

# The Serving Gifts

## Key Verse

*Romans 12:4-5 - For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

## Exploring the Bible

### I. Overview

*Romans 12: 3-5 - For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.*

Question: How should you judge yourself (verse 3)?

Answer:

Question: What do the believers in Christ form?

Answer:

Paul describes this group of gifts just like the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12. The people who have these different gifts make up different parts of the body of Christ. But there is still only one body. There is the same diversity of gifts (body parts), the same unity (one body), and the same equality (belong to each other).

*Romans 12:6-8 - We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.*

Question: List the gifts in this passage

Answer:

Question: We have these gifts according to what?

Answer:

Question: How do these gifts operate?

Answer:

Like the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 these gifts are also grace gifts. That means that these gifts are freely given by the Holy Spirit. You can't earn these gifts. But unlike the grace gifts of 1 Corinthians 12 which focused on the supernatural, these gifts focus on the practical side of body life. Yet, just because they are practical gifts doesn't mean that these gifts don't require the same supernatural work of the Spirit. Everything in the Kingdom of God requires the supernatural power of the Spirit to succeed.

## **II. How Do These Gifts Operate?**

The grace to operate these gifts manifests itself in the form of faith. Several things become evident from this form of manifestation. First, even when several people have the same gift they will each have a different proportion of faith by which they can operate their gift. Second, you are only going to be able to operate your gift to the extent of your faith. Third, we might assume that "according to the faith given you" means a level of faith. Soon, we can start thinking that we have less faith than someone else and therefore think that God gave us less than someone else because He gave us less faith. But this is not the meaning. It refers to the kind of faith needed to exercise your particular manifestation of that gift. Each of these gifts have many facets of operation just as we saw with the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12. For each facet of operation that a particular gift may have, God gives the kind of faith necessary to operate that gift for that facet of ministry. You wouldn't use a lawn mower to cut a hundred acres of hay, and you wouldn't bring the big mowing equipment used for cutting the hundred acres of hay to mow your lawn. Each piece of equipment has its own requirement for being used, yet both are used to cut grass. God is not in the business of playing favorites, giving some more faith while others less. He is in the business of equipping His children to walk out their gifting to the fullest.

## **III. A Closer Look**

### **A. Prophet**

Like the 5-fold ministry gift, the gift of prophecy can foretell (future events) or forth tell (the present) message of God. Unlike the 5-fold ministry gift this gift is not a part of the person's DNA (5-fold=prophet, gift=prophecy). The gift is activated according to the need and assignment of the prophet.

## **B. Teaching**

Like the 5-fold ministry gift, the gift of teaching gives the person the ability to clearly explain the truths of the Bible to God's people. Their joy is in seeing the light bulb go on for the people who are listening. Unlike the 5-fold ministry gift, this gift is not a part of the person's DNA (5-fold=teacher, gift=teaching). They can activate the gift when it is needed, and many times the focus of their teaching involves their Kingdom assignment.

## **C. Encouragement/Exhortation**

These people are God's positive promoters. They are constantly encouraging the saints to go forward in the Kingdom and exhorting them to grab all that God has for them. One of the most devastating attacks of the enemy is the spirit of discouragement. This gift operating in God's people is the supernatural antidote for this kind of spiritual attack.

## **D. Serving/Helps**

The traditional view of this gift is that these people have a gift for just getting a lot of needed work done. Some described a person operating with this gift as a jack-of-all-trades because they could do so many different things. While this gift may encompass some aspects of this, there is so much more. This gift gives people the supernatural ability to come along side others in intercession, prayer for specific types of needs, and a variety of other supernatural assistance. Those who operate in intercessory prayer usually are operating in this gift. Another example of this gift might be a person having an anointing to pray for a specific need and see results.

## **E. Administration/Leadership**

The people who have this gift have the ability to administrate God's operations. This is much different than the skill to manage a church office or a project. These people have the supernatural ability to see all the aspects of God's operation, see what needs to be done and when, and identify who has the particular skill or gifting to accomplish things

with God's anointing. Like the other gifts this gift will manifest in different arenas through different people.

## **F. Giving**

The people who have this gift have a supernatural ability to give, especially material possessions. This doesn't mean that they are necessarily rich financially. Instead, they have a supernatural ability to allow God's resources to flow through them. If they are being led by the Spirit, their giving will not be random to anyone in need but their giving will be targeted according to the Spirit's leading.

## **G. Mercy**

The people who have this gift have a supernatural ability to show mercy to those who need it. This is different from showing sympathy or empathy for a person. This is the ability to bring restoration and healing those who have been hurt or wounded or have fallen into some sin and need restoration into fellowship with the rest of the body.

## **IV. Who Has These Gifts**

While it doesn't say it directly, it seems clear from this passage that all believers have some form of one of these gifts operating in them. Along with the gifts from 1 Corinthians 12, there can be some powerful combinations. Imagine someone with the gift of mercy operating in words of knowledge that gives them the ability to speak directly to specific wounds in a person. Or, how about a person with the gift of mercy also operating with discerning of spirits and the Spirit guides them in their giving. It also means teaming up with others in the body who have gifts that compliment your gifts so that you work together.