

FBC - 1/23/85
Wed. Evening
From Tape/mc

WEDNESDAY EVENING SERVICE

1 Cor. 12: 1-7

*Holy Spirit and His Gifts to us.
How to find our gifts.*

1 Cor. 12 is one of the most important chapters in the Bible because it deals with the H. S. and the gifts of the H. S. It's not the only place where we have information on the gifts but it's one of the most important, so I want us to just get right into this. Paul is writing the church at Corinth and answering certain questions which they posed in a letter that they've written him and evidently, they had asked him about Spiritual Gifts, as they had about the Lords Supper and marriage and other things. So he addresses himself to it. He says

V. 1 (read) actually 'gifts' is not in the original - the original word means 'Holy Spirit Bestowed Ministry'. It's one word - numatakos- but he says 'concerning these special ministries of the H. S., I would not have you ignorant. I would not have you unaware; I would not have you uninformed. But really, there's not a better translation than just ignorant. You would think that anyone who had ever read the N. T. would not be unaware of the gifts of the H. S. and yet, I think you can go into whole churches where they are totally ignorant of the gifts of the H. S. I think I have been in church; I think I have preached in revival meetings where the whole church was ignorant of the Gifts of the H. S.

You say 'well, was there much going on?' Well, God works with what He HAS to work with and He works according to our level of understanding. But suppose the church is ignorant of the Gifts of the H. S.? Do you not see the tremendous limitation? Take our own fellowship. Suppose we knew nothing about the Gifts of the H. S. in this church. Well, if we knew nothing about the gifts of the H. S., we'd be tremendously impoverished. By knowing the Gifts, we have opened a great vast ocean of ministries. To lay people.

Many beautiful ministries that people would never have known and even if they had been exercising them, they would not have known what they were and they would not have known what the Bible teaches about them. That's bad - that's VERY bad. If the church, of course, did not experience the Gifts and sometimes the Gifts operate up to a level, even though the people don't even know what the gifts are and never have heard them. Some are exercising the gift

of - say teaching and some the gifts of wisdom and these things. But if the church didn't have the gifts, it wouldn't even be a church. If the Gifts of the Spirit are not operative to some extent, in the body, all you would have would be a human organization and you wouldn't have any power or any real ministry. Is that possible? Very possible.

I think we certainly find this. So Paul is saying 'I do not want you to be ignorant of this'

.2 (read) 'Gentiles' is 'pagan' and the Corinthians were, before they were converted. He reminds them, that at one time they were just worshipping dumb idols and were being led around by idols which could not even speak. The word 'dumb' means 'voiceless'. We don't know much about this in this country, but I tell ^{you} you/don't have to do a THING, except to go to one non-Xtn country and see people worshipping idols to see how sad this is. They're literally led by them.

They are literally dominated by idols. Just like in Bangkok, ~~XXXXXX~~ just a big piece of steel right in the center of the city, which they call 'The Place of Power' and people just come from everywhere, bow, putting of food and flowers - to the center of power, which was not a thing but a steel beam. You say 'it's incredible'. Indeed it is. Well, the Corinthians were in this shape. They were led around by idols which couldn't even speak. Strange. It's amazing what the unenlightened mind, without the Bible and the H. S., can be led into.

V. 3 (read) 'speaking by the Spirit' or speaking under the power of the H. S. is what he's saying. 'Of God calleth Jes. accursed'. Now evidently, there were people who claimed to be under the Spirit of God who were cursing Jes. And Paul is saying that it would be impossible for any person, under the power of the Spirit, to curse Jes. And, indeed it would! Because you see, the H. S. IS the Spirit that testifies that Jes. IS the Son of God and if the H. S. is in us, we're certainly not going to curse JC, but we are going to glorify Him. But there were people, evidently, who were cursing Jes. and claiming they were under the power of the H.S.

But he gives the positive next: next section of V. 3 (read) 'by the Holy Ghost' or by the

power of the H. S. Now, you can say Jes. is Lord with the lips without the power of the H. S. The Bible is very clear on this. Jes. says in Luke 6: 46 (read). Again Jes. says in Matt. 7: 21 (read). It's possible to call Jes. Lord and to sing about His Lordship, but what Paul is saying is one of the great N. T. Truths. 'NO man can say that Jes. is Lord and it be a reality in his life, except by the H. S.' Which brings to our minds one of the most important ministries and indeed, the dominant ministry of the H. S. THE dominant ministry of the H. S. is to make Jes. Lord in our lives!

You and I cannot do this. We cannot make Jes. Lord, apart from the power of the H. S. Because to make Him Lord is to die. We must die and the H. S. is the one who nails us to the cross and gives us the power to enthrone Jes. Wherever Jes. is really Lord, it's through the power of the H. S. It's not through natural power; but it's through the work of the H. S. Jes. in talking about the H. S., in John 16 - there's a key passage. Turn to John 16: he is talking about the work of the H. S. in John 16: 13 (read). Now look at V. 14 (read) the Greek verb 'show' here means more than just an intellectual knowledge.

It really means that the H. S. takes the things of Jes. and makes them real in our lives, including His Lordship. We hear a lot about the infilling of the H. S. today. The supreme evidence of the infilling of the H. S. is the Lordship of Jes. No one is really filled with the H. S. unless Jes. is Lord. That is the evidence of the infilling of the H. S. more than anything else. Where Jes. controls the life and where Jes. is glorified and worshipped and the H. S. will always call attention to Jes and will enthrone Him as Lord. So Paul is saying that no man can say that Jes. is Lord and it be a reality. Without the power of the H. S. and no man will ever curse Jes. or call Him 'anathama' (?) who is under the power of the H. S. because that is the ministry of the H. S.

Now having said this, he goes in to this matter of ministries and effects and gifts. He says in V. 4 of 1 Cor. 12 (read) 'diversities' is the word 'varieties'. You see the word 'gifts' there? That's a great N. T. word. It's really the word 'charismatic'. C-h-a-r-i-s-m-a-t-a,

which is just the plural form of gifts. The Greek word for Gift is charisma; you put that ta on the end and you have gifts. It was really a shame that about 1965, we began to hear about the charismatic movement and Baptists were so ignorant of this, they didn't even know it was a N. T. word. They thought this was something absolutely new. The word simply means 'grace gift'. Not concerning the gifts (the charismata) and this same word occurs in Rom. 12: 6.

I remember the SBC was meeting in Miami and somebody from Virginia made a motion on the floor that we condemn the Charismatic Movement and I remember the Pres. said 'well, are you sure you want to condemn the Grace Gifts'? He knew some Greek and he pointed out, he said 'Charismatic are the Grace Gifts'. This is really what the word 'charismatic' means. Now, concerning the Grace Gifts - just like salvation is a gift, so the gifts of the H. S. are Gods Grace Gifts bestowed upon us. You see, when you're saved, you receive the H. S.; you receive the life of the Spirit (Acts 2: 38) but we receive a great deal more!

We receive gifts of ministry; not just a few of us, but to be a believer is to be^a/gifted believer and to receive a charisma or a charismata. I have pointed out to you in days past that I find three views, concerning the gifts, just in quick review:

1. One Gift is Charisphobia. Which is to be afraid of the gifts, until we don't teach about them or we don't want to hear anything about them. That's an extreme. We certainly want to avoid that.

2. Charismania. Where people just get caught up in the gifts and forget Jes. and Evangelism and those things and THAT'S wrong. But the real N. T. view is this:

3. The Charismatic View. Which is the gifts of the Spirit working in the people of God to make the church the Body of Christ and to make it a powerful witnessing of the Body in the world. That's Gods purpose for His church is to be gifted and to exercise those gifts in the Body for the edification of the members and for the glorification of the Head, who is Jes.

Now concerning the gifts, he says, 'there are varieties of gifts' and indeed there are. There are so many gifts. We have nine listed in 1 Cor. 12: 8 through 10 - there are nine. But look, turn back to Rom. 12 - if you don't think there are varieties of gifts, turn back to Rom. 12: 6, 7 & 8, we have seven gifts(read) There is prophecy, (prophecy according to the proportion of faith) (V. 6).

V. 7: or ministry (there is the second gift) or he that teacheth or teaching.

V. 8: exhortation, giving, ruling and mercy. There are seven of them.

You find five gifts listed in Eph. 4: 11(read) apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. Look at the end of 1 Cor. 12 - you have a listing there in V. 28. He says 'and God hath set some in the church apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, gifts of healing, helps, government, diversities (variety) of tongues.

Then, in addition to this, if you will turn to 1 Peter 4: 9 you will find a gift. 'Use hospitality one toward another without grudging.' That's a gift. If you turn back to 1 Cor. 7: 7, I believe this is correct - there would be some controversy here but in 1 Cor. 7: 7, I read it to say that chastity is a gift given to some people. Now when you bring all these gifts together, you have about 21 or 22 gifts that I find in the N. T. But you have a greater variety than this.

You can take ANY of these categories of gifts and they will be expressed in many different ways. For instance: take the gift of teaching; how many of you teach in here tonight, raise your hands. Well, a lot of you. There's not a one of you that teach alike. Not at all. The way ~~you~~ you exercise that gift is different. Does that mean that part of you have the gift of teaching and part of don't? Not at all. Preaching: you've never heard two preachers that were alike. Sometimes a church will change its pastor and they just won't accept him because he didn't preach like the former pastor.

That's one of the reasons we need to know the Truth of the gifts of the Spirit. When he's got just as valid a ministry as the preceding man, though he didn't do it the same way. You see, we need to KNOW this. You see, in the body of Christ there is tremendous diversity. God is a God of great variety and great diversity. This is the way it is in nature. Did you know there is nothing alike in nature? If you would snow flakes, under a microscope, you'd find every snow flake different. God didn't make us alike.

We've been meeting for two weeks, setting up our Steering Committee for our 'Together We Grow'. It's been one of the most challenging things I've ever gone through with, in my life. As I've seen the wonderful members of this congregation come in and just how different they are. Yet, all of them the Children of God but so different. Different personalities. It's just so obvious. Different gifts. It's just beautiful! Just to see this. And this is what God has in His church - great diversity. All kinds of gifts.

Now think of the staff of FBC. Now Tripp is sitting here. Well, I don't know what he'd say his gifts are, but to deal with Body Life, I HOPE he has the gift of mercy or I think he'd lose his mind. You cannot imagine what this good man does in the way of dealing with human need and so many kinds of people. Well, then, I think of

Tom sitting over here. He certainly has the gift of counselling, I believe. I believe that Sam Wiley has the gift of teaching. That's right, say AMEN to your leader! Boost him! O.K. My secretary, is she here? Is Janey here? She isn't here, but I want to tell you something; she has a gift. She has the gift mentioned in 1 Pet. 4: 9 - hospitality. She wouldn't hesitate to invite - she invited the Director of Together We Grow - said 'listen, you stay at my house tonight; don't you get a motel, you stay at my house'. She wouldn't hesitate to invite ten or twenty people in their home, fix them a meal.

Some ladies can't do that. They'd have three coronary and two strokes!!! But now she thrives on this. A beautiful thing. Take Eddie Graber - I think has the gift of ~~min~~ administration.

Take Ken Carter - organization, administration. ON ~~XXXXXXXXXX~~ and on you could go. There are a variety of gifts and when you try to put people in a mold and say 'now, listen, you've got to have this gift and you've got to act like everybody else, you're destroying the work of God and the beauty of the Body of Christ.

There are varieties of gifts but the same H. S. (V. 4). See? While there are varieties of gifts, they're all given by the same H. S. We ought never to forget this.

V. 5 (read) 'differences' is the same word as 'diversities' up there. You say 'well, why did the KJ people change it?' Well, they said it's good style and that calls for not repeating it, but when you're translating, you better repeat it. That's the same word that's up there in V. 4. 'Administrations' is the word 'ministries'. There are all kinds of ministries. All kinds of gifts; all kinds of ministries, but the same Lord, Jes.

V. 6 (read) there you have that word 'diversities' again. Now they come back to it there in V. 6, the KJ people because they say 'well, it's not good style to repeat' but you see we know in this scientific age of accuracy, that you need to tell EXACTLY what the Greek says and in three verses there, you've got the word 'variety'. V. 6 has one of the most important Truths for us to remember today. You see there's a tendency for us to try to make everybody like ourselves or a stereotype.

Nothing hurts me more, really, nothing disturbs me more, that to hear one believer putting down another. I think there's no discouragement as great in the Body of Christ as to hear one believer putting down another believer. Because ~~XXXX~~ this believer may have a different view; a different ministry and a different way of expressing it. So you find this today in the Xtn world, which we ought to avoid like a plague. Here's a fundamentalist: the fundamentalist has been taught all the doctrines, reared on the KJ; and generally, a Schofield Bible. Nothing wrong with that. Nothing wrong with that. But it IS wrong when that fundamentalist condemns others, who may not have this background and that rigidity in doctrine, say 'well, you

just don't have it, brother'. When there's every evidence in that man's life that he loves Jesus, faithful church member, but yet, he doesn't ~~XXXX~~ cross every 'T' and dot every 'I'. Now when you have that kind of spirit, that's divisive in the Body and that does not advertise Christ.

But you have that. Or to take a liberal Xtn, for instance, who - maybe he's gone to school, maybe he knows English, maybe he knows language but who would condemn and ignorant, honest believer because he hadn't had the advantage he'd had. That is so much out of order in the Body of Christ and among believers. Or to take a Charismatic Xtn, who condemns, say fundamentalist, or others, because they haven't had - maybe an experience they had ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~ or a manifestation of the Spirit in their life. That's Spiritual pride of the highest order!

That should be avoided like a plague. You see, this is the reason there are different churches and different denominations. There are people that we can minister to in the FBC that other churches could not minister to. But there are people that other churches can minister to that we simply cannot ~~xx~~ minister to in the FBC. I've had people to come to this church and they would say to me ~~XXXXXX~~ 'you know, I went to S. S. and I really liked it. I came to hear you preach and I really liked it. But I came to the worship service and there's something I didn't like'. I said 'what didn't you like?'

He said 'well, I want a Worship Service where there's a great deal of commotion and where there is just a lot of activity and demonstration and noise - loud singing, maybe somebody getting up and preaching right in the middle of the service; speaking in tongues; word of prophesy or something like that. You know, FB is not for me because I'm used to something else'. So they go to another fellowship, because that is a ministry that appeals to them. Sunday, because of the snow, I couldn't leave my home as early as usual and I heard two men - I heard Jimmy Swaggart and I heard Dr. James Kennedy. It could not be more different. Here was Jimmy Swaggart just moving around everywhere. Man, moving around. Brother, he was moving!

Was I blessed? Of COURSE, I was blessed. He was preaching the Bible; preaching the Truth.

But here came James Kennedy and man, did that choir dot every T and cross every I. And James Kennedy, in a robe, came up there and preached. Now some people would say 'well, now the Spirit was with Jimmy Swaggart but not James Kennedy.' Or somebody would say 'the Spirit was with James Kennedy but not with Jimmy Swaggart'. No, you are wrong if you say that. The Spirit is with both of them and James Kennedy has a ministry that Jimmy Swaggart could never touch in a thousand years and Jimmy Swaggart has a ministry that James Kennedy would never touch!'

Different ministries, varieties of ministries, different expressions - but the same Lord, the same Spirit and the same Father. When we realize this Truth, I tell you it is a tremendous thing. I think in our church, we've handled it pretty well. Occasionally I hear somebody who's trying to put somebody down because they don't quite express it this way or have had this! Listen, don't you ever be a part of that because that is Spiritual pride and that is of Satan and that is contrary to the N. T. order. Now he goes on to say in

V. 7 (read) rather awkward. What he's saying is not 'every man' it's not in the Greek but to 'every single believer has been given a gift for the common good'. There's the beautiful thing. Here's the test: are we using the gift that God's given us, not for our ego and not even for our own pleasure, but for the common good? Are we using the gifts to build up Christ's Body? And to build up one another? Turn to 1 Peter 4: 10 (read) 'THE charisma (and he's talking about every believer) even so, minister ~~one~~ the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold (and that means many colored) grace of God'. Isn't that beautiful?

You see, we're not given the gifts for ourselves. We're given our gifts for the Body. God did not give me the gift of preaching or prophesy to use for myself. But it belongs to you. It belongs to the church and it's to ^{be} exercised in the church; it's to be exercised for the common good and if it's not for the common good, it should not be exercised. The true gifts of the Spirit will always be a blessing to people. All right. What's your gift tonight? Bro. David Bethel, what is your gift? Would you just stand up. I think that it's good to share what our gifts are; that it's good to share WHAT our gifts are and how we're using them in the Body.

Bro. David what is your gift and how are you using it to the common good? Wonderful! Give us an example of how you are using it? Use it in teaching and indeed, you can certainly use exhortation in teaching. And you're not doing it for David, you're doing it for others and Jes. That's beautiful.

Carolyn, what would you say one of your gifts is and how do you use it? Just stand up here and tell us. Wonderful. These things are so inter-related, that if you have one, you may have several. Maybe exhortation, maybe the Word of Wisdom comes in there, at times. That's wonderful and it's a great joy, isn't it? To do that.

All right, Patsy, what is your gift? How are you using that for the common good. That's a wonderful gift, Patsy. I'd like for you to be my nurse. I want the nurse to have mercy on me when I'm in the hospital. I HOPE the doctor does.

Bro. Ross, what would you say your gift is? Probably have several, but name one gift and tell us how you use it. O.K. Wonderful. Bro David Bacon, what would you say one of your gifts is and how you're using it for the common good? Sure. Good! You probably have encouragement there; exhortation. That is a tremendous gift he's talking about. The gift of encouragement. I had a man come by my office today who has such a gift of encouragement. I tell you when you're seeking to lead people and seeking to do that which you feel is right, nothing will help you more than an encourager who comes along. PTL for the encouragers in the congregation.

Some people do not have this. They just don't have it. Bro. Asa Hutchinson, hope you can go hear Jerry Falwell tomorrow, but what is your gift and how do you use it? That's good! Amen! Reason I thought you'd want to go hear Falwell - I know how keenly interested you are in the issues he will be discussing and hope you can go in. Of course, any of you for that matter.

Well, I think this gives us an example of how wonderful this is. Now suppose that someone with

the gift of teaching would look down on - say, with mercy. Or suppose one with teaching would demand of another with the gift of teaching that they teach just like he teaches. There are varieties of gifts and varieties of ministries and varieties of effects. But the same Lord; the same Spirit; the same Father. Mrs. Curtis, what is your gift? You sure it's Evangelism, Mrs. Curtis? How many of you think Mrs. Curtis may have the gift of Evangelism? That's wonderful. That's wonderful.

All right, well on and on we could go. But it's a wonderful thing that we're talking about. PTL! Now you may say 'well, I don't know what they're talking about tonight; I don't have a gift.' YES, you do! You say 'well, how do I find it?' Well, we could talk a long time, but the best way to find it is to start serving Jes. and if you don't - if you're not in the right slot, He'll get you there. The Bible doesn't say a lot about it - about discovering the gifts. It says 'serve Jes.'

You know, Philip began as a deacon and that really wasn't his gift. But God got him, finally, to Evangelism. You just start serving. You do what Ken Carter or some of us ask you to do. If you don't know, just start serving Jes. with a pure heart; I'll guarantee you will know what your gift is. Because He's looking for people to serve Him. PTL! AMEN?

Let's stand.