone.

17.4 Paul and Extraordinary Works of Power. Paul went to Ephesus and preached Jesus to the disciples of John, numbering about twelve men. They believed and were baptized. Paul laid his hands upon them and the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they began speaking in tongues and prophesying (Acts 19:1-7, page 1737). Only three times in Acts do we read about speaking in tongues (Acts 2--Jersualem, Acts 10--Caesarea, and Acts 19--Ephesus). God was performing extraordinary miracles ("Δυνάμεις τε οὐ τὰς τυχούσας"-

-literally, “not the ordinary miracles”—an example of litotes) by the hands of Paul, so that handkerchiefs or aprons were carried from Paul's body and the diseases ("τὰς νόσους") left the sick and the evil spirits went out ("τε πνεύματα τὰ πονηρὰ") (Acts 19:12, pages 1737-1738). So, the word of the Lord was growing mightily ("ὔξανεν ") and prevailing (Acts 19:20, page 1738).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, supported by a display of extraordinary miracles, with handkerchiefs and aprons bringing healing and casting out demons.

17.5 Faith and the Power of God. Paul wrote to the Galatians that God provided them with the Holy Spirit and works of powers ("ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις") in them ("ἐν ὑμῖν"--or among them). God did not do those things through the Law, but rather through hearing with faith (Galatians 3:5, page 1822).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of doing works of powers in the Holy Spirit with new believers, so that they will understand that their salvation did not come through the Law, but rather through hearing with faith.

17.6 The Power of Grace. Paul commended the Ephesian elders to God and the word of His grace, which is able ("ᾧ δυναμένῳ") to build them up and to give them the inheritance among all those who are sanctified (Acts 20:32, page 1741).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of building up the saints and reminding them that they have an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

17.7 The Power To Establish. As Paul closed the Book of Romans, he wrote: "Now to Him who is able ("Τῷ δυναμένῳ") to establish you according to my Gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ . . . " (Romans 16:25, page 1781).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of establishing believers according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the preaching of Jesus Christ.

17.8 <u>The Gospel and the Power of God</u>. Paul observed that the Jews ask for signs and Greeks search for wisdom. Paul preached Christ crucified, to Jews a stumbling block and to Gentiles foolishness, but to those who are the called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power ("δύναμιν") of God and the wisdom of God. The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men (1 Corinthians 1:22-25, page 1783).

<u>Identification</u>. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of proclaiming Christ crucified to both Jews and Gentiles, knowing and demonstrating that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

Section Eighteen

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Power of Faith

18.1 No Power To Save. The Book of James presents two questions regarding faith and works: "What use is it, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but he has no works? Can ("μὴ δύνατα") that faith save him?" (James 2:14, page 1889). Faith without works is dead (James 2:17, page 1889).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of joining faith with works that evidence salvation.

18.2 Able To Perform His Promises. Abraham believed that God was able ("δυνατός") to perform His promises (Romans 4:21, page 1764).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of believing that God is able to perform His promises, even when it appears to be physically impossible.

18.3 How Are You Able To Believe? Jesus asked a group of Jews seeking to kill Him: "How can you ("πῶς δύνασθε") believe, when you receive glory from one another and you do not seek the glory that is from the one and only God?" (John 5:44, page 1664).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of asking unbelievers how they can believe, when they receive glory from men and do not seek glory from the one and only God.

Section Nineteen

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Able and Unable

19.1 Ability. As above, the term "powers" refers to the ability to do things. In the New Testament, the term "powers" occurs as "able to do" and "unable to do." We can look at some examples of both occurrences. As you review the examples of "able" and "unable" below, please consider how powers control your works. Consider jumping to the moon from the earth. From our standpoint, such thoughts may appear to be nonsense. Yet, what if the power of God could enable a believer to do things we all think are impossible and frankly ridiculous? God brings such power into our lives so that things we were unable to do now become able to do. Likewise, some things you were unable to do, like stop worrying, now become able to do, because of the power of God working in you.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of equipping people to find and receive the power of God working within them to come to faith and to help believers use and increase their faith so that they stop doing things displeasing to God and start using the power of God to please Him in more and greater ways**.**

19.2 Unable. At times, the term "powers" means unable to do something. I am going to emphasize “No Power” in the examples below. As we study these individual examples, keep in mind that the power of God may greatly influence what we are unable to do. I have divided these unable to do things into different categories. At times, we speak a person having no "willpower" to change things. This link between the will and the power to do things appears in some verses below.

Section Twenty

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

The Ministry of Able

20.1 Able To Know. Paul walked about Athens and noticed the great idolatry. He began reasoning with the Jews in the synagogue and everyone present in the marketplace where he reasoned with them daily, preaching Jesus and the resurrection. The Athenians took Paul to the Areopagus and asked Paul: "Are we able to know" ("Δυνάμεθα γνῶναι"--present middle indicative) what this new teaching is which you are proclaiming?" (Acts 17:16-19, page 1734). Paul had the power to make people ask him for more information about Jesus and His resurrection. He then preached Jesus to them, emphasizing His resurrection and the judgment to come (Acts 17:17-34, pages 1734-1735).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of provoking people to ask "Are we able to know" about Jesus and His resurrection, and then preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them.

20.2 Able To Keep You from Stumbling. Jude reminded believers that God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, is the One who is able ("Τῷ δυναμένῳ"--notice the middle voice) to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy (Jude 1:24, page 1913).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of keeping believers from stumbling, particularly when they contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Section Twenty One

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

The Ministry of Unable

21.1 Unable To Deny a Sign. Peter and John healed a man who had been lame from his mother's womb. Peter and John fixed their gaze upon him and said: "Look at us!" In the name of Jesus Christ the Nazarene, Peter commanded him walk. The lame man leaped and stood upright and began walking and entered the temple with them. All the people saw him and took note that the lame man they had seen begging for food outside the temple for many years now walked into the temple (Acts 3:1-10, page 1703). Later, Peter and John were taken before the Jewish council. Although the council warned Peter and John to stop preaching in the name of Jesus, the council could not deny ("οὐ δυνάμεθα") that a noteworthy sign ("γνωστὸν σημεῖον") "has taken place through them is apparent to all who live in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it" (Acts 4:16, page 1705). In that verse, the Greek word there is "sign," and not "miracle." A sign ("σημεῖον") points to the authority behind the action at issue; see 1 Corinthians 1:22, page 1783).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of performing undeniable works of healing as a testimony to religious tribunals.

21.2 Unable To Stop Speaking. As Peter and John stood before the Jewish council, the council commanded them completely to stop speaking and teaching in the name of Jesus. Peter and John replied: "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the judge; but we cannot ("οὐ δυνάμεθα") stop speaking about what we have seen and heard " (Acts 4:19-20). Notice the council was "unable to deny" the sign had taken place, just as Peter and John were "unable to stop speaking" about Jesus. The power that produced the sign also produced the inability to stop speaking about Jesus. Both powers went hand in hand from God. Compare Zacharias who was unable ("μὴ δυνάμενος") to speak for a time because he did not believe the message of the angel who told him that his barren wife would have a son, John the Baptist (Luke 1:20, page 1594).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of being unable to stop speaking about Jesus Christ, even after warnings from government or religious officials.

21.3 Unable To Do Anything against the Truth. Paul testified that the Corinthian ministry team was unable ("οὐ δυνάμεθά") to do anything against the truth, but only for the truth (2 Corinthians 13:8, page 1818).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of standing against opposition, while proclaiming that the ministry team is unable to do anything against the truth.

Section Twenty Two

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

The Prayers of Power

22.1 Praying for Power. Paul prayed for churches, and those prayers serve as great examples of how to pray for other believers.

22.1.1 Ephesians. Paul prayed for the Ephesians regarding the power of God.

22.1.1.1 Surpassing Greatness of the Power. Paul prayed that the eyes of the hearts of the Ephesian believers may be enlightened so that they may know ("εἰδέναι") what is the surpassing greatness of the power of God ("τῆς δυνάμεως") toward us that believe. That power works according to the strength of His might (Ephesians 1:18-19, page 1828).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying for believers. The gifted believer may pray, like Paul, that the eyes of the believers' hearts may be enlightened so that they may know the surpassing greatness of the power of God toward us that believe. By prayer, believers may see the power of God at work, according to the strength of His might. Believers must act upon that knowledge and live in that power of God.

22.1.1.2 Strengthened with Power. Paul also prayed that God the Father would grant to the Ephesians, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power ("δυνάμει κραταιωθῆναι") through His Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in their hearts richly through faith (Ephesians 3:16-17, page 1830).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying that believers would be strengthened with power through the Holy Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith.

22.1.1.3 Far above All Power. Paul also described Jesus as seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly places, far above all rule ("ἀρχῆς") and authority ("ἐξουσίας") and power ("δυνάμεως") and dominion ("κυριότητος") and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come (Ephesians 1:21, page 1828).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying that believers would see Jesus seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come and acting upon that knowledge.

22.1.1.4 Able To Do Far Beyond. Paul also prayed to Him who is able ("Τῷ δυναμένῳ ") to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to ("κατὰ") the power ("τὴν δύναμιν") that works within us (Ephesians 3:20, page 1830).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying that God would do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.

22.1.1.4.1 The Power Working Within Us. Paul prayed for the Ephesians to the God who is able ("Τῷ δυναμένῳ") to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power ("ἣν δύναμιν") that works ("τὴν ἐνεργουμένην") within us (Ephesians 3:20, page 1830).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Power may have a ministry of using the power of God to pray that other believers would

understand and believe that God can do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.

22.2 Colossians. Paul also wrote to the people of Colossae and told them about his prayers for them.

22.2.1 Spiritual Wisdom and Understanding. Paul testified that the ministry team to Colossae had not ceased to pray for them and to ask that they may be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying for believers to be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

22.2.2 Walk Worthy of the Lord. Paul also prayed for the Colossians that they would walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying for believers to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

22.2.3 Strengthened with All Power. Paul prayed further that the believers would be strengthened with all power ("ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει δυναμούμενοι"), according to God's glorious might (Colossians 1:9-12, page 1841).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying for believers to be strengthened with all power, according to the glorious might of God.

22.2.4 Please the Lord. Paul specifically prayed that the Colossians would please the Lord in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God, in all power empowering ("ἐν πάσῃ δυνάμει δυναμούμενοι"), according to His glorious might ("κατὰ τὸ κράτος τῆς δόξης αὐτοῦ"), for the attaining of all steadfastness and patience (Colossians 1:12, page 1841). Notice the phrase: "in all power empowering." Paul prayed for that continuous, active empowering of the Colossians with all power. He linked the power of God continually working

in them so that they would remain steadfast in producing good works for God, by the power of God continuing to please God in all respects.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of prayerful encouragement of other believers by both praying for those believers and then sharing your prayer with them, just like Paul did in discipling the saints at Colossae.

22.3 Thessalonica. Paul prayed for the Thessalonians, a church that experienced persecutions.

22.3.1 Worthy of God's Calling. Paul prayed that God would count them worthy of their calling (2 Thessalonians 1:11, page 1852).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying that God would count believers worthy of their calling, and sharing those prayers with those believers.

22.3.2 Fulfill Every Desire for Goodness. Paul also prayed that God would fulfill every desire for goodness in the Thessalonians (2 Thessalonians 1:11, page 1852).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying that God would fulfill every desire for goodness in a group of believers. Like Paul, you share those prayers with the believers you prayed for.

22.3.3 Glorifying the Name of the Lord Jesus. Paul also prayed that as a result of God working in them with power, the name of the Lord Jesus will be glorified in them (2 Thessalonians 1:11-12, page 1852).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of praying that as God works in a group of believers, the name of Jesus may be glorified in those believers. Like Paul, you share those prayers with the believers you prayed for.

Section Twenty Three

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Powers in Believers

23.1 **Special Powers**. Born-again believers have special powers of God at work in them. Without Jesus abiding in them and without the believer abiding in Jesus, believers can do nothing.

Unable To Do Anything

23.2 **No Power To Do Anything**. Jesus explained to His disciples: I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you cannot ("οὐ δύνασθε") do anything ("οὐδέν"--literally, nothing)" (John 15:5, page 1686).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of bearing much fruit for God because they abide in Jesus.

Unable To Be Hidden

23.3 **No Power To Be Hidden**. Jesus taught His disciples that they are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be ("οὐ δύναται") hidden" (Matthew 5:14, page 1507).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of shining so brightly for God that the believer cannot be hidden.

Unable To Take Anything out of the World

23.4 **No Power To Take Anything out of The World**. Paul told Timothy, his spiritual son, that just as we have brought nothing into the world, so also we are not able ("δυνάμεθα") to take anything out of it either (1 Timothy 6:7, page 1859). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers must recall that truth and share that we are unable to take anything out of this world.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of living and dealing with possessions based upon the knowledge that the believer has no power to take anything out of this world.

Unable To Die

23.5 No Power To Die. All believers once resurrected cannot die any more, for they are like the angels, and are sons of God, beings sons of the resurrection (Luke 20:36, page 1642).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of living with the knowledge that the believer will be resurrected and unable to die once they are resurrected.

The Temporary Inabilities of Believers

23.6 In the following examples, Jesus compared the "not able now" with the "able later" future. Some examples of this change from "not able now" to "able later" illustrate the power of God. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of God changing "not able now" into "able now" in a variety of different ways. In many of the examples below, we see how things change over time or because of different circumstances. Those examples illustrate how things change in many ways, and turn from "not able now" to "able now" over time.

23.6.1 No Power To Come to Jesus--Little Children. Jesus also explained that His disciples cannot come with Him now to Paradise, but later they will join Him there. Jesus also told His disciples on the night before His crucifixion: "Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, "Where I am going, you cannot come ("οὐ δύνασθε")'" (John 13:33, page 1684).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of speaking powerful words and just the right time, according to the ability of the believer to receive the message.

God also revealed that some born-again believers have temporary inabilities. Those inabilities mean that they lack the power to do something now, which they will do later.

Unable To Bear Them

23.7 **No Power To Bear Them**. Jesus carefully controlled His words: "I have many more things to say to you, but you cannot ("οὐ δύνασθε") bear them now" (John 16:12, page 1688).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of carefully limiting the things said to other believers, because they are not able to bear them now.

Unable To Eat Solid Food

23.8 **No Power To Eat Solid Food**. Paul wrote the Corinthians that he gave them milk to drink, because they were unable ("οὔπω ἐδύνασθε) to eat solid food ("βρῶμα") and they continued until now to be unable ("οὐδὲ ἔτι νῦν δύνασθε") to eat solid food (1 Corinthians 3:2, page 1784).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of giving milk to some believers, because they are unable to eat solid food.

Powers of Discipleship

23.9 **Power To Be the Disciple of Jesus**. Jesus outlined what you must do to be His disciple. Jesus laid down some basic requirements for being His disciple. At times, a believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may help others experience the works of powers they have experienced themselves.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of living an exemplary life as a disciple of Jesus.

23.9.1 **Hate Your Family**. Jesus taught that whoever does not hate his own father and mother and wife and children and brothers and sisters, yes, and even his own life, he cannot ("οὐ δύναται") be My disciple (Luke 14:26, page 1630).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of hating family members by following Jesus without family entanglements.

23.9.2 Carry and Come. Likewise, Jesus said: "Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot ("οὐ δύναται") be My disciple" (Mark 14:27, page 1630).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of carrying his own cross daily while following Jesus as a disciple.

23.9.3 Give Up All Possessions. Jesus also explained: "So then, none of you can be ("οὐ δύναται") My disciple who does not give up all his own possessions" (Luke 14:33, page 1630).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of giving up all his own possessions to follow Jesus.

No Power To Sin

23.10 No Power To Sin. John revealed: "No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot ("οὐ δύναται") sin, because he is born of God" (1 John 3:9, page 1906).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of living in demonstration of overcoming sin, because he is born of God. The believer will still sin some, but his life will demonstrate extraordinary power in overcoming sin.

Power To Work

23.11 No Power To Work. Jesus encouraged His disciples; "We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; night is coming when no one can ("δύναται") work" (John 9:4, page 1673).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of working so long as it is day.

Eternal Security

23.12 No Power To Snatch. Jesus revealed: "My Father, Who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able ("δύναται") to snatch them out of the Father's hand" (John 10:29, page 1676).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of demonstrating that we are secure in Christ, and no one can snatch us out of the Father's hand.

Time and Power

23.13 James and John: Able Now, Drink Later. The disciples James and John, through their mother, asked Jesus if they could sit at His right and left hand in His kingdom. Jesus answered and said: "Are you able (" δύνασθε") to drink the cup that I am about to drink?" They said replied: "We are able ("Δυνάμεθα")." Jesus then answered: "My cup you shall drink." (Matthew 20:22-28, page 1537; Mark 10:32-45, pages 1578-1579). Jesus drank the cup of suffering, persecution and death the next day. They would drink it later.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of Able Now, Drink Later, meaning that some believers with the Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have the ministry of explaining the importance of exercising abilities later, in keeping with God's timing.

23.14 Peter: Not Able Now. On the night before Jesus died, Jesus told Peter: "Where I go, you cannot ("οὐ δύνασαί") follow Me now; but you will follow later" (John 13:36, Page 1684). Jesus demonstrated the ministry of the Power of Not Able Now. At times, Jesus had to explain timing to people. Jesus promised Peter that he would follow Jesus later, but not now. When Peter heard Jesus, Peter responded "Lord, why can I not ("οὐ δύναμα") follow You right now? I will lay down my life for you" (John 13:37, Page 1684).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of demonstrating and explaining the timing of God (e.g., not able now, but later) to other believers.

Power To Thank God

23.15 What Thanks Are We Able To Render. Paul and the ministry team serving the Thessalonians testified: "For what thanks can ("δυνάμεθα") we render to God for you in return for all the joy with which we rejoice before our God on your account," (1 Thessalonians 3:9, page 1848).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of: (a) giving thanks to God for all the joy on account of fellow believers living for Jesus Christ; and (b) letting those believers know how you thank God for the joy they give to the ministry team.

Power To Save from Death

23.16 Able to Save from Death. In the days of His flesh, Jesus offered up prayers and supplications with loud crying and tears to the One able ("τὸν δυνάμενον") to save Him from Death, and He was heard because of His piety ("τῆς εὐλαβείας") (Hebrews 5:7, page 1874). Compare Peter who described believers experiencing various trials. As they have been grieved ("λυπηθέντες") by those various trials, they still rejoice because they know they are protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Peter 1:3-7, page 1893; see also John 16:20, page 1688; 1 Thessalonians 4:13, page 1849).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping people face death as they experience various trials.

Power To Accept Word of God

23.17 Able To Accept the Word of God. Jesus taught that some people were eunuchs from the womb; some were made eunuchs by men, and some people made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of God. Jesus then said: "He who is able ("ὁ δυνάμενος") to accept this, let him accept it (Matthew 19:12, page 1535).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of physical sacrifice for the kingdom of God, and helping people understand and accept such sacrifice.

Power To Know the Way

23.18 Thomas: Able to Know. The night before Jesus died on the cross, Jesus told His disciples that: (a) their hearts should not be troubled and they must maintain their faith in God and in Jesus (especially Peter should obey, because Jesus had just warned him that he would deny Jesus three times that very night); and (b) that Jesus was going to His Father's house to prepare a place for them, where He would personally receive them and abide with them; and (c) that they knew the way (John 13:36-14:6, page 1684). Thomas replied: "Lord, we do not know where you are going, how are we able to know the way?" (John 14:5, page 1684). Thomas contradicted Jesus when Thomas declared that Thomas did not know the way--we should never contradict Jesus. Thomas thought Thomas did not know where Jesus was going, and so Thomas could not know how to go to an unknown destination. Even so, Jesus explained to Thomas that Jesus is the way to the Father and Thomas would come to the Father by way of Jesus--Jesus is the only way to the Father (John 14:6, page 1684).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of explaining that Jesus is the only way to the Father.

Power To Do Good to the Poor

23.19 Whenever You Wish, You Can. After a woman anointed Jesus (see The Anointing of Jesus), people criticized the woman, because they claimed the nard could have been sold for a lot of money and given to the poor. Jesus then said to them: "For you always have the poor with you, and whenever you wish, you can ("δύνασθε") do good to them; but you do not always have Me" (Mark 14:7, page 1586).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping the poor by doing good to them.

Power To Manage

23.20 Able To Invest. Jesus told a parable about a man giving talents to his servants before he left on a journey. He divided talents among his slaves,

distributing to each one according ("κατὰ") to his own ability ("τὴν ἰδίαν δύναμιν") of each slave. (Matthew 25:14, page 1547).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of using the valuable things entrusted to him by Jesus according to his full ability.

Power To Give

23.21 Able To Give. Paul commended the Macedonians for their giving, noting that according to ("κατὰ") their ability ("δύναμιν") and beyond their ability ("δύναμιν"), they gave of their own accord (2 Corinthians 8:3, page 1812).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of giving according to their ability and beyond their ability. See The Spiritual Gift of The Giver.

Power To Conceive

23.22 Able To Conceive. By faith Sarah received ability ("δύναμιν") to conceive, even beyond the proper time of life, because she considered Him faithful who had promised (Hebrews 11:11, page 1882). Compare how the power ("δύναμις") of the Most High overshadowed Mary so that she conceived a holy Child, called the Son of God (Luke 1:35, page 1595).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping women conceive, even beyond their natural childbearing years.

23.23 Able To Raise Up Children. Some people thought that they did not need Jesus and repentance because they were they physical descendants of Abraham. John the Baptist told those people: "From these stones God is able ("δύναται") to raise up children to Abraham" (Matthew 3:9, page 1504; Luke 3:8, page 1600).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of persuading people that even though they trust their family lineage, they must turn away from such trust to believing only Jesus Christ can and will save them by faith alone.

Power To Remove Logs

23.24 **Able To Say**. Jesus during the Sermon on the Mount asked: "Or how can you say ("ὡς δύνασαι λέγειν") to your brother, 'Brother, let me take out the speck that is in your eye,' when you yourself do not see the log that in in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take out the speck that is in your brother's eye . . . (Luke 6:42, page 1608).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of removing logs from the eyes of people.

Power To Be Free

23.25 **Able To Be Free**. Regarding slaves, Paul wrote: "Were you called while a slave? Do not worry; if you are able ("δύνασα") to become free, rather do that" (1 Corinthians 7:21, page 1789).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping slaves find freedom, as they are able.

Power To Escape Temptation

23.26 **Able To Bear Up**. Paul wrote that God will never tempt you beyond what you are able ("δύνασθε"), but with the temptation will make the way of escape, so as to empower yourself ("δύνασθαι") to bear up (1 Corinthians 10:13, page 1791--complementary infinitive to empower yourself).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping people escape from temptations.

Power To Stand

23.27 **Able To Stand--Firm**. Paul commanded the Ephesians to put on the full armor of God, to empower ("δύνασθαι") you to stand against the schemes of the devil (Ephesians 6:11, page 1834). A believer with The Spiritual Gift of

Works of Powers may have a ministry of empowering believers to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping people wear the armor of God, so that they will stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

23.28 Able To Stand--Lord. Jesus forbade us to judge the servant of another. "To his own master he stands of falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able ("δυνατεῖ") to make him stand" (Romans 14:4, page 1777).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping people overcome the judgments of others, by recognizing that the Lord is able to make them stand.

23.29 Stand In God's Way. Peter reported that God gave to the Gentiles the same gift as He gave to the Jerusalem believers after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ; who was I that I could ("δυνατὸς") stand in God's way" (Acts 11:17, pages 1721-1722).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of getting people not to stand in the way of God as He pursues His plans.

Power To Prophesy

23.30 Able To Prophesy. Paul explained to the Corinthians: "For you can ("δύνασθε") all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping prophets prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted.

Power To Understand

23.31 Able To Understand. Paul wrote to the Ephesians: "By referring to this, when you read you can ("δύνασθε") understand my insight into the mystery of Christ" (Ephesians 3:4, page 1829).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping people read the Scriptures, so that they may gain insight into the mystery of Christ.

Power To Be Saved

23.32 Able To Be Saved. The disciples were perplexed that Jesus had told them that it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. They were astonished and asked Jesus: "Then who can ("δύνατα") be saved" (Matthew 19:25, page 1535; Mark 10:26, page 1578: Luke 18:26, page 1637))? Jesus replied: with God, all things are possible.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of showing that with God, all things are possible, so that even a rich man may enter the kingdom of God.

Power and Finances

23.33 Able To Make Grace Abound To You. Paul wrote: God is able ("δυνατεῖ") to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed" (2 Corinthians 9:8, page 1813).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping believers to experience the grace of God in everything, and particularly their finances, so that they may have an abundance for every good deed

23.34 Able To Be Sold. A woman anointed Jesus and His disciples were indignant: "For this perfume might have been ("ἐδύνατο") sold for a high price and the money given to the poor (Matthew 26:9, page 1549).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of using physical goods for Godly purposes, even though the money may have been spent to help the poor.

Power and the Tongue

23.35 Able To Bridle. If a man does not stumble in what he says, “he is a perfect man, able ("δυνατὸς") to bridle the whole body as well" (James 3:2, page 1890).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping believers bridle the tongue and the body to glorify God.

Power To Heal

23.36 Healings. Jesus gave His disciples the power ("δύναμιν") to heal diseases ("νόσους θεραπεύειν") (Luke 9:1, page 1615). Just as Jesus healed the sick, so also the disciples could heal the sick.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of healing diseases.

Section Twenty Four

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Powers and Possibilities

24.1 If Possible. At times, the noun "possible" ("δυνατόν") occurs in the context of "if possible."

24.1.1 If Possible--Deceive the Elect. Jesus said that false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible ("εἰ δυνατόν"), even the elect (Matthew 24:24, page 1545; Mark 13:22, page 1585).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of safeguarding the elect from being misled by false prophets showing great signs and wonders.

24.1.2 If Possible--Cup Pass. Jesus prayed that "if possible" ("εἰ δυνατόν"), He would like to the cup to pass from Him. Even so, Jesus prayed not as I will, but as You will (Matthew 26:39, page 1551; Mark 14:35, page 1587).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping the elect to accept the will of God for them, even when it may be difficult to endure.

24.1.3 If Possible--In Jerusalem. Paul decided to sail past Ephesus, so that, if possible ("εἰ δυνατὸν"), he could be in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost (Acts 20:16, page 1740).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping people fulfill their plans, as possible.

24.1.4 If Possible--Peace. Paul commanded the Romans: "If possible ("εἰ δυνατόν"), so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men" (Romans 12:18, page 1776).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of helping people find peace, as far it depends upon the believer.

24.1.5 If Possible--Eyes. Paul commended the Corinthians: "For I bear you witness, that, if possible ("εἰ δυνατὸν"), you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me" (Galatians 4:15, page 1824).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of loving people so much, that they are willing to make physical sacrifices for them.

Section Twenty Five

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Powers and Patience

25.1 The Power of God Made Known. God endured with great patience vessels of wrath prepared for destruction, even though he was willing to demonstrate His wrath and to make known His great power ("δυνατὸν ") (Romans 9:24, page 1771).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of making the great power of God known, and at times demonstrating the wrath of God.

Section Twenty Six

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Powers and Strength

26.1 Strength. Paul recounted how afflictions in Asia burdened the ministry team beyond their strength ("δύναμιν"), so as to despair ("ἐξαπορηθῆναι") even of life (2 Corinthians 1:8, page 1805).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of using the power of God to strengthen people burdened beyond their strength and near despair.

Section Twenty Seven

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Powers and Weakness

27.1 Power and Weakness. Paul wrote that he suffered for Christ's sake with contentment; "for when I am weak, then I am strong ("δυνατός") (2 Corinthians 12:10, page 1817).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of demonstrating that you can be strong, even when you are weak because of suffering, and so find spiritual contentment.

27.2 From Weakness Made Strong. By faith Old Testament saints from weakness ("ἀπὸ ἀσθενεία") were made strong ("ἐδυναμώθησαν"). (Hebrews 11:34, page 1883). A list of verbs describes the action of faith in Hebrews 11:34, page 1883). All the verbs tell us how faith worked in the lives of Old Testament saints.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of making the weak strong in faith.

27.3 Weakness and Power. God revealed to Paul that grace is sufficient for him to deal with his weakness. In fact, the power ("ἡ γὰρ δύναμις") is perfected in weakness ("ἀσθενείᾳ") (2 Corinthians 12:9, page 1817). Paul boasted about his weaknesses, so that the power of Christ ("ἡ δύναμις τοῦ Χριστοῦ") may dwell in him (2 Corinthians 12:9, page 1817).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of boasting in personal weaknesses so that the power of Christ may dwell in that believer.

Section Twenty Eight

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Gentleness and the Powers of God

28.1 Gentleness. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that even though they were empowered ones in weight ("δυνάμενοι ἐν βάρει") as apostles of Christ, they proved to be as gentle among the Thessalonians as a nursing mother (1 Thessalonians 2:1-8, page 1847).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry characterized by a nursing-mother's gentleness.

Section Twenty Nine

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Sympathize and the Powers of God

29.1 Sympathize. Jesus being tempted ("πεπειρασμένον") in all things as we are, remained without sin. Because He was tempted as we are, He is not a High Priest who cannot ("ὴ δυνάμενον") sympathize with our weaknesses ("ταῖς ἀσθενείαις") (Hebrews 4:15, page 1873).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of sympathizing with weakness, because Jesus was tempted as we are, yet remained without sin.

Section Thirty

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Gentleness and the Power of God

30.1 Deal Gently. Every high priest, except Jesus, was beset with weakness and required to offer sacrifices for his sins (Hebrews 5:1-4, page 1871). Because of their own weakness, those high priests were able ("δυνάμενος") to deal gently with the ignorant and misguided.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of dealing with the weak and misguided, by the power of God working within them to bring them to faith in Jesus Christ and build up that faith.

Section Thirty One

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Godliness and the Powers of God

31.1 Godliness. Paul wrote to Timothy that in the last days, men will hold to a form of Godliness, although they have denied its power ("τὴν δύναμιν αὐτῆς").

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of exposing men who hold to a form of Godliness in their lives, although they have denied its power.

Section Thirty Two

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Suffering and the Powers of God

32.1 Suffering according to The Power of God. Paul wrote to Timothy that he should not be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord or of Paul, but join with Paul in suffering for the gospel, according to ("κατὰ") the power ("δύναμιν") of God (2 Timothy 1:8, page 1861).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers have a ministry of helping people through times of suffering for the gospel, according to the power of God. The power of God works through The Spiritual Gift of Works of Power to provide help while suffering for the Gospel.

Section Thirty Three

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Fearlessness and the Powers of God

33.1 Fearlessness. Jesus commanded His disciples: " Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable ("μὴ δυναμένων") to kill the soul; but rather fear Him ("τὸν δυνάμενον") who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell ("γεέννῃ") (Matthew 10:28, page 1517).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of fearlessness, so that they do not fear anyone but God, because only God has the power to destroy both soul and body in hell.

Section Thirty Four

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Piety and the Powers of God

34.1 Power and Piety. Peter and John healed the lame man sitting at the Beautiful Gate (Acts 4:1-10, page 1703). As the man was clinging to Peter and John, standing on his feet for the first time, a crowd assembled around Peter and John. Seizing the moment, Peter preached Jesus to that crowd (Acts 4:11-26, pages 1703-1704). He began his message to the Men of Israel by asking them whey they were amazed ("θαυμάζετ"). Then he asked them: "why do you gaze at us, as if by our own power ("δυνάμει") or piety ("εὐσεβείᾳ") we had made him walk" (Acts 4:12, page 1704).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of healing people, but then being careful immediately to disclaim that their own power or piety had anything to do with the healing; instead they focus their message upon the powerful salvation offered only through the risen Savior, Jesus Christ (Acts 3:12, page 1704).

Section Thirty Five

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Comfort and the Powers of God

35.1 Able To Comfort. Paul revealed that as believers suffer in any affliction, God comforts us in all our affliction, to enable ("δύνασθαι") us to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort which we ourselves are are being comforted by God (2 Corinthians 1:4, page 1864).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry, while he himself is suffering afflictions, of enabling other believers in the midst of afflictions to share the comfort of God with other believers.

Section Thirty Six

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Building Up and Inheritance

36.1 The Power of Grace. Paul commended the Ephesian elders to God and the word of His grace, which is able ("ᾧ δυναμένῳ") to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all those who are sanctified (Acts 20:32, page 1741).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of commending people to God and the word of His grace, which is able to build them up and given them an inheritance among those who are sanctified (Acts 20:32, page 1741).

Section Thirty Seven

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Arrogance and the Powers of God

37.1 Arrogance of Many Tutors. Paul knew that some people at Corinth opposed Paul and his ministry. Paul observed that the Corinthians had embraced countless tutors in Christ, but Paul remained their only father in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Those tutors stirred up the Corinthians believers to oppose Paul (1 Corinthians 4:14-21, page 1786). The Corinthians also had bitter factions among themselves (1 Corinthians 3:1-9, pages 1784-1785). Paul wrote that he when returned to the Corinthians, he would confront the arrogant ("ἐφυσιώθησάν") and find out about their power ("τὴν δύναμιν"), not the words of the arrogant ("οὐ τὸν λόγον τῶν πεφυσιωμένων"). Paul emphasized that the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power ("δυνάμει") (1 Corinthians 4:19-21, page 1786).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry based upon the power of God, sufficient to confront false

teachers and finding out about their power, because the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power.

37.2 Arrogance of Immorality. Paul also confronted the Corinthians about their arrogance concerning immorality among them. A man had taken his father's wife, and no one objected. Such immorality did not even exist among the Gentiles, but the Corinthians did not mourn, so that the immoral would be removed from their midst. Instead of mourning, they had become arrogant ("πεφυσιωμένοι") toward that immoral behavior. Therefore, Paul had already judged the person who had committed this sin, even though Paul was not physically present, but rather spiritually present. Paul determined that, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and with the power of the Lord Jesus ("τῇ δυνάμει τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ"), Paul would deliver such a one to satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 5:1-5, pages 1786-1787).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of confronting the arrogant who do not mourn over immorality in the assembly, so that the immoral one may be delivered to satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

Section Thirty Eight

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Hypocrisy and the Powers of God

38.1 Religious Hypocrisy. Jesus entered a synagogue and met a woman who for eighteen years had been bent double, a sickness ("ἀσθενείας") caused by a spirit ("πνεῦμα ἔχουσα"). She was unable ("μὴ δυναμένη") to straighten at all. Jesus freed her ("ἀπολέλυσαι") and laid his hands on her. The synagogue official became indignant ("ἀγανακτῶν") because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath. Jesus called them hypocrites, because they loosed their donkeys on the Sabbath, but they objected to Jesus loosing the woman, a daughter of Abraham, on the Sabbath. All of the opponents of Jesus were being humiliated, but the entire crowd was rejoicing over all the glorious things Jesus did (Luke 12:10-17, page 1627).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may heal people in front of religious people, and show everyone the hypocrisy of the religious leaders who oppose Jesus.

Section Thirty Nine

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Power and Language

39.1 The Power of the Voice. Paul wrote that if he did not know "the meaning of the language" (" τὴν δύναμιν τῆς φωνῆς"), then he would be a barbarian to the one speaking and the one speaking would be a barbarian to him (1 Corinthians 14:11, page 1799). Therefore, the term "power" may mean the ability to speak and understand a language.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of speaking foreign languages, without learning them.

Section Forty

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

No Power To Produce

40.1 No Power To Produce Fruit. Jesus taught: "A good tree cannot ("οὐ δύναται ") produce bad fruit, nor a bad tree produce good fruit" (Matthew 7:18, page 1511).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of producing good fruit in believers.

40.2 No Power for Fig Tree To Produce Olives. Regarding the tongue, James asked if a fig tree can ("μὴ δύναται") produce olives or a vine produce figs? Nor salt water produce fresh (James 3:12, page 1890).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of using the tongue to produce good fruit.

Section Forty One

The Ministry of Works of Powers: Admonish One Another and the Powers of God

41.1 Admonish One Another. In Romans 15, Paul commanded strong believers to bear the weakness of those without strength. Those believers must accept one another, just as Christ accepted us to the glory of God. Yet, believers full of goodness, and filled with all knowledge, are empowered ("δυνάμενοι") to admonish ("νουθετεῖν") one another. Please take notice that the strong believers, not just the pastor, do the admonishing (Romans 15:1-21, page 1779).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of admonishing other believers, while accepting them just as Jesus accepted us to the glory of God.

Section Forty Two

The Ministry of Works of Powers: Powers and Antichrist and Demons

42.1 Able To Resist. Believers must take up the full armor of God, so that they will be able ("δυνηθῆτε") to resist in the evil day" (Ephesians 6:13, page 1834).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of taking up the full armor of God, so that the believer will be able to resist in the evil day.

42.3 Able To Extinguish. Believers who take up the shield of faith will be able ("δυνήσεσθε") to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one (Ephesians 6:16, page 1834).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of taking up the shield of faith, so that the shield shall extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one.

42.4 No Power To Cast Out without Prayer. Jesus taught His disciples that some demons cannot ("οὐδενὶ δύναται") come out by anything but prayer (Mark 9:29, page 1575).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of casting out demons, even with continued prayer.

42.5 Destruction of Fortresses. God gave every believer "weapons of warfare not of the flesh, but divinely powerful ("δυνατὰ τῷ θεῷ") for the destruction of fortresses" (2 Corinthians 10:4, page 1814).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of using weapons of warfare not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

42.6 Authority over Demons. Jesus gave His disciples power ("δύναμιν") and authority ("ἐξουσίαν") over all the demons ("τὰ δαιμόνια") and to heal diseases ("νόσους θεραπεύειν") (Luke 9:1, page 1615). Jesus distinguished power and authority. Compare Jesus with power ("δυνάμει") and authority ("ἐξουσίᾳ") commanding the unclean spirits ("οἷς ἀκαθάρτοις πνεύμασιν") and they come out (Luke 4:31-37, page 1603). Power means you have received the ability to cast out out unclean spirits, and authority means you have the right to exercise that power in the Name of Jesus Christ who gave you that power. To understand the concept of "authority," consider the centurion who said he was a man under authority ("ἐξουσίαν"), with soldiers under him. He would say to a soldier under him, "Go," and he goes (Mathew 8:9, page 1512). Authority ("ἐξουσίαν") describes the right to issue commands and expect obedience. Power means you have the ability to enforce your will. This study of The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers focuses upon works of "powers" ("δυνάμεις"). Jesus had both power and authority over all demons and all diseases and could heal them at will. Yet, at Nazareth, Jesus wondered at their unbelief and was unable to work many miracles. The

problem was not with Jesus, but with His hometown, His relatives and His own household rejecting Him.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of the ability to command unclean spirits and they obey.

42.7 All the Power of the Enemy. Jesus gave His disciples the authority ("τὴν ἐξουσίαν ") to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power ("τὴν δύναμιν") of the enemy, and nothing will injure ("οὐ μὴ ἀδικήσῃ") you (Luke 10:19, page 1619).

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have a ministry of exercising authority over all the power of the enemy.

Section Forty Three

The Ministry of Works of Powers:

Powers and the Future

43.1 The Powers of the Age to Come. In Hebrews 6, we read about a group of people who have "tasted the good word of God and the powers ("δυνάμεις") of the age to to come" (Hebrews 6:5, page 1874). These people had heard the word of salvation, but never believed the word of salvation (see Eternal Security). The implication stands that, in the future, a new age will dawn and the powers of that age will be very awesome. Even today, those powers work in some people, while others have only tasted the same. Jesus said to the crowd and His disciples: "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God after it has come in power ("δυνάμει")" (Mark 9:1, page 1574). For a full discussion of the fulfillment of that prophecy, see the article Shall Not Taste Death. Jesus spoke of John and Peter, and perhaps others, who wrote down the revelations they received regarding the kingdom of God coming in power.

Identification. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Power may have a ministry of speaking about the kingdom of God coming in power, based upon the revelations provided in the New Testament.

Hallmarks of the Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers

Works of Powers: Understanding the Spiritual Gift. The believer with the Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers displays works using the powers of God. As above, the ministry of the works of powers may take many forms, and produce a variety of effects. I have listed a few of those hallmarks below.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers and then see if you may have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of performing signs, particularly with their hands, so that unbelievers come to salvation.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ and God may grant that signs and wonders be done to draw attention the ministry of people sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ and making disciples.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of seeing signs produced by God to identify the works of God; those signs herald future events and identify God's plans.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of the Holy Spirit empowering the believer to speak, act and glorify God in many different ways.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of performing great wonders and signs among the people, while filled with grace and power.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of traveling to hostile territory and spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ, while performing signs and great works of power, so that even magicians are astonished and baptized.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of quenching physical fire

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of identifying previous works of powers by God for the purpose of showing His great salvation throughout history.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of overcoming the power of riches by the power of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of considering whether a person is strong enough spiritually to overcome a stronger enemy force.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of overcoming evil powers by the salvation, glory and power which belong to God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping people find and use the ability of the power of God working within them to come to faith and to help believers use and increase their faith so that they stop doing things displeasing to God and start using the power of God to please Him in more and greater ways**.**

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of raising the dead by the power of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of making plans by the power of God that no human will be able to overthrow.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ to people who think the word of the cross is foolishness, but to those who are being saved, it is the power of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of doing all things and triumphing over all persecutions, struggles and afflictions by the power of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of providing convincing proofs from the Scriptures that God has the power to raise the dead.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of doing great things for people by the power of the Mighty One.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping believers realize how to use the power of God to do all things in God's power according to God's purpose, recognizing that we are not able to do anything on our own.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of using God's power in both words and deeds.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of speaking with God's knowledge and wisdom so that no one is able to answer a word.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a life of overcoming unbelieving siblings, relatives and a place known for its evil practices by the power of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of demonstrating authority and power over unclean spirits, in the Name of Jesus, to confirm the message of salvation.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of doing many powers in many places, but his hometown and his relatives and his household will take offense at him and the wisdom and powers displayed through him, so that they dishonor him and limit the works of of powers in that place because of their unbelief; even so the believer continues on fulfilling the will of God for a lifetime.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of healing people (see The Spiritual Gifts of Healings). The difference between The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers includes a variety of powerful deeds and words (which may include healings, but includes much more), whereas The Spiritual Gifts of Healings primarily focuses upon healings by the power of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of plundering the house of the devil in the name of Jesus. This ministry may include casting out demons, breaking the power of the devil in a person's life, and exercising power over the devil in the name of Jesus.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of healing people who know the Lord is willing and able to heal them.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of power going forth from the believer because someone seeking healing has touched a garment worn by the believer.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of power over physical illness, such as a bleeding problem for many years.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of power over physical disfigurement, such as the inability to stand upright for many years.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of power to find enough food to feed a hungry crowd and satisfy them with food.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of performing works of powers in the name of Jesus, and will have no power to speak evil of Jesus soon afterwards.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of strengthening believers, whom God considers faithful, so that God may put that believer into service, even though that believer was previously a blasphemer and a persecutor and violent aggressor.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of speaking for Jesus with such utterance and power that the believer's opponents will not be able to resist or refute.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of proving that Christ is not weak in believers, but powerful in them, even when their lives demonstrate problems with immorality, factions, drunkenness, and other sinful practices.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry to believers facing temptation by strengthening them with the knowledge that Jesus has suffered temptation, and so Jesus is able to aid those who are tempted.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of strengthening believers with the knowledge that nothing is able to separate them from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of strengthening believers that all things are possible in God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of strengthening believers with the knowledge that God alone has the ability to save people.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of demonstrating that all things are possible with God, even casting out demons in the Name of Jesus.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of proclaiming the power of the sacred writings which gives the wisdom leading to salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of implanting the word, which is able to save souls, so that believers put aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of showing that the kingdom of God grows so that the birds of the air may nest under its shade.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of speaking to rulers and demonstrating that they must be born again. Through the powerful salvation of Jesus Christ, and Him alone, those rulers may be born again, even when they are old.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of ascertaining facts in order to decide disputes.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of using legal rights to defend against false charges

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of showing that accusers cannot prove their charges.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of calming down disorderly gatherings, particularly those riots which break the civil law.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of presenting spiritual truths in the context of a legal defense that gives glory to God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry, based on the wisdom of God, of deciding disputes between his brethren, without going to any civil court.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping churches keep the word of Jesus, and not deny His name in what they do and say.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping churches walk through open doors, which no one can shut.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of uniting the body of Christ so that each member understands their need for every other member in the body of Christ.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry, as an Elder, of holding fast the faithful word which is in accordance with teaching, so that he will be able to exhort and to refute those who contradict.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of overcoming powerful men by the powers of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping the powerful believers to bear with the weakness of those without strength and not just please themselves.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of urging believers to examine their calling, so that they recognize that not many mighty were called.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping believers rejoice when they are strong in the Lord Jesus, and praying that the powers of God may make them complete.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may be part of a ministry team that avoids giving any cause of offense which might discredit the ministry, but commends itself in power.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may be impelled by the Holy Spirit to move to various geographical areas, where God will use that person to perform great ministry in the power of the Holy Spirit.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of demonstrating the power of God so that opportunities arise to preach Jesus to religious leaders who deny Him.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry (often as part of a ministry team) of giving powerful testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, with great grace upon all members of the ministry team.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of doing good works of powers, and healing (see The Spiritual Gifts of Healing) all who are oppressed by the devil.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers, clothed with power from the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation, may have a ministry of being a witness of Jesus with power

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of overcoming the power of sin, which is found particularly in the law.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of manifesting the power of God to overcome defilement.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of works of powers to bring entire cities to repentance leading to salvation.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of teaching and praying that the God of Hope will fill other believers with all joy and peace in believing, so that they will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ in demonstration of Spirit and power, so that the faith of the converts would rest on the power of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of preaching not in persuasive words of wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, so that the faith of the converts may rest not on the wisdom of men, but on the power of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of bringing the Gospel not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit with full conviction.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of implanting the word, which, when received in humility, is able to save your souls, so that you are able to put aside all filthiness and all that remains of wickedness.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ by demonstrating that Law has no power to save anyone.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ, supported by a display of extraordinary miracles, with handkerchiefs and aprons bringing healing and casting out demons.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of doing works of powers in the Holy Spirit with new believers, so that they will understand that their salvation did not come through the Law, but rather through hearing with faith.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of building up the saints and reminding them that they have an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of establishing believers according to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the preaching of Jesus Christ.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of proclaiming Christ crucified to both Jews and Gentiles, knowing and demonstrating that the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of joining faith with works that evidence salvation.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of believing that God is able to perform His promises, even when it appears to be physically impossible.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of asking unbelievers how they can believe, when they receive glory from men and do not seek glory from the one and only God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of equipping people to find and use the ability of the power of God working within them to come to faith and to help believers use and increase their faith so that they stop doing things displeasing to God and start using the power of God to please Him in more and greater ways.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of provoking people to ask: "Are we able to know about Jesus and His resurrection?" and then preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ to them.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of keeping believers from stumbling, particularly when they contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of performing undeniable works of healing as a testimony to religious tribunals.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of being unable to stop speaking about Jesus Christ, even after warnings from government or religious officials.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of standing against opposition, while proclaiming that the ministry team is unable to do anything against the truth.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of praying for believers that the eyes of their hearts may be enlightened so that they may know the surpassing greatness of the power toward us that believe, according to the strength of His might, and acting upon that knowledge.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of praying that believers would be strengthened with power through the Holy Spirit in the inner man, so that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of praying that believers would see Jesus seated at the right hand of God in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the age to come and acting upon that knowledge.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of praying that God would do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of praying for believers to be filled with the knowledge of God's will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of praying for believers to walk in a manner worthy of the Lord.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of praying for believers to be strengthened with all power, according to the glorious might of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of prayerful encouragement of other believers by both praying for those believers and then sharing your prayer with them, just like Paul did in discipling the saints at Colossae.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of praying that God would count believers worthy of their calling, and sharing those prayers with those believers.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of praying that God would fulfill the believers' work of faith with power, and sharing those prayers with those believers.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of making disciples and praying for the work of faith with power, and sharing those prayers with those believers.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of bearing much fruit for God because they abide in Jesus.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of shining so brightly for God that the believer cannot be hidden.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of living and dealing with possessions based upon the knowledge that the believer has no power to take anything out of this world.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of living with knowledge that the believer will be resurrected and unable to die once they are resurrected.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of speaking powerful words at just the right time, according to the ability of the believer to receive the message.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of carefully limiting the things said to other believers, because they are not able to bear them now.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of giving milk to some believers, because they are unable to eat solid food.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of living an exemplary life as a disciple of Jesus.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of hating family members by following Jesus without family entanglements.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of carrying his own cross daily while following Jesus as a disciple.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of giving up all his own possessions to follow Jesus.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of living in demonstration of overcoming sin, because he is born of God. The believer will still sin some, but his life will demonstrate extraordinary power in overcoming sin.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of working so long as it is day.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of demonstrating that we are secure in Christ, and no one can snatch us out of the Father's hand.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of Able Now, Drink Later, meaning that some believers with the Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers may have the ministry of explaining the importance of exercising abilities later, in keeping with God's timing.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of demonstrating and explaining the timing of God (e.g., not able now, but later) to other believers.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of : (a) giving thanks to God for all the joy on account of fellow believers living for Jesus Christ; and (b) letting those believers know how you thank God for the joy they give to the ministry team.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping people face death as they experience various trials.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of physical sacrifice for the kingdom of God, and helping people understand and accept such sacrifice.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of explaining that Jesus is the only way to the Father.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping the poor by doing good to them.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of using the valuable things entrusted to him by Jesus according to his full ability.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of giving according to their ability and beyond their ability.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping women conceive, even beyond their natural childbearing years.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of persuading people that even though they trust their family lineage, they must turn away from such trust to believing only Jesus Christ can and will save them by faith alone.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of removing logs from the eyes of people.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping slaves find freedom, as they are able.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping people escape from temptations.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping people wear the armor of God, so that they will stand firm against the schemes of the devil.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping people overcome the judgments of others, by recognizing that the Lord is able to make them stand.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of getting people not to stand in the way of God as He pursues His plans.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping prophets prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping people read the Scriptures, so that they may gain insight into the mystery of Christ.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of showing that with God, all things are possible, so that even a rich man may enter the kingdom of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping believers to experience the grace of God in everything, and particularly their finances, so that they may have an abundance for every good deed

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of using physical goods for Godly purposes, even though the money may have been spent to help the poor.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping believers bridle the tongue and the body to glorify God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of healing diseases.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of safeguarding the elect from being misled by false prophets showing great signs and wonders.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping the elect to accept the will of God for them, even when it may be difficult to endure.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping people fulfill their plans, as possible.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping people find peace, as far it depends upon the believer.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of loving people so much, that they are willing to make physical sacrifices for them.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of making the great power of God known, and at times demonstrating the wrath of God.

♦ Works-of–Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of using the power of God to strengthen people burdened beyond their strength and near despair.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of demonstrating that you can be strong, even when you are weak because of suffering, and so find spiritual contentment.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of making the weak strong in faith.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of boasting in personal weaknesses so that the power of Christ may dwell in that believer.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry characterized by a nursing-mother's gentleness.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of sympathizing with weakness, because Jesus was tempted as we are, yet remained without sin.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of dealing with the weak and misguided, by the power of God working within them to bring them to faith in Jesus Christ and build up that faith.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of exposing men who hold to a form of Godliness in their lives, although they have denied its power.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of helping people through times of suffering for the gospel, according to the power of God

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of fearlessness, so that they do not fear anyone but God, because only God has the power to destroy both soul and body in hell.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of healing people, but then being careful immediately to disclaim that their own power or piety had anything to do with the healing; instead they focus their message upon the powerful salvation offered only through the risen Savior, Jesus Christ.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry, while the believer is suffering afflictions, of enabling other believers in the midst of afflictions to share the comfort of God with other believers.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of commending people to God and the word of His grace, which is able to build them up and given them an inheritance among those who are sanctified.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry based upon the power of God, sufficient to confront false teachers and finding out about their power, because the kingdom of God does not consist in words, but in power.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of confronting the arrogant who do not mourn over immorality in the assembly, so that the immoral one may be delivered to satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of healing people in front of religious people, and show everyone the hypocrisy of the religious leaders who oppose Jesus.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of speaking foreign languages, without learning them.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of producing good fruit in believers.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of using the tongue to produce good fruit.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of admonishing other believers, while accepting them just as Jesus accepted us to the glory of God.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of taking up the full armor of God, so that the believer will be able to resist in the evil day.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of taking up the shield of faith, so that the shield shall extinguish the flaming arrows of the evil one.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of casting out demons, even those who require prayer.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of using weapons of warfare not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of the ability to command unclean spirits and they obey.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of exercising authority over all the power of the enemy.

♦ Works-of-Powers gifted believers may have a ministry of speaking about the kingdom of God coming in power, based upon the revelations provided in the New Testament.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers propels many ministries producing a wide variety of effects. Those powers edify the body of Christ and demonstrate the power of God in evangelism, discipleship, leadership, and many other activities within the church. The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers also ministers to unbelievers and demonstrates the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and His great love for all people. The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers enables believers to do marvelous works for God, and to produce results only God can produce. With God, nothing is impossible.

11

The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits

Class of Gift: Serving

1 Corinthians 12:10, Page 1796

"and to another judgment of spirits"

Section One

Introduction

1.1 Every Born-Again Christian Has at Least One Spiritual Gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, page 1796). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of ministries ("διακονιῶν"), with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Therefore, God uses believers with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits to produce a variety of ministries and a variety of effects.

1.2 Meaning of the Term "Judgment of Spirits." The phrase used to describe The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits concerns a special spiritual ability to recognize spirits. The New American Standard Bible translates the term "judgment" ("διακρίσεις") as “distinguishing.” Because of the term’s use elsewhere, I prefer the term “judgment.” A few examples will help in understanding its use in the New Testament.

Section Two

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits:

Identifying Evil Spirits

2.1 The Spirit of Satan. After Jesus explained to His disciples that He must suffer, die and be raised up on the third day, Peter rebuked Jesus and declared those things would never happen (Matthew 16:21-22, Page 1530). Jesus then turned to Peter and said: "Get behind Me satan" (Matthew 16:23, page 1530). Jesus further explained that Peter had set his mind on man's interests, not God's. Jesus displayed His ability as God to distinguish the spirit of satan at work in Peter. A believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Judgment of Spirits may be able to identify the spirit of satan or other evil spirits at work in believers and other people, causing them to set their minds upon the interests of man, and not the interests of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of identifying the spirit of the devil or other evil spirits at work in believers and other people, causing them to set their minds upon the interests of man, and not on the interests of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

2.2 The Spirit of Python. As Paul walked about Philippi, a slave-girl followed after him. She kept crying out: "These men are bond-servants of the Most High God, who are proclaiming to you the way of salvation" (Acts 16:17, page 1732). Even though the slave-girl said nice things, Paul identified the spirit within her as an evil spirit, "the spirit of divination." Literally, the term was "spirit of python" ("πνεῦμα πύθωνα"). The Holy Spirit enabled Paul to discern that the spirit inside the slave-girl was evil. The believer with the Spiritual Gift of Judgments of Spirits may be able to identify the true spirit behind very nice words spoken about people.

Identification. If you have a ministry of identifing the true spirit of very nice words spoken about people, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Three

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits:

Removing Misgivings

3.1 Misgivings. In Acts 11:12, page 1721, Peter related his experience when the Holy Spirit fell upon him and removed all misgivings ("διακρίναντα") about going with messengers from Caesarea. The term "misgivings" relates to other uses of the root term to indicate doubts. In this case, the Holy Spirit specifically removed doubts about going with the messengers. At times in our lives, we have serious misgivings about doing certain things. A saint with The Spiritual Gift of The Judgment of Spirits may help us identify if our "misgivings" are from the Holy Spirit or not.

Identification. If you a ministry of determining whether “misgivings” are from the Holy Spirit or not, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Four

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits:

Passing Judgment

4.1 The Gift of Prophecy. Paul directed the proper of use of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. He explained that during the public meeting of the church, only two or three prophets were to prophesy at one meeting, and others would pass judgment. If a revelation is made to another, then the first must remain seated.

4.2 The Passing of Judgment. Apparently, the other prophets were to pass judgment ("διακρινέτωσαν") upon the person offering a revelation (1 Corinthians 14:29, page 1800). At all times the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets. The prophets never were to lose control over themselves, so that they fell into uncontrolled, ecstatic utterance. Instead, at all times, they were to remain in control of their own speaking. The other

prophets present may be the ones passing judgment, but a male believer here possessing The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits would know whether the prophecy came from God or elsewhere. Only a male with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits would be proper in this context because females should remain silent and are not permitted to speak at church meetings with males present (1 Corinthians 14:34, page 1800). Likewise, the female believers should refrain from exercising authority over male believers, because of the order of creation (males first) and the spiritual deception of Eve (1 Timothy 2:12-14, page 1856).

Identification. If you have a ministry of identifying the spirit behind a prophecy offered to other believers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Five

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits:

Resolving Doubts

5.1 Discern and Doubt. Doubts cause problems for all believers. The root term for "doubt" and the term for "discern" both have the same root word. Although I understand the limits, I posit that The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits has an aspect to it covering "doubt." Therefore, because the root words are the same, we should consider a few verses about doubting.

5.2 Doubt and Prayer. Jesus instructed His disciples about prayer. He focused upon doubts inhibiting prayer. Jesus told His disciples that whatever they believe will happen "without doubts" ("μὴ διακριθῇ"), it will be granted to him (Mark 11:23, page 1581; Matthew 21:21, page 1538). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may also be able to distinguish doubt from faith. Some people may speak from doubts that oppose faith, and the use of The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may help in separating doubt from faith.

Identification. If you have a ministry of separating doubts from faith in what people do and say, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

5.3 Doubt and Food. Paul taught that believers should avoid eating things that cause other believers to stumble (Romans 14:21, page 1778). We must each eat with our own convictions before God (Romans 14:22, page 1778). If people doubt when eating certain things, then they are condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith, and whatever is not from faith is sin (Romans 14:23, page 1778). The saint with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may distinguish between faith and doubt in a believer, particularly when it comes to food and drink.

Identification. If you have a ministry of judgment between faith and doubt in matters of diet, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

5.4 Doubt and Wisdom. James commanded all believers to seek wisdom from God, but they must ask in faith without doubting ("διακρινόμενος")(James 1:5-6, page 1887). The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may be able to discern faith from doubt in the spirits of those believers seeking wisdom.

Identification. If you have a ministry of discerning faith from doubt in the spirit of those people seeking wisdom, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

5.5 Mercy and Doubting. Jude linked doubting ("διακρινομένους") with mercy (Jude 1:22, page 1913). Jude wrote to the called, beloved in God the Father and kept for Jesus Christ (Jude 1:1, page 1912). He commanded believers to have mercy on people who are doubting. Mercy refers to withholding punishment, and mercy produces a spiritual response in a person watching another person suffer. In this case, mercy refers to lovingly helping the person suffering affliction. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may be able to discern a person suffering affliction, and pour out mercy upon them as they doubt.

Identification. If you have a ministry of discerning that a person is suffering from affliction, and you pour out mercy upon them as they doubt, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Six

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits: Appraisal

6.1 Judging. The New Testament provides very specific information about judging people, including ourselves. One aspect of judging concerns the same root word "διακρίνειν" (to distinguish or discern) for judgment and judging.

6.2 Discerning Arrogance. Paul exposed the sin of one becoming arrogant against another (1 Corinthians 4:6, page 1786). Paul explained that if you think you are superior ("διακρίνει"), then you must remember that you are overlooking the fact that all that you have, you have received (1 Corinthians 4:7, page 1786).

Identification. If you have a ministry of understanding that all that you have, you received, then you may be able to help others avoid thinking they are superior, and you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Seven

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits: Discerning the Times

7.1 Discerning. Jesus answered the Pharisees and Sadducees seeking a sign from Him. He reminded them that they were able "to discern" ("διακρίνειν") the appearance of the sky regarding the likelihood of storms, but they could not discern the signs of the times (Matthew 16:3, page 1529). The believer with the Spiritual Gift of Judgment Spirits may be able to discern the spirits of the people failing to understand the spiritual signs in front of them.

Identification. If you have a ministry of discerning the spirit of the people failing to understand the spiritual signs in front of them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Eight

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits:

Rebuke without Railing Judgment

8.1 Rebuke. Michael the Archangel did not possess The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits, but he provided an excellent example of delivering a rebuke in the name of the Lord, without a railing judgment ("διακρινόμενος") (Jude 1:9, page 1912). While disputing with the devil about the body of Moses, Michael did not dare pronounce against the devil a railing judgment. Michael recognized the power and authority of satan. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may be able to deliver a rebuke against a powerful being in the name of the Lord without falling into a railing judgment.

Identification. If you have a ministry delivering rebukes against powerful beings in the name of the Lord without falling into railing judgments, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Nine

The Ministry Judgment of Spirits:

The Gall of Bitterness

9.1 Gall of Bitterness. Paul encountered a man named Simon who thought he could become like the apostles so that when he laid his hands on a believer, they would receive the Holy Spirit. After Simon attempted to buy that gift, Paul told Simon to repent, because Simon was in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity (Acts 8:22-23, Pages 1714-1715). The Holy Spirit again helped Paul to discern the spirit at work in the life of Simon.

Identification. If you have a ministry of discerning that a person needs to repent, because that person is in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity, particularly because that person seeks to acquire spiritual power by buying it, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Ten

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits: Judgment

10.1 Judge the Body. In 1 Corinthians, Paul confronted the believers about their practices at the Lord's Supper. When they gathered to remember the death, burial, resurrection and return of the Lord Jesus Christ, they disgraced themselves and their testimony by their actions of getting drunk and acting selfishly (1 Corinthians 11:17-22, page 1795). Furthermore, Paul commanded them to judge ("διακρίνων") the body rightly (1 Corinthians 11:29, page 1796). He meant that each believer must focus upon the body of Christ, crucified for us, and discern in ourselves any sin causing turbulence in our relationship with Jesus. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may have the ability to discern disturbances caused by unconfessed sins in the lives of believers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of discerning sin that causes people to incur problems because they did not judge the body rightly before partaking of the Lord's Supper, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Eleven

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits: Acceptance

11.1 Weak in Faith. In Romans, Paul explained how more mature believers must accept the weak in faith. The strong must accept the weak, without passing judgment ("διακρίσεις") on the opinions of the weak. Doctrine always makes a difference, but opinions may be personal. The term "opinion" ("διαλογισμῶν") means in this context the personal decision to eat vegetables or not or to observe one day above another (Romans 14:1-9, page 1777). That personal decision should not lead others to view you with contempt (Romans 14:3, page 1777). We are not free to have our own doctrine, but we may have our own opinions. The strong must be careful to distinguish the doctrine

from the opinion. In all cases, we should not sit in judgment upon other believers for their opinions, and always avoid regarding them with contempt. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may have the ability: (a) to distinguish opinion from doctrine; and (b) to accept the weak without passing judgment upon their opinions; and (c) avoid regarding others with contempt for their opinions.

Identification. If you have a ministry characterized by the ability: (a) to distinguish opinion from doctrine; and (b) to accept the weak without passing judgment upon their opinions; and (c) to avoid regarding others with contempt for their opinions, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Twelve

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits:

Christian Court

12.1 Christian Court. In 1 Corinthians 6, Paul explained to the Corinthians that believers should not take believers to secular court. Instead, they should resolve their differences in the church. Specifically, the two opposing parties should find a wise man who will be able to decide ("διακρῖναι") between them (1 Corinthians 6:5, pages 1787-1788). In this case, the wise man can use his spiritual ability to make a judgment between the two opposing parties. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may be able to decide between the competing people and competing spirits opposing each other in the Christian court.

Identification. If you have a ministry to discern between competing people and competing spirits, so that you may render a wise decision between opposing parties, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Section Thirteen

The Ministry of Judgment of Spirits: Discerning Good and Evil

13.1 Good and Evil. As a normal part of growing up in Christ to a mature believer, God must train our senses to discern good and evil. Some people were born again years ago, but never matured in Christ, because they have become dull of hearing, and require teaching of the elementary principles of the oracles of God (Hebrews 5:12, page 1874). Those immature believers should have become teachers of the truth, and not remained ignorant and immature. Immature believers often cannot tell the difference between sound doctrine and the doctrine of demons. Immature believers often cannot discern that certain teachers of the Bible are not teaching the Bible, but rather teaching the doctrine of demons. Immature believers need milk and not solid food (Hebrews 5:12, page 1874). Only mature believers accustomed to solid food have by repeated practice had their senses trained to discern good and evil (Hebrews 5:14, page 1874). Only the regular diet of solid food (doctrine from the word of God beyond the elementary principles of the oracles of God) can help the believer truly discern good and evil. The believer with the Spiritual Gift of Judgment Spirits may be able to distinguish good and evil, and the spirits behind the teaching.

Identification. If you have a ministry of discerning between good and evil, and you can distinguish the spirits behind the teaching, and you enjoy a spiritual diet of solid food, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

Hallmarks of The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits

Judgment of Spirits: Understanding the Spiritual Gifts. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits has the ability to discern the spirits at work in people. As above, the ministry of the believer

with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits may take many forms, and produce a variety of effects. I have listed a few of those hallmarks below.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits and then see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to identify the activity of satan causing a believer to focus upon the interests of man and not the interests of God.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to discern the true spirit behind very nice words spoken about people.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to determine whether "misgivings" are from the Holy Spirt or not.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to identify the spirit behind a prophecy offered to other believers.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to separate doubts from faith in what people do and say.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to distinguish between faith and doubt in matters of diet.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to distinguish faith from doubt in the spirit of those people seeking wisdom.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to discern that a person is suffering from affliction, and pour out mercy upon them as they doubt.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to understand that all that you have, you received, and you help others avoid thinking they are superior.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to discern the spirit of the people failing to understand the spiritual signs in front of them.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to deliver a rebuke against a powerful being in the name of the Lord without falling into a railing judgment.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to discern that a person needs to repent, because that person is in the gall of bitterness and in the bondage of iniquity, particularly because the person seeks to acquire spiritual power by buying it.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able: (a) to distinguish opinion from doctrine; and (b) to accept the weak without passing judgment upon their opinions; and (c) to avoid regarding others with contempt for their opinions.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may be able to discern between competing people and competing spirits, so that you may render a wise decision between opposing parties.

♦ Judgment-of-spirits gifted believers may enjoy a diet of solid spiritual food, so that they are able to discern between good and evil, and they can distinguish the spirits behind the teaching.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits includes a variety of spiritual abilities all dealing with the ability to discern the spirits behind or at work in the actions of people and the teachings they promote. It also includes the ability to identify the spirits at work in people, and to make wise decisions between competing parties in a dispute. At times, it helps others avoid drowning in bitterness. The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits also includes the ability to discern the spirits behind actions and teachings, and to distinguish good from evil.

12

The Spiritual Gift of Deacony

Class of Gift: Serving

Romans 12:7, Page 1775

"if deacony, in the deacony"

Section One

Introduction

1.1 Every Born-Again Christian Has at Least One Spiritual Gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11). **Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of deaconies ("διακονιῶν"), with a variety of spiritual workings ("ἐνεργημάτων") (1 Corinthians 12:4-7).** Therefore, if you have the Spiritual Gift of Deacony, that single gift may result in a variety of deaconies, producing a variety of workings. Furthermore, if you have the Spiritual Gift of Deacony, your ministry may look very different from another believer with the same gift of deacony. Your ministries of the same spiritual gift may produce very different workings. So, one gift may result in different ministries, and each ministry may produce very different spiritual workings. Every local assembly should be known for its deacony ("διακονίαν"), just as the Church at Thyatira was commended by God for the deacony ("τὴν διακονίαν") there (Revelation 2:19).

1.2 Meaning of the Term "Deacony". The term used to describe the gift of deacony ("διακονίαν") in Romans 12:7 literally means acts of deacons ("διακονιῶν"). Deacons were a special class of people in the New Testament. Some people even held the Office of Deacony in the New Testament, but not every deacon held the Office of Deacon. I coined the term "deacony" to

highlight the difference in words used to describe a particular type spiritual service in the New Testament. The word "servant" has been misused to translate many different New Testament terms, losing the distinctions among words in the original autographs of the New Testament. In Romans 12:7, Paul did not define this term deacony ("διακονίαν"). So, I conclude that Paul recognized that his readers would be familiar with the normal usage of this term "deacony," preserved for us in Scripture, and the other uses would help us understand this Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

1.3 The Office of Deacon and The Spiritual Gift of Deacony. Strange as it may seem, not every person holding the Office of Deacon must posses the Spiritual Gift of Deacon. The Office of Deacon describes the service they perform, not the spiritual gift they possess. Deacons often have an oversight ministry, like the seven in Acts 6 concerning the oversight of feeding the widows. The apostles commanded the brethren to oversee carefully men who would be full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom. Having found them by their careful inspection, we will appoint ("καταστήσομεν") (referring to the apostles appointing the seven men) appoint them over these needs ("ἐπὶ τῆς χρείας ταύτης"). Therefore, the deacony of the seven men included being in charge of the needs of widows and others needing food service daily. Becuase they seven were appointed by the apostles to oversee those needs, they had to be full o fhte spirit and wisdom, because their deacony required both. Those seven males were not required to serve the tables, but rather to oversee the needs of the saints for food. Remember, too, that the apostles had their own sphere of service ("διακονίᾳ"), ministering the word. Therefore, we must be careful to distinguish Office of Deacon from the Spiritual Gift of Deacon. Men could be appointed to the Office of Deacon without possessing the qualification of the Spiritual Gift of Deacon. Likewise, The Spiritual Gift of Pastor does not equate to the Office of Overseer just as the Office of Deacon does not equate to The Spiritual Gift of Deacon. For example, some deacons may have the spiritual gift of evangelism (consider Philip the Evangelist; Acts 6:3; Acts 8:4-6; Acts 21:8). Consider also Judas Iscariot, the betrayer of Jesus. Judas received his share in the ministry ("διακονίας"), but was never born-again (Acts 1:17; John 17:12). In fact, Judas Iscariot also held the Office of Apostle ("ἀποστολῆς"), and participated in the deacony ("διακονίας") of the apostles with Christ (Acts 1:25), but was never born-again. People should not confuse the Office of Deacon with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony. In Philippians 1:1, Paul described the Office of Deacony ("διακόνοις") alongside the Office of Overseer ("ἐπισκόποις"). As a spiritual gift, God

bestows The Spiritual Gift of Deaconcy upon some saints, but not all saints (1 Corinthians 12:11). Although saints may desire the greater spiritual gifts to be present in their local assemblies (1 Corinthians 12:31), God Himself always bestows the spiritual gifts according to His will (1 Corinthians 12:11). In contrast, an unbeliever may hold the Office of Deacon, because humans appoint deacons, and they may be deceived (Acts 6:5; 1 Timothy 3:1, 8-13– the parallelism between 3:1 and 3:8 indicates that both "ἐπισκοπῆς" and "Διακόνους" refer to office and people holding those offices must meet the qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 3:8-13).

1.4 Deacony and the Spiritual Gifts. All believers must know and use their spiritual gifts. All believers, not just the pastors and church leaders, perform the work of deacony ("διακονίας"). That "deacony" must continue until all the saints attain the unity of the faith and achieve spiritual maturity. That "deacony" also protects believers from being tossed about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, and the craftiness of deceitful scheming (Ephesians 4:14). While all believers must perform the work of deacony, only some believers have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony, bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon some, but not all, believers as gift of grace which works according to His power (Ephesians 3:7).

1.5 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Deacon". The Greek term ("διακονίαν") translated as deacony in Romans 12:7 has diverse applications in the New Testament. As you read through these varying uses of the term "deacony" and related words, please keep in mind that I interpret these passages below as examples, on the one hand, of spiritual activities all believers will do at times; but, on the other hand, the saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony in the forms described below will have a special gift from God to edify believers and build up unity in their deaconies. Let us explore some of those uses to gain insight into the different ways God gifts people to serve in His Name and in His ministry to the Body of Christ. We will see below that the Spiritual Gift of Deacony involves different major areas of ministry. We will look at them one at a time.

Section Two

The Foundations of Deacony

2.1 Deacony: Basic Meaning. Deacony has a broad range of meaning in the New Testament. It includes a monetary gift, an office, a lifestyle, an attitude, the work of a person who humbles himself to exalt God, and the acts of a person who follows the commands of others.

2.2 Jesus: The Perfect Example of Deacony. Jesus lived as a perfect example of so many spiritual gifts. He was completely and continually filled with the Holy Spirit and possessed all the spiritual gifts. He used those spiritual gifts perfectly.

2.2.1 Jesus Deacony: Deacons Me, Follows Me. Jesus provided a very short and powerful summary of true deacony to God: "If anyone deacons ("διακονῇ") Me, he must follow Me; and where I am, there My deacon ("ὁ διάκονος ὁ ἐμὸς") will be also; if anyone deacons to Me ("ἐμοὶ διακονῇ"), the Father will honor him" (John 12:26).

Identification. If you have a deacony of following Jesus and serving Him, and being with Jesus at all times, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.2.2 Jesus Deacony: Deacon, Not Be Deaconed. As the disciples argued among themselves regarding greatness, Jesus explained to them that greatness among believers comes from being the deacon of believers. Jesus then declared that He came to deacon ("διακονῆσαι"), and not be deaconed ("διακονηθῆνα"). Deacony for Jesus included giving His soul a ransom for many (Matthew 20:28; see also Mark 10:45). Jesus deaconed everyone. Jesus became a deacon (" διάκονον") to the circumcision on behalf of the truth of God so that both Jews and Gentiles may glorify God for His mercy (Romans 15:8).

Identification. If you have a deacony of serving other believers in the Name of Jesus Christ, and giving your life for them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.2.3 <u>Jesus: The Deacon of All</u>. Jesus commanded His disciples to distinguish themselves from the rulers of the Gentiles in two important ways. His disciples would: (1) never lord themselves over others; and (2) never exercise authority over them. Whoever wishes to be greatest among His disciples must be deacon ("διάκονος") of all (Matthew 20:26; Matthew 23:11; Mark 9:35; Mark 10:43-45). Jesus demonstrated perfect deacony in deaconing the disciples at the Last Supper. He told his disciples that the leader ("ὁ ἡγούμενος") must become like the deaconer ("ὁ διακονῶν"--notice the definite article with the participle) (Luke 22:26). Jesus described Himself as the Deaconer ("ὁ διακονῶν") (Luke 22:27).

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a deacony of not lording yourself over others, and humbly serving others, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.2.4 <u>Jesus Deacony: Future</u>. When Jesus comes back to earth, He will find some ssaints on alert, expecting His return. At that time, Jesus will gird Himself and will deacon ("διακονήσει") them, just as He did before He left (Luke 12:37; John 13:5-20).

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a deacony of serving other believers, while looking for Jesus to come and serve believers upon His return to earth, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.3 <u>The Faithful Requirement of Deacony</u>. Paul explained that he thanked Christ Jesus the Lord, Who strengthened ("ἐνδυναμώσαντί") Paul, because the Lord considered Paul faithful ("πιστόν"), putting Paul into deacony ("διακονίαν") for Jesus (1 Timothy 1:12). Therefore, we see that Jesus took a violent aggressor, blasphemer and persecutor of the Lord Jesus and put him into deacony. God considered Paul faithful and put Paul into deacony. God has called every believer into deacony to use that saint's spiritual gift(s) to the glory of God. We must all be found faithful to God, so that God will use each of us in a deacony tailored precisely to make the most effective use of our spiritual gift(s) for the Lord Jesus. We deacon by faith. See also Tychicus, the faithful deacon ("διάκονος") (Ephesians 6:21). Because the term "deacon" ("διάκονος") was applied to Tychicus, the question arises

about whether Tychicus held the office of deacon. See New Testament Offices.

Identification. If you have a deacony of thanking God that He put you into deacony of God, notwithstanding your evil past, and if you have a deacony for Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.4 Stewardship. Paul considered himself a deacon ("διάκονος") of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the church, according to "the stewardship from God bestowed" on him for the benefit of believers (Colossians 1:25). Paul served as a deacon of the mystery of Christ in the Gentiles, the hope of glory (Colossians 1:25-27). The stewardship also included proclaiming Christ, and admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that Paul may present the believers complete in Christ (Colossians 1:28). Likewise, Paul considered Timothy a good deacon ("διάκονος") of Christ Jesus, if Timothy would point out the teachings of Christ to the brethren, and so nourish himself (1 Timothy 4:6). Because each believer has received a special gift, each believer must employ it in deaconing ("διακονοῦντες") one another as a good steward of God (1 Peter 4:10).

Identification. If you have a deacony of deaconing God as a good steward of the New Testament Mysteries, and you point out the teachings of Christ and nourish yourself upon them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.5 The Receipt and Fulfillment of Deacony. The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony has received a deacony, but the saint must take care to trust the Lord to bring such deacony to completion, by consistent work and labor, often with others.

Identification. If you have a deacony and take care to trust the Lord to bring your deaoncy to completion, by consistent work and labor, often with other saints, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.5.1 <u>Archippus</u>. Archippus serves as an excellent example of two aspects of the deacony ("διακονίαν") (Colossians 4:17). Paul commanded Archippus to "Take heed" ("Βλέπε") to the deacony ("διακονίαν") which you have "received in the Lord" ("παρέλαβες ἐν κυρίῳ"), to fulfill it ("πληροῖς"). The Lord bestows a deacony upon a saint as a free gift. Yet, the Lord commands us to be sure that we fulfill that deacony and bring it to fullness and completion.

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a deacony and take heed to the deacony which you have received in the Lord, to fulfill it; or you know the Lord bestowed your deacony upon you as a free gift, and you obey the Lord's command to bring your deacony to fullness and completion, they you may have the Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.5.2 <u>Timothy</u>. Consider also Paul's command to Timothy, the spiritual son of Paul. Paul commanded Timothy to be sober in all things, do the work of an evangelist, and fulfill ("πληροφόρησον") the deacony of you ("τὴν διακονίαν σου"). Timothy did not appear to have the Spiritual Gift of Evangelism, but he was commanded to do the work of an evangelist. Like Timothy, we may not have the Spiritual Gift of Evangelism, but we must consistently share our faith in Christ as part of our deacony. Like Archippus, Paul wanted Timothy to fulfill his deacony and not quit early, as Timothy faced hardships. We all need a Paul in our lives to encourage us to fulfill the deacony bestowed upon us. Part of that endurance to fulfill our deacony includes being sober ("νῆφε") and enduring hardships ("κακοπάθησον"), without being so discouraged we forsake our deacony for Christ, who endured all things for us.

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a deacony and are sober in all things, do the work of an evangelist, and fulfill your deacony, and endure haredship without being so discouraged you forsake your deacony, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.5.3 <u>Mark</u>. Paul and Barnabas took Mark with them on the first missionary journey. Mark abandoned the ministry team (Acts 13:13), and separated Paul and Barnabas for the second missionary journey. Barnabas wanted to take

Mark, but Paul declined to take Mark because he had abandoned them before (Acts 15:37-41). Well, much later in Paul's life, Mark again became useful to Paul. In his closing years, Paul declared that Mark was again useful to Paul for deacony ("διακονίαν") (2 Timothy 4:11). Often our deacony includes serving other believers in their deacony. We work together on one team, the church of Jesus Christ. Mark reminds us that we may stagger and fall at times in deacony, but God has a marvelous way of restoring believers to fulfill their deacony.

Identification. If you have deacony of joining a ministry team, abandoning that team, and then returning to the team, so that you have become useful again to the other believers on the original team, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.5.4 Angels. As a side note, angels serve as ministering ("λειτουργικὰ") spirits, sent out to deacon ("διακονίαν") to those who will inherit salvation (Hebrews 1:14). During the lifetime of believers on earth, God sends angels to render deacony to believers. The angels do not have the Spiritual Gift of Deacony, but they still perform deacony as sent from God. The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony should consider themselves as sent from God to use their spiritual gift to the glory of God. Just as good angels perform deacony for God to believers, so also deacons of him ("οἱ διάκονοι αὐτοῦ"), referring to the devil's deacons, disguise themselves as deacons of righteousness ("διάκονοι δικαιοσύνης") (2 Corinthians 11:15).

Identification. If you have a deacony of being sent by God to deacon to those who will inherit salvation, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.6 Strength for Deacony. Peter wrote that if anyone deacons ("διακονεῖ"--present active indicative), he must do so out of strength which God supplies ("ἐξ ἰσχύος ἧς χορηγεῖ ὁ θεός") (1 Peter 4:11). As stewards of the manifold grace of God, we employ our spiritual gifts to deacon fellow believers using the strength which only God supplies.

Identification. If you have a deacony with strength which only God supplies, and you serve God as a steward of the manifold grace of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.7 Never Discredited. Paul remained very concerned that the deacony ("ἡ διακονία") would never be discredited by the behavior of the participants (2 Corinthians 6:3). The saints were to live giving no cause for offense in anything, so that the deacony ("διακονία") would not be discredited. Paul himself had great concern that, although a sinner himself, he would never be a deacon of sin ("ἁμαρτίας διάκονος") (Galatians 2:17).

Identification. If you have a deacony to deacon as part of a ministry team, and have great concern that your behavior would never discredit the team or God, and that you would never be a minister of sin, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.8 The King and the Deacons. Kings spoke to their deacons ("διακόνοις") and the kings expected those deacons to carry out their commands immediately (Matthew 22:13). The link between masters and deacons concerns obedience and doing the will of the master.

Identification. If you have a deacony of carrying out the commands of King Jesus, and expect all servants of the King to act likewise, and you live as a servant of the King, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.9 God Works Through Our Deacony. Paul related all the things God had done among the Gentiles through the deacony ("τῆς διακονίας ") of him (Acts 21:19). Notice that God did the work and received all the glory. The deacony ("τῆς διακονίας") was accurately described as Paul's deacony, without taking anything away from the work of God. God gave Paul that deacony to do. We must be certain we never lose sight of the fact that God does the work of deacony.

Identification. If you have a ministry of consciously relating your entire deacony to service for God and by God, and God receives all the glory, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

2.10 Commending Ourselves. Deacons ("διάκονοι") of God must commend themselves as they suffer with endurance afflictions, hardships, distresses, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, sleeplessness, and hunger (2 Corinthians 6:4). They also commend themselves as deacons ("διάκονοι") of God in purity, knowledge, patience, kindness, in the Holy Spirit, genuine love, in the word of truth, in the power of God by the weapons of righteousness, and in other ways (2 Corinthians 6:4-10). Believers show themselves to be deacons ("διάκονοι") of God by the fruit they bear in all circumstances. Paul and the other apostles suffered tremendous hardships as deacons of Christ ("διάκονοι Χριστοῦ") (2 Corinthians 11:23).

Identification. If you have a deacony in which you commend yourself as you suffer with endurance afflictions, hardships, distresses, beatings, imprisonments, tumults, labors, sleeplessness, and hunger, and you also commend yourself as a deacon of God in purity, knowledge, patience, and kindness, doing all in the Holy Spirit, with genuine love, in the word of truth, in the power of God by the weapons of righteousness, and you bear fruit showing yourself to be a deacon of God, and you have sufferecd tremendous hardhsips as a deacon of Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Three

The Deacony of Meals

3.1 Meal Preparation.The Spiritual Gift of Deacony includes preparing meals for other people. Preparing meals may distract a person from listening to Jesus. Believers should always choose the good part of sitting with Jesus (John 10:38-42). In contrast, Mary's sister Martha was distracted with all her deacony ("διακονίαν"); while Mary sat at the feet of Jesus, Martha was busily preparing the food for the dinner guests. Although Martha worked hard, she was distracted from Jesus (Luke 10:40). Any time our deacony us from sitting and listening to Jesus, we may have a very big problem where our

deacony has caused us to lose touch with Jesus Himself. The saint with The Spiritual Gift of Deacony may be found sitting at the feet of Jesus, listening to Jesus, but ready to prepare a meal when Jesus requests the same.

Identification. If you have a deacony of preparing meals for other people, without being distracted away from Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

3.2 Others First. The Spiritual Gift of Deacony means that the deacon deacons others first, particularly before they eat and drink themselves. Jesus told the story of the slave coming in from the field (Luke 17:1-9, page 1634). He emphasized that the master will say to the slave that you serve ("διακόνει"") first, and only then may the slave eat and drink. The saint with The Spiritual Gift of Deacony often eats and drinks after using their spiritual gift to benefit others first.

Identification. If you have a ministry of fulfilling your obligations to your Master before you meet your own needs and desires, like eating and drinking only after you have ministered to your master by providing food and drink for your master, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

3.3 Selective Deacony. Not long after Jesus ascended to heaven, a complaint arose in Jerusalem that the widows of the Hellenistic Jews were being overlooked in the church's daily deacony ("διακονίᾳ") of food (Acts 6:1). The twelve apostles declared that it was not desirable ("ἀρεστόν") for them to neglect the word of God in order to deacon ("διακονεῖν") tables (Acts 6:2). The apostles issued a command to the brethren: you oversee ("ἐπισκέψασθε"–aorist middle imperative, second person plural) spiritual men regarding the daily deacony ("τῇ διακονίᾳ τῇ καθημερινῇ ") regarding food (Acts 6:3). The seven men were to oversee the deacony of feeding thousands, seeing to it that no one was overlooked. Meanwhile, the twelve apostles would devote themselves to the deacony of the word ("τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦ λόγου") (Acts 6:4). Meal preparation requires the faithful deacony of many people, each with their own deacony, just as the twelve apostles devoted themselves to their separate deacony of the word. The person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony will often labor under the direction of others, but perform their service to the glory of God, just like the others performing their deacony. The interplay here between the work of "overseeing" and

“deacony” provides insight into the relationship between the Office of Overseer and the Office of Deacon.

Identification. If you have a deacony of deaconing saints under the direction of other believers, and perform your deacony to the glory of God, just like others perform their deacony to the glory of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Four

The Deacony of the Word

4.1 The Deacony of Apostles. In the early church, the apostles devoted themselves to the deacony of the word ("τῇ διακονίᾳ τοῦ λόγου") (Acts 6:4). The apostles did not want to deacon tables ("διακονεῖν τραπέζαις") (Acts 6:2). The person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may be devoted to the deacony of the word through preaching in difficult circumstances and bearing witness for Christ before tribunals, with the prospect of persecution and death.

Identification. If you have a deacony of putting other believers in charge of other deaconies so that you may devote yourself to the deacony of God’s word and prayer, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

4.2 The Deacony of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Paul also described himself as a deacon ("διάκονος") of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:23). The person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may have an evangelism ministry, and possess the Spiritual Gift of Evangelism. In Paul's case, his deacony included spreading the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ all over the world.

Identification. If you have a deacony of evangelism, and spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Five

The Deacony of Money

5.1 Relief for the Poor. The church at Antioch commissioned Paul and Barnabas to take money from the saints at Antioch to the Jerusalem church to help relieve the effects of the famine. In proportion to their means, the saints sent a deacony ("διακονίαν") to Jerusalem (Acts 11:29). The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may have the special deacony of raising and delivering money for the work of Jesus Christ, particularly in providing money to relieve the struggles of the poor or famine afflicted.

Identification. If you have a deacony of raising and delivering money for the work of Jesus Christ, and particularly in providing money to relieve the struggles of the poor, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

5.2 The Mission of Money. Paul and Barnabas returned from Jerusalem having fulfilled their deacony ("διακονίαν") to deliver the contribution from the saints at Antioch (Acts 12:25). The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may have the special ability to perform missions for Jesus, delivering money or other things for the glory of God. Likewise, Macedonia and Achaia later in the deacony of Paul made a contribution for the relief of poverty in Jerusalem and sent it by Paul. Paul considered his part in raising and delivering that gift to be part of his deacony ("διακονία") for Jerusalem (Romans 15:31). As Paul went to Jerusalem, he considered such work "deaconing to the saints" ("διακονῶν τοῖς ἁγίοις") (Romans 15:25). Similarly, Paul wrote the church concerning the deacony for the saints ("Περὶ μὲν γὰρ τῆς διακονίας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους"), referring to collecting funds to support the saints (2 Corinthians 9:1). The churches of Macedonia were imploring the ministry team for the grace and fellowship of the deacony which is among the saints ("τὴν χάριν καὶ τὴν κοινωνίαν τῆς διακονίας τῆς εἰς τοὺς ἁγίους") (2 Corinthians 8:4). The person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may have the special ability to encourage believers in distant lands to raise money, and then the deacon delivers the money as intended.

Identification. If you have a deacony of deaconing to saints through encouraging believers in distant lands to contribute to the needs of the saints,

especially the financial needs, and then bringing those gifts to people in need, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

5.3 <u>The Administration of Money</u>. The Corinthian church had raised a generous gift to help the poor. Paul took precautions that no one would discredit the ministry team in the deacony ("διακονουμένῃ") of that gracious gift (2 Corinthians 8:19). In this case, Paul understood that the raising, handling and delivery of the gift required careful deacony, to avoid the appearance of impropriety (2 Corinthians 8:20-21).

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a deacony of avoiding the appearance of impropriety in the raising, handling and delivery of gifts for the poor, and you exercise great care in the administration of that gift, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

5.4. <u>The Blessings of Giving</u>. The deacony ("διακονία") of supplying the needs of the saints results in overflowing glory to God. That deacony ("διακονίας") provides proof of their obedience to their confession of Christ (2 Corinthians 9:13).

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a deacony of supplying the needs of the saints to overflowing and you strive to do all things to the glory of God, and so prove your obedience to the confession of Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

<u>Section Six</u>

<u>The Deacony of Testimony</u>

6.1 <u>Testimony for Christ</u>. Paul received a deacony ("διακονίαν") from Jesus to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24). We see an overlap between the spiritual gifts at times. In this case, Paul did the work of an evangelist and apostle, both spiritual gifts. He considered the work he performed to be a deacony, which he received from Jesus. The deacony he considered a gift from Jesus Christ. The saint with the Spiritual

Gift of Deacony may have the special calling to perform a ministry, such as preaching the gospel of grace, and team functions with the gifted saint.

Identification. If you received a deacony from Jesus to testify solemnly of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and you are part of a team with the same purpose, and you know your deacony is a gift of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

6.2 Tychicus. Paul sent Tychicus to the Ephesian church to testify to the circumstances of Paul while imprisoned. Paul considered Tychicus a beloved brother and a faithful deacon in the Lord ("πιστὸς διάκονος ἐν κυρίῳ") (Ephesians 6:21). Paul trusted Tychicus with a specific mission: (a) to make known to the Ephesians everything about Paul's circumstances; and (b) to comfort the hearts of the Ephesians (Ephesians 6:22).

Identification. If you have a deacony of visiting people to learn and testify about their physical and spiritual condition, and you perform that deacony as a faithful and beloved brother, and saints can count upon you to perform your deacony to comfort the hearts of the target audience, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Seven

The Deacony to Saints

7.1 The Household of Stephanus. Paul preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ to Achaia (1 Corinthians 16:15). The Romans divided Greece into Macedonia and Achaia. Paul identified the household of Stephanus as the first fruits of Achaia. The household of Stephanus devoted ("ἔταξαν") themselves to deacony ("διακονίαν") of the saints. In this case, the context helps us understand what it means to be devoted to the deacony to the saints. First, the saints at Corinth should be in "subjection ("ὑποτάσσησθε") to such men and to everyone who helps in the works and labors." The original text

emphasizes the terms "fellow-workers" ("συνεργοῦντι") and "laborers" ("κοπιῶντι"). Not only did this household work, but they worked very hard for the saints. Stephanus also brought monetary support ("what was lacking") and spiritual refreshment ("ἀνέπαυσαν"). The person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may function as part of a ministry team devoted to providing for the physical needs of the saints, as well as directing the efforts of others through coordination of different relief and supply efforts. The result of such deacony may provide monetary support and also refreshment for fellow-workers and laborers in the ministry. Such men should be acknowledged ("ἐπιγινώσκετε") (1 Corinthians 16:18).

Identification. If you have a deacony as part of a ministry team devoted to providing for the physical needs of the saints, as well a directing the efforts of others through coordination of different relief and supply efforts, all to the glory of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

7.2 The Deacony of the Hebrews. The writer to the Hebrews commended the Hebrews for their work and love shown toward the name of God. That love and work were described as "having deaconed" ("διακονήσαντες"--aorist active participle) and "deaconing" ("διακονοῦντες"--present active participle) to the saints. The Hebrews were known for their past work of deacony and their continued work as saints who continually deacon for the name of God, a very Hebrew expression referring to the honor and majestic deity of God (Hebrews 6:10). The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may be known for both their past and present deaconing to the saints, implying that they perform not only isolated acts of deacony, but they perform continual, loving deacony for the saints as a way of life, using their spiritual gift. As always, all the saints are called by God to perform such deacony, but the person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony will excel in this ministry to the saints continuously.

Identification. If you have a deaony known for your past and present deacony to the saints, with continual and faithful service as a way of life, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

7.3 <u>Timothy and Erastus</u>. Paul sent Timothy and Erastus, two of the one deaconing ("τῶν διακονούντων"--present active participle) to him, to Macedonia (Acts 19:22). Paul relied upon the faithful deacony of people to refresh him, help him, and carry gifts to and from him. The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may be just like Timothy and Erastus in their deacony to Christ.

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a deaoncy of serving a believer, and then being sent by that believer to deacon to other believers, so that you follow a pattern of deacony to believers in different places, and supporting their ministry and providing for the physical needs of the saints and reporting about the life of other saints, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

7.4 <u>The Deacony of the Women</u>. At the cross of Jesus, looking on at a distance, Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of the sons of Zebedee, and other women, witnessed the death of Jesus. They had been deaconing ("διακονοῦσαι"--present active participle, nominative feminine plural) to Him ("αὐτῷ"--notice the dative with the participle) and had followed Him from Galilee (Matthew 27:55). Those women apparently joined other women, including Joanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, who were contributing to the support of Jesus and His disciples out of their private means (Luke 8:1-3). Some women possessing the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may contribute to the support of believers out of their private means. Therefore, we should be careful to remember that many women deaconed to the needs of Jesus and His disciples, so that Phoebe, for example, would not necessarily hold the Office of Deacon, but she may have the Spiritual Gift of Deacon (Romans 16:1).

<u>Identification</u>. If you have a deacony of contributing to the needs of the saints from your private means, and also support the ministry of others through deaconing the needs of the ministry team, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Eight

The Deacony Reconciliation

8.1 The Rebirth and Reconciliation. Every believer becomes a new creation at the moment they are born again by faith alone in salvation through Jesus Christ. At that same moment, every believer receives the deacony ("τὴν διακονίαν") of the reconciliation ("τῆς καταλλαγῆς") (2 Corinthians 5:19).

Identification. If you have a deacony of the reconciliation, proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and drawing people to Christ, and deaconing them in sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

8.2 The Deacony of Reconciliation. God gave all believers the deacony ("τὴν διακονίαν ") of the reconciliation ("τῆς καταλλαγῆς"). Reconciliation ("καταλλαγῆς") means that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself. More precisely, God was not counting the trespasses of sinners against them, but rather seeking the repentance of sinners so that they may be brought into a new relationship with God based upon saving faith. Because of sin, man must be reconciled to God. God has put in us ("θέμενος ἐν ἡμῖν") the word of reconciliation ("τὸν λόγον τῆς καταλλαγῆς"). We must act as ambassadors for Christ. We beg ("δεόμεθα") people to be reconciled to God (2 Corinthians 5:20). The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony will have a special ability to beg people to come to Christ and serve Christ as an ambassador, performing the deacony of reconciliation in bringing people to Christ as Savior.

Identification. If you have a deacony of acting as an ambassador of Christ, pursuing the deacony of the reconciliation, and proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and begging them to be reconciled to God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Nine

The Deacony of Deacons

9.1 The Office of Deacon. In the New Testament, the local assembly had two offices (and perhaps others): overseers and deacons ("ἐπισκόποις καὶ διακόνοις") (Philippians 1:1). Writing to his child in the faith Timothy, Paul first discussed the Office of Oversser and Paul then turned to the Office of Deacon (1 Timothy 3:1-13). In 1 Timothy 3:8, the term "deacons" ("Διακόνους") refers to males who hold the Office of Deacon, but as we have seen above, this deacony may take many forms. Among the qualifications of deacons ("διάκονοι"), they must be husbands of one wife (1 Timothy 3:12). The Office of Deacon had special spiritual qualifications, which Paul described with particularity. The New Testament contains many references to the term "deacon" and it most often refers to the general work of deacons or their actions and not a specific office or spiritul gift. In other words, the majority of times you read about a "deacon" in the New Testament, you are not looking at someone holding the Office of Deacon or The Spiritual Gift of Deacon, but rather someone doing the work of a deacon. That "deacon" may have the Spiritual Gift of Deacony or the Spiritual Gift of Deacon, or both, but all believers are called to be a deacon of Jesus Christ.

Identification. If you hold the Office of Deacon and you have its spiritual qualificaitons and you fulfill your obligations well, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

9.2 The Rewards Deaconing Well. Those who have deaconed well ("καλῶς διακονήσαντες") obtain for themselves a high standing in the faith and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus (1 Timothy 3:13).

Identification. If you have deaconed well and you have obtained for yourself a high standing in the faith and great confidence in the faith that is in Christ Jesus, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Ten

The Deacony to the Imprisoned

10.1 Onesimus. During Paul's imprisonment, Paul wrote to his friend Philemon, who had a church in his house (Philemon 1:2). Paul wrote about Philemon's runaway slave named Onesimus, whom Paul had met in prison. Paul sought the permission of Philemon to keep Onesimus with Paul. Paul wanted to keep Onesimus so that, on behalf of Philemon, Onesimus may deacon ("διακονῇ") to Paul (Philemon 1:14). The exact tasks Onesimus performed remain unclear, but they can be described as "deacony." The person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may render deacony to an imprisoned saint, like Paul.

Identification. If you have a ministry of deaconing to a saint in prison or otherwise confined, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Eleven

The Deacony of Care

11.1 The Deacony of Care. Paul reminded the Corinthian assembly that they were a letter of Christ, having been "deaconed to ("διακονηθεῖσα") by us" (2 Corinthians 3:3). Paul meant that Christ's ministry team to Corinth had planted the seed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ at Corinth, others watered that seed, and God gave the increase. Paul described his apostolic work at Corinth as deacony. The New American Standard Bible translated the word for deacony as "cared" in this context. The work of deacony includes an expression of care for the welfare of the believers. The person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may take special spiritual care to ensure the development of spiritual maturity in the lives of a particular group of believers.

Identification. If you have a deacony of caring for believers and seeking their welfare, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Twelve

The Deacony of the Holy Spirit

12.1 The Deacony of Death. Paul drew a stark contrast between the deacony of death ("ἡ διακονία τοῦ θανάτου") (2 Corinthians 3:7) and the deacony of the Spirit ("ἡ διακονία τοῦ πνεύματος") (2 Corinthians 3:8). The deacony of death consisted of letters engraved on stone and came with glory and resulted in the condemnation of men (2 Corinthians 3:9). Even so, the deacony of death came with glory, so that the face of Moses shone with the glory of God.

Identification. If you have a deacony of living the ministry of the Spirit by rendering spiritual and physical service to the glory of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

12.2 The Deacony of the Spirit. The deacony of death came with glory, but the deacony of the Holy Spirit has even greater glory. Although the deacony of death resulted in condemnation, the deacony of the Holy Spirit results and abounds in righteousness (2 Corinthians 3:9). The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may have a deacony of proclaiming the work of the Holy Spirit with great boldness, particularly resulting in salvation.

Identification. If you have a deacony of proclaiming the work of the Holy Spirit with great boldness, particularly resulting in salvation, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

12.3 The Deacons of the New Covenant. Directly related to the Deacony of the Spirit, the deacons ("διακόνους") of the New Covenant perform the deacony of the Spirit (2 Corinthians 3:6). God makes the deacons of the New Covenant adequate to perform the deacony of glory in sharing the blessings of the New Covenant. The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may have the deacony of sharing the blessings of the New Covenant.

Identification. If you have a deacony of sharing the blessings of the New Covenant, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Thirteen

The Deacony of Slavery

13.1 Roman Slavery. The Roman empire accepted slavery and the New Testament provides instructions for slaves. If a slave ("δοῦλος") can become free, then become free. But if a man is called to salvation while a slave, he should not worry about it. Every slave is the Lord's freeman; likewise, every man not in human slavery is Christ's slave (1 Corinthians 7:20-24). Paul did not tell Christian slaves to revolt and leave their masters.

Identification. If you (often as a slave yourself) have a deacony to slaves (slaves, employees, servants, etc.) reminding them that they serve Christ, and you encourage them to be free if possible, but if not, to serve their human masters as they serve Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

13.2 Christian Slavery. At the wedding in Cana attended by Jesus, His disciples and His mother Mary, Mary gave orders to the deacons ("διακόνοις") to obey Jesus. Jesus then gave orders to the deacons. Those deacons ("διάκονοι") knew that Jesus had turned water into wine (John 2:1-12). At times deacons understood things others never knew. Likewise, in the Book of Philemon, we can read about a runaway slave who served Paul. Paul informed Philemon, the owner of the slave, that Onesimus, the slave, had become useful to Paul during his imprisonment. Paul then entreated Philemon to allow Onesimus to continue with Paul so that he may deacon ("διακονῇ") to Paul in his imprisonment (Philemon 1:13). Slaves often were commanded by their masters: deacon ("διακόνει") me (Luke 17:8). Servants were also commanded to deacon their masters with the fear of God, even if their masters were unreasonable (1 Peter 2:18). The person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may have a special ability to deacon a master in humility, as they work for the Lord and His blessing.

Identification. If you have a deaconing to Christ by serving your master (without disobeying Christ), and you do so even when your master is unreasonable, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Fourteen

The Deacony of Church Planting

14.1 **The Deacony of Church Planting**. Paul traveled around the Mediterranean world directed by the Holy Spirit. Paul often went first to the synagogue at a particular location, and there preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Some of the people in those local synagogues repudiated the word of God and deemed themselves unworthy of eternal life and rejected the Gospel (Acts 13:46). But as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed the Gospel (Acts 13:48). Paul and Apollos became deacons ("διάκονοι") through whom the Corinthians believed in the Gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:5). Paul planted, Apollos watered, and God gave the increase (1 Corinthians 3:6). Therefore, saints with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may have a deacony of deaconing to God through church planting.

Identification. If you have a deacony of visiting places where the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not been preached for the purpose of planting a church there, and you serve those people as deacons of the Gospel of Jesus Christ (often without pay), then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Fifteen

The Deacony to the Local Assembly

15.1 The Deacony of Phoebe. Paul recognized Phoebe as a deacon ("διάκονον") of the church at Cenchrea (Romans 16:1). She was a helper ("προστάτις") of many people, and of Paul himself (Romans 16:2). The term for "helper" ("προστάτις") apparently includes helping people from your own resources, as a richer person benefits a person in financial need. Phoebe performed her notable deacony at Cenchrea, a local church. A saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may use their finances to benefit other people in need of financial support. Please recall that calling Phoebe a deacon does not necessarily mean she held the Office of Deacon or that she had The Spiritual

Gift of Deacon. Remember the women who deaconed to the Lord during His public ministry. See the women from Galilee who deaconed to the needs of the Lord (see Section 7.4 above). Those Galilean women did not posses The Spiritual Gift of Deacon because spiritual gifts were not given until Pentecost following the Ascension of Jesus. Likewise, the Office of Deacon did not begin until the church age, which began at Pentecost following the Ascension of Jesus.

Identification. If you have a ministry of deaconin to Christ by using your resources to support the local church and deacon to that local church as fitting for a female while giving all to the glory of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Section Sixteen

The Deacony to the State

16.1 The Deacony of the State. Paul described the government as a deacon ("διάκονός") of good, appointed by God for good. He also described the government as a deacon ("διάκονός") of God, who bears the sword, and acts as an avenger of God, who brings wrath on the one who practices evil. Believers must submit to government because of wrath, but also for the sake of conscience (Romans 13:5). The person with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony may participate in government to serve the purposes of God.

Identification. If you have a deacony of working in the government for the purpose of bringing the wrath of God upon the ones who practice evil, and you encourage people to obey the government not only for the sake of wrath, but also because of conscience, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

Hallmarks of The Spiritual Gift of Deacony

Deacony: Understanding the Spiritual Gifts. The saint with the Spiritual Gift of Deacony deacons in many ways, but all the time deaconing

to other people for the glory of God. They serve the Godly, the unGodly, the reasonable and the unreasonable. They take orders from others without disobeying Jesus their Lord.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of Deacony and then see if you have that spiritual gift.

If you want to examine yourself regarding The Spiritual Gift of Deacony, then see if you have a special joy and effectiveness for Jesus when you participate in the activities listed below. You may have The Spiritual Gift of Deacony.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers prepare meals for people.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers serve others first, before themselves.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers often labor under the direction of others.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may deacon the word of God, at times bearing witness to Christ before tribunals even as they face the prospect of death or imprisonment.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may also have a ministry of evangelism.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may raise and deliver money for the work of Jesus Christ, and particularly, at times, providing money for the poor and famine afflicted.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may raise money in distant lands for the relief of other believers facing hardship or death.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may handle and deliver money, while being careful to administer such gifts carefully, while avoiding the appearance of impropriety.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may supply the needs of the saints, resulting in overflowing glory to God and providing proof of their confession of Christ.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may be part of a team proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may have a deacony of delivering news of a believer's circumstances so as to comfort the hearts of others concerned about the believer's condition.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may be a part of a ministry team running errands (even to other countries), delivering reports, and meeting the physical needs of the ministry team.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may perform continual, loving service to others as a way of life.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may refresh another believer.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may carry gifts from place to place, or person to person, church to church, or from a person to a group.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may contribute from their private means to the support of the ministry by giving money to God.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may have a ministry of reconciliation, working as an ambassador, with God using them to appeal to people to be reconciled to God, and begging them to be reconciled as needed.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may be a male believer holding the Office of Deacon.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may have a deacony to the imprisoned.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may take special spiritual care to promote the spiritual maturity of other believers.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may have a deacony of proclaiming the work of the Holy Spirit with great boldness, resulting in salvation.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may have a deacony of sharing the blessings of the New Covenant.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may know special things about the works of Jesus, and they carry out their service with quiet obedience in humility.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may deacon to God through church planting.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may use their financial abilities to benefit other people.

♦ Deacony-gifted believers may deacon in government to the glory of God.

Conclusion

As with many other spiritual gifts, The Spiritual Gift of Deacony intersects and overlaps other spiritual gifts. No spiritual gift operates in isolation. They work together for the common good of people, and often particularly for believers. The Spiritual Gift of Deacony involves people deaconing to Jesus Christ as Lord and Master, performing services for Him by deaconing to other people at work, in distant lands, by traveling, supplying physical and financial needs, working in government, and doing many other acts of obedience to Jesus Christ, because they love Him and love to deacon to Him as a way of life devoted to God.

13

The Spritual Gift of The Giver

Category of Gift: Service

Romans 12:8, Page 1775

"he who gives, with liberality,"

Every believer should give of their resources to God, because we have been bought with a price, the precious blood of Jesus Christ. God owns all our time, money, energy, and our entire lives. Every believer functions as a steward of the resources God has entrusted to us.

Paul described The Spiritual Gift of The Giver. In Romans 12, Paul used a particular Greek construction to describe the spiritual gifts of teaching, exhorting, giving, leading, and showing mercy. In contrast, Paul used simple nouns to describe the spiritual gifts of prophecy and service.

Section One

Background on Giving

1.1 Giving Generally. We have seen that many, but not all, spiritual gifts relate to basic commands to all believers. The person possessing the special spiritual gift of giving falls into this category. Every Christian must give, but the saint with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver has a special ability to give with liberality. Jesus taught about giving on numerous occasions. Let us examine a few of those teachings.

1.2 Old Testament Giving. God tells us that every beast of the forest, the cattle on a thousand hills, every bird of the mountains, and everything that moves in the field is His (Psalm 50:10-11, page 903). He flatly declares that the world is His, and all it contains ("וּמְלֹאָהּ, תֵּבֵל לִי-כִּי") (Psalm 50:12, page

903). Therefore, we know from Scripture that God owns everything. Because God owns everything, and He entrusted those things to humans, how do we fulfill our stewardship over those things? We should be careful to follow Scripture to understand our stewardship responsibilities. Even so, Jesus has fulfilled the requirements of the Law of Moses (Matthew 5:17, page 1507; Romans 7:6, page 1767), and believers are no longer subject to the Law. Therefore, the Law of Moses cannot serve as a guide for the giving of righteous people (Romans 10:4, page 1772; Galatians 3:23-24, page 1823; 1 Timothy 1:8-11, page 1854). Instead, we will look for New Testament principles to guide us in our stewardship.

Identification. If you have a ministry of giving, based upon your knowledge that God owns everything, and He has appointed you to give generously as His steward, while you are sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of faithful stewardship of God's resources.

1.3 New Testament Giving. In the New Testament, we see many wonderful examples of giving. We also learn important principles of giving. Please recall that everyone must be a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7, page 1813), but the people with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver will super-abound with giving, with liberality.

1.3.1 Giving Means You Share Food and Clothing. John the Baptist proclaimed that the crowds coming to him to be baptized were a brood of vipers, fleeing from the wrath to come (Luke 3:7, page 1600). John the Baptist warned them further that the axe was already laid at the root of the tree. If the tree does not bear fruit, then God would chop that tree down, even if it claimed to be children of Abraham. The crowd reacted with a question: "Then what shall we do?" (Luke 3:8-10). John the Baptist answered that they must share ("μεταδότω") one tunic if anyone had two tunics, and do likewise with food (Luke 3:11, page 1600). As we will see below, this word "share" has a very important meaning when we examine The Spiritual Gift of The Giver below.

Identification. If you have a ministry of joyfully sharing your food and clothing with other people, because you have repented of your sins and turned to God, and, while you are sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, God uses your giving to bring people to Himself, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of sharing of food and clothing.

1.3.2 Giving Means Work First So You May Give Later. In Ephesians 4:28, page 1831, we learn that believers work, instead of stealing, so that believers will have something to share ("μεταδιδόναι") with those people in need. Notice the relationship between working and giving here. Work first so you may share later. You may work even after you have enough for yourself and family, so that you may share with those people in need ("χρείαν").

Identification. If you have a ministry of working first so that you have extra to share with other people, while you are sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of working first so that later you may share with others.

1.3.3 Giving Means You Rely upon God To Sustain You Everyday. God created every living thing on earth, and feeds them every day. He opens His hand and satisfies the desire of every living thing (Psalm 145:15-16, page 998; compare Matthew 6:26, page 1510). Jesus taught that we must avoid Gentile anxieties about food and clothing by trusting God to provide them to us as we need them (Matthew 6:25-34, page 1510).

Identification. If you have a ministry of giving without anxiety about your need for food and clothing because you trust God to provide for all your needs, and, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, you share your trust in God providing everything you need, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of proclaiming your trust in God to provide for basic needs and demonstrating your trust through giving food and clothing to others.

1.3.4 Giving Means You Give All You Have. One day Jesus sat down opposite the treasury, and taught His disciples about giving by comparing the large sums rich people put into the treasury with the two small copper coins the poor widow put into the treasury. Jesus taught that the widow gave all she had to live on. By giving her all, she put in more than all of them (Luke 21:1-4, page 1642). Compare James 1:5, page 1887, where God gives wisdom generously ("ἁπλῶς") to saints who ask for it. Be sure to learn the lesson here. Spiritual giving never means giving quantitatively (large sums), but rather qualitatively (all you have from the heart). Notice the poor widow had two coins, and she gave both. She could have held one back, but gave both coins to God's service.

Identification. If you have a ministry of giving all you have to live on, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of giving all that you have to live on.

1.3.5 Giving Means You Do It Quietly and Secretly. Jesus taught His disciples to give to the poor without sounding trumpets to be honored by men (Matthew 6:2, pages 1508-1503), but rather to do it quietly and secretly so that even your left hand does not know what your right hand is doing (Matthew 6:3-4, page 1503).

Identification. If you a ministry of giving quietly and secretly, without seeking honor from men, so that your right hand does not know what your left hand is doing, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of quietly and secretly giving and avoiding honor from men.

Section Two

The Ministry of Giving:

Giving All

2.1 The New Testament Use of the Word "Giving." Paul only used a few words to describe The Spiritual Gift of The Giver in Romans 12:8, Page 1775. We can examine these words to understand the points he was making about The Spiritual Gift of The Giver. Please remember always that God inspired each word (verbal inspiration) of the Bible and God inspired all the words (plenary inspiration) in the Bible.

2.2 The Word "Giving" in Romans 12:8. The New Testament description of this spiritual gift in Romans 12:8, page 1775, certainly is brief. Let us start with the word for "giving" in Romans 12:8, page 1775. Paul does not use the normal word for giving ("δίδωμι"). Instead, he selects a word used infrequently (only two other times) in the New Testament. Scholars who study words in the Bible define this word here for giving ("μεταδιδοὺς") as to impart, give or share. As part of good word study technique, let us see how this same root word has been used in those other two places in the New Testament.

2.2.1 Share Tunics and Food. In Luke 3:11, page 1600, as we saw above, Jesus told the crowd (including unbelievers) to share ("μεταδότω") their tunics and food with those who have none. People with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver will share their clothes and food with people who do not have food and clothing.

Identification. If you have a ministry of sharing your food and clothing with people who do not have food and clothing, while you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of feeding and clothing people lacking those things.

2.2.2 Work To Share Earthly Goods. In Ephesians 4:28, page 1831, we saw above that believers should work so that they may share ("μεταδιδόναι") earthly goods with others. In both instances of the other uses of this particular term for "giving," it refers to sharing earthly goods with needy people. People with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver will work longer and harder than others so that they have more to share with people in true need.

Identification. If you have a ministry of sharing your earthly goods with needy people, and work longer and harder to obtain them, so that you may share them, while you also share the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry working harder and longer to share your earthly goods with those people who lack the same.

2.2.3 Widow's Act of Giving. Compare the emphasis on sharing earthly goods with the widow's act of giving. In the Luke 21:4, page 1642, the widow cast ("ἔβαλεν") her gift ("τὰ δῶρα") out of her poverty ("τοῦ ὑστερήματος") and literally cast all the life out of her ("πάντα τὸν βίον"), meaning that she cast all her money for living. The point with her is that poor widow did not just share, she gave all she had to live on. She did not just share her earthly goods, but she cast her entire life-money into the treasury for God's use. She gave everything, and showed us that true spiritual giving will never be how much you gave (the rich people gave vast sums from their riches) in the sense of quantity, but rather God demands high quality giving--all you have (the widow's two coins). People with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver tend to give all that they have, not measured in quantity, but in quality of the giving.

Identification. If you have a ministry of sharing like the widow, who gave all you have to live on, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may

have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a widow-like ministry of giving the last you have.

Section Three

The Ministry of Giving:

Liberality

3.1 The Spiritual Gift of The Giver: "Liberality" Word Study. The other word in Romans 12:8, page 1775, dealing with giving is the word translated "liberality" ("ἁπλότητι"). The New Testament has at least seven uses of this basic noun and those uses fall into two basic categories of meaning.

3.1.1 Meaning One of "Liberality": Bountiful Giving. We learn more about bountiful giving from the example of the Corinthian church with their giving.

3.1.1.2 Supply and Multiply Principle of Giving. In 2 Corinthians 9:11, page 1813, God explained the basic principle of supply ("χορηγήσει") and multiply ("πληθυνεῖ") concerning our giving. God not only supplies our giving, but He multiplies our giving (2 Corinthians 9:10, page 1813). Believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver rely upon the spiritual principle of supply and multiply. They count upon God to supply their own needs, so that in turn, God will multiply what they have, so that they may give to people in need.

Identification. If you have a ministry of relying upon and sharing with others the spiritual principle of supply and multiply, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of counting upon God to supply and multiply what you sow, so that you may share God's bounty in your life with other people, so that they too may give to people in need.

3.1.1.3 Giving with All Liberality. God explained that the Corinthians will be enriched in everything for all liberality, apparently referring to their giving with "all liberality" ("πᾶσανἁπλότητα") for the saints in Jerusalem

who were suffering from famine and poverty (2 Corinthians 9:11, page 1815). This phrase "all liberality" describes the extent of the Corinthians' giving--all out giving. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver give with all liberality, meaning that they hold nothing back and give bountifully.

Identification. If you have a ministry of practicing all-out giving to help other believers going through a difficult time, such as famine and poverty, and you hold nothing back, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of holding nothing back to ease the suffering of other believers suffering from famine and poverty.

3.1.1.4 Saints Enriched for Giving with All Liberality. Putting these thoughts together, God told the Corinthians that He would enrich them as they gave all out. God continued on and explained that the saints will glorify God because of the Corinthians for the "liberality" ("ἁπλότητι") of their contribution to the saints in Jerusalem and to all (2 Corinthians 9:13, page 1814). Earlier in 2 Corinthians 8:2, page 1812, Paul told the Corinthians about the giving of the Macedonians. The Macedonians were suffering a great ordeal of affliction, but in their deep poverty overflowed in the wealth of their liberality ("ἁπλότητος ") of giving. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver give out of their relative poverty and in their afflictions, but they give with all liberality from what they have received from God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of giving to other believers, while you are suffering a great ordeal of affliction, and you suffer from deep poverty yourself, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of giving liberally, even as you endure a great ordeal of affliction yourself and poverty.

3.2.1 Meaning Two of "Liberality": Sincerity. Paul himself provided another example of giving with liberality and he himself illustrated the concept of giving with sincerity. Paul gave of himself to the Corinthians, so that he conducted his service among the Corinthians with proud confidence.

3.2.1.1 Giving in Sincerity. In 2 Corinthians 1:12, page 1805, we observe the term "sincerity" ("ἁπλότητι") which relates closely to the word for liberality described above.

3.2.1.2 Proud Confidence. In 2 Corinthians 1:12, page 1805, we see that "sincerity" (“ἁπλότητι”) described the "proud confidence" (“καύχησις”) Paul had of the way he conducted himself toward the whole world, and the Corinthians in particular, "in holiness and Godly sincerity, not in fleshly wisdom but in the grace of God." Paul emphasized here that he was sincere, and without any type of deceit, dishonesty, or pride. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver give with sincerity, according to the grace of God, so that they give of their time and efforts with proud confidence.

Identification. If you a ministry of giving with sincerity and others have proud confidence in your giving, and no element of deceit, dishonesty, or pride taints your giving, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of giving with sincerity, and without any hint of deceit, dishonesty, or pride.

3.2.1.3 Sincerity of Heart. In Ephesians 6:5, page 1833, Paul commanded slaves to obey their master in sincerity ("ἁπλότητι") of heart, as if they were serving Christ (see the same thought and term used in Colossians 3:22, page 1845). Notice that slaves have an obligation to serve because someone else owns them. How you perform your compulsory service to your master makes all the difference. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver provide service to their masters, employers, friends, spouses, children, and ultimately to God, from a heart of sincerity, knowing they are giving of themselves in service to God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of obeying the command of God to give with sincerity of heart to your employers, friends, spouses, children, and ultimately to God, knowing that you are rendering faithful service to God, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of giving from a sincere heart, rendering your service of giving as unto God.

3.2.1.4 Pure Devotion to Christ. In 2 Corinthians 11:3, page 1815, Paul warned the Corinthians against being led astray in their minds, by the same tactics Satan used to deceive Eve, from the sincerity ("ἁπλότητος") and purity of devotion to Christ. In that last passage, we understand that sincerity can also be a quality of devotion in the mind to Christ. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver have devoted themselves in their minds to Christ, so that they give as service to Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of giving without being led away from your sincerity and purity of devotion to Christ, while sharing the Gospel of Jesus Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, with a ministry of giving in purity and sincerity of heart, so that you do not fall into pride and dishonor.

Hallmarks of the Gift of Giving

Giving: Understanding the Spiritual Gifts. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver gives with joy and sincerity of heart, without putting themselves first in their service as stewards of the things God has entrusted to them. They give first and without sinful restraint. As above, the ministry of the believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver may take many forms, and produce a variety of effects. I have listed a few of those hallmarks below.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of The Giver and then see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver.

♦ Giving-gifted believers give all that they have.

♦ Giving-gifted believers work longer and harder than others so that they have more to share with people in true need.

♦ Giving-gifted believers tend to give all that they have, not measured in quantity, but in quality of the giving.

♦ Giving-gifted believers rely upon the spiritual principle of supply and multiply.

♦ Giving-gifted believers give with all liberality, meaning that they hold nothing back and give bountifully.

♦ Giving-gifted believers give out of their relative poverty and in their afflictions, but they give with all liberality from what they have received from God.

♦ Giving-gifted believers give with sincerity, according to the grace of God, so that they give of their time and efforts with proud confidence.

♦ Giving-gifted believer provide service to their masters, employers, friends, spouses, children, and ultimately to God, from a heart of sincerity, knowing they are giving of themselves in service to God.

♦ Giving-gifted believers have devoted themselves in their minds to Christ, so that they give as service to Christ.

May all believers serve God by giving to others what He has first given to us, with all liberality and with all joy.

Conclusion

So, let us assemble our knowledge of the uses of the terms, and the primary teachings about giving, and summarize our study. The Spiritual Gift of The Giver means that you can share physical goods with people in need, and do so with all out giving, from a sincere and pure heart. People with this gift often like to work extra hard, so they have extra to share with people in need. People with this gift exercise it secretly and quietly, deliberately avoiding the praise of men (and without blowing trumpets), so they can receive the reward of God. The people with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver comprehend that God owns everything, and He alone supplies and multiplies the seed they sow into the lives of the needy. When they give, the people with The Spiritual Gift of the Giver never have cares or anxieties about their own welfare, because they know God alone provides for them. God loves all cheerful givers, even those saints who do not have The Spiritual Gift of The Giver (2 Corinthians 9:7, page 1812).

14

The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier

Category of Gift: Service

Romans 12:8, Page 1775

"he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness,"

Many people show mercy, and some people are known for their acts of great mercy. Paul linked The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier with cheerfulness. Notwithstanding other meanings of the term “mercier,” I chose the special phrase “The Mercier” (“ὁ ἐλεῶν”) to convey the meaning of the participle in the original, and emphasize this gift’s relationship to other spiritual gifts using a participle. This participle functions as a verbal noun, and characterizes action (mercy) of the believer with this spiritual gift. As we will see in the study below, God loves cheerfulness and bringing His mercy to people. His mercy should always make people, especially believers, very happy. As the believer gifted with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier uses that gift, then Paul commands the believer do so with cheerfulness. So often in the Bible we see this link between serving God and being happy about that service. At times, we may encounter serious affliction, but even then God commands us to rejoice. At other times, we may be undergoing very difficult times ourselves, but again, God commands us to share the comfort He gives to us with others while we ourselves are still suffering. We will see how much the Body of Jesus Christ needs mercy every day. God has gifted some believers to be His special ministers of mercy.

Section One

Introduction

1.1 **Blessed**. Jesus proclaimed: "Blessed are the merciful (“ἐλεήμονες”), for they shall receive mercy (“ἐλεηθήσονται”)" (Matthew 5:7, page 1506). All believers must show mercy to others, and then they too will receive mercy. People with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, however, have a special gift from God to show mercy to others. No matter what concept springs to mind when you hear the word “mercy,” be sure to keep an open mind when you read the New Testament. When we walk through the Scriptures about mercy together, we will watch Jesus display true mercy. He always sets the examples we must follow. As with so many other spiritual gifts, one spiritual gift may produce a variety of ministries and a variety of effects. Because of the brief description of this gift in Romans 12:8, page 1775, we will focus upon other uses of the term "mercy" ("ἐλεῶν") to understand the nature and operation of The Spiritual Gift of Mercier. As you read through the different ministries related to The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, please keep in mind that Paul commanded believers with that gift to use their gifts with cheerfulness. Their happiness in using their spiritual gift will make all the difference in how that ministry affects other people. God never intends for the spiritual gifts to be an end in themselves. If you use your spiritual gift(s) properly, they will build up the body of Jesus Christ, the church composed of born-again believers. Yet, some spiritual gifts also have ministry to unbelievers, and so Jesus never helped people physically or spiritually, just so that they would perish in their sins feeling better. He always acted to bring people to salvation in Himself, by presenting the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Likewise, whenever spiritual gifts are used with unbelievers, then the Gospel of Jesus Christ should be presented at that time, for today is the day of salvation. You may not be an evangelist, but you are always called to envangelize the lost every day. Therefore, I will use the phrase “share the Gospel of Jesus Christ” to mean that you present the plan of salvation to people who are unsaved (and offer the unbeliever an opportunity by prayer to receive the free gift of salvation), and encourage born-again believers to live out their salvation.

Section Two

The Ministry of The Mercier:

Mercy of the Lord Jesus

2.1 Mercy and Condemnation. Jesus explained that mercy (Ἔλεος"), translated at times as "compassion," permits people to avoid condemning the righteous, because God desires compassion (Ἔλεος") and not sacrifice (Matthew 12:7, page 1520). Mercy means that God withholds the condemnation that every sinner deserves. It also means that God blesses us in ways we do not deserve, very similar to grace.

Identification. If you enjoy withholding condemnation, and you avoid condemning the righteous, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the condemned, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier.

2.2 Justice, Mercy and Faithfulness. Jesus said the weightier provisions of the law include justice ("τὴν κρίσιν"), mercy ("τὸ ἔλεος") and faithfulness ("τὴν πίστιν") (Matthew 23:23, 1543). As we observe Jesus interact with people and use living examples of mercy in action, we can begin to discern a pattern of mercy that characterizes The Spiritual Gift of Mercier.

Identification. If you value justice, mercy and faithfulness, and you share The Gospel of Jesus Christ with people needing mercy, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier.

2.3 The Cries for Mercy. On many occasions, Jesus heard the cry for mercy from all sorts of people. Suffering prompted many calls for mercy, and people recognized that Jesus could provide mercy that would help them find relief from suffering. Those same cries for mercy today compel believers, particularly those with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, to help those people crying out for mercy from God. For God Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. In this context, Jesus commanded us to be merciful, just as your Father is merciful (Luke 6:35-36, page 1608).

Identification: If you find yourself seeking out ungrateful and evil people suffering and calling out to God for spiritual help, and you share the Gospel

of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with a ministry of sharing your faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Section Three

The Ministry of the Mercier:

The Physically Sick

3.1 Jesus and Mercy for Physical Healing. Jesus healed many people with various diseases ("ποικίλαις νόσοι"). At times, so many people brought sick people to Jesus for healing that great crowds formed (for example, Mark 1:32-33, page 1559). In some cases, we see that the people sought mercy from God to heal their various diseases. Believers today with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier will be drawn to the physically ill to minister to them.

Identification. If you see people suffering from physical disease, and you have a spiritual desire to minister to those sick and physically suffering people, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with a ministry to the physically ill, suffering from various diseases, bringing faith and comfort to them through your healing work.

Section Four

The Ministry of The Mercier:

The Demon Possessed

4.1 The Cries for Mercy from the Demon Possessed. Jesus heard the cries regarding the demon-possessed and answered those calls for help.

4.1.1 The Canaanite's Cry for Mercy concerning Demon Possession. In Matthew 15:22, we read about a Canaanite woman. When Jesus was near, she began to cry out ("ἔκραζεν"), saying "Have mercy ("Ἐλέησόν") on me, Lord, Son of David; my daughter is cruelly demon-possessed ("κακῶς δαιμονίζεται")." Jesus did not immediately answer the

woman, but she persisted and Jesus finally commended her great faith. Immediately, her daughter was healed ("ἰάθη"). Today, we see people interceding like the Canaanite woman for their loved one suffering under demon possession. People today seek the mercy of God, and Jesus sends believers with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier to help them.

Identification. If you encounter people affected by demon possession, and you know that God sent you to cast out that demon (or demons), and you want to show them the mercy of God to the people crying out to receive mercy from God for themselves or others, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier with a ministry to the demon possessed.

4.1.2 The Demon Possessed Lunatic and Mercy. In Matthew 17:18, page 1531, we read that a father brought his son to Jesus. The father described his son a lunatic ("σεληνιάζεται") and very ill ("κακῶς πάσχει"), often falling into the fire and the water. Jesus then proclaimed: "You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I put up with you? Bring him here to Me" (Matthew 17:17, page 1531). Jesus then rebuked the boy, the demon came out of him, and the boy was cured at once. We glean from this passage that some demon-possessed people act like lunatics. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier seek out the unbelieving and perverted people, to have mercy upon the demon-possessed and ill.

Identification. If you encounter evil and perverted people, acting like lunatics and very ill, suffering from demon possession, and you know that God sent you to cast out that demon from that evil and perverted person and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier with a ministry of casting out demons from evil and perverted people, acting like lunatics, and you bring The Gosple of Jeuss Christ with salvation by faith alone to those people.

Section Five

The Ministry of The Mercier:

Prisoners

5.1 Onesiphorus and the Blessing of Mercy. In Second Timothy 1:16, page 1855, we read about the blessing of mercy ("ἔλεος") upon the house of Onesiphorus. This man Onesiphorus refreshed ("ἀνέψυξεν") Paul and was not ashamed of his chains. While in Rome, Onesiphorus sought out Paul, eagerly searching for him, and found him. Onesiphorus rendered precious services to Paul while Paul was imprisoned. Today, the saint with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier will search out (compare The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter) people suffering and imprisoned. Sometimes the prison may be a jail cell, but other times it may be anything that holds a person under bonds, restricting freedom and movement. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier will render services of mercy to these imprisoned people.

Identification. If you eagerly search out prisoners, find them, and bring them refreshment from God, without feeling shame about the bondage of imprisonment, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with a ministry to prisoners.

Section Six

The Ministry of The Mercier:

The Despised

6.1 Despised Receive Mercy. In Matthew 9:9-13, page 1514, we read about Jesus calling Matthew, a tax-gatherer for the Roman conquerors. Matthew invited Jesus over for a meal and many tax-gatherers and sinners attended the dinner. The Pharisees, who generally hated Jesus, did not understand why Jesus ate with tax collectors and sinners. Jesus taught them: "It is not those who are healthy who need a physician, but those who are sick" (Luke 9:12, page 1514). Jesus then said: "Go and learn what this means: 'I DESIRE COMPASSION' ("Ἔλεος"), "'AND NOT SACRIFICE,'" for I did not

come to call the righteous, but sinners." Believers with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier love to have dinner with tax-gatherers and sinners for the purpose of seeking and saving the lost.

Identification. If people everyone hates invite you to dinner, and you know that they are spiritually sick and need Jesus, the Physician, and you feel the compassion of God at work within you for those people, and you know that God is using you to call sinners to repentance and salvation, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with a ministry to the despised people.

6.2 Ten Lepers Seeking Mercy. In Luke 17:12, page 1634, we read that ten lepers sought mercy from Jesus: "Jesus, Master, have mercy ("ἐλέησον") on us!" By the Law of Moses, those ten lepers had to stand at a distance from Jesus, because of their leprosy. Even so, Jesus heard them and helped them. Only one of the ten lepers came back to Jesus after being healed, and he was a Samaritan, a people hated by the Jews, but loved by Jesus (Luke 17:15-19, page 1635). You may consider a leprous Samaritan to be an outcast of the outcast. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier find ways to minister to people who stand at a distance because they have a disease, who may be from a hated ethnic minority, or have severe disfigurements.

Identification. If you encounter people with physical problems that separate them from the community of other people, and no one likes them anyway because of their national heritage, race, or something else, and they cry out to you for mercy from God, and you long to see them healed and restored, and saved by faith alone in Jesus Christ, and you minister to them in the name of Jesus, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with a ministry to the physically separated and despised.

Section Seven

The Ministry of The Mercier:

Debtors

7.1 Forgiven All, Now Forgive Others. In Matthew 18:21-35, page 1533, Peter asked Jesus about how often he should forgive a brother who sins against him. Jesus replied first by saying forgive the brother not just seven times, but seventy times seven, meaning always be forgiving. Jesus then illustrated forgiveness and the kingdom of God by telling the story of the slave forgiven a large debt by his king. The slave prostrated himself before the king and begged for patience, and promised repayment. The king graciously forgave that slave. Notice that the king rendered judgment that the slave owed the debt and had not repaid the debt. At that point, the king extended mercy, so that mercy triumphed over judgment. Next, the forgiven slave refused to have mercy and forgive his fellow slave for a relatively small debt, even though the slave pleaded for patience just as the forgiven slave had pled to the king. The forgiven slave threw the debtor slave into prison. When the king heard about the forgiven slave's lack of forgiveness, he confronted the forgiven slave with these words in Luke 18:33, page 1534: "Should you not also have had mercy ("ἐλεῆσαι"--notice the aorist infinitive--completed forgiveness with purpose) on your fellow slave, in the same way that I had mercy (" ἠλέησα"--aorist emphasizing complete forgiveness) on you?" Then the king in anger delivered the forgiven slave into the hands of the torturers until he paid back all that was due. Consider James 2:13, page 1889: "For judgment will be merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy ("ἔλεος") triumphs over ("κατακαυχᾶται") judgment." The believers with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier understand their own forgiveness and enjoy forgiving others in mercy, because they have been forgiven everything by King Jesus. They model mercy for everyone around them when it comes to forgiveness of all debts of all kinds.

Identification. If you have been forgiven all by Jesus, and you find yourself in positions to model forgiveness for debtors, and love to forego judgment in favor of showing mercy seventy times seven per day to the same person doing the same evil thing time after time, and you forgive small debts owed to you by others because God has forgiven you of the death penalty you deserve, and

you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with a ministry to the debtors who need forgiveness from God, which you model to them in the way you forgive them entirely and repeatedly, so that you may continue to have a relationship with them, based upon the forgiveness of Jesus Christ.

Section Eight

The Ministry of The Mercier:

The Barren

8.1 Elizabeth the Barren Seeking Mercy. In Luke 1:58, page 1596, we learn that the mercy of God had been given to a barren woman named Elizabeth. Elizabeth had been seeking a child, but she had not conceived. Finally, an angel announced to her husband, Zacharias, that she would bear a son. When her neighbors and relatives heard that she gave birth to a son, John the Baptist, they knew that God had displayed His great mercy ("ἔλεος") toward her (compare the praise of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who proclaimed that God had mercy upon her for bearing Jesus and also God has mercy upon generation after generation, for all who fear Him--Luke 1:50, page 1595). Believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier minister to the barren women among us. God loves to show His mercy by giving children to married couples, and also through ministering to those still waiting for a child.

Identification. If you love to minister to the barren women among us, who seek a child but have not received one from God by His mercy, and you love to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with a ministry to the barren among us.

Section Nine

The Ministry of The Mercier:

The Blind

9.1 The Two Blind Men's Cry for Mercy concerning Blindness. In Matthew 20:30, two blind men cried out ("ἔκραξαν"), saying, "Lord, have mercy ("Ἐλέησον") on us!" While the crowd told the blind men to be silent, Jesus heard them crying out all the more, and felt compassion ("σπλαγχνισθεὶς") for them. Jesus touched their eyes and they regained their sight and followed Him (compare the story of blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52, page 1579)). Today, people with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier do not listen to the crowds commanding the blind people to stop bothering Jesus. Instead, those spiritually gifted people show mercy to the blind, being moved with compassion, and minister to the needs they see before them.

Identification. If you hear the cries of blind people calling to the Lord Jesus for mercy, and you see other people ignoring those blind people and trying to silence them, and yet you feel compassion for the blind, and enjoy ministering to their needs and seeking healing for them even when other people tell you to stop, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier, with a ministry to the blind.

Section Ten

The Ministry of The Mercier:

The Condemned

10.1 Mercy for those Suffering Wrongful Condemnation. In Matthew 12:1-8, page 1519-1520, the disciples of Jesus were hungry and began to pick the heads of grain and eat. The Pharisees condemned the disciples for breaking the law of the Sabbath, as they interpreted it. Jesus responded to the Pharisees and taught them that David ate the consecrated bread in the house of God and the priests also minister on the Sabbath. Jesus

said that He was Lord of the Sabbath and greater than the temple. Jesus authorized the activity of His disciples on the Sabbath. Jesus also explained: "But if you had known what this means, 'I DESIRE COMPASSION ("Ἔλεος"), AND NOT SACRIFICE,' you would not have condemned ("κατεδικάσατε") the innocent ("τοὺς ἀναιτίους") (compare Romans 9:15, page 1771 on the link between mercy and compassion; see also Galatians 6:16, page 1826). Therefore, we may learn that believers with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier show mercy to other disciples who have been falsely condemned by "religious" people, because the disciples followed the direction of Jesus Christ. Furthermore, believers with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier also explain that God seeks mercy from men, and not sacrifice. Jesus has already made the perfect and complete sacrifice for all our sins.

Identification. Often, “religious people” wrongly condemn people who do not follow their own erroneous interpretations of the Scriptures. If you see people condemned wrongly for some activity, and you have a solid Scriptural basis for consoling them, and the compassion of God for the wrongfully condemned motivates you to seek them out, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with a ministry to the wrongfully condemned.

Section Eleven

The Ministry of The Mercier:

The Beaten and Forsaken

11.1 Mercy and the Good Samaritan. In Luke 11:30-37, pages 1619-1620, a Jewish lawyer sought to justify himself and asked Jesus: Who is my neighbor when it comes to loving my neighbor as I love God? Jesus then told the story of the good Samaritan. In this story, we see that a priest and Levite passed by a man beaten, robbed and left wounded on the Jericho road. Finally, a Samaritan traveler stopped, bandaged the wounded man, and took him to an inn. He instructed the innkeeper to take care of the man, and the traveler would repay any cost upon his return. Jesus asked the lawyer who proved to be the neighbor? The lawyer responded: the one who showed mercy to him. Jesus said: go and do the same. Jesus showed that doing mercy to a Samaritan (the Jews and Samaritans were enemies) defines the term

"neighbor." The lawyer sought to know who was his neighbor, and Jesus answered that being a neighbor means you show mercy to your enemies, especially when other people ignore the wounded laying on the road. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier will always be a neighbor to the wounded, and spend their time and money upon helping them recover from the wounds, even when the religious people walk right by the wounded.

Identification. If you see other people passing by the beaten and wounded, and you know that racial, religious and national bias play a part in other people refusing to help the beaten and wounded person, and you enjoy spending your time, effort and resources to help beaten and wounded people everyone else sees but passes by, and you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with the ministry of showing mercy to the beaten and wounded.

Section Twelve

The Ministry of The Mercier:

Blessings

12.1 The Blessings of Mercy. The Bible also presents some distinct blessings connected to mercy. God shows mercy to the disobedient to God ("ἠπειθήσατε τῷ θεῷ")(Romans 11:30, page 1175), and displays His mercy even upon Gentiles who become part of God's family (1 Peter 2:10, page 1895). Jesus commanded all people to love their enemies, lend without expectation of repayment, and be sons of the Most High. For God Himself is kind to ungrateful and evil men. In fact, God displayed His great mercy ("τὸ πολὺ αὐτοῦ ἔλεος") in causing us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3, page 1893). Indeed, the wisdom of God is full of mercy ("μεστὴ ἐλέους") and good fruits, without hypocrisy (James 3:17, page 1891). Our very salvation rests upon the mercy of God, because salvation does not rest upon deeds which we have done in righteousness, but we were saved according to His mercy ("ἔλεος") (Titus 3:5, page 1867). Jesus stands as our merciful ("ἐλεήμων") and faithful high priest, to make propitiation for the sins of the people (Hebrews 2:17, page 1871).

Identification. If you love to show mercy to the disobedient, and love your enemies, and display the mercy of God causing people to be born again to a living hope, and do so without hypocrisy, while you share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier, with a ministry of blessing the condemned.

Section Thirteen

The Cheerful Use of The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier

13.1 Cheerfulness. Now, having seen how The Spiritual Gift of the Mercier operates according to the example of the Lord Jesus, we can appreciate that it must be used with cheerfulness (Romans 12:8, page 1775). This word for "cheerfulness" ("ἱλαρότητι") is used only here in the New Testament. Some scholars have pointed out that our English word "hilarious" comes from this same Greek word. In any event, the way to exercise the gift of mercy is with cheerfulness ("ἱλαρότητι"). The attitude expressed in the giving of mercy will come through loud and clear when done with a cheerful heart. So often that smile combined with the act of mercy ministers wonderfully the love of Jesus Christ to those struggling with life.

Identification. If you minister the mercy of God to people, and cheer fills your heart as you minister mercy to others, then you may be using The Spiritual Gift of Mercier to the glory of God.

Hallmarks of The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier

Mercier: Understanding the Spiritual Gifts. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier ministers to a wide variety of people, but those people often suffer from the effects of physical and spiritual problems. Both the victims and the perpetrators need mercy. God pours out His mercy upon all kinds of people. As above, the ministry of the believer with The Spiritual

Gift of The Mercier may take many forms, and produce a variety of effects. I have listed a few of those hallmarks below.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of The Merceir and to see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of Mercier.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers respond to cries for help.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers minister to the physically sick.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers minister to the demon possessed.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers eagerly seek out prisoners and refresh them.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers minister to the despised.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers minister to the debtors.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers minister to the barren.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers minister to the blind.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers minister to the wrongfully condemned.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers minister to the beaten, wounded, and forsaken.

♦ Mercy-gifted believers minister with cheerfulness.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier rests upon the justice, faithfulness, and love of God. If, in the name of Jesus Christ, you love to respond to cries for help, provide the for the needs of the physically ill, enjoy spending time with people society despises, make it a point to seek out and refresh prisoners; and encourage debtors, the barren, and blind; and defend the wrongfully condemned; and lift up the beaten, wounded, and forsake. When you do all

those things with cheerfulness, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier.

15

The Spiritual Gift of Helps

Class of Gift: Service

1 Corinthians 12:28, Page 1797

"Helps"

Section One

Introduction

1.1 All Saints Gifted. Every born-again Christian has at least one spiritual gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, page 1796). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of ministries ("διακονιῶν"), with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Therefore, if you have The Spiritual Gift of Helps, that single gift may result in a variety of ministries and spiritual effects. Although not all believers may have The Spiritual Gift of Helps, they should be careful to lay hold of people for the purpose of helping them pursue the glory of God.

1.2 Meaning of the Term "Helps." The term used to describe The Spiritual Gift of Helps ("ἀντιλήμψεις"–1 Corinthians 12:28, page 1797) means a believer with a special ability to lay hold of someone for their benefit. This word only occurs once in the New Testament (1 Corinthians 12:28). Therefore, we have very little direct lexical information regarding this term.

1.3 Helps and the Spiritual Gifts. All believers must know and use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God. All believers, not just the pastors and church leaders, perform the work of helps. While all believers must perform the work of helps, only some believers have The Spiritual Gift of Helps, bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon some, but not all, believers as a gift of grace which works according to His power (Ephesians 3:7, page 1829).

1.4 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Helps." The Greek term translated as "helps" ("ἀντιλήμψεις") has no other appearance in the New Testament outside of 1 Corinthians 12:28, page 1797. Therefore, we do not see any direct use of term in the New Testament to understand its meaning. It was used in the Septuagint (the Old Testament translated into Greek, abbreviated "LXX").

1.5 The Usage of the Term "Helps" in the Septuagint. Please recall that the Septuagint is not inspired. Only the original autographs of the New Testament and Old Testament are inspired. In the Septuagint, the term "help" appears in Psalm 22:19, page 875, as "assistance" when David identified the LORD as his help and beseeched the LORD to hasten to his assistance ("τηναντιλημψιν" translating "לְעֶזְרָתִי"). In Psalm 84:5, page 939, the Psalmist wrote that blessed is the man whose strength ("αντιλημψις" translating "עוֹז") is in the LORD. In Psalm 83:8, we read that Assyria became a "help" ("αντιλημψιν" translating "זְרוֹעַ") to the children of Lot. In Psalm 89:18, page 943, the Psalmist described the LORD as our "shield" ("αντιλημψις" translating "עֻזָּמוֹ"). In Psalm 108:8, the Psalmist described Ephraim as a "helmet"("αντιλημψις" translating "מָעוֹז"). Based upon these uninspired translations (with English from the New American Standard Bible) that should be viewed with caution, the usage in the Septuagint supports the translation of 1 Corinthians 12:28 as "helps," but adds a background of assistance with power and military strength, and even the concept of a helmet for protection. But the LXX employs wide discretion in translating terms and casts some doubt upon

the heavy reliance upon the LXX translations above. Therefore, the ideas behind "helps" means to lay hold of someone for the purposes of protection, strength, and deliverance.

Section Two

The Ministry of Laying Hold

2.1 Pressing On. Paul described Jesus as having laid hold ("κατελήμφθην") of Paul (Philippians 3:12, page 1838). While Jesus has a firm grip on Paul, Paul continues to press on that he may lay hold ("καταλάβω") of the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus. Notice the interaction between the two grips. Jesus first grips and holds Paul, and then Paul strives to grip the prize of the upward call of God, the very purpose of Jesus gripping Paul in the first place. Paul did not struggle to release the grip of Jesus, but to fulfill the grip of Jesus by laying hold of the prize of God's upward call. One grip strengthens the other grip. Consider a parent holding a child up to reach a piece of fruit hanging from a tree.

Identification. If you have a ministry of striving to lay hold of the prize of the upward call of God, while Jesus grips you, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Helps.

2.2 Letting Down. After Saul met Jesus on the Damascus road, Saul began to proclaim Jesus in the synagogues. He confounded the Jews living in Damascus by proving that Jesus is the Christ. After many days, the Jews plotted to kill Saul, but the disciples took Saul by night and let him down through an opening in the wall and he escaped to Jerusalem (Acts 9:19-25, page 1717).

Identification. If you have a ministry of providing the means of escape and protection for other believers under attack, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Helps.

2.3 Barnabas. After Saul of Tarsus met Jesus on the Damascus road, Saul (later known as Paul) went to Jerusalem. There the brethren were afraid of him because they knew of his prior violent hatred of Christians and his earlier actions in arresting Christians. Many believers in Jerusalem did not believe that Paul was a disciple. Barnabas, however, "took hold of him" ("ἐπιλαβόμενος") and brought Paul to the apostles, who received him so that he was with them, moving freely about Jerusalem, speaking out boldly in the name of the Lord (Acts 9:26-31, page 1717).

Identification. If you have a ministry of laying hold of a new believer to introduce that new believer to other believers so that fears and prejudices may be laid aside, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Helps.

Section Three

The Ministry of The Helper

3.1 John Mark. When Paul and Barnabas returned from their mission to Jerusalem to deliver a contribution from Antioch to the poor of Jerusalem, they brought with them John who was also called Mark (Acts 12:25, page 1722). As Paul and Barnabas began their first missionary journey, they took along John as their helper ("ὑπηρέτην"). John helped Paul and Barnabas proclaim the word of God. After John's early departure from the first missionary journey, Paul refused to take John on the next missionary journey, but Barnabas separated from Paul and took John with him (Acts 15:36-41, page 1731). Paul later found Mark to be useful for service ("εὔχρηστος εἰς διακονίαν") to Paul (2 Timothy 4:11).

Identification. If you have a ministry of traveling with missionaries, and seek to aid them in their preaching and teaching, you may have The Spiritual Gift of Helps.

Section Four

The Ministry of Supporting

The Use of other Gifts

4.1 Barnabas. When the Holy Spirit began producing much fruit in Antioch, the Jerusalem church sent Barnabas to Antioch to investigate the matter. After witnessing first hand the many great things God was doing in Antioch among the people, and especially the Gentiles, Barnabas left and went to Tarsus to pick up Paul and bring him to Antioch to join the ministry team. Barnabas helped Paul develop his use of spiritual gifts by his daily encouragement to participate in the booming ministry at Antioch and use his spiritual gifts to the glory of God (Acts 11:19-30, page 1722). You may recall that on the first missionary journey, Paul at Lystra discerned the faith of the lame man to be made well, and the man was healed by God. Yet, the people regarded Barnabas as the chief speaker and called Barnabas the name of their highest God, Zeus (Acts 14:8-18, pages 1727-1728). Although Paul did his share of preaching on that first missionary journey, Barnabas and Paul worked together on a ministry team and both were acclaimed speakers. Please keep in mind that Barnabas was instrumental in bringing Paul along in the ministry and helping him use his spiritual gifts to the glory of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of seeking out believers to have them join a ministry team, so that they will use their spiritual gifts next to other gifted believers, and the ministry team functions even better together, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Helps.

4.2 Paul. Having benefited from the influence of Barnabas in his life, Paul wrote under the inspiration of God about discipleship. Paul taught that discipleship begins with salvation and leads to entrusting the things learned from others to the next generation of disciples who will in turn entrust those things to the next generation of disciples (2 Timothy 2:2, page 1862). Paul practiced what he preached and taught. Young Timothy joined Paul in missionary service and Paul greatly aided Timothy by instructing him and encouraging him to use his spiritual gifts to the glory

of God (see all of 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy). Paul performed the same type of service for Titus (see the Book of Titus) and others in the New Testament.

Identification. If you have a ministry of helping disciples to use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God and often provide hands on guidance, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Helps.

Hallmarks of the Spiritual Gift of Helps

Helps: Understanding the Spiritual Gift. The believer with the Spiritual Gift of Helps ministers in many ways, helping believers with protection, service, development and discipleship. They use their spiritual git to assist ministry teams, develop individual believers, and provide protection against threats.

Please review this entire article to understand The Spiritual Gifts of Helps and to see if you have that spiritual gift.

If you want to examine yourself regarding The Spiritual Gift of Helps, then see if you have a special ability to help other believers glorify God and to protect them from evil. If you find yourself participating in the some of the activities listed below, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Helps.

♦ Helps-gifted believers may have a ministry of striving to lay hold of the prize of the upward call of God, while gripped by Jesus.

♦ Helps-gifted believers may have a ministry of providing a means of escape and protection for other believers under attack.

♦ Helps-gifted believers may have a ministry of laying hold of new believers to introduce them to other believers so that fears and prejudices may be laid aside.

♦ Helps-gifted believers may have a ministry of traveling with missionaries and aiding them with preaching and teaching.

♦ Helps-gifted believers may have a ministry of seeking out believers to join a ministry team, so that they will use their spiritual gifts next to other gifted believers, and the ministry team functions better together.

♦ Helps-gifted believers may have a ministry of helping disciples to use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God and often provide hands-on spiritual guidance.

Conclusion

Because the word "helps" only occurs one place in the New Testament, we have very little direct lexical evidence to determine what the word means in the New Testament. Therefore, I am cautious about its meaning in the context of The Spiritual Gift of Helps. Even so, the most obvious meaning (to me) would be that this spiritual gift enables the use of other spiritual gifts by helping other believers use their spiritual gifts. Of course, we all share in that privilege of helping others use their spiritual gifts through the process of discipleship, but these people shine brightly using their gifts while striving to lay hold of the prize, providing escape and protection for other believers, introducing them to others and overcoming fear and prejudice, traveling with missionaries, and seeking out others to join a ministry team.

16

The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter

Class of Gift: Speaking

Romans 12:8, Page 1775

"or he who exhorts, in his exhortation;"

Watch the Video with Bert Allen

Section One

Introduction

1.1 Every Born-Again Christian Has at Least One Spiritual Gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, page 1796). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of ministries, with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Therefore, if you have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter, that single gift may result in a variety of ministries, producing a variety of effects. Furthermore, if you have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter, your ministry may look very different from another believer with the same gift of exhortation. Your ministries of the same spiritual gift may produce very different effects. So, one gift may result in different ministries, and each ministry may produce very different spiritual effects.

1.2 Meaning of the Term "Exhortation." The term used to describe the gift of exhortation in Romans 12:8, page 1775, literally means to call

along side of you ("παρακαλῶν"). In Romans 12:8, page 1775, Paul did not define this term. Therefore, I understand that Paul recognized that his readers would be familiar with the normal usage of this term "exhorting," preserved for us in Scripture, and it would serve as our guide to understanding The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

1.3 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Exhortation." The Greek phrase translated here as he who exhorts ("ὁ παρακαλῶν") has diverse applications in the New Testament. As you read through these varying uses of the basic term "to call along side" ("παρακαλεῖν"), please keep in mind that I interpret these passages below as examples on the one hand of spiritual activities all believers will do at times; but, on the other hand, the saint with The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter with the ministries described below will have a special gift from God to edify believers and build up unity. Let us explore some of those uses to gain insight into the different ways God gifts people to exhort in His name and in His ministry to the Body of Christ. We will see below that The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter involves different major areas of ministry. We will look at them one at a time.

Section Two

The Ministry of the Exhorter: Foundations

2.1 Exhort: Basic Meaning. Exhortation has the traditional meaning of advising, instructing, and calling upon urgently. In the New Testament, The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter has many ministries and effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-6, page 1796).

Identification. If you have a ministry of exhorting advising, instructing, and calling upon people urgently, and especially believers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

2.2 Exhortation: Teaching and Refuting. As we hold fast the faithful word of God's teaching, we will be able both to exhort ("παρακαλεῖν") in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict (Titus 1:9, page 1866). In this case, The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter focuses upon taking action

(encouraging sound doctrine and refuting those who contradict) based upon the teaching and applying the word of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of holding fast the faithful word of God's teaching, and you use the Bible both to exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

2.3 Exhortation: Preaching. Biblical preaching includes exhorting ("παρακαλέσας") believers from the Word of God. Paul exhorted believers as he preached the Bible to them (Acts 20:1-2, page 1739). The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes taking the Word of God to elders and other believers to strengthen them and prepare them for further service.

Identification. If you have a ministry of exhorting people from the word of God while preaching to them, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

2.4 Exhortation: Godly Living. Paul also exhorted ("παρακαλοῦμεν") the Thessalonians to Godly living (1 Thessalonians 4:1, page 1849). Likewise, in Hebrews 13:22, page 1887, we see a similar idea of urging believers to bear with all the word of exhortation contained in the New Testament book of Hebrews. In passing, please note that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets also relates to The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter. Exhortation does not relate to new revelation from God (The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets), but rather the use of the word of God to edify the lives of believers and promote sound doctrine. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the proper, spiritual application of expository teaching from the word of God (1 Corinthians 14:31, page 1800). This spiritual gift links the word of God with action based upon it. That action can be refutation, instruction, and application of teaching.

Identification. If you have a ministry of refuting, instructing, and applying teaching, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

Section Three

The Ministry of The Exhorter:

Imploring

3.1 Exhortation: Imploring. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes, at times, the act of imploring someone to do something. The term "implore" means to beg or request with urgency and in a serious manner to do something.

Identification. If you have a ministry of imploring people to do something, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

3.2 Exhortation: Imploring God To Act Now. Consider the centurion who came to Jesus, imploring Him to help a tormented servant (Matthew 8:6, page 1512). Although that centurion was not demonstrating The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter, he does illustrate the passion and urgency of The Spiritual Gift of Exhortation when it comes to imploring. The centurion stands for the concept that The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes, at times, an urgent, forceful appeal for help from God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of making urgent, foreceful appeals to God for help, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

3.3 Exhortation: Imploring Believers To Walk Worthy of Their Calling by the Lord Jesus. Paul implored ("Παρακαλῶ") the Ephesians to walk worthy of their calling (Ephesians 4:1, page 1830). One aspect of The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the gift of imploring people to take action, and specifically, to do the will of God. In your life, you may recall a time when someone implored you to walk with God, to do His will.

Identification. If you have a ministry of imploring people to do the will of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

Section Four

The Ministry of The Exhorter:

Comfort

4.1 Exhortation: Comforting. Believers blessed with the ministry of comforting show one aspect of The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter. Comfort can result in a variety of ministries and a variety of effects.

Identification. If you have a ministry of comforting people, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

4.1.1 Exhortation: Comforting the Afflicted. God Himself really cares about each believer and comforts them. He also provides The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter , which goes beyond the duty and privilege of every believer to comfort others. Some believers who have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter have been trained by God using affliction in their lives. In 2 Corinthians 1:4, page 1804, we read that God comforts ("παρακαλῶν") believers "in all our affliction so that we will be able to comfort ("παρακαλεῖν") those who are in any affliction with the comfort ("παρακλήσεως") with which we ourselves are comforted ("παρακαλούμεθα") by God." Even while they are still suffering with their own afflictions, by God's strength and gift, they reach out and call alongside others suffering their own afflictions and comfort them with God's comfort that they have experienced firsthand (2 Corinthians 1:4, page 1804). When believers face serious affliction and need comforting, God sends a saint with The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter with a ministry of comforting the afflicted.

Identification. If you have a ministry of comforting the afflicted, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

4.1.2 Exhortation: Comforting the Grieving. When believers see a loved one die, we do not grieve as other people who have no hope. We comfort ("παρακαλεῖτε") one another with the knowledge that each believer who has left the body is present with the Lord. Furthermore, each body will be resurrected in glory when Christ Jesus comes in the clouds to rapture His

saints in Christ. The saint with The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter will apply God's gracious truth to the grieving in a special outpouring of spiritual activity (1 Thessalonians 4:18, page 1850).

Identification. If you have a ministry of comforting the grieving, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

4.1.3 Exhortation: Comforting the Repentant. Every believer must comfort ("παρακαλέσαι") believers who confess their sins, so that they will not be overwhelmed by sorrows (2 Corinthians 2:7, page 1806). Yet, The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter provides special comfort for restoring the repentant soul as it hurts from sin. Indeed, when the church imposes discipline upon a believer, the goal will always be restoration (Galatians 6:1, 1826). After repentance, restoration comes with comforting. In contrast to the ministry of The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter that implores, or exhorts in the narrow sense, this ministry of The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter follows up with people who have strayed, repented and now need comforting.

Identification. If you have a ministry of comforting the repentant, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

4.1.4 Exhortation: Comforting the Depressed. God comforts ("παρακαλῶν") the depressed, and sent Titus who comforted ("παρεκάλεσεν") Paul. (2 Corinthians 7:6, page 1811). The word used for depression here ("ταπεινοὺς") means low, humble, or brought low with grief. God used the arrival of Titus to encourage Paul and his companions. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter brings comfort to the grieving, the lowly, the emotionally turmoiled and downtrodden.

Identification. If you have a ministry of comforting the depressed, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

Section Five

The Ministry of The Exhorter:

Appealing

5.1 Exhortation: Appealing. Another area of exhortation includes appealing. Jude wrote to believers, appealing ("παρακαλῶν") to them to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints (Jude 1:3, page 1912). Compare the effect of love motivating Paul to appeal to Philemon for Onesimus his runaway slave (Philemon 1:9, page 1868; compare Philemon 1:10 for the same word used to appeal). Some believers possess the special gift of interceding for another person, and appealing for them and appealing to another believer to do the gracious thing.

Identification. If you have a ministry of appealing to people to contend earnestly for the faith, or appealing to believers to do the right thing, or to appeal to people to do the will of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

Section Six

The Ministry of the Exhorter:

Urging

6.1 Exhortation: Urging. The ministry of urging believers falls into four related areas.

Identification. If you have a ministry of urging believers to do the will of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

6.1.1 Exhortation: Urging Sensible Living. Paul urged ("παρακάλει") the young men to be sensible ("σωφρονεῖν") (Titus 2:6, page 1866). At times, we all need urging to live a more sensible, and less unrestrained, life. In particular, this word sensible includes the idea of restraining

passions. God gifts some people to urge you to live under control, and not in runaway passions. While The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter may be full of emotion like imploring, it also brings all emotions under the control of God. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the ministry of urging believers to live sensibly.

Identification. If you have a ministry of urging believers to live sensibly, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

6.1.2 Exhortation: Urging Completion. Likewise, Paul and his group urged ("παρακαλέσαι") Titus that he may complete ("ἐπιτελέσῃ") the collection for the poor begun among the Corinthians (2 Corinthians 8:6, page 1812). The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the ministry of urging believers to complete the spiritual work they have begun.

Identification. If you have a ministry of urging believers to complete the spiritual work they have begun, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

6.1.3 Exhortation: Urging Believers to Get Along. This urging may be directed to fellow believers to get along: "I urge ("παρακαλῶ") Euodia and I("παρακαλῶ") urge Syntyche to live in harmony ("τὸ αὐτὸ φρονεῖν") in the Lord" (Philippians 4:2, page 1839). Some believers possess the gift of urging people to reconcile their differences and live together in peace. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the ministry of urging believers to get along with each other so that they live in harmony.

Identification. If you have a ministry of urging believers to live in harmony with one another, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

6.1.4 Exhortation: Urging Believers to Abstain from Fleshly Lusts. Peter wrote: "I urge you ("παρακαλῶ")" . . . to abstain from fleshly lusts . . . " (1 Peter 2:11, page 1895). Fleshly lusts plague all believers, but some believers God empowers with a special gift to urge us to abstain from indulging the desires of the flesh and the mind. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the ministry of urging believers to abstain from fleshly lusts.

Identification. If you have a ministry of urging believers to abstain from fleshly lusts, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

Section Seven

Exhortation: The Ministry of Encouraging

7.1 Exhortation: Encouraging. In contrast to what many believers think and practice, God wants to encourage your life. Believers must encourage one another and build up one another in Christ (1 Thessalonians 5:11, page 1850). The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter often includes a note of urgency.

Identification. If you have a ministry of encouraging believers and building up believers in Christ, and encouraging other believers to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

7.1.1 Exhortation: Encouraging Today. Because of the deceitfulness of sin, and the way it hardens our hearts, we need encouragement right now, today. We must encourage ("παρακαλεῖτε") one another as long is it is "Today," so that no one will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin (Hebrews 3:13, page 1872). The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the ministry of encouraging believers today.

Identification. If you have a ministry of encouraging believers today, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

7.1.2 Exhortation: Encouraging Strength and Faith. Paul sent Timothy ahead to Thessalonica to strengthen and encourage ("παρακαλέσαι") their faith (1 Thessalonians 3:2, page 1848). The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the ministry of encouraging strength and faith in believers.

Identification. If you have a ministry of encouraging strength and faith in believers, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

7.1.3 Exhortation: Encouraging To Endure Tribulations. Paul and Silas returned to cities, "strengthening the souls of the disciples, encouraging ("παρακαλοῦντες") them to continue in their faith, and saying 'Through many trials and tribulations we must enter the kingdom of God'" (Acts 14:22, page 1728). As believers, tribulations will come into our lives, and we should

consider ourselves blessed. God has already made us more than conquerors, and believers gifted by God with encouragement remind us of that fact all the time. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the ministry of encouraging believers to continue in their faith, even when they encounter tribulations, knowing that they will enter the kingdom of God after suffering on earth.

Identification. If you have a ministry of encouraging believers to continue in their fiath, even when they encounter tribulation, knowing that they will enter the kingdom of God after suffering on earth, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

Section Eight

The Ministry of The Exhorter:

Conciliating

8.1 Exhortation: Conciliating. Finally, consider the ministry of conciliating. Paul said: “When we are slandered ("δυσφημούμενοι"), we try to conciliate (“παρακαλοῦμεν”);” (1 Corinthians 4:13, page 1786). While we all should follow the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12, page 1506), God provides a special gift of reaching out to people who are speaking evil untruths about you. This type of conciliation touches the lives of the believers who have created significant distance in their relationships with other Christians. Conciliation brings them together, even in the face of one person being sinful. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes the ministry of conciliation.

Identification. If you have a ministry of conciliating when slandered, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

Hallmarks of The Spiritual Gift

of The Exhorter

Exhortation: Understanding the Spiritual Gift. Beverly, my wife, went through this study with me recently. She said: "Wow, I may have this spiritual gift now that I understand it." Sometimes careful study may lead you to know more about how God has gifted you for service. Remember that our spiritual unity and maturity depend upon all of the saints, and not the "clergy," doing the work of service to God by ministering to the Body of Christ. Please recall that the list below indicates some of the ministries exhortation-gifted believers perform in service to Jesus Christ our Lord.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter and then see if you may have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed below and then see if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers teach and refute.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers preach.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers encourage Godly living.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers encourage other believers to act now.

♦ Exhortation-gifted urge believers to walk worthy of their calling in Jesus Christ.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers comfort the afflicted.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers comfort the grieving.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers comfort the repentant.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers comfort the depressed.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers appeal to other believers.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers urge sensible living.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers urge completion.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers urge believers to get along.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers urge believers to abstain from fleshly lusts.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers encourage believers today.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers encourage strength and faith.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers to endure tribulation.

♦ Exhortation-gifted believers conciliate.

Conclusion

The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter produces a variety of effects, and a variety of ministries. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter involves up close and personal activity, and often rests upon establishing, maintaining and reconciling personal relationships. The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter includes getting close to people in love, and calling to them in love, with a purpose.

17

The Spiritual Gift of The Leader

Category of Gift: Service

Romans 12:8, Page 1775

"he who leads, with diligence"

Every born-again Christian has at least one spiritual gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from the Lord Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, page 1796). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of ministries ("διακονιῶν"), with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Therefore, if you have The Spiritual Gift of Helps, that single gift may result in a variety of ministries and spiritual effects. Although not all believers may have The Spiritual Gift of Helps, they should be careful to lay hold of people for the purpose of helping them pursue the glory of God.

The Spiritual Gift of The Leader in the New Testament requires special study because people frequently misunderstand it. The believers exercising The Spiritual Gift of The Leader in the local assembly must be spirit-controlled believers, who are depending upon God using their spiritual gift to provide leading to the church. So often, the people who are popular, or the people who give the most money to the church, or those people with the greatest influence upon other people, set the direction of the church and provide leading, whether or not that person has The Spiritual Gift of The Leader or is Spirit-filled. In this study, we will look at The Spiritual Gift of The Leader in the New Testament.

In Romans 12:8, Page 1775, we read about the spiritual gift of "he who leads," which I will refer to as The Spiritual Gift of The Leader. I chose this phrase "The Leader" because it conveys the idea of the participle in the Greek text ("προϊστάμενος"). With some of the spiritual gifts, we only have a few words

to describe the gift and its uses. We can understand more about The Spiritual Gift of The Leader by examining the use of the words related to "leading" in other passages in the New Testament.

Section One

Leading in the New Testament

In the New Testament, God provided directions for leading the Church through offices (elder and deacon), and also through the spiritual gifts, whether the spiritually gifted man holds an office or not. Leading in the New Testament means that believers follow the will of God, and The Spiritual Gift of The Leader helps believers follow the will of God. Every member of the body of Christ has a special spiritual gift, and God seriously expects each of us to use those spiritual gifts in the service and edification of all believers. We can review the concept of leading in the New Testament to explain The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

1.1 The Term "Lead" Defined. The word "leading" ("προϊστάμενος") in Romans 12:8, page 1775 provides a starting point for understanding The Spiritual Gift of The Leader in the New Testament. I submit it may be best to limit the gift of leading described here to the use of the term "leading" ("προϊστάμενος") and its related uses in the New Testament. You may certainly look to other passages to understand the work that leaders do in the local assembly, such as Hebrews 13:7, 17 and 24, pages 1886 and 1887 and 1 Peter 5:1-4, page 1899 (Elders there). Saints with The Spiritual Gift of The Leader may or may not hold the Church Office of Overseer in the church, and perhaps the pastor may not have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader. The other word "diligence" ("σπουδῇ") in Romans 12:8, page 1775, helps us understand how The Spiritual Gift of The Leader should be exercised. First, let us examine the concept of leading and then turn to the proper use of this spiritual gift with diligence.

Section Two

The Ministry of Leading:

Taking Care at Home

We know from 1 Corinthians 12:5-6, page 1796, that one spiritual gift may produce a variety of ministries ("διακονιῶν") and a variety of effects ("ἐνεργημάτω"). In this case, The Spiritual Gift of The Leader may produce a variety of ministries with a variety of spiritual effects. So, we will examine The Spiritual Gift of The Leader and look at its ministries and effects.

2.1 The Ministry of Leading at Home. The root word for "lead" in Romans 12:8, page 1775, provides guidance for understanding The Spiritual Gift of The Leader. The ministry of Elders (an office of the church--not a spiritual gift) and Deacons (an office of the church--not a spiritual gift) begins at home and we will examine the qualifications for those offices briefly.

Identification. As a male believer, if you have a ministry of leading well at home, so that your family members live to the glory of God, then you may have one of the qualifications to be an Elder in your local assembly; you may also have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

2.1.1 The Qualification of Elders. Elders must manage their own families to the glory of God. Elders in the New Testament have specialized duties, such as shepherding the flock from: (a) savage wolves attacking from without; and (b) evil men within the flock drawing away saints from the flock (Acts 20:28-30, page 1741). This ministry of managing the home rests upon the same root word as "leads" in Romans 12:8, page 1775. The qualifications for elders include the ability to manage ("προϊστάμενον") their own children and their own households and keep them under control ("ὑποταγῇ") (1 Timothy 3:4, page 1856). Therefore, we may understand that one aspect of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader will involve influencing the mind and behavior of people, so that they will mature in Christ, while staying under control, and maintaining dignity ("σεμνότητος"). The saints need this type of leading from leaders, including Elders, who have first demonstrated this leading ability at home.

2.1.2 The Qualification of Deacons. Likewise, Deacons must have the same ability to be leaders ("προϊστάμενοι") at home first (1 Timothy 3:12, page 1856). Deacons labor at home and keep their own families under control by promoting Godliness in the family before they become Deacons.

2.2 The Ministries of Leading and Taking Care. The overseer (Elder) must also be able to manage ("προστῆναι") his own household well; if he cannot manage his own household, then how will he take care ("ἐπιμελήσεται") of the church of God? (1 Timothy 3:5, page 1856). Please take notice here that the ability to manage his own household directly relates to taking care of the church of God. The ministries of managing and taking care have a direct relationship.

Identification. As a male, if you have a ministry of managinge your own household well, you may have one of the qualifications to be a Deacon in your local assembly; you may also have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

2.2.1 The Ministry of Providing Necessary Care. The Roman centurian Julian had to guard Paul and take Paul to Rome. During the journey, at Sidon, Julian allowed Paul to go to his friends and receive needed care ("ἐπιμελείας") (Acts 27:3, page 1753). Apparently, this ministry of providing necessary care involved both spiritual and physical help.

2.2.2. The Ministry of Providing Physical Care to the Injured. Likewise, the good Samaritan paid the innkeeper and directed him to take care ("Ἐπιμελήθητι") of his neighbor (Luke 10:35, page 1620). This ministry involved the payment for physical services rendered, and provided time for the physically injured to recover.

Identification. If you have a ministry of providing necessary care (directly or indirectly) to the needy, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

2.2.3 The Ministry of Searching Carefully. Finally, consider the woman who searches her house carefully ("ἐπιμελῶς") to find the lost coin (Luke 15:8, page 1631). The careful searching by the woman means that The Spiritual Gift of The Leader involves concerted efforts to find missing things. It speaks to the need to be diligent and thorough in the ministry of leading carefully.

Identification. If you have a ministry of searching carefully for things, especially missing things or missing people, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

So, we learn that The Spiritual Gift of The Leader starts at home. Males holding the offices of Elder and Deacon in the local church may possess The Spiritual Gift of The Leader, but they must display an exemplary ability to lead. Other men may possess The Spiritual Gift of The Leader, but they will perform their ministries without holding the Church Office of Overseer or Deacon. We often see the gift in action by noticing the effects of the proper use of the spiritual gift.

Section Three

The Spiritual Effects of

The Spiritual Gift of The Leader

The Spiritual Gift of The Leader produces spiritual effects in the lives of believers. We know that one spiritual gift may result in a variety of different ministries and effects. The Spiritual Gift of The Leader means that the leaders will lead the assembly of saints, helping believers grow up in Christ, staying under control, and maintaining a dignified reputation for the assembly. Furthermore, the leaders have charge ("προϊσταμένους") over the saints, who should appreciate their Godly leading (1 Thessalonians 5:12, page 1850). Indeed, these leaders who lead well ("καλῶς προεστῶτες") should receive double honor (1 Timothy 5:17, page 1858). As a side note, Elders should also be careful, as leaders, to recognize the spiritual gifts of the saints under their charge and encourage them (1 Timothy 4:14, page 1857). All leaders must labor diligently. When The Spiritual Gift of The Leader operates properly, you will see the following effects in the lives of believers. The Spiritual Gift of The Leader produces the spiritual effect of control and the spiritual effect of dignity. We will look at each of them next.

3.1 The Spiritual Effect of Control. The Spiritual Gift of The Leader produces control ("ὑποταγῇ") (1 Timothy 3:4, page 1856). This term "control" ("ὑποταγῇ") describes both voluntary submission and compulsory

subordination. This spiritual ability to bring people under the control of God reflects a special spiritual gift.

Identification. If you have a ministry characterized by the ability to control people through both voluntary submission and compulsory subordination, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

3.1.1 Subjection. The term "subjection" ("ὑποταγῇ") shows the fruit of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader. When used properly, The Spiritual Gift of The Leader results in believers following the will of God. This term "subjection" has several different aspects.

Identification. If you have a ministry characterized by the ability to encourage subjection to God, so that believers follow the will of God, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

3.1.2 Control by Jesus. Today, if you say someone is controlling, you are often criticizing them. Unbelievers long to live without the control of other people. In contrast, Jesus loves to control His children and His mature children love that control. Jesus ascended to heaven after angels, authorities and powers were subjected (1 Peter 3:22--"ὑποταγέντων"--notice the aorist participle indicating complete and total control) to Him. Therefore, we see this special power of God acting forcefully to bring supernatural beings (angels, authorities, and powers) into subjection to Christ. Believers with The Spiritual Gift of The Leader have a special spiritual gift to bring other people under the will of Christ. Do not misunderstand: while Christ ascended and exercised His will over angels, authorities and powers, we still wrestle against them, but we triumph in Christ as we stand in His might (Ephesians 6:10-17, page 1834). In contrast, Paul also taught us that the mind set on the flesh is not able to subject itself ("ὑποτάσσεται") to the law of God (Romans 8:7, page 1768). In the future, after all things have been subjected ("ὑποταγῇ") to Jesus, then Jesus will be subjected ("ὑποταγήσεται") to the Father who subjected to Him (τῷ ὑποτάξαντι αὐτῷ") all things. We learn from this verse that a believer does nothing more that Jesus does when He is subjected to the control and authority of the Father (1 Corinthians 15:28, page 1801). Being under the control of Jesus or the Father in no way diminishes the spiritual stature of the person being subjected, but rather acknowledges a perfect joining of wills. Although we do not yet see all things placed in subjection to Christ, yet the Scripture proclaims that, in fact, all things have been placed in subjection to Christ (Hebrews 2:8, page 1871). Furthermore,

Christ Himself has the inherent, divine power as God to subject all things to Himself (Philippians 3:21, page 1839). Therefore, one effect of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader means that the local assembly lives under the control of Jesus.

Identification. If you have a ministry where God uses you to bring other believers under His control, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

3.1.3 Obedience to Your Confession of the Gospel of Christ. The term "control" also includes obedience to your confession of Christ. When exercised properly, The Spiritual Gift of The Leader will result in believers acting in obedience to their confession of Christ. In 2 Corinthians 9:13, page 1814, Paul discussed the ministry of hard work to earn a living to supply the needs of the saints and make donations to other believers. As the Corinthians worked for a living, they glorified God by their obedience ("ὑποταγῇ") to their confession of Christ. The Spiritual Gift of The Leader produces obedience in working and giving money for the support of the saints. In a more general sense, The Spiritual Gift of The Leader helps believers live obediently to their confession of Jesus Christ. If you claim to be born again by confessing Christ as Lord because of your faith in Him, then The Spiritual Gift of The Leader will help you live accordingly. For example, The Spiritual Gift of The Leader will help believers understand and apply the duty in Christ to work hard and use the proceeds of hard work to bless other believers in need of support. Therefore, one spiritual effect of control means that the local assembly lives in obedience to their confession of Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of bringing other believers to live obediently to their confession Christ, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

3.1.4 Not Yielding to Hypocrisy and False Teachers. In the Book of Galatians, Paul described hypocrisy. He confronted the apostle Peter for falling into the hypocrisy of acting like a Judaizer (these people taught you must keep the law to go to heaven). When the Judaizers came to visit in Antioch, then Peter acted just like they did. Paul proclaimed that "we did not yield in subjection ("ὑποταγῇ") to them for even an hour, so that the truth of the gospel would remain with you" (Galatians 2:5, page 1820). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control means that the local assembly does not yield in subjection to hypocrisy and false doctrine.

Identification. If you have a ministry of keeping believers from yielding to hypocrisy and false teachers, and you confront other believers who promote such evil behavior, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

3.1.5 Accepting Discipline Well. Receiving discipline does not always seem joyful, but discipline trains us in Godliness and results in the peaceful fruit of righteousness. For discipline to yield good results in our lives, we must be subject ("ὑποταγησόμεθα") to the Father of spirits, and live (Hebrews 12:9, page 1884). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control means that the local assembly lives in subjection to the discipline of the Lord and bears the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

Identification. If you have a ministry of receiving discipline well, and are well trained in Godliness, with your life abounding with the peaceful fruit of righteousness, and help others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

3.1.6 Submit to God and Resist the Devil. James teaches us that we must submit ("ὑποτάγητε") to God, and resist the devil. Another effect of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader will be to help people to submit to God and, while submitting to God, to resist the devil. Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control means the local assembly submits to God and resists the devil.

Identification. If you have a ministry of submiting to God and resisting the devil as a way of life, and helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

3.1.7 Submit to Every Human Institution. Peter commands us: "Submit ("Ὑποτάγητε") yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution (1 Peter 2:13, page 1895; compare Titus 3:1, page 1867). Notice that we submit for the sake of the Lord Jesus. Jesus paid taxes (Matthew 17:24-27, page 1532), and recognized that even Pilate had no authority over Him except that authority given by God to Pilate (John 19:11, page 1693). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control causes the local assembly to submit to every human institution, within the will of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of submiting yourself to every human institution, and paying taxes appropriately, within the will of God, and

helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

3.1.8 Younger Men Be Subject to Elders. Peter also directed young men to be subject to elders (1 Peter 5:5, page 1899). Younger men would do well to let older, Godly men lead the assembly. All leaders in the local assembly must possess The Spiritual Gift of Leadership. Within the group of men possessing The Spiritual Gift of Leadership, the younger men should follow the general pattern of younger men submitting to the older men. Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control causes younger men in the assembly to submit to the older men.

Identification. If you have a ministry of submiting to elders, and helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

3.2 The Spiritual Effect of Being Careful To Engage in Good Deeds. Paul commanded Timothy to be careful to speak confidently, so that believers will be careful to engage in ("προΐστασθαι ") good deeds (Titus 3:8, page 1867). This spiritual effect of being careful to engage in good deeds flows from The Spiritual Gift of The Leader. As believers exercise The Spiritual Gift of The Leader, people hear them speak confidently about the doctrine in the New Testament, and the believers become careful to engage in good deeds. Not only must the saints with The Spiritual Gift of The Leader be careful to engage in good deeds personally, but they must also lead others to engage in good works. By implication, the entire assembly may unify its efforts to produce good works, and unite individual efforts. Often, the leaders identify the pressing needs of the saints that require others to do good deeds to meet those needs (Titus 3:14, page 1867). Therefore, another spiritual effect of spiritual control causes the local assembly to engage in good deeds.

Identification. If you have a ministry of engaging in good deeds, and helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

So we learn that The Spiritual Gift of The Leader produces the spiritual effects of control within the local assembly and the local assembly being careful to engage in a variety of good deeds, all to the glory of God. The

Spiritual Gift of The Leader must be exercised with control--evenly, consistently, and with diligence.

Section Four

The Ministry of Leading:

Diligence

We have reviewed some of the New Testament material concerning the general concept of leading in the New Testament. From that general understanding of leading, we can see that in Romans 12:8, page 1775, it must be done with diligence. Therefore, we will now begin a review of the New Testament concept of diligence, with a special view of how diligence would apply to the use of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1 Word Study of Diligence. We can study the word "diligence" ("σπουδῇ") in the New Testament to gain further insight into the proper exercise of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader. The study of the term "diligence" reveals several related categories of meaning for this word, and many of them tell us how to use The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.1 Diligence and Eagerness. In Romans 12:8, page 1775, Paul used the word for "diligence" ("σπουδῇ") to describe how The Spiritual Gift of The Leader must be exercised. Sometimes that same word for "diligence" is translated "with eagerness." We may gain further insight into the use of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader by reviewing some of the uses of the root term diligence.

4.1.1.1 Onesiphorus. Onesiphoris stands out as a great example of eagerness. During Paul's imprisonment in Rome, Onesiphorus eagerly ("σπουδαίως") searched for Paul, to refresh him, even though others may have stayed away because they were ashamed of his chains (2 Timothy 1:17, pages 1861-1862). Men with The Spiritual Gift of The Leader display this same quality. This eagerness identifies every man displaying The Spiritual Gift of Leadership. You may identify The Spiritual Gift of Leadership by observing men in the local assembly who search out the believers in the flock who need ministry in any form, such as refreshment, encouragement, and

the list goes on. The Spiritual Gift of Leadership prompts the believer to search out eagerly ways to meet the needs of saints and you are not ashamed to go where others are too ashamed or too scared or too important to go.

Identification. If you have a ministry of eagerly searching out ways to meet the needs of saints and you are not ashamed to go where others are too ashamed or too scared or too important to go, and you help others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.1.2 Making Every Effort. In some New Testament passages, the root word translated "diligence" found in Romans 12:8 has been translated as "make every effort."

4.1.1.2.1 Come Quickly. For example, in 2 Timothy 4:21, page 1865, Paul urged Timothy to make every effort ("Σπούδασον") to come before winter to visit him. Previously, in 2 Timothy 4:9, page 1864, Paul urged Timothy to make every effort ("Σπούδασον") to come quickly to him. This diligence that means "make every effort" should also characterize the use of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

Identification. If you have a ministry of making every effort to come quickly to those in need, and you help others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.1.2.2 Encourage Others. People with The Spiritual Gift of The Leader must be known as people who "make every effort" to encourage others. Likewise, in Titus 3:12, page 1867, Paul urged Titus: “make every effort (“σπούδασον”)” to come to him in Nicopolis.

Identification. If you have a ministry of making every effort to come and encourage others, especially by visiting them, and helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.1.2.3 Writing Others. Jude said he "was making every effort” ("σπουδὴν") to write concerning their common salvation (Jude 1:3, page 1912).

Identification. If you have a ministry of making every effort to write people concerning their common salvation, and helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.1.2.4 Summary of Making Every Effort. The same "make every effort" attitude describes one aspect of diligence that must be an important part of how saints gifted with The Spiritual Gift of The Leader undertake their leading. They should put all of their efforts into leading, and not be absent or part-time leaders. Of course leaders can have a variety of full time jobs, but when it comes to exercising The Spiritual Gift of The Leader, they should remember to make every effort.

4.1.2 Diligence and Helping Others. Another aspect of diligence includes being careful to help others. Leaders need to help others with diligence. For example, Paul instructed Titus to be diligent ("σπουδαίως") to help Zenas the lawyer and Apollos on their way so that they would lack nothing (Titus 3:13, page 1867). This "lack nothing" ("μηδὲν λείπῃ") attitude must guide leaders to be diligent to help other workers lack nothing as they equip them for ministry.

Identification. If you have a ministry of diligently supplying others so that they lack nothing, and helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.3 Diligence and Self-Examination. Another meaning of "diligence" includes diligent ("σπουδάσατε") self-examination to be certain about the calling of Christ and His choosing of believers (2 Peter 1:10, page 1900). Saints with The Spiritual Gift of The Leader should be certain to encourage other saints to examine themselves diligently to be sure they are pursuing personal spiritual development in the areas of faith, moral excellence, knowledge, self-control, perseverance, Godliness, brotherly kindness, and love (2 Peter 1:5-8, page 1900). In 2 Peter 1:5, page 1900, Peter directed the saints to apply all diligence ("σπουδὴν") to perfect their lives through adding Godly qualities within themselves by the power of God. With those spiritual qualities, saints will be useful for the service of God. This quality of diligent self-examination, in conjunction with a spiritual desire to mature in the qualities Christ produces in us, means that every person desiring to lead must encourage everyone to perform regular spiritual self-examination, starting with the leader himself.

Identification. If you have a ministry of making diligent self-examination, and you have a spiritual desire to mature in the qualities Christ produces in us, and you help others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.4 Diligence and Spiritual Development. Another use, related directly to the passage in 2 Peter 1:5-8, page 1900, of this word "diligence" concerns the duty of leaders to be totally diligent ("σπουδάσατε") to present saints to Christ in peace, spotless and blameless (2 Peter 3:14, page 1902). The spiritual welfare of the flock requires constant diligence to preserve peace within the assembly, and to promote a spotless and blameless testimony in every saint.

Identification. If you have a ministry of striving diligently to present saints to Christ in peace, spotless and blameless, and you help others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.5 Diligence and Handling the Word of God. So often I meet people who have been saved from the penalty of their sins for many years, and yet cannot locate in their Bibles any two verses that describe salvation. I am not talking about arcane spiritual matters in obscure passages, but rather basic truths about essential matters of the faith. Ignorance of God's Word stains the lives of so many believers. Furthermore, many saints have no intention of reading the Bible, and becoming acquainted with the principles of reading and interpreting the Bible. In 2 Timothy 2:15, page 1862, Paul commanded each saint to be continuously diligent ("σπούδασον") to present themselves approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the word of truth. The Spiritual Gift of The Leader must address this need in every Christian to learn how to handle and interpret the Word of God, and it is not just the duty of the leading believers to interpret the Bible and handle it accurately. Every saint must know how to read, interpret and apply Scripture daily. Leaders use diligence in leading the saints in this area. The spiritual effect of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader means that saints handle the word of God properly, as a workman that does not need to be ashamed.

Identification. If you have a ministry of diligently handling the word of God, and interpreting it and applying it properly, and helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.6 Diligence and Reminding. In 2 Peter 1:15, page 1900, Peter declared that he would be diligent ("σπουδάσω") that after his departure, his audience would be able to call his teaching to their minds. Leaders exercising The Spiritual Gift of The Leader should always have this desire to remind

believers, and be diligent about reminding believers, to abide in the doctrine of Jesus Christ and His teaching, as recorded in the Old and New Testaments. The spiritual effect of The Spiritual Gift of the Leader means that saints remember the teachings of Christ.

Identification. If you have a ministry of diligently reminding saints to remember the teachings of Jesus, and helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.7 Diligence and Entering the Rest of God. In Hebrews 4:11, page 1873, God commanded saints that we must be diligent ("σπουδάσωμεν") to enter His rest. In exercising The Spiritual Gift of The Leader, everyone who has received the word of God with saving faith must be diligent to enter the rest of God. The leader works with saints to keep them from falling, and being sure that each saint remains strong in the faith. The spiritual effect of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader produces diligence in entering the rest of God.

Identification. If you have a ministry of diligently seeking to enter the rest of God, and you strive to keep from falling away spiritually, and you help others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

4.1.8 Diligence and Godly Sorrow. Another example of the use of the term for "diligence" occurs in 2 Corinthians 7:11, page 1811. There we see that Godly sorrow produced great earnestness ("σπουδήν") in the Corinthians as they dealt with the sinful brother described in 1 Corinthians 5:1-5, pages 1786-1787. Their great earnestness led them to vindication, fear, longing, zeal and avenging of wrong. Leaders operating under the influence of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader will help all the saints develop a sense of great earnestness as the result of Godly sorrow over sin. This great earnestness will itself result in the saints taking appropriate action to restore the sinner, and restore the local assembly. The spiritual effect of The Spiritual Gift of The Leader produces an earnest sorrow over sin leading to repentance and Godly living.

Identification. If you have a ministry of diligently seeking repentance that produces earnest sorrow over sin and leading to Godly living, and helping others in the local assembly to do likewise, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

Hallmarks of the Spiritual Gift of Leading

Leading: Understanding the Spiritual Gift. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Leader starts at home to manage his family in the will of God. He encourages others to live in the will of God, and to seek out people in need to refresh them and help them. He provides spiritual care for everyone, and exercises his gift with diligence. He promotes voluntary submission to God and compulsory control by God. He pays his taxes and resists the devil, while living an exemplary lifestyle of submission to God. He seeks out missing people and leads them back to Christ. He eagerly makes every effort to help people in need, and always acts with diligence.

Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of The Leader and then see if you have that spiritual gift.

Check out the list below to see if you have some of the spiritual qualities listed and if other believers confirm your understanding. You may have The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

♦ Leading-gifted believers lead first at home with diligence.

♦ Leading-gifted believers provide spiritual care for everyone.

♦ Leading-gifted believers provide physical care.

♦ Leading-gifted believers search carefully for missing people.

♦ Leading-gifted believers promote voluntary submission and compulsory control by causing people to keep the commandments of Christ found in the Bible.

♦ Leading-gifted believers avoid hypocrisy and confront others who fall into it.

♦ Leading-gifted believers accept discipline well.

♦ Leading-gifted believers submit to God and resist the devil.

♦ Leading-gifted believers pay their taxes and submit to every institution.

♦ Leading-gifted believers act with eagerness and bring spiritual refreshment.

♦ Leading-gifted believers come quickly to visit those people in spiritual need.

♦ Leading-gifted believers write others concerning their common salvation.

Conclusion

So, we may summarize The Spiritual Gift of The Leader. Jesus emphasized that the greatest among the saints would be the least of them and servant of all (Mark 9:33-37, page 1576). We see then, as servants, saints gifted with The Spiritual Gift of The Leader must exercise leading with diligence, and be an example to the flock. As saints, we must appreciate their work and honor them.

18

The Spiritual Gift of Navigations

Class of Gift: Speaking

1 Corinthians 12:28, Page 1797

"Navigations"

Section One

Introduction

1.1 Every Born-Again Christian Has at Least One Spiritual Gift. Every born-again believer in Jesus Christ has received a spiritual gift from God (1 Corinthians 12:4-11, page 1796). Please recall also that one spiritual gift may have a variety of ministries ("διακονιῶν"), with a variety of spiritual effects (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, page 1796). Therefore, if you have the Spiritual Gift of Navigations, that single gift may result in a variety of ministries and spiritual effects. Although not all believers may have The Spiritual Gift of Navigations, they should be careful to guide people under the direction of God.

1.2 Meaning of the Term "Navigations." I will use the term "navigations" ("κυβερνήσεις"–plural noun), translated by the New American Standard Bible as "administrations," to describe the special ability to carry out the work of God similar to the work the pilot of a ship (1 Corinthians 12:28, page 1797). The pilot was not the same person as the captain of the ship. In Acts 27:11, page 1754, we see the distinction between "the navigator" ("τῷ κυβερνήτῃ"–translated as "pilot" by the New American Standard) and a "the captain" ("τῷ ναυκλήρῳ") of the ship. A

centurion, with Paul as his prisoner, boarded a ship for the journey to Rome. During their voyage, the centurion had to make a decision about where to harbor for the winter. Paul offered a prophecy from God that the ship would suffer great trouble, but the centurion was more persuaded by the navigator and the captain (notice they both spoke), who urged that they continue on to a harbor on Crete and winter there. Normally, the pilot possessed great local knowledge about weather patterns, currents, depths, and many other maritime matters for a particular area. The pilot worked as part of a team, but the head of the team on board was the captain. The pilot took measurements and readings periodically during the voyage and made changes according to the sailing conditions. The pilot understood maps and knew about weather patterns. The pilot performed a group of tasks designed to reach the destination for the ship. For my purposes, I will use the term "navigations" to refer to the work of navigators, or marine pilots. Therefore, the term "navigations" refers to the spiritual ability to know the current location, the path forward to the destination, and the best route to get there. The pilot charted the course, but did not set the final destination. The pilot fixed the current position and offered course corrections to reach the destination. The pilot served as a navigator, and produced navigations. Notice the plural here. The work of the pilot produced many navigations. I have used that word "navigations" to describe the product of the work of the maritime pilot or navigator. Also, please notice that the list of spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:28, page 1797, consists of nouns, and so they do not focus upon the person entrusted with the spiritual gift (apostles, prophets, teachers), but with the product of the spiritual activity (healings, helps, navigations, kinds of tongues). Also, please note that the New American Standard Bible uses the term "administration" to translate a separate Greek word ("οἰκονομία"–Ephesians 3:9, page 1829) and the root word of "administrations" includes a wide range of activities in the New Testament. Yet, Paul chose a maritime term ("κυβερνήσεις") and I have followed Paul's lead to focus upon the work of the navigator (the maritime pilot), and not the larger use of the term for "administration"("οἰκονομία").

1.3 <u>Navigations and the Spiritual Gifts</u>. All believers must know and use their spiritual gifts to the glory of God. All believers, not just the pastors

and church leaders, perform the work of evangelism. While all believers must perform the work of navigating their own lives, under the direction of the Holy Spirit, only some believers have The Spiritual Gift of Navigations, bestowed by the Holy Spirit upon some, but not all, believers as a gift of grace which works according to His power (Ephesians 3:7, page 1829).

1.4 The New Testament Diversity of the Term "Navigations." The Greek term translated as "administrations" has diverse applications in the New Testament. As you read through these varying uses of the term "administrator" and related words, please keep in mind that I interpret these passages below as examples, on the one hand, of spiritual activities all believers will do at times; but, on the other hand, the saint with the Spiritual Gift of Navigations in the forms described below will have a special gift from God to produce navigations. Let us explore some of those uses to gain insight into the different ways God gifts people to serve in His name and in His ministry to the Body of Christ. We will see below that The Spiritual Gift of Navigations involves different major areas of ministry. We will look at them one at a time.

Section Two

The Ministry of Navigations:

Charting the Course

2.1 Maritime Pilot. During his trial before Porcius Festus, the Roman Governor over the land of Israel (Judea was the name of the Roman province), Paul appealed to Caesar in Rome. Paul had that right because, under Roman law, any Roman citizen could appeal his case directly to Caesar, the emperor of the Roman Empire. As Paul traveled from the land of Israel to the home of Caesar in Rome, the Romans assigned a centurion to take Paul there. Paul traveled by boat and made stops along the way. The journey did go not as quickly as planned, and winter with its storms was approaching fast. The centurion consulted with the captain of the ship and the marine pilot ("τῷ κυβερνήτῃ") about the best course for the ship so that

it could find safe harbor for the winter. Paul warned everyone that great tragedy would come upon the ship, and both human lives and the cargo would be lost. Even so, the centurion was more persuaded by the advice of the captain and the pilot. Not long after the majority on the ship decided to sail and seek safe harbor on Crete, a huge storm caught them and threatened the ship. During the storm, Paul again prophesied and said that the ship would be lost, but now all the lives on the ship would be saved. Just as Paul prophesied, the ship and cargo were lost, but every life was saved. In that seafaring story, the role of the maritime pilot was clearly not the same as the captain. The pilot apparently knew about Phoenix, a safe harbor on the island of Crete, which faced southwest and northwest, and would be a good place for wintering. This kind of local knowledge about the harbor and how to pick the right weather and the right course to sail there characterized the work of the maritime pilot. In this case, even the best laid plans of the captain, the maritime pilot and the majority of the people on board plunged the ship into great peril, because they ignored Paul and his prophecy from God (Acts 27:1-44, pages 1753-1755). Even so, the story provides a nice example of how the maritime pilot was not the same as the captain of the ship. Both the captain and the maritime pilot spoke to the people on board, and persuaded the majority to set sail for Phoenix, a safe harbor, if only they could reach it in time.

Identification. If you have ministry of charting the right course for a group to reach a destination fixed by God, and you use your superior spiritual knowledge of the people and the conditions, so that you can safely navigate to God's destination, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Navigations.

Section Three

The Ministry of Navigations:

Steering Clear of Danger

3.1 Safe Distance. In the future, God will bring judgment upon Babylon the Great City (Revelation 18:1-8, pages 1934-1935). Babylon had made the merchants of the earth very rich, but she will be destroyed. Babylon and its inhabitants will be filled with torment, weeping and mourning. In one hour, Babylon and its wealth will be laid waste. Every marine pilot ("κυβερνήτης") will keep a safe distance from Babylon, as they will watch the smoke of her burning. Those shipmasters will know that they must steer clear of the smoking ruin of Babylon the Great City.

Identification. If you have ministry of identifying great danger, and steering a path to keep the group safely away from such danger, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Navigations.

Hallmarks of The Spiritual

Gift of Navigations

Navigations: Understanding the Spiritual Gifts. The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Navigations ministers in many ways, helping believers to reach the destination of God, while steering the best course, and steering clear of dangers.

Please review this entire article to understand The Spiritual Gift of Navigations and to see if you have that spiritual gift.

If you want to examine yourself regarding The Spiritual Gift of Navigations, then see if you have a special ability to help other believers glorify God and to provide navigations from God. If you find yourself participating in some of the activities listed below, then you may have The Spiritual Gift of Navigations.

♦ Navigations-gifted believers may have a ministry of charting the right course for a group to reach the destination of God, by following the Scriptures, using superior knowledge and experience.

♦ Navigations-gifted believers may have a ministry of steering the group away from dangers, so that the group may arrive at its destination safely.

Conclusion

Because the word “navigations” only occurs twice in the New Testament, we have very little direct lexical evidence to determine what the word means in the New Testament. Therefore, I am cautious about its meaning in the context of The Spiritual Gift of Navigations. Based upon the work of the maritime pilot recorded in the Book of Acts and the Book of Revelation, we gain some insight into how the maritime pilot charted the course to reach the destination fixed by God, and steered the group clear of dangers.

19

The Spiritual Gift of Tongues

Category of Gift: Speaking

1 Corinthians 12:10

"to another various kinds of tongues, ..."

Section One

Pentecost and the Baptism

of the Holy Spirit

1.1 Words from the Holy Spirit. Before Pentecost in Acts 2, Jesus died and was raised from the dead. Before Jesus died, He predicted His death and the later arrest of His disciples. Jesus promised His disciples that they would be arrested, but He also promised that the Holy Spirit would provide the words for them to speak, so that they should not worry beforehand what they are to say ("λαλήσητε"). The Holy Spirit would give them the words to say in that hour. Jesus commanded them: "say: ("λαλεῖτε") the words given to them. Indeed, it is not the disciples who speak in that hour, but the Holy Spirit Himself speaking ("λαλοῦντες") through them (Mark 13:11, page 1584). Therefore, we know that the Holy Spirit may produce well-reasoned, coherent speech in disciples at the appropriate time, even before The Spiritual Gift of Tongues was given at Pentecost.

1.2 Tongues of Fire. After Jesus ascended into heaven, His disciples were gathered together in Jerusalem, waiting for the Holy Spirit to come upon them, just as Jesus had prophesied (Acts 1:8, page 1699). Suddenly, a noise like a violent wind from heaven filled the whole house where the disciples

were gathered. Tongues as of fire appeared to them, and rested upon each one of them. The disciples were filled with the Holy Spirit and they began to speak with other tongues ("λαλεῖν ἑτέραις γλώσσαις"), as the Holy Spirit gave them utterance ("ἀποφθέγγεσθαι")(Acts 2:4, page 1700). So God bestowed the New Testament Spiritual Gift of Tongues for the first time.

1.3 Foreign Languages. As the apostles first spoke in tongues, men from various countries heard them speaking in their own language. In passing, the text may indicate that twelve different dialects were spoken. Those men said: "And how is it that we each hear them in our own language to which we were born?" (Acts 2:8, page 1701). Therefore, we learn that the first instance of the use of the Spiritual Gift of Tongues resulted in unbelieving men hearing of the mighty deeds of God spoken by Galilean disciples under the influence of the Holy Spirit in foreign languages ("διαλέκτῳ"). In this case, the foreigners heard their own language distinctly. The disciples were not speaking in an unintelligible, ecstatic non-sense manner. We also learn that speaking with other tongues ("λαλεῖν ἑτέραις γλώσσαις") produces a hearing and understanding in the birth-language of the intended recipients ("τῇ ἰδίᾳ διαλέκτῳ ἡμῶν ἐν ᾗ ἐγεννήθημεν"). Apparently, some in the audience, consisting in part of Jews and proselytes, heard an audible language they understood, and others heard language they did not understand. The people who did not understand attributed the language to drunkenness in the speakers. Because The Spiritual Gift of Tongues acts as a sign to unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:22, page 1799), we know that God was speaking through tongues to unbelievers. Again in passing, Peter may have been the interpreter of those tongues as he preached his message. Peter seized the moment in time to preach a wonderful sermon and explain the events.

1.4 Pouring Forth the Holy Spirit. Peter preached and linked the speaking in tongues with the prophecy of Joel, who revealed that God would in the last days pour forth His Spirit upon all mankind, and grant wonders in the sky above and signs on earth below. All of those wonders and signs would take place before the great and glorious day of the LORD shall come. Yet, an invitation and promise remains from Joel: everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved (Acts 2:14-21). So, Peter linked speaking in tongues with the inauguration of the last days specified by the prophet Joel, and specifically the pouring forth of the Holy Spirit upon believers. For Peter, today is the day of salvation.

Section Two

Foreign Language and The

Spiritual Gift of Tongues

2.1 Unknown Languages or Ecstatic Utterances? Some people claim that 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 13, 14, 19 and 27, pages 1798-1800, people were speaking in tongues and producing "unknown tongues" or ecstatic speech. We can review those claims in more detail.

2.1.1 Unknown Languages? At the outset, the King James Version has added the word "unknown" before the word "tongues" in 1 Corinthians 14:2, 4, 13, 14, 19 and 27, pages 1798-1800. All of those verses have the same root word for "tongues" ("γλῶσσα"). In the original Greek manuscripts, the original text does not have the word "unknown" and the King James Version only inserts the word "unknown" because the human editors of the King James Version added the word "unknown." That word "unknown" misleads readers into thinking the original text distinguished this word for "tongues" from other uses of the same term. It is the same Greek root word for "tongues" and has the same uniform meaning in all those verses: known human language.

2.1.2 Other Tongues. The Greek term for "tongues" ("γλώσσῃ") in 1 Corinthians 14:2 is the same root word for tongues used in Acts 2 for known languages. In Acts 2:4, page 1700, we read that the apostles began "to speak with "other tongues" ("λαλεῖν ἑτέραις γλώσσαις"). The word "other" ("ἑτέραις") means a different kind of known language, such as the language of the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Mesopotamians, Judeans, Cappadocians, Pontians, and Asians (Acts 2:6-13, page 1701). Therefore, we know the first instance of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues started as the Holy Spirit gave "utterance" ("ἀποφθέγγεσθαι") to the apostles to speak in foreign, known languages.

2.1.3 Language and Tongues. Based upon the Pentecost experience in Acts 2, we would expect, then, that the word "tongues" in 1 Corinthians would also refer to foreign, known languages. So, let us examine the evidence in the text.

2.1.3.1 No Church Profit from Tongues. In 1 Corinthians 14:6, page 1798, Paul explained the relationship between his personal ministry at Corinth and spiritual gifts. Paul observed that if he spoke to the Corinthians in tongues, it would not profit them. In contrast, if he spoke to them either by way of revelation or of knowledge or of prophecy or of teaching, then they would be edified (1 Corinthians 14:6, page 1798). We should learn from Paul about the need to edify one another when we gather together, and not focus upon selfish interests of displaying a spiritual gift that will not benefit other believers gathered together.

2.1.3.2 Knowledge and Tongues. Paul then developed the relationship between knowledge and tongues. While the speaker using The Spiritual Gift of Tongues may speak to another person, the listener will not understand the foreign language being spoken without an interpreter. Paul used the analogy of tongues to make his points about edification and tongues.

2.1.4 The Analogy of Tongues. In fact, in 1 Corinthians 14:10-11, page 1799, Paul immediately turned to discussing known languages as an illustration of what he meant about tongues producing known sounds, but unless you know the language spoken, you cannot understand the sounds.

2.1.4.1 Flute and Harp. Paul began the analogy of tongues by likening tongues to a flute or a harp, but the sound ("φωνὴν") of the musical instrument must be different in tone ("διαστολὴν τοῖς φθόγγοις") to produce pleasing music (1 Corinthians 14:7, page 1798). Without those different tones, how will it be known ("πῶς γνωσθήσεται") what is played on the flute or harp? As we think about tongues, we see that knowledge plays a critical role in understanding the message conveyed by the tongue; mysteries remain unknown to the listeners when spoken in tongues without interpretation. By the message conveyed through The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, believers gain knowledge about all things pertaining to life and Godliness (2 Peter 2:1, page 1900).

2.1.4.2 Bugle. In 1 Corinthians 14:8, pages 1798-1799, Paul continued the analogy of tongues with the illustration of the bugle. If the bugle produces an "indistinct" ("ἄδηλον") "sound" ("φωνὴν"), no one will prepare himself for battle. So, if a believer does not utter ("δῶτε") by the tongue speech ("λόγον") that is clear ("εὔσημον"), how will it be known what is spoken ("λαλούμενον")? Paul meant that tongues produce sounds that the hearer

cannot understand. He then continued the analogy of tongues to make his point.

2.1.4.3 Language and Tongues. Some people point out that in 1 Corinthians 14:8-10, Paul used a different Greek term for "sound" or "language" ("φωνῶν"), and not the term used for "in tongues" ("γλώσσῃ") in the same context. They suggest that different Greek words must mean different kinds of tongues (known language versus unintelligible sounds). In the New Testament, every time the root word for "language" ("φωνῶν") is used to describe sounds made by a human being, it always refers to known language, with the possible exception of Jesus crying out on the cross, but even then it appears in a parallel passage that He uttered words in a human language. So, any claim that "sound" or "language" in this context when associated with the root word ("φωνῶν") must overcome the uniform New Testament use of those forms to refer exclusively to known human language when used in connection with humans. Even so, we can further study 1 Corinthians 14:10, page 1799, to appreciate the points Paul made by using the different words in the analogy of tongues. We must first understand the context to grasp Paul's revelation of the analogy of tongues.

2.1.4.4 The Comparison of Two Things. Some people argue that an analogy is not usually between the same two things. They mean that Paul would not use an analogy to compare the same thing, because analogies are used to compare and explain different things.

2.1.4.4.1 The Two Things Explained. What are the two things compared and contrasted in the analogy of tongues? To answer that question, we must keep in mind the context here. Paul's analogy actually began with the flute, harp, and bugle illustrations.

2.1.4.4.1.1 The First Thing. The first thing Paul mentioned is the sound of musical instruments (flute, harp and bugle). Please notice that Paul used the term ("φωνὴν") in 1 Corinthians 14:7 to describe the lifeless things ("ἄψυχα φωνὴν") (the flute and harp) producing "sound." In 1 Corinthians 14:8, pages 1798-1799, Paul used the term "sound" ("φωνὴν") again. Therefore, the first thing is the sound ("φωνὴν") produced by musical instruments to convey distinct music and the bugle to prepare for battle. These things show that the sound ("φωνὴν") must be understood to be effective. Without understanding of distinct tones, then the sound ("φωνὴν") has not achieved the intended result. Notice this connection between (a) the

player, (b) the instrument, and (c) the hearer. The same relationship applies between (a) God, (b) the speaker in tongues, and (c) the hearer who understands the intention of God in playing the instrument. God intends to communicate a revelation of a particular mystery. God then selects the instrument to convey the revelation (the person possessing The Spiritual Gift of Tongues). God then communicates the mystery through speaking in tongues. The audience (the people listening to the music) does not understand the message of God until the message is interpreted. God uses spiritually gifted people to play His revelation to the congregation, but God intends for people to understand the revelation, and not merely hear a foreign language they do not understand.

2.1.4.4.1.2 The Second Thing. Paul used the analogy of tongues to illustrate the problem when listeners do not understand the words of the speaker, or in this case, the language of the speaker. As we have seen with the examples of the flute, harp and bugle, God intends to use lifeless objects (musical instruments) to convey music and meaning to the hearers. Therefore, the second thing in the analogy of tongues means that none of the tongues ("φωνῶν") in the world lack meaning ("ἄφωνον"). In 1 Corinthians 14:10, page 1799, please notice the use of the term "language" ("φωνῶν") follows the same word for "sound" ("φωνὴν") in the previous verses referring to musical instruments. Therefore, the use of different Greek words for language in this context does not refer to The Spiritual Gift of Tongues producing unknown languages and unknown sounds, but, precisely because of the context, The Spiritual Gift of Tongues produces known languages. The analogy does not contrast known languages with unknown languages, but rather musical instruments provide the analogy to understand how God uses The Spiritual Gift of Tongues to convey revelations to the congregation, using known tongues which have meaning. Just as people use musical instruments to communicate, so also God used The Spiritual Gift of Tongues to communicate mysteries. Those tongues, however, must be interpreted through The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues.

2.2 Pray That He May Interpret. In the context of using The Spiritual Gift of Tongues within the congregation, Paul wrote in 1 Corinthians 10:13, page 1799, that the tongues speaker must pray that he may interpret. Notice the command here. The entire point of using The Spiritual Gift of Tongues in the congregation is for the interpretation to follow. Without that

interpretation, no edification would result. Because of the command to pray, it seems that the prayer offered would be intelligible. Paul commanded men speaking in tongues to pray that he may interpret. Paul warned the Corinthians that speaking in a foreign tongue (by means of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues) only makes the speaker and the listener appear to the other as a barbarian, unless they both know the tongue (1 Corinthians 14:11, page 1709).

Section Three

The Mind, the Spirit and the Spiritual Gift of Tongues

3.1 The Mind and The Tongue. Normally, believers must exercise great care over what they say with their tongue, because it can cause great blessing or great harm (Ephesians 4:29, page 1831; James 3:1-18, pages 1890-1891). Paul described the relationship between the tongue and the mind. He indicated that when he prayed in a tongue, his spirit ("πνεῦμά") prays, but his mind ("νοῦς") was unfruitful ("ἄκαρπός"). His prayer in tongues resulted in giving thanks to God well enough ("καλῶς"), but the listeners were not edified (1 Corinthians 14:13-17, page 1799).

3.2 Praying in Tongues and the Spirit. Paul disclosed that he prayed in tongues. He explained that when he prayed in a tongue, then his spirit prayed, but his mind was unfruitful. In the congregation, Paul desired to pray with his mind and his spirit, to sing with the spirit and with the mind, so that the other believers present would be able to say "Amen" when he finished his prayer of giving thanks. While he prayed in tongues, he was giving thanks well enough, but the other persons in the congregation were not edified. Indeed, whenever Paul used The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, he was always concerned with the edification of other believers (1 Corinthians 14:13-17, page 1799). Therefore, praying in tongues among other believers does not edify the listeners and they cannot join in the prayer. Paul did not pray in tongues in the congregation and explained why no one should pray in tongues during a meeting of believers.

3.3 Paul's Personal Experience with Tongues. Paul thanked God that he spoke in tongues more than all of the Corinthian believers. Therefore, Paul was not speaking in jealousy about the practice of the Corinthians with The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. The apostle himself had more personal experience with tongues than the Corinthians. Even so, Paul reiterated that he desired to speak five words with his mind so that he may instruct others also, rather than ten thousand words in a tongue (1 Corinthians 14:18-19, page 1799). Anyone displaying The Spiritual Gift of Tongues must be careful to use it only if another can interpret the tongue and so edify other people.

3.4 Praying in Tongues. Many people have various thoughts about praying in tongues. In order to evaluate the concept of praying in tongues, we must review the Scriptures, as always. Four passages receive frequent attention regarding praying in tongues.

3.4.1 Romans 8:26. In Romans 8:26, page 1769, Paul wrote that the Holy Spirit helps our weakness, because we do not know how to pray as we should. Because of our spiritual inability regarding prayer, the Holy Spirit intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. In this verse, the Holy Spirit does the groaning and interceding, not the believer uttering something amounting to groaning. The essence of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues starts with utterances in a foreign tongue. Likewise, God searches the hearts and knows what the mind of the Holy Spirit is, so that the Holy Spirit perfectly presents our prayers and supplications to God, according to the will of God (Romans 8:27, page 1769). The Spiritual Gift of Tongues concerns revelation, and not prayer and petition directly. The Spiritual Gift of Tongues only edifies other believes if it is interpreted.

3.4.2 1 Corinthians 14:1-19. In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul provided a lengthy explanation of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, and then declared that the Corinthians should seek The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, because it provided immediate blessing and edification to everyone who heard the prophecy. Paul himself indicated that he prayed in tongues (the Greek text indicates a present general condition; indeed, Paul spoke in tongues more than all the Corinthians--1 Corinthians 14:18, page 1799). So, if some people argue that tongues can be a private prayer language for edification of the believer, can that interpretation be true? Probably not. First, praying in tongues also requires interpretation to edify other believers, and the edification of all believers is the primary goal of all the spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 14:26, page 1799; 1 Corinthians 14:4, page 1798; 1 Corinthians

12:7, page 1796). Second, The Spiritual Gift of Tongues was given for a sign to unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:22, page 1799). Finally, all believers are led by the Holy Spirit in prayer, and the Holy Spirit intercedes for all believers, without respect to any gift. Likewise, Jesus Christ Himself directs us to pray in His name and intercedes in prayer for believers (Luke 22:31-32, pages 1645-1646; John 17:9, page 1689; John 17:13-21, page 1690; Hebrews 7:25, page 1876; 1 John 2:1, page 1904).

3.4.3 Ephesians 6:18. In Ephesians 6:18, page 1834, Paul commanded the Ephesians to pray and make supplication at all times in the Spirit. Notice that all believers were to pray in the Holy Spirit. Yet, not every believer possesses The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, and so Paul could not have commanded every believer to use a special prayer language of praying in tongues. Unless all the Ephesians possessed The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, then Paul was not commanding them to pray in tongues. Therefore, the passage means that Paul commanded believers to pray in the Holy Spirit, using their minds to pray for all the saints and to make special petitions for Paul to be bold in his witness for the Gospel of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 6:18-20, page 1834). Furthermore, because the Ephesians controlled the content of the prayer subjects, they were not receiving revelation from God, as would be the case if they were using The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, which always involved the revelation of mysteries (1 Corinthians 14:2, page 1798).

3.4.4 Jude 1:20. As noted above in Ephesians 6:18, believers can and must pray in the Holy Spirit, and such prayers have nothing to do with The Spiritual Gift of Praying in Tongues. In Jude 1:20, page 1913, Jude commanded believers: “building yourselves up" ("ἐποικοδομοῦντες") “on your most holy faith” ("τῇ ἁγιωτάτῃ ὑμῶν πίστει") by “praying in the Holy Spirit” ("ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ προσευχόμενοι"). Interestingly, the Greek phrase "in the Holy Spirit" ("ἐν πνεύματι ἁγίῳ") is never used in the New Testament in relationship to speaking in tongues. The Holy Spirit intercedes for believers, and leads believers in prayer (Romans 8:26, page 1769). Not every believer has The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, but every believer must pray in the Holy Spirit. Therefore, because of the general command to pray in the Holy Spirit, we know that Jude refers to something other than praying in tongues, because the Holy Spirit does not bestow The Spiritual Gift of Tongues upon everyone. Notice that reverse reasoning does not work here concerning praying in tongues. Some people argue that since we are commanded to pray in the Spirit, it must mean that a prayer language in

tongues exists apart from The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. Yet, Jude 1:20 provides no support for that claim, because it does not mention tongues anywhere in the Book of Jude. Likewise, some people try to identify a special prayer language, distinct from The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, in 1 Corinthians 14. The burden of proof would be upon the proponents to show from the text that The Spiritual Gift of Tongues is not at issue, because the entire chapter focuses upon the proper use of spiritual gifts, and gives special attention to the superiority of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets over the Spiritual Gift of Tongues. Therefore, every believer must pray in the Holy Spirit, but not all believers possess The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. Praying in the Holy Spirit never means you must pray in tongues.

Section Four

The Purpose of the

Spiritual Gift of Tongues

4.1 Edification of the Church. Paul emphasized that God gave spiritual gifts to His children for the common good ("συμφέρον") (1 Corinthians 12:7, page 1796). Through the ministry of each spiritual gift, believers perform the work of ministry, so that they build up the body of Christ, attain to the unity of the full stature of Christ, grow in the knowledge of the Son of God, progress toward spiritual maturity, avoid being tossed about by every wind of doctrine, and do not fall prey to the trickery and deceitful schemes of men (Ephesians 4:12-14, page 1831). In 1 Corinthians, Paul proclaimed that the primary purpose of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues is the edification of believers, when interpreted through the Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues (1 Corinthians 14:13-19, page 1799). Paul declared that all things must be done for edification when the believers assemble together (1 Corinthians 14:26, page 1799).

4.2 Sign to Unbelievers. As we have seen in Acts 2, the initial outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples at Pentecost functioned, in part, as a sign to unbelievers. Peter preached a great sermon starting from the manifestation of tongues and proclaimed the Gospel of Jesus Christ. About three thousand souls were added to the church that day (Acts 2:3, pages 1702-1703).

4.3 Speaking Mysteries. In 1 Corinthians, Paul gave corrective teaching for the problems with the use of spiritual gifts at Corinth. In particular, Paul taught the Corinthians how to use The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. He first noted that the one who speaks in tongues speaks to God, and not to men (1 Corinthians 14:2, page 1798). No one understands ("ἀκούει") what he says, except God. As believers speak in tongues, they speak "mysteries" ("μυστήρια"). This term "mysteries" has a very important meaning in the New Testament and refers to specific revelations from God. A "mystery" means God revealed in the New Testament through the Apostles and Prophets things that were hidden from previous generations (Romans 16:25-27, page 1781; Ephesians 3:1-7, page 1829). For a fuller discussion of mysteries, see The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom.

4.4 Personal Edification of the Gifted Person. The Spiritual Gift of Tongues edifies the gifted believer and not others because they do not know what he is saying (1 Corinthians 14:4, page 1798). The believer exercising The Spiritual Gift of Tongues speaks to God and not to men (1 Corinthians 14:2, page 1798).

4.5 The Superiority of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. Paul taught that the one who exercises The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation. In contrast, the believer exercising the Spiritual Gift of Tongues edifies only himself, and not the church at large (1 Corinthians 14:34, page 1798). Greater is the one who prophesies than one who speaks in tongues, unless one arises to interpret the tongues (1 Corinthians 14:5, page 1798).

4.6 The Desire for Tongues. Paul wished that everyone at Corinth would speak in tongues. But even more, Paul wished that they would all prophesy. While the Holy Spirit distributes the individual spiritual gifts as He desires (1 Corinthians 12:7, page 1796), Paul commanded the Corinthians to desire earnestly the spiritual gifts, especially that they may prophesy. Paul personally both prophesied and spoke in tongues, and spoke in tongues more than all of the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 14:18, page 1799) and found it personally edifying. Yet, the New Testament contains no obvious records that Paul or anyone else used The Spiritual Gift of Tongues for the purpose of speaking to foreigners in their own language to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Peter apparently spoke in Hebrew to the crowd questioning how they each heard their own language. The tongues operated as a sign to unbeleivers and sparked interest in the audience at Pentecost for Peter's sermon. The

Spiritual Gift of Tongues also provides building up of the individual believer as its primary target. Tongues remain a sign to unbelievers, as we saw at Pentecost (Acts 2). With Paul, we should always desire to display the greater gifts in the church. According to Paul, The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, without interpretation, has no place in the life of the church at its meetings.

Section Five

The Proper Use of the

Spiritual Gift of Tongues

5.1 Mature Thinking about The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. God testified that believers must not be children ("παιδία") in their thinking ("φρεσίν"). Believers, however, must be infants ("νηπιάζετε") regarding evil ("κακίᾳ"), but they must be mature in their thinking ("φρεσὶν"). Paul meant that we must be completely without experience when it comes to evil. But when it comes to thinking, we must be mature people ("τέλειοι") in our thinking and analysis, especially when it comes to understanding evil people and evil things. Paul then applied this admonition to understand The Spiritual Gift of Tongues.

5.2 The Law and Foreign Tongues. Paul cited the Old Testament ("the Law") to prove that tongues are for a sign to unbelievers. Paul quoted Isaiah the prophet who wrote that God would speak to rebellious Israel through "strange tongues" ("ἑτεροglώσσοις") from the lips of strangers ("ἑτέρων"), but the people of Israel still would not listen (1 Corinthians 14:20, page 1799). Paul meant that God intended The Spiritual Gift of Tongues as a sign to unbelievers, and not believers. God used various means to reach unbelievers, including disclosing His revelations to Israel through foreigners speaking foreign languages. In this context, Paul wanted the Corinthians to understand that God gave tongues for the purpose of communicating His revelation to people, and using foreign tongues to emphasize the special nature of the revelation from God. The Corinthians needed to be mature in their thinking to understand the revelations of God, and no longer indulge themselves as infants in their disorderly use of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues in their meetings of believers.

5.3 Church Assemblies. When the entire church at Corinth assembled together, the ungifted and unbelievers would have considered the church mad if everyone spoke in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:23, page 1799). Therefore, if all the church prophesied instead, then the ungifted or unbeliever would have been convicted ("ἐλέγχεται") by all, and he would have been called to account by all; the secrets of his heart would have been disclosed; and so he would have fallen on his face and worshipped God, declaring that God was certainly among them (1 Corinthians 14:24-26, page 1799). Paul repeatedly emphasized the superiority of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets to The Spiritual Gift of Tongues without interpretation.

Section Six

The Improper Use of the Spiritual Gift of Tongues

6.1 Confusion and Disorder. Paul warned the Corinthians that even spiritual gifts can be used improperly. The Corinthians had numerous problems when they came together to worship. Confusion and disorder characterized their meetings, at times.

6.2 Two or Three. In contrast to church services today, the New Testament assembly had opportunities for many male speakers to participate. Yet, they must each take turns and be careful to follow the spiritual rules for congregational practice and use of the spiritual gifts.

6.3 The Silence of Women. In this context of the proper use of spiritual gifts, God commanded the women in the congregation to remain silent during the congregational meetings. Just as the believer wishing to use The Spiritual Gift of Tongues in the assembly must remain silent ("σιγάτω") unless an interpreter is present to interpret and bless the congregation, so also the women were not permitted to speak. Likewise, the believer wishing to use The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets must remain silent ("σιγάτω") while another prophet speaks. At all times, during the meeting of the assembly, the women were to remain silent ("σιγάτωσαν"), for God did not permit them to speak (1 Corinthians 14:34, page 1800). Similarly, God did not permit them to teach or exercise authority over a man, but they must remain quiet. God

explained that women must remain silent because of the order of creation (Adam was created first) and the woman is more easily deceived (1 Timothy 2:12-15, page 1856). Women certainly possess vital spiritual gifts, but some of those gifts must be exercised outside of the assembly of believers. Outside the congregational meeting of males and females, they may teach children and other females, prophesy, heal the sick, and do all the things their gifts may allow them to do, but not during the meeting of the saints. In the entire New Testament, the uniform teaching of God stands against women speaking in the meetings of the church where males and females are present. So, the next time you see Paula White, Joyce Meyer, or other popular female speakers talking to audiences of both males and females, you know that those speakers ignore the clear teaching of Scripture and promote the improper use of spiritual gifts. Although the crowds may be large to hear them, and they have best-selling books, you should always recall and follow the Scripture, that women must remain silent in the congregation when men and women are present. Also, please recall that in the last days, congregations will not endure sound doctrine, but wanting to have their ears tickled, will accumulate teachers for themselves in accordance with their own desires, and will turn their ears away from the truth and will turn aside to myths (2 Timothy 4:3-4, page 1864). Although you may love hearing women preach, no woman should teach a man or exercise any form of authority over a man. Never let the crowds or your own emotions fool you. Remain faithful to the Scriptures.

6.4 Errors concerning Speaking in Tongues. People today teach many errors concerning The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. Using the Scriptures, we can distinguish the truth of God from doctrinal errors.

6.4.1 Error: Speaking in Tongues Always Accompanies Baptism with the Holy Spirit. Every born again believer has received the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and it occurs at the moment of salvation. Consider 1 Corinthians 12:13, page 1797: "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." So, we know at the moment of salvation Jesus baptizes every believer with the Holy Spirit (Matthew 3:11, page 1504). Yet, not every believer speaks in tongues (1 Corinthians 12:30, page 1797; 1 Corinthians 14:5, page 1798). Therefore, people err when they teach that speaking in tongues always accompanies baptism with the Holy Spirit.

6.4.2 Error: Speaking in Tongues Always Accompanies Being Filled with the Holy Spirit. While not all believers speak in tongues, all believers may be filled with the Holy Spirit. In fact, God commands all believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18, page 1832). As we have seen above, not all believers speak in tongues. Likewise, some people teach that the fruit of the Holy Spirit includes speaking in tongues. In fact, Galatians 5:22, 23, page 1825 never mentions any spiritual gift in that list (except faith "πίστις," and that probably refers to the quality rather than the spiritual gift), but lists the fruit every believer must have in their lives as they are commanded to walk in the Holy Spirit. Therefore, people err when they teach that speaking in tongues always accompanies being filled with the Holy Spirit.

6.4.3 Error: Speaking in Tongues Always Accompanies True Salvation. People err when they teach that speaking in tongues always accompanies true salvation. Consider again that not every believer speaks in tongues (1 Corinthians 12:30, page 1797; 1 Corinthians 14:5, page 1798). If people point to the Book of Acts as proof that people always spoke in tongues when they believed, they overlook that the Book of Acts only mentions speaking in tongues three times: (1) at the Jerusalem Pentecost in Acts 2; (2) at Caesarea after Peter received the Sheet Vision (God welcomes men in every nation who turn to Him) in Acts 10; and (3) at Ephesus when the disciples of John received the Gospel of Jesus Christ in Acts 19. Outside of those three passages, many people from all over the Mediterranean world hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ and believe. We hear nothing about them speaking in tongues. Please remember that speaking in tongues serves as a sign to unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:22, page 1799). Today, some people try to teach other people how to speak in tongues. They try to get all believers to speak in tongues by letting the Holy Spirit flow in them. Such practices contradict the Scriptures because speaking in tongues is always a spiritual gift bestowed upon some believers, but never upon all believers. Therefore, try as they might, some believers will never speak in tongues, and only rebellious people will tell people that all believers may speak in tongues. The Bible flatly contradicts such teaching and practice (1 Corinthians 12:30, page 1797; 1 Corinthians 12:11, page 1796). So, people err when the claim that speaking in tongues always accompanies true salvation.

Section Seven

Do Not Forbid the Use of the Spiritual Gift of Tongues

7.1 Disagreement. Strong disagreements remain about the presence of miraculous spiritual gifts today, and the presence of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues and The Spiritual Gift of The Interpretation of Tongues. Some claim all of these gifts have ceased, while others proclaim and practice their continuation today, while others remain open and cautious.

7.2 Scriptural Consensus. No matter what position you hold regarding The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, Scripture must control both the content of the gift and the expression of the gift. We have studied the Scripture above, and for every instance of someone claiming to exercise The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, we must remember that all things must be done properly and in an orderly manner (1 Corinthians 14:39, page 1809). Finally, we must remember that God said that we must not forbid speaking in tongues (1 Corinthians 14:39, page 1809).

Hallmarks of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues

As with the other spiritual gifts used to write the New Testament, The Spiritual Gift of Tongues has also passed away in its revelatory capacity. If some people claim they speak in tongues, then we should carefully compare their use to the New Tetament description of tongues. Why do so many people claim to use it today? I urge those people claiming to use The Spiritual Gift of Tongues to see if the tongues were used in anything other than expressions of New Testament mysteries and always a sign to unbelievers.

The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Tongues proclaimed the mysteries of God, a direct revelation of something hidden previously but revealed by the apostles and prophets in the New Testameent. Please review this entire chapter to understand The Spiritual Gift of Tongues.

♦ Tongues-gifted believers speak the mysteries of God.

♦ Tongues-gifted believers provide a sign to unbelievers.

♦ Tongues-gifted believers speak in known languages.

♦ Tongues-gifted believers control the use of the spiritual gift, so that they keep silent if an interpreter is not present.

Conclusion

The believer with The Spiritual Gift of Tongues spoke mysteries from God. We know that a mystery was a revelation from God about something previously hidden, but now made known through the prophets and apostles of the New Testament. If it is still present today, any use of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues must follow the Scriptural requirements for its use.

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The Spiritual Gift of The Intrepetation of Tongues

Category of Gift: Revelation

1 Corinthians 12:10

"to another the interpretation of tongues, ..."

Section One

The Link between The Spiritual Gift of Tongues and the Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues

1.1 Corinth and The Spiritual Gifts. As we have seen, the Holy Spirit came down upon the Apostles gathered in Jerusalem after Jesus had ascended to heaven. Those Apostles began to speak in foreign languages, and Peter preached a great sermon resulting in the salvation of three thousand souls. Later in the New Testament, we read about the use of the Spiritual Gift of Tongues at the church in Corinth. As Paul expressed his teaching about the proper use of spiritual gifts within the local assembly of believers, he linked together The Spiritual Gift of Tongues with a separate, but related, spiritual gift, The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues. Paul stated clearly that during the meetings of the congregation of

believers at Corinth, believers should not use The Spiritual Gift of Tongues without an interpreter being present. The interpreter was a believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues. Without interpretation, the person seeking to speak in tongues was to remain seated and silent during the service. (1 Corinthians 14:26-33).

1.2 Foreign Languages. At Pentecost, the Apostles spoke in different tongues, so that people from many different countries heard them speak in their own languages (Acts 2:5-13, pages 1700-1701). As discussed more fully in The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, the best evidence points to The Spiritual Gift of Tongues always producing foreign languages which require interpretation through The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues. Some people argue that at Corinth, many different languages were spoken, and so it would seem likely that an interpreter would be present. In order to understand the nature of the interpretation, we must remember that The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues requires the person to be a believer, being led by the Holy Spirit to produce the correct interpretation of the mystery delivered through The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. Providing an interpretation of a foreign tongue will not be a mechanical process, but rather the Holy Spirit leads the individual to produce an interpretation of the mystery spoken by use of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues so that interpretation perfectly reflects in the common language the message the Holy Spirit intended to communicate. Please recall that the Holy Spirit is never surprised or hindered that another believer with The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues is not present to interpret. The Holy Spirit always has a divine plan for every meeting of believers.

Section Two

The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues Required

2.1 Requirements. The Spiritual Gift of Tongues may be exercised privately without interpretation, but such use only edifies the person using The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. Because Paul repeatedly emphasized the importance of edifying the entire congregation through the use of all the spiritual gifts, Paul warned the Corinthians not to allow believers to use The

Spiritual Gift of Tongues in the assembly without first being sure a saint with the The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues was present and ready to interpret (12 Corinthians 14:26-27, pages 1799-1800).

2.2 The Interpreter. The believer gifted with The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues has a supernatural ability to understand the tongue spoken (a foreign language) and the ability to present a divine translation of that message in the common language. At Corinth, The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues apparently allowed one believer to interpret many different languages spoken through the different believers using The Spiritual Gift of Tongues (1 Corinthians 14:26-28, pages 1799-1800).

Section Three

The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues and Verbal Inspiration

3.1 Verbal Inspiration. God communicates revelation through works and words. With words, God reveals His verbal messages to mankind. Every word revealed by God means something in particular. As God told Jeremiah the prophet, "Do not omit a word" (Jeremiah 26:2, page 1227). Every word of God stands both the test of time and the test of truth. God means every word He gives through revelation. Therefore, as The Spiritual Gift of Tongues produces a known language, communicating a mystery, it must be translated into the common language of the audience so that they may be edified. Just as the New Testament authors quoted, interpreted and applied the Scripture of the Old Testament, so also the The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues produced the inspired interpretation of the message delivered through the The Spiritual Gift of Tongues.

3.2 Interpretation. Interpretation can be distinguished from translation. The Greek word for interpretation ("ἑρμηνείαν"), giving rise to the term Hermeneutics (principles of interpretation), means to provide not only a translation, but also the meaning of the words. The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues means that the gifted interpreter can provide the

authoritative meaning of the mystery proclaimed through The Spiritual Gift of Tongues.

Section Four

The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues: Pray that You May Interpret

4.1 The Need for Interpretation. Without interpretation, the message delivered in a foreign language through The Spiritual Gift of Tongues would not edify the church. Therefore, the believer enjoying The Spiritual Gift of Tongues pouring forth within himself may be glorifying God, but the message delivered to him would be of no value to anyone else unless they understood the message. Therefore, as noted above, Paul required a believer with The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues to be present and ready to interpret the tongue. In Paul's case, he possessed both spiritual gifts, so that he could interpret the message delivered to him through The Spiritual Gift of Tongues (1 Corinthians 14:13-19, page 1799).

4.2 Self-Interpretation. Paul himself apparently possessed both spiritual gifts, so that he could interpret the message delivered to him through The Spiritual Gift of Tongues. Self-interpretation of tongues seems implied in 1 Corinthians 14:13, page 1799. According to Paul, the one who speaks in a tongue is commanded to pray that he may interpret. Remember, without interpretation, the message remains a blessing to the speaker, but the audience is not edified. So, if a believer has a desire to speak in tongues during a meeting and knows he may interpret the message by using The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues, he may proceed, provided that he follows the rules and no more than two or three speak, and then only with interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:27, pages 1799-1800).

Section Five

The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues and Prophecy

5.1 Prophecy and Tongues: Separate Gifts. Paul used different Greek words to separate into three groups the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10. He separated the groups with the word "another of a different kind" (hetero–"ἑτέρῳ") and distinguished between the gifts of the same group with the word "another of the same kind" (allo–"ἄλλῳ"). You can review that list in the article on The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom. So Paul grouped together the spiritual gifts of Faith, Healing, Miracles, Prophecy and Judgment of spirits. In another group, all by themselves, Paul placed the spiritual gifts of tongues and the interpretation of tongues. Therefore, we may expect that some differences remain between The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets and The Spiritual Gift of Tongues and The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues.

5.2 Prophecy and The Interpretation of Tongues. Some people argue that the interpretation of tongues amounts to prophecy. If you understand that prophecy always concerns the revelation of knowledge otherwise unknown to mankind, then you may think that the interpretation of tongues forms a subset of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. So, let us look at the differences between The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets and The Spiritual Gift of Tongues.

5.2.1 Prophecy Explained. Every prophecy was designed to edify the believers hearing the prophecy. In one way or another, every prophecy revealed knowledge that would immediately edify the entire congregation. For the prophet, the mind immediately comprehended the message because the Holy Spirit communicated in a language known to the audience. It required no special gift of interpretation.

5.2.2 Tongues Explained. The Spiritual Gift of Tongues revealed mysteries. Furthermore, the one speaking in tongues spoke not to men, but to God. No one understands what he speaks, because he speaks mysteries. Please recall that the term "mysteries" has a special meaning in the New

Testament. The term mysteries means something previously hidden (or not as fully revealed) and now revealed through the prophets and apostles of the New Testament. Therefore, the scope of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues does include the mind of the believer (1 Corinthians 14:13, apge 1799), and the believer does not understand the content of the tongue itself, and that content consists of mysteries.

5.3 Affinities of The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues with other Spiritual Gifts. While The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues stands in a group by itself with only The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, it does have some affinity with other Spiritual Gifts.

5.3.1 Affinity with Prophecy. As we have seen above, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets also concerns revelation. Prophecy involves the mind, so that the revelation requires no special gift of interpretation.

5.3.2 Affinity with The Word of Wisdom. The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom, as shown above, also concerns the revelation of mysteries. The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues also concerns the revelation of mysteries, but it involves speaking them to God and bringing a blessing upon the gifted person only, without interpretation.

Hallmarks of The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues

♦ Interpretation-of-Tongues gifted believers interpret the language of the believer speaking with The Spiritual Gift of Tongues.

♦ Interpretation-of-Tongues gifted believers depend upon the Holy Spirit working within them to produce the perfect interpretation.

♦ Interpretation-of-Tongues gifted believers may interpret their own messages provided by their use of The Spiritual Gift of Tongues.

♦ Interpretation-of-Tongues gifted believers provide interpretation of mysteries revealed through The Spiritual Gift of Tongues.

Conclusion

As with The Spiritual Gift of Tongues, The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues may have passed away with the completion of the New Testament. Therefore, if it is still present today, any use of The Spiritual Gift of The Interpretation of Tongues must follow the Scriptural requirements for its use.

Appendix

Some Structural Qualities of Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12

Section One

Introduction

To gain a better understanding of the spiritual gifts, we must always study the Bible as our primary resource. It provides the revelation from God about how we live the will of God, and what attitudes must shape our entire spiritual lives. That revelation also helps us understand how to relate to other believers, who do not act just like us or think just like us. In fact, they have spiritual abilities from God that differ sharply from our abilities from God. We must learn from the revelation of God in Scripture why those differences exist, how to value and honor differences among believers, and how to rejoice together in Christ as one unified group, loving one unified God. So we must start with a careful examination of the Bible and particularly the words of the Bible. Each word really counts and so we must do our best to understand the words and how those words convey revelation from God to us. The structure of the words requires careful examination, because God used human authors to convey His very words. As the Psalmist wrote centuries before, "Great are the works of the Lord; they are studied by all who delight in them" (Psalm 111:2, page 969). God described His works in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12, as He did on every page of the Bible. As we study His works, we learn about our best lives in God.

Some people think that everyone receives one of the spiritual gifts listed in Romans 12 at the time of spiritual birth. They call these spiritual gifts motivational gifts. Paul certainly teaches that every believer has received at least one spiritual gift, but why not follow the structural pattern of Romans

12 to understand these spiritual gifts, and how they fit into the larger revelation concerning spiritual gifts? Exegesis of the Scriptures should control our understanding of spiritual gifts, not psychological theories, not popular ideas, and not human thoughts. Each spiritual gift stands with a category of gifts. By understanding the categories of gifts, we gain much more insight into each spiritual gift and its proper operation. The structural patterns reveal categories and those categories help us understand each gift and the functions of the gifts, the proper operation of the gifts, and the purposes of the spiritual gifts within the Body of Christ.

Section Two

Romans 12

2.1 Romans 12 Context. In Romans 12, Paul provided a particular context to the use of the spiritual gifts described there. Paul began the chapter by urging the Romans, by the mercies of God, to present their bodies as holy and living sacrifices to God, which was their spiritual service of worship. In addition, Paul commanded them to be transformed by the renewing of their minds, so that they may prove the will of God, which is good and acceptable behavior (Romans 12:1-2).

2.1.1 Grace. Paul explained how grace worked in his life as a believer (Romans 12:3). He had received grace for salvation, but that same grace from God worked in Paul to say to everyone not to think more highly of himself that he ought to think. Believers must think with sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith. God used a very interesting phrase: "to each as God measured a measure of faith" ("ἑκάστῳ ὁ θεὸς ἐμέρισεν μέτρον πίστεως") (my translation). By grace God has distributed to each believer a particular quantity of faith.

2.1.2 Worship, Grace, Faith. Be careful to understand three key concepts here: (1) worship through service; and (2) grace restraining believers from thinking too highly of themselves; and (3) faith measured to each believer for the purpose of sound judgment about yourself. These three concepts control

the use of spiritual gifts, which empower believers for daily living, but also expose believers to a multitude of spiritual challenges based upon using those gifts. Each spiritual gift produces powerful results in the lives of believers, resulting in glory to God, but the believer using spiritual gifts faces temptations in the areas of envy, shame, anxiety, conceit, arrogance, pride, immorality, impurity, idolatry, and the list goes on. God commanded us to use our spiritual gifts to His glory, but also warned us to remember the spiritual basics about using our gifts. Please keep in mind that grace and faith tend to restrain a believer from thinking too highly of himself. In this context, all spiritual gifts can only be exercised best with humility and sound judgment. Faith seeks to produce sound judgment, and restrain personal pride, particularly in the use of spiritual gifts. God uses those qualities to unify the Body of Christ, but within that unity, God plans great diversity of actions. Each believer will have a different ministry from God, according to the faith given to that believer.

2.3 Functional Approach. Paul focused upon a functional approach to spiritual gifts in Romans 12:4, page 1775. Within the single Body of Christ, composed solely of believers, all the members of the Body do not have the same function ("πρᾶξιν"). This term "function" may be translated here as "actions" or "behaviors." Paul zeroed in on what believers do. How do we act? What is Godly behavior? If what I am doing is not the same thing as what you are doing, are we both doing the will of God? Is either of us doing the will of God?

2.3.1 Many and One. Paul described the Body of Christ as many, and yet, Christ has only one body of believers. Paul then shifted focus to another unity. Believers are all united to Christ, but they are also all united to one another as members of the Body of Christ. This new structural component of Romans 12:5, page 1775, exposed that unity flows vertically with Christ and horizontally among all believers. Along these two different directions, believers simultaneously live in harmony with the will of God, doing the will of God. In other words, God intends for believers to live in harmonious loving relationship with God, and, at the same to time, to act differently from other

believers, but still living in harmonious loving relationship with other believers. Only God can make this work.

2.3.2 <u>According To</u>. In Romans 12:6, page 1775, the preposition "according to" ("κατὰ") occurs twice and deserves special attention. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul listed several spiritual gifts and used the same preposition, "according to" ("κατὰ") to describe the working of The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge, particularly as it relates to The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom. The details with the words in the Bible really matter.

2.3.2.1 <u>According To the Grace Given to Us</u>. In Romans 12:6, page 1775, we read first: "Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us . . . ." The phrase "Since we have" ("ἔχοντες") translates one Greek verbal, plural participle. It means that corporately, the believers at Rome have already received spiritual gifts. At the moment of salvation, Jesus baptizes each believer in the Holy Spirit (Luke 3:36) and each believer receives at least one spiritual gift. Paul continued: God bestowed gifts ("χαρίσματα") that differ ("διάφορα") "according to the grace given" ("κατὰ τὴν χάριν τὴν δοθεῖσαν") "to us" ("ἡμῖν") as believers. If you ponder that statement, then you may begin to understand that God gives different expressions of grace to each believer. The many spiritual gifts ("χαρίσματα"—notice the plural) differ according to the singular grace ("χάριν") given ("τὴν δοθεῖσαν"—aorist participle with the article) part of the clause (article—noun—article—participle) modifying the noun the grace to us ("ἡμῖν"—notice the plural). Each spiritual gift represents a different expression of the grace of God. Because God bestows the gifts, and measures the faith, believers must exercise those gifts with spiritual care. Paul then began to differentiate several gifts, but each individual gift operates according to the grace given to us. The differences in the Body of Christ arise, in part, from the different gifts distributed by God throughout the Body of Christ. Each spiritual gift expresses a different grace given to a particular individual. God gives individual grace to each believer in the form of a grace thing ("χαρίσματα"), which we call a spiritual gift. Therefore, the first "according to" ("κατὰ") explained that the gifts distributed to the many believers composing the Body of Christ differ on the basis of the grace given

to that believer. As a side note, I recognize that the pronoun "us" ("ἡμῖν") is plural, "given to us," but the force of the construction means that the gifts differ according to the grace gifts bestowed corporately throughout the Body of Christ, but each individual receives at least one spiritual gift. In Romans 12, Paul focused upon the collective expression of the spiritual gifts and therefore used the term "us." Therefore, the first "according to" ("κατὰ") explained that the gifts given to the Body of Christ ("us") differ according the grace given with each gift. The "according to" ("κατὰ") conveys the meaning that the spiritual gifts have differing expressions of God's grace associated with each gift. When I use my spiritual gift of teaching, my ministry differs from your ministry of teaching, using the same spiritual gift. God uses each believer with that believer's individual gift to minister, and each ministry will produce a specific effect in the Body of Christ. We will see more about that in 1 Corinthians 12.

2.3.2.2 <u>According to the Proportion of the Faith</u>. Also in Romans 12:6, page 1775, Paul began a list of spiritual gifts. He wrote: "If prophecy, according to ("κατὰ") the proportion of the faith" ("τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως") (my translation). I prefer "the faith" (instead of "his faith") to follow the same construction in the previous part of the verse "according to the grace given to us." Notice also the term "according to." In Romans 12:6, page 1775, the "according to" occurs twice: once for all the gifts, and then only in relation to the spiritual gift concerning prophecy (see The Spiritual Gift of the Prophets). In order to keep things straight, I will include the spiritual gift concerning prophecy, found here in Romans 12:6, page 1775, and 1 Corinthians 12:9, page 1796, and Ephesians 4:11, pages 1830-1831, under the general title The Spiritual Gift of the Prophets. Prophets convey prophecy. Now, let us look at the structural formula Paul used in discussing the spiritual gifts. The Spiritual Gift of the Prophets operates according to ("κατὰ") the faith given to him. Notice that in Romans 12:3, page 1775, God measured a measure of faith to each believer, and that measured faith allows us to think so as to have sound judgment (See 1 Peter 4:7, page 1898; 2 Timothy 1:7, page 1861; 2 Corinthians 5:13, page 1809; Mark 5:15, page 1566; Acts 26:25, page 1753). Therefore, the "according to" ("κατὰ") in Romans 12:6, page 1775, concerning the operation of The Spiritual Gift of The

Prophets rests upon faith for exercising sound judgment in the use of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. Consider the prophets at Corinth waiting for the proper time to reveal their prophecy in the church meeting. Because the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets, each prophet can wait for the proper time to speak, in order to avoid confusion and maintain an orderly church service. Others will pass judgment on each prophecy given (1 Corinthians 14:29-33, page 1800).

2.3.2.3 Understanding the Term According To. In order to understand the use of a particular term, I like to look at other uses of the same term elsewhere in the Bible, keeping in mind the author, audience, purpose, form and context of the term used.

2.3.2.4 Hebrews 12:10. In Hebrews 12:10, page 1884, (human author uncertain) we read: "For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, so that we may share His holiness." This verse contrasts (a) the human ways of discipline according to ("κατὰ") human thoughts and (b) the divine discipline producing common good in us so that we share His holiness. Our earthly fathers used their human thoughts for the administration of discipline, but the Father of spirits disciplines believers using His own nature to produce Godly results in our lives for the common good. Therefore, we see how the term "according to" ("κατὰ") operates in terms of controlling or providing a source for action. The faith given to the believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets controls the use with sound judgment.

2.4 The "If." In Romans 12:6-8, page 1775, Paul used a pattern, with some variations, in listing the spiritual gifts. The pattern separates the spiritual gifts into categories. People may interpret the pattern to see one or more categories. In my case, having considered different elements of the passage and the structure, I submit four categories may be best. My main goal is to point out the structure, and others may improve upon the interpretation below having pondered the structure. If so, please send me an email.

A chart helps me understand the different structural elements. In this entire study of the structure of Romans 12 concerning spiritual gifts, I hope to

stimulate further study, more prayer, and better interpretations resulting in more glory to God in the way believers understand and employ their gifts in His unified service. Nothing in this study constitutes anything more than the first steps on a long journey of understanding and refinement under the hand of God directing all our paths.

Verse	Conjunction	Gift	Preposition	Obligation
Romans 12:6	if ("εἴτε")	Prophecy (προφητείαν—Noun Accusative)	According To (κατὰ)	The Measure of Faith (τὴν ἀναλογίαν τῆς πίστεως—Article Accusative + Noun Accusative + Article Genitive + Noun Genitive)
Romans 12:7	if ("εἴτε")	Service (διακονίαν—Noun Accusative)	In (ἐν)	The Service (τῇ διακονίᾳ--Article Dative + Noun Dative)
Romans 12:7	if ("εἴτε")	The Teacher (ὁ διδάσκων—Article Nominative + Verbal Participle)	In (ἐν)	The Teaching (τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ--Article Dative + Noun Dative)
Romans 12:8	if ("εἴτε")	The Exhorter (ὁ παρακαλῶν—Article Nominative + Verbal Participle)	In (ἐν)	The Exhorting (τῇ παρακλήσει—Article Dative + Noun Dative)
Romans 12:8	None	The Giver (ὁ μεταδιδοὺς—Article Nominative + Verbal Participle Active)	In (ἐν)	Liberality (ἁπλότητι—Noun Dative)
Romans 12:8	None	The Leader (ὁ προϊστάμενος—Article Nominative	In (ἐν)	Diligence (σπουδῇ--Noun Dative)

		+ Verbal Participle Middle)		
Romans 12:8	None	The Mercier (ὁ ἐλεῶν—Article Nominative + Verbal Participle Active)	In (ἐν)	Cheerfulness (ἱλαρότητι—Noun Dative)

2.4.1 <u>Category One: Prophecy</u>. As a gift of revelation, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets functions differently that some other giftrs in the Body of Christ.

2.4.1.1 <u>Structural Aspects of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets</u>. Prophecy occurs as a noun, "prophecy" ("προφητείαν"). The rest of the spiritual gifts in this list follow the "if" (εἴτε) and "in" ("ἐν") pattern of construction. In this case of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, the construction is: "if prophecy, according to the proportion of the faith" (my translation). Therefore, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets presents a unique pattern in the list: "if" (εἴτε) – "prophecy" ("προφητείαν"--noun)—"according to" ("κατὰ")—"the measure" ("τὴν ἀναλογία")—"of the faith" ("τῆς πίστεως"). In Greek grammar, the author may use the definite article ("τῆς") as a pronoun ("his"). I do not believe it is "his" personal faith at issue, but rather the faith described above that produces sound judgment and is a gift of God. Therefore, I prefer to read the article as "the" for structural reasons, as described above. Likewise, I will avoid the personal pronoun in the following verses also. We will see that the structural pattern changes some and keeping the article as "the" helps me understand the structure. So, based upon the construction of the text, we may expect that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets functions differently from every other gift listed in Romans 12.

2.4.1.2 Noun + Preposition According To. Prophecy stands first in the list. At times, Paul appeared to have given order to his lists of gifts for a purpose. In Romans 12:6, page 1775, Paul used a simple noun to describe The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets and the preposition "according to" ("κατὰ") to describe this gift, but he did not use that preposition again in the list. As we will see, Paul frequently used a participle to describe other spiritual gifts in this list, and then used another term associated with that particular gift. With that background in mind, let us look at structural qualities of each gift Paul described. From the structure, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets stands first, has a noun to describe the gift, and the preposition "according to" ("κατὰ"). The significance of those three elements leads me to conclude that this gift rests upon the revelation of God, and therefore does not rely upon the subjective faith of the person receiving The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets. The faith at issue with The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets is the faith given to the believer from God--the gift operates according to that faith from God. The prophet must have faith to receive the revelation, and God gives different revelations based, in part, upon the faith He gives to the individual believer.

2.4.2 Category Two: Service. In Romans 12:7, page 1775, we see The Spiritual Gift of Deacony. People disagree about whether the gift is associated only with the office of deacon, or refers to all people with The Spiritual Gift of Deacony without limitation. In my view, based upon the context of gifts and not offices, I understand Paul to be speaking about The Spiritual Gift of Deacony without limitation to the office of deacon.

2.4.2.1 Structural Aspects of The Spiritual Gift of Deacony. Paul used the pattern: if ("εἴτε") service (διακονίαν—noun accusative), in (ἐν) the service (τῇ διακονίᾳ--article dative + noun dative). In looking for similar Pauline constructions using "the service" in the dative case (τῇ διακονίᾳ--article dative + noun dative), I found only 2 Corinthians 3:9, page 1807.

2.4.2.2 2 Corinthians 3:9. In 2 Corinthians 3:9, page 1807, Paul discussed the ministry of condemnation ("τῇ διακονίᾳ τῆς κατακρίσεως"—article dative + noun dative + article genitive + noun genitive) and compared it to the ministry of righteousness ("ἡ διακονία τῆς δικαιοσύνης"—article

nominative + noun nominative + article nominative + noun nominative). When Paul used the dative case to describe ministry there, he linked it to the condemnation under the old covenant. The law informed us how sinful we are and how much we need a Savior, Jesus Christ. The ministry was confined to condemnation. It operated in a particular sphere. Paul did not limit the ministry of righteousness in the same way, but emphasized the quality of that ministry using the genitive. I find this pattern helpful in understanding the dative usage in Romans 12:7. The ministry at issue in Romans 12:7 operates in the sphere of The Spiritual Gift of Deacony, and not necessarily in the office of deacon or the general ministry of all believers.

2.4.3 <u>Category Three: Teaching and Exhortation</u>. The third category of spiritual gifts has a common structure: if ("εἴτε") + Article Nominative + Verbal Participle + In (ἐν) + Article Dative + Noun Dative. This structure describes The Spiritual Gift of The Teacher and The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter. Below, to follow the more traditional approach, I refer to those gifts as The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers and The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter.

2.4.3.1 <u>The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers</u>. In Romans 12:7, page 1775, Paul described The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers. He wrote: if ("εἴτε") the teacher (ὁ διδάσκων—article nominative + verbal participle), in (ἐν) the teaching. Paul used the construction "the teacher" (ὁ διδάσκων) only here in the New Testament (no one else used it either). Notice here that this translation shifts the emphasis to the believer with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers, identified as "the teacher" (compare Matthew 23:8, page 1542). Paul personalized The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers to highlight how the individual gift relates to the Body of Christ and how each spiritual gift functions differently within the Body of Christ. The teacher provides a different function with the teaching he received from God. Again, I prefer the translation "the teaching" and not "his teaching" to remove any subjective element of human or personal teaching. Ideally, the teaching comes from God through The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers. Do not, however, confuse teaching with revelation. The teacher explains and applies the revelation provided already. The prophet and the teacher are not only believers with separate gifts, but those two gifts belong to different categories.

2.4.3.2 <u>The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter</u>. In Romans 12:8, page 1775, Paul described The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter. He used the same structural pattern as with The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers: if ("εἴτε") the exhorter (ὁ παρακαλῶν—article nominative + verbal participle), in (ἐν) the exhortation (τῇ παρακλήσει—article dative + noun dative). Paul also used the construction "the exhorter" (ὁ παρακαλῶν) in 2 Corinthians 1:4, page 1804, (God the Father "Who comforts us" ("ὁ παρακαλῶν ἡμᾶς") in all our affliction) and 2 Corinthians 7:6, page 1811, ("Who comforts the depressed"--"ὁ παρακαλῶν τοὺς ταπεινοὺς"). I understand that one could argue that the other two uses in the Corinthian epistles promote the translation in Romans 12:8 of "he who exhorts" instead of "the exhorter." Even so, I believe the context of Romans 12:8 emphasizes the functional differences of the ministries of particular believers who use the different gifts, and not the person using the gift. In other words, in the Corinthian passages, in both instances, God does the action and He receives all the emphasis. In Romans, human believers use the gifts under the power of God working within them. Paul expounded upon the relationship of different functions of different spiritual gifts, within one Body of Christ. Paul revealed a unity of differences, based upon the functional aspects of the different spiritual gifts. As is often the case, the translation reveals the interpretation behind the translation. Such interpretations can be very dangerous if they obscure the revelation intended by God. I prefer principles of literal translation. Therefore, I look forward to emails helping me understand the text better.

2.4.4 <u>Category Four: The Giver, The Leader, the Mercier</u>. Paul described the last three gifts using a different structure: No "if" ("εἴτε") + Article + Verbal Participle + in (ἐν) + Noun (No Article). Please notice that Paul dropped the "if" ("εἴτε"), which signals to me that they relate to one another more than they relate to the rest of the list. Of course, Paul could be indicating that these gifts are all a subset of The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter, but that does not seem likely based upon the research of The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter above. Without high confidence, I created a new category for those three gifts, because the text appears to group them together, without close structural similarity to the preceding categories. Paul

made significant changes to the structure of his description of these three gifts. Paul, drawing upon his large vocabulary, knew how to use a *hapax legomenon* (a word only occurring once in the New Testament), and other infrequently used words. Paul used the precise term that best expressed the concepts he communicated. Of course, God superintended the entire process of revelation and breathed out each word.

2.4.4.1 <u>The Giver</u>. Paul dropped the "if" ("εἴτε") in describing The Spiritual Gift of The Giver. Why did he drop the "if" ("εἴτε")? I submit that Paul intended to create a structural change because of the characteristics of the spiritual gift now at issue. Let me explain. The Giver (ὁ μεταδιδοὺς—article nominative active + verbal participle) must use The Spiritual Gift of The Giver with the manner of liberality. The manner of use replaced the sphere of use. Paul's focus upon the manner of use for this category of spiritual gift suggests further that without this revelation in this verse, the believer exercising one of those spiritual gifts may not understand fully the unrestrained manner of using this gift. If the previous gifts were restrained by the sphere of their operation (dative case there too), then Paul wanted to be sure that he used a broad and unrestricted noun (without the article) to emphasize the unrestricted, liberal use of this gift. Paul broke the pattern of the using the participle followed by the preposition followed by an article and the noun associated with the root of the participle. Why the change? Paul revealed that the Giver did not operate in the sphere of giving (as with the previous gifts), but that the giving must be done with liberality. The term liberality lacks the article. In fact, Paul never used an article with this dative noun (four other occurrences—2 Corinthians 1:12, page 1805; 2 Corinthians 9:13, page 1814; Ephesians 6:5, page 1833; Colossians 3:22, page 1845), but he did use the article with each occurrence of the genitive noun (two occurrences—2 Corinthians 8:2, page 1812; 2 Corinthians 11:3, page 1815). Those uses each require their own study, but sincerity, simplicity and liberality underlie the basic uses. While the use of the gift may be relatively unrestrained, it still must be used with sincerity, simplicity and liberality; wisdom, not foolishness, must control the use of all the gifts. For example, unrestrained giving may result in throwing money away; under God's direction, every penny may be well-spent.

2.4.4.2 <u>The Leader</u>. Paul followed the pattern of no if ("εἴτε") + the leader (ὁ προϊστάμενος—article middle nominative + verbal participle) + in (ἐν) + diligence (σπουδῇ--noun dative). Please notice that the middle voice here emphasized that the leader must be careful to focus his own will first upon himself in being a leader with diligence. He must be diligent that his relationship with God exhibits a pattern of Godly living. The Spiritual Gift of The Leader, as above with The Spiritual Gift of The Giver, required instruction about the manner of use of the spiritual gift. Paul used related terms to describe: (a) the work of elders and deacons as managers of their own children and their own households (1 Timothy 3:4, 12, page 1856); and (b) those believers who have charge over other believers (1 Thessalonians 5:12, page 1850); and (c) believers striving after good works (Titus 3:8, 14, page 1867). In Romans 12:8, page 1775, Paul emphasized that the leader must exercise The Spiritual Gift of The Leader with diligence. If you look back at the other uses of the related terms, the need for diligence becomes apparent in every occurrence in the related terms in the New Testament: diligence in managing people at home, diligence in exercising leadership over other believers, diligence in striving after good works. Consistency leads to Godly behavior in using The Spiritual Gift of The Leader.

2.4.4.3 <u>The Mercier</u>. Paul followed the pattern of no if ("εἴτε") + the mercier (ὁ ἐλεῶν—article nominative + verbal participle active) + in (ἐν) + cheerfulness (ἱλαρότητι--noun dative). In this section, I pour special meaning into the term "Mercier" to suit my own purposes. It means the saint with The Spiritual Gift of Mercier. As we have seen with the pattern above for this category, Paul used the noun without the article to emphasize the manner of use of The Spiritual Gift of Mercier. The manner of use must be with cheerfulness. Paul used the same root term to describe how God loves a cheerful giver (2 Corinthians 9:7, page 1813). The believer exercising The Spiritual Gift of Mercier will do so with cheerfulness. This manner of exercising the gift identifies the category of the gift. It fits right in with giving, leading and mercy.

2.5 <u>Romans 12 Chart of Categories</u>. Based upon the study above, we may present a chart of the categories of spiritual gifts in Romans 12.

Category One—Revealing

The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets

Category Two--Serving

The Spiritual Gift of Deacony

Category Three—Speaking

The Spiritual Gift of The Teachers

The Spiritual Gift of The Exhorter

Category Four—Sharing

The Spiritual Gift of The Giver

The Spiritual Gift of The Leader

The Spiritual Gift of The Mercier

2.6 Conclusion. In Romans 12, careful study of the structure of the text produces helpful results for understanding and living the functional aspects of the spiritual gifts listed there. We gain insight into how the individual gifts function, and as we understand the functions, so also we live more harmoniously in the Body of Christ.

Section Three

1 Corinthians 12

3.1 Not Unaware. Paul wrote the Corinthians concerning spiritual gifts and began with the phrase: "I do not want you to be unaware ("οὐ θέλω ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν") (1 Corinthians 12:1, page 1796). This term "unaware" occurs in a similar phrase in Romans 1:13, page 1759: "I do not want you to be unaware" (οὐ θέλω δὲ ὑμᾶς ἀγνοεῖν), where Paul disclosed his travel plans and purposes to the Romans. In 1 Corinthians, Paul revealed

basic principles about spiritual gifts, so that the Corinthians may learn to exercise their spiritual gifts appropriately within the Body of Christ and avoid problems.

3.2 Led Astray to Mute Idols. Paul built upon the Corinthians' prior pagan experience in being led astray to the mute idols (1 Corinthians 12:2, page 1796). Paul emphasized that (a) the Corinthians were led astray to idols; and (b) those idols were mute. Both of those ideas will be important in Paul's revelation concerning the spiritual gifts described in 1 Corinthians.

3.3 Confessions Concerning Christ. Then Paul contrasted (a) the blasphemy of the phrase "Jesus is accursed," which no one speaks under the control of the Spirit of God; and (b) the glory of the phrase "Jesus is Lord," which only people under the control of the Holy Spirit speak (1 Corinthians 12:3). Paul begins to focus upon the roles of Jesus and the Holy Spirit in helping us understand the spiritual gifts. He also warns that evil people may be doing unusual or supernatural things, claiming that they have spiritual gifts from God. Paul provides a test to distinguish false statements from true statements, and that test centers upon the confession of "Jesus is Lord." God loves variety in the Body of Christ, and used spiritual gifts to promote that variety.

3.4 Varieties of Gifts. After warning of imposters who deny Jesus is Lord, but claim to be from God, Paul began to explain how spiritual gifts operate in the Body of Christ. Paul revealed that "there are varieties of spiritual gifts" ("Διαιρέσεις δὲ χαρισμάτων εἰσίν") (1 Corinthians 12:4, page 1796). Believers must understand God placed a variety of spiritual gifts into the Body of Christ. Yet, Paul also stated "but the same Spirit" ("τὸ δὲ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα"). The term "varieties" ("Διαιρέσεις") only appears in this passage in the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians 12: 11, Paul used the verb form of the root word to describe the Holy Spirit as working all things related to the spiritual gifts in this passage, "distributing" ("διαιροῦν"—verbal participle active) to each believer just as He wills.

3.5 Varieties of Ministries. Paul continued: "And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord" (1 Corinthians 12:5, page 1776). Paul

connected the ministries to the Lord Jesus, in contrast to the gifts placed by the Holy Spirit.

3.6 Varieties of Effects. Paul expounded: "There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons ("καὶ διαιρέσεις ἐνεργημάτων εἰσίν, ὁ δὲ αὐτὸς θεός, ὁ ἐνεργῶν τὰ πάντα ἐν πᾶσιν") (1 Corinthians 12:6, page 1796). Notice that continuity of the original text: There are a varieties of works ("ἐνεργημάτων"—plural noun genitive), but the same God, the One who works ("ὁ ἐνεργῶν "--verbal participle nominative active) all things in all." God works all the works of the Body of Christ (compare Ephesians 2:10 to see that God prepared the good works beforehand, that believers should walk in them). God (God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit—one God, three divine Persons) controls the distribution of the spiritual gifts, the ministries of those gifts, and produces all the works of those gifts.

3.7 Common Good. Paul tied the varieties together by revealing the common purpose of the spiritual gifts: the common good ("τὸ συμφέρον"—article + verbal participle accusative active) of the Body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:7, page 1796). All the varieties of gifts, ministries and effects join together under God's power to work for the common good. Notice that God uses the spiritual gifts to produce of coordinated effort, promoting the common good.

Category One—Revelation Gifts

3.8 Category One—Revealation Gifts. Just as in Romans 12, Paul used a structure in 1 Corinthians 12 to delineate the spiritual gifts. He used particular words in the original text to identify these groups.

3.8.1 The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom. First in the list of spiritual gifts found in 1 Corinthians 12 is The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom. Paul described that spiritual gift as follows: "For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit . . . " '("᾽ῷ μὲν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος δίδοται λόγος σοφίας") (1 Corinthians 12:8).

3.8.1.2 <u>The "Men-De" ("μὲν-δὲ") Construction</u>. If you have followed the study through Romans 12, then you may see how Paul did not use a participle to describe any part of this spiritual gift. Participles dominated the Romans 12 passage. Nouns dominate the list in 1 Corinthians 12, but remember that Paul used a simple noun to describe The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets in Romans 12:6, page 1775. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul began his description with a common "men-de" ("μὲν-δὲ") construction, often used as part of binary construction: the first phrase introduces one idea, and the second phrase introduces a related idea. Each context must determine the relationship (e.g., contrastive, adversative, change) between the two phrases. In this case, Paul immediately revealed a relationship between: (a) The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom ("λόγος σοφίας"); and (b) The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge ("λόγος γνώσεως").

3.8.1.3 <u>"For" ("γὰρ") Particle</u>. The "for" ("γὰρ") particle often provides important background information, and may also be used to describe inference or causation, among other uses. In this case, Paul used the "for" ("γὰρ") to link the previous discussion of the different functional aspects of the spiritual gifts with a list of the spiritual gifts especially prominent at Corinth.

3.8.1.4 <u>Is Given</u>. The verb "is given" ("δίδοται"—indicative present passive) controls the entire list of gifts in this paragraph. Paul deliberately did not describe who gave the spiritual gifts, but here focused upon the gifts themselves.

3.8.1.5 <u>Through the Spirit</u>. Paul employed the phrase "through the Spirit" ("διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ") to describe the first category of gifts. This phrase "through the Spirit" ("διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ") occurs five times in the New Testament. Four of those five times referred to the means of a delivery of a revelation from God (Acts 11:28, page 1722--Agabus; Acts 21:4, page 1742--disciples; 1 Corinthians 2:10, page 1784--us; 1 Corinthians 12:8, page 1796--the one given the word of wisdom). The other occurrence described Paul's prayer for the Ephesians that they may be strengthened with power "through His Spirit" ("διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος αὐτοῦ") of Him in the inner man.

The predominant usage ties the phrase "through the Spirit" ("διὰ τοῦ πνεύματος ") to revelation from God, and in the other instance concerns the means of strengthening the inner man with power through His Spirit. In this list of spiritual gifts, Paul used this preposition only once; in Romans 12:6-8, page 1775, Paul never used that preposition. Just as Paul repeatedly used participles in Romans 12 with the preposition "in" to describe those gifts, so Paul used two nouns repeatedly in 1 Corinthians. In the Romans 12 list, Paul was emphasizing how those gifts related to different functions in the body of Christ and how those gifts must be used; in the 1 Corinthians 12 list, Paul highlighted how those spiritual gifts produced different ministries and effects, but all of those gifts were given by only one God, commanding decency and order, without factions, in the Body of Christ.

3.9 <u>The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom</u>. Paul began this list of spiritual gifts with the phrase "the word of wisdom" ("λόγος σοφίας"). Notice three things here about the construction.

3.9.1 <u>The Allo-De ("ἄλλῳ δὲ") Construction</u>. The New Testament contains many lists, but only in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, page 1796, does the allo-de ("ἄλλῳ δὲ") construction occur. This construction deserves far more attention that I can give to it here, and I leave it for others to study. It serves to join two ideas together, and the "de" suggests, perhaps, a mild contrast. If so, then The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom stands in mild contrast to The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge. Likewise, The Spiritual Gift of Faith stands in mild contrast to The Spiritual Gifts of Healings and The Spiritual Gifts of Effecting of Miracles. Please take notice that the Category Two Gifts all rest upon faith, but The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets and The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits do not have the allo-de ("ἄλλῳ δὲ") construction; those two gifts both have revelatory components to them, which the other gifts (excluding The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Wisdom and The Spiritual Gift of The Word of Knowledge) do not. Those two gifts have sharper contrasts and relate to one another more than they relate to other gifts in the Sharing Category. Finally, The Spiritual Gift of Kinds of Tongues stands in mild contrast to The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues. Indeed, the fuller discussion of each spiritual gift below will

support this mild contrast relationship among these gifts. As always, every word (in the broadest sense) carries important meaning in the New Testament. While The Spiritual Gift of Tongues and The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues both have revelatory aspects to them, Paul separated them by placing them in a separate category of Tongue Gifts by using the "another of a different kind" ("ἑτέρῳ") preposition. They are so different in substance that Paul did not include The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets and The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits in the Tongues Gifts category. At Corinth, the church had far bigger problems with The Spiritual Gift of Tongues and the Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues than any other gifts, judging from the amount of discussion that Paul devoted to the proper use of those spiritual gifts. Do not misunderstand, I am not suggesting that this list is only a Corinthian list, but rather the church at Corinth illustrates perfectly why Paul separated the Tongue Gifts from all other spiritual gifts.

3.9.2 <u>No Article</u>. At times, New Testament writers did not use an article ("the") to describe something. As always, context controls here. In 1 Corinthians 12:8, page 1796, in the Greek text, we see no article before "word of wisdom." Therefore, we must examine the context to understand what Paul intended. Often, the article serves to identify something. The genitive "wisdom" identifies the "word" and limits it. Others may contend that wisdom is the source of the word. In either case, Paul used the word "logos" which has a large background. Paul had already explained that Greeks search for wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:22). Paul also distinguished the wisdom of men ("σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων") (1 Corinthians 2:5) and the world through its wisdom ("ὁ κόσμος διὰ τῆς σοφίας") (1 Corinthians 1:21) from the wisdom of God ("τῇ σοφίᾳ τοῦ θεοῦ") and knowing God (1 Corinthians 1:21 and 1 Corinthians 2:5). Paul contrasted the wisdom of his age and the rulers of his age with the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 2:6-16). In 1 Corinthians 1-2, Paul frequently used the article with the noun wisdom, where he identified the type of wisdom and how the plan of God relates to the wisdom of God and the revelation of mysteries at the proper time.

3.9.3 <u>The Noun Nominative + Noun Genitive Construction</u>. Paul joined two nouns to reveal the word of wisdom. He used the same structure (noun nominative + noun genitive) to reveal the word of knowledge, the gifts of healing, the effecting of miracles, Judgment of spirits, kinds of tongues, and interpretation of tongues. The genitive noun helps us understand in what sense Paul used the nominative noun. Paul described The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom as a "word" (meaning a specific concept) given from God flowing from and with the wisdom given by God. Paul varied this pattern in the same list of spiritual gifts. In 1 Corinthians 12:10, page 1796, Paul used the same genitive noun "tongues" with different nominative nouns "kinds" and "interpretation" to describe The Spiritual Gift of Tongues and The Spiritual Gift of the Interpretation of Tongues. So, we must be careful to follow the structure here.

3.9.4 <u>Through</u>. Paul used the preposition "through" ("διὰ") to describe how the Spirit relates to The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom. The "through" preposition means that God reveals a word of wisdom by means of the Holy Spirit.

3.10 <u>The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge</u>. Paul used the same basic construction to describe both The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Wisdom and The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge. He also placed them in the same category of spiritual gift.

3.10.91 <u>Noun Nominative + Noun Genitive Construction.</u> As above, the Word of Knowledge ("λόγος γνώσεως"—Noun Nominative + Noun Genitive) follows the similar construction used to describe the Word of Wisdom. Paul used the term "knowledge" ("γνώσεως"—noun genitive singular) virtually every time (except 1 Timothy 6:20) to describe holy knowledge related to God.

3.10.2 <u>According To</u>. Paul used the preposition "according to" ("κατὰ") the same Spirit ("τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα"). As we observed in Romans 12:8, page 1775, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets operates according to the measure of faith. Therefore, the preposition "according to" ("κατὰ") means in this context that the revelation associated with the word of knowledge is according to (in the

sense of approved by or derived from) the Holy Spirit. For example, consider Romans 4:18, page 1763. Paul wrote there that Abraham would become a father of many nations "according to that which had been spoken . . . " (see also Romans 2:16, page 1760; Romans 4:18, page 1763; 2 Corinthians 4:13, page 1808; 2 Corinthians 10:13, page 1814). The according to ("κατὰ") identified the authority (the promise of God) for such a statement (father of many nations). The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge comes from the Holy Spirit, and He controls the application of the word of knowledge in relationship to the word of wisdom.

3.10.3 The Same Spirit. Paul linked the activity of the Holy Spirit to both the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge. Paul used different prepositions, but used the phrase "the same Spirit" ("τὸ αὐτὸ πνεῦμα") with The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge. Only one Spirit, the Holy Spirit, works in both spiritual gifts. We should keep in mind that The Spiritual Gift of the Word of Knowledge operates according to the same Spirit because we shall see next that The Spiritual Gift of Faith operates "in the same Spirit."

Category Two—Sharing Gifts

3.11 Category Two—The Sharing Gifts. Paul used the preposition "another" ("ἑτέρῳ") to identify a new category of spiritual gifts. Those category two gifts include The Spiritual Gift of Faith, The Spiritual Gifts of Healing, The Spiritual Gift of the Effecting of Miracles, The Spiritual Gift of the Prophecy, and The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits. Because they all include direct actions with others, I have labelled them sharing gifts. I understand that such labels do not have clear textual support, but I find "sharing" to be the most descriptive.

3.12 The Spiritual Gift of Faith. Paul listed The Spiritual Gift of Faith first in the list of the sharing gifts. Paul wrote: "to another faith in the same spirit" ("ἑτέρῳ πίστις ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ πνεύματι") (1 Corinthians 12:9, page 1796). The adjective "another" ("ἑτέρῳ") means another of a different kind, so we have encountered a new group of gifts here.

3.12.1 Faith. Faith ("πίστις ") appears here as a noun nominative, without an article. As above, Paul used only nouns to describe the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12, as opposed to many participles in Romans. Paul focused upon the qualities of the gift itself. The Corinthians had plenty of experience with the gifts in their congregation. Their problems centered around using the gifts harmoniously and avoiding factions, which displayed their spiritual immaturity.

3.12.2 In the Same Spirit. The phrase "in the same Spirit" ("ἐν τῷ αὐτῷ πνεύματι—only occurrence in the New Testament") links this gift back to the preceding gifts because of the Holy Spirit's activity. The preposition "in" ("ἐν") followed by the dative case describes here both (a) the Holy Spirit acting as the One who gives the gift (primary emphasis); and (b) how the gift operates only by the power of the Holy Spirit (secondary emphasis) (see 1 Corinthians 12:3, page 1796).

3.13 The Spiritual Gifts of Healings. Paul used "to another" ("ἄλλῳ de—Pronoun Indefinite Dative + Conjunction Coordinating"), signaling that The Spiritual Gifs of Healing is of the same type as The Spiritual Gift of Faith (another of the same kind). Please keep in mind that Paul used "hetereo" ("another of a different kind") to identify different kinds of spiritual gifts in this list, and "allo" ("another of the same kind") to identify spiritual gifts of the same kind.

3.13.1 Gifts of Healings. To be more precise, I would prefer to translate this gift as The Spiritual Gifts of Healings.

3.13.2 Noun Nominative + Noun Genitive Construction. Paul used the plural for "gifts of healings" ("χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων—Noun Nominative Plural + Noun Genitive Plural"). Paul may have emphasized that: (a) "gifts" mean each instance of healing represents a special gift from God; and (b) "healings" refers to physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual (with more subtypes).

3.13.3 In the One Spirit. Paul used the phrase "in one spirit" ("ἐν τῷ ἑνὶ πνεύματι") to describe The Spiritual Gifts of Healings. The preposition

"in" (ἐν—Dative) identifies the Holy Spirit as the means of empowering the spiritual gift. The phrase "one Spirit" ("τῷ ἑνὶ πνεύματι—Article Definite Dative + Adjective Cardinal Dative + Noun Dative; please notice that the dative phrases are often translated as "in," even without a preceding preposition) only occurs here in this passage. In this case, Paul employed a cardinal adjective "one" to centralize in one Holy Spirit the multitude of spiritual gifts of healings. Paul used the construction "one Spirit" ("ἑνὶ πνεύματι") to describe: (a) the baptism of all believers in the one Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:13, page 1797; and (b) the access to the Father through the one Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:18, page 1821); and (c) the one spirit of the Ephesian believers standing firm (Philippians 1:27, page 1836).

3.14 <u>The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers</u>. Although some translations refer to this gift as the gift of miracles, I prefer the translation as The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers ("ἄλλῳ δὲ ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων") (1 Corinthians 12:10, page 1796).

3.14.1 <u>The Allo-De Construction ("ἄλλῳ δὲ")</u>. The allo-de Construction ("ἄλλῳ δὲ") falls into the same class of Sharing Gifts because of the "and to another of the same kind" ("ἄλλῳ δὲ —Pronoun Indefinite Dative + Conjunction Coordinating") preposition. Therefore, The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers is another of the same kind of spiritual gift as The Spiritual Gift of Faith, but a slight difference in contrast separates them. The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers involves faith, and represents a sharing ministry. The contrast between The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers displays the supernatural power of God to minister to the needs of people while The Spiritual Gift of Faith represents a special faith in spiritual warfare, standing firm, overcoming, fellowship, and eternal rewards, among others. The Spiritual Gift of Faith rests upon faith and conviction, provided in extraordinary measure by God. In contrast, The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers rests upon supernatural works of power from God.

3.14.2 <u>Noun Nominative + Noun Genitive Construction</u>. As above, Paul used the Noun Nominative Plural + Noun Genitive Plural ("ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων") construction. Many works ("ἐνεργήματα") of

many powers ("δυνάμεων") characterize The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers. The many works flow from the many powers producing those many works; all the works and all the powers are divine. Please take notice that in Galatians 3:5, Paul wrote "working miracles" ("ἐνεργῶν δυνάμεις"—verb participle nominative masculine singular + noun accusative plural) which shows another possible way of describing the effecting of miracles. Although many translations use a participle ("effecting"), the original text used a noun. Likewise, in Philippians 2:13, page 1837, Paul used the terms "the one working" (definite article nominative masculine singular + verb participle present active nominative singular) to describe God working in believers. Paul was very familiar with the participle for "working," but did not use it in 1 Corinthians 12, although many English translations chose to translate the noun "effects" as "effecting," imbuing it with the force of participle. I find this translation disfavored because of the noun structure throughout the passage. Paul emphasized the "works," as further described them as "of powers." In the broader context of the New Testament, the works should be the focus as produced by God through His powers ("δυνάμεων").

3.14.3 <u>The Absence of "In" and "Spirit</u>." At times, noticing the absence of something helps us understand the truth. In this case, The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, and The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits, The Spiritual Gift of Different Kinds of Tongues, and The Spiritual Gift of Interpretation of Tongues are not followed by a preposition and a reference to the Holy Spirit, like the preceding gifts in the list. What does this absence mean? The absence could mean that "the same Spirit" used in the last preceding verse controls these gifts also. Before we go further, let us notice the the allo-de ("ἄλλῳ δὲ") construction occurs with The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers. The tongues gifts start with a "another of a different kind" ("ἑτέρῳ") designation, indicating they are in a different category. So, for the time being, we will focus more upon these three gifts of The Spiritual Gift of Works of Powers, The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, and The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits. If Paul mentioned the Holy Spirit to emphasize unity with the preceding gifts, why did He omit any reference to the Holy Spirit with the last three gifts in the Sharing Category? Apparently, the Corinthians were not separating and fighting over these

three gifts. These three gifts naturally tended to unify people and join them together in their worship and fellowship. I look forward to hearing more from others about the absence. I only scratched the surface here.

3.15 <u>The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets</u>. Paul introduced The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets with the phrase "to another prophecy" ("ἄλλῳ προφητεία") (1 Corinthians 12:10, page 1796). That phrase reflects a precise, pointed reference. Paul did not modify it, except with the term "another of the same kind" ("ἄλλῳ"). Therefore, we know that The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets falls into the Category of Sharing Gifts. Paul did not intend to expound upon the operation of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets, but to emphasize its coordination with other spiritual gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, page 1796.

3.15.1 <u>Noun Only</u>. Only The Spiritual Gift of Faith and The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets occur as simple nouns, with no other modifiers. Looking back at Romans 12, we see there that faith and The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets go hand in hand in Romans 12:6, 1775 ("according to his faith").

3.15.2 <u>Romans 12</u>. Notice that Paul did not describe the Spiritual Gift of Faith in Romans 12, but left that discussion for the Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians, Paul gave a brief reference in 1 Corinthians 12 to faith, apparently for the purpose of describing the relationship of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets to all the other gifts. Paul would give much greater attention to the proper functioning of The Spiritual Gift of The Prophets elsewhere in 1 Corinthians (e.g., 1 Corinthians 14).

3.16 <u>The Judgment of Spirits</u>. Paul revealed The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits ("ἄλλῳ διακρίσεις πνευμάτων") in this list in 1 Corinthians 12. The Corinthians had some understanding of The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits from their church life.

3.16.1 <u>Noun Dative Plural + Noun Genitive Plural</u>. The New American Standard translates the word "judgment" ("διακρίσεις") by using a participle ("distinguishing"). I prefer to follow the Greek text which contains the noun dative ("διακρίσεις") and translate it as a noun, "judgment."

3.16.2 Judgment. In the only other use of the exact form of the noun, Romans 14:1, page 1777, contains the idea of judgment of opinions ("διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν"). Therefore, I prefer to keep the translation the same, where possible. Romans 14:1, page 1777, provides a great hedge in understanding the use of The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits. Paul in Romans 14:1, page 1777, forbade believers from passing judgment upon the "opinions" ("διακρίσεις διαλογισμῶν") of the brother weak in faith ("Τὸν δὲ ἀσθενοῦντα τῇ πίστει"). In contrast, Hebrews 5:14, page 1874, reads: "But solid food is for the mature, who because of practice have their senses trained to discern good and evil." Notice there that maturity, not a spiritual gift, has trained ("γεγυμνασμένα") the senses ("τὰ αἰσθητήρια") for judgment ("διάκρισιν") between good and evil ("καλοῦ τε καὶ κακοῦ"). Therefore, every mature believer should: (a) accept a brother weak in faith without passing judgment upon their "opinions;" and (b) have their senses trained for judgment regarding all believers (including themselves) whether the spirit at work is good or evil. The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits avoids passing judgment upon the opinions of weaker brothers, but does employ on a different level the judgment of good and evil spirits.

3.16.3 Spirits. The saint with The Spiritual Gift of Judgment of Spirits has judgment regarding good spirits and bad spirits, and the spirit behind a communication or act. In Revelation 22:6, page 1941, we see the phrase "the spirits of the prophets" ("τῶν πνευμάτων τῶν προφητῶν") used to describe how God, the Lord "sent his angels to show to his bondservants the things which must soon take place." God the Father is also described as the Father of spirits ("τῷ πατρὶ τῶν πνευμάτων") (Hebrews 12:9, page 1884). As the Father of all spirits, God sends His word to His bondservants, the prophets. Others may claim to speak for God, but they only deceive people (e.g., Matthew 24:11, page 1545). This gift operates to distinguish the spirit behind the prophecy (1 Corinthians 14:29, Page 1800).

Category Three—Tongue Gifts

3.17 Category Three—Tongue Gifts. Paul again used the preposition "another" ("ἑτέρῳ") to identify a new category of spiritual gifts. Paul set apart

The Spiritual Gift of Tongues and The Spiritual Gift of The Interpretation of Tongues into their own category of spiritual gifts.

3.18 The Allo-De Construction The allo-de construction ("ἄλλῳ δὲ") falls into the same class of Tongue Gifts because of the "and to another of the same kind" ("ἄλλῳ δὲ —Pronoun Indefinite Dative + Conjunction Coordinating") preposition.

3.19 γένη γλωσσῶν. Paul used the term "kinds" ("γένη") of tongues. As a nominative noun, it indicates in this context subsets or groups of tongues (the set of known languages).

3.19.1 1 Corinthians 12:28. Notice the same structure in 1 Corinthians 12:28, page 1797, where Paul gave a list of spiritual gifts, but used the same phrase "kinds of tongues" ("γένη γλωσσῶν"). The question arises about what the term "kinds" ("γένη") means here. We have several choices for how the term "kinds" ("γένη") was used here: (a) known languages; or (b) no known language; or (c) only sounds not composing any language.

3.19.2 Galatians 1:14. In Galatians 1:14, page 1820, Paul used the phrase "my countrymen" ("γένει μου"). He apparently meant other Jews who were contemporaries in time. The Jews he had in mind were also studying Judaism, but he excelled his countrymen in his zeal for the traditions of the fathers. The distinction he made in Galatians 1:14, page 1820, indicates that the term γένει may refer to a group of the same people, all humans and all Jews.

3.19.2 Philippians 3:5. In Philippians 3:5, page 1838, Paul used the phrase "of the nation" ("ἐκ γένους Ἰσραήλ"). Paul used the genitive preposition with genitive nouns. He meant that he was a single person from the nation of similar people with the national identify of Israel. He called himself a "Hebrew of the Hebrews" ("Ἑβραῖος ἐξ Ἑβραίων"). Many Hebrews, but just one special Hebrew, Paul.

3.19.3 Mark 7:26. In Mark 7:26, page 1571, Mark described the woman as "Gentile" ("Ἑλληνίς"), of the "Syrophonecian race"

("Συροφοινίκισσα τῷ γένει"). Mark identified "Syrophonecians" as part of the larger group of "Gentiles." This non-Pauline usage indicates that the phrase "in the race" ("τῷ γένει") identifies the woman as part of the larger group of Gentiles, and she had all the characteristics of Gentiles.

3.19.4 1 Peter 2:9. In 1 Peter 2:9, page 1895, Peter contrasted the "aliens" ("παρεπιδήμοις") scattered abroad, apparently consisting of both Jewish and Gentile saints. Peter strung together several terms to identify the "aliens" as compared to unbelievers who rejected Jesus as the Cornerstone. Peter identified those saints a CHOSEN RACE ("γένος ἐκλεκτόν"), a royal priesthood ("βασίλειον ἱεράτευμα"), a holy nation ("ἔθνος ἅγιον") and a people ("λαὸς") for God's own possession. This non-Pauline usage indicates that the term "race" ("γένος") in this context identifies the aliens in contrast to the larger group of unbelievers. Although both groups were apparently humans, only the saints were a chosen "race." The "chosen race" had all the characteristics of the larger group of humans living in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bythinia. Compare Peter's usage in 1 Peter 2:9, page 1895, with Acts 2:1-13, pages 1700-1701, where the Galileans began speaking, and the Parthians, Medes, Elamites, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt Libya, Cyren and Romans each heard them in their own language (all known langauges). Notice the simultaneous hearing and comprehension of each individual known language without any interpreter.

3.19.5 Known Language. Although not conclusive, Paul's use of the term "kinds" in the other passages supports the position that the tongues spoken were all from the group of known languages. If he meant meaningless, ecstatic sounds (not words from a known language), then it would seem strange to use the term "kinds" which in the other passages refers to a subset of a known group. The one from a subset has all the features of the larger set. The subset distinguishes itself with some factors not shared with set. If a person argues that "kinds of tongues" means nonsense sounds which belong to a larger family of nonsense sounds, then I find that unlikely in view of the other passages mentioned above. Therefore, I conclude that the set in 1 Corinthians 12:10, page 1796, is all known langauges, and the subset is the

particular known language spoken through The Spiritual Gift of Tongues at a particular instant. I did not find any other New Testament usage that would prohibit such interpretation.

Conclusion

As Paul wrote, “the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith” (1 Timothy 1:5, page 1854). I pray that the Lord Jesus, the Holy Spirit and the Father will use this study to promote further awareness of the truth about the spiritual gifts bestowed upon the church, and how the church may be empowered by the varied ministries and effects of those spiritual gifts. I look forward to hearing from others about the truths found in the Scriptures. As always, the glory goes to God and the errors here are only from me.