

Devotion: Nature of Spiritual Gifts

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[0 : 00] So we're in chapter 12, and chapter 12, 13, 14 is a whole section together about spiritual gifts. And let me just start by saying a couple reasons why we would study such a thing.

Number one, we study verse by verse, and so we've come to this section, so we're going to pick it up. We're not going to run from it. We're just going to study it as best we can. And number two, the idea of spiritual gifts is heavy in all of the training material about how a church does ministry. Back in the day, I remember taking what was called a spiritual gift survey. And what that was, was it basically like a personality test, but I was told at the end of this test what my spiritual gift was. Now, I don't know how they decided what these questions ought to be, but that is one of the things that a lot of churches will say is that they want you to discover your spiritual gift so that you can use your spiritual gift in ministry.

Because everyone believes that every member of a church ought to be involved in doing something for the sake of the gospel. And so this has been kind of the classic way within the last, you know, 100 years that people have talked about this.

[1 : 29] It is not how people talked about it before the 100 years, but we'll get to that before too long. A third reason is that in chapter 14, verse 1, it says, Pursue love and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts.

That's a command. Earnestly desire the spiritual gifts. For someone like me who has a tendency to downplay the spiritual gifts in certain ways, that's a command that you have to reckon with. You know, think about it this way. We see commands in the scriptures all the time. Commands such as encourage one another. And we don't blink an eye at obeying that command.

We just go like, oh man, I ought to encourage other people. And so we begin to try to obey that command. Well, how do we obey this command when there's a lot of things not told to us about spiritual gifts?

So we've got to figure that out. And the final thing as to why we would study this is that spiritual gifts are abused today. Spiritual gifts are abused today.

[2 : 45] From the gift of tongues to the gift of prophecy to the gift of a word of knowledge or a word of wisdom, people do and say all kinds of crazy things under the guise that they have a spiritual gift and they're exercising this spiritual gift.

I've been in a worship service where everybody in the worship service all of a sudden started babbling things that I couldn't understand. And they were all doing it at the same time.

And I was just standing there going like, what is going on? I've been there praying with a group of pastors. And I got super distracted because this pastor over here, under his breath, when it wasn't his turn to pray, was just babbling syllables that I had no idea what they meant.

And he was just going for it. And so the thing is, is that the largest segment of the Christian church in the world are what you call charismatics.

Charismatics get their name from the Greek word for gifts, which is charismata. Okay. So a charismatic believes that these gifts that we're going to be looking at are still operable in the church today, the way that they were back in the time of Paul.

[4 : 14] And they have certain definitions of what these gifts are. And then they act on those gifts. And you've got a continuum of people in this world, some who are on this extreme end who abuse it and who do all kinds of crazy things under the name of the Spirit of God.

And then you have people on this end who, even though they're still charismatics, they describe themselves as charismatics with seatbelts on. So they would be the first person to say, all of you people babbling here in the service, stop.

You don't have an interpreter. You need to be quiet. So they would have some gumption about them and they would kind of hold things back. They would call out the abuse on the other end and say, that's wrong.

And I appreciate the charismatics with the seatbelt on. And just so you understand the differences, the church across the road, they are charismatic. They went from being Methodist to being charismatic.

Brother Bill will tell you that he's a charismatic with a seatbelt on. Okay, so he's here and he would call out these abuses. Okay, I know full well that he would.

[5 : 24] He and I have talked about it. There's a whole other group and we're often given the name cessationists. Cessationists. And those are people who say that in one form or another, these gifts have actually ceased to operate within the church.

That that was for a season, but they're no longer something that we use. I sort of fall into that category, but not in a very neat and tidy way.

And so this is all going to be super messy. So with that said, we need to do what we've done every time. And we need to talk for a few minutes about what the problem for the Corinthians were.

Because I want you to notice verse 1 of chapter 12 says, now concerning spiritual gifts. They wrote to Paul asking something about spiritual gifts.

We don't know what they asked. We're not sure entirely what the problem was. But had they not asked, we would not know that these gifts exist.

[6 : 35] If they had not asked, we would not know that these gifts exist. So remember something about the problem of the Corinthians as a whole, right? They are combining the gospel with Greek wisdom, particularly rhetoric and eloquence, right?

Just because Paul speaks the truth doesn't mean that they believe it. They're expecting someone to be very eloquent in their speaking ability, to entertain them, to wow them.

And that's how they know something is true, right? That's one of the things we've said over and over again. Well, many of these gifts involve the idea of speaking.

So now you can begin to see how this begins to come together. The Corinthians also thought of themselves as super spiritual people, right?

Many of them considered themselves to have arrived at the realized eschaton. In other words, I've already made it past normal life.

[7 : 39] I'm in the end times. I have become perfected. And many of them were holding that they were more spiritual than other people within the church because many of them spoke in tongues.

Tongues was the problem. Now, here's why I say tongues was the problem, okay? I'll give you, I think, three or four reasons. Number one, in verses 8 through 10, it lists out several gifts.

The last gifts to be listed are another various kinds of tongues and to another interpretation of tongues. It's last on the list.

It's also last in the list of when the gifts are repeated in 28 through 30 when it says, do all speak with tongues, do all interpret.

So it's last in the list, which doesn't prove anything, but that's just a data point, right? Secondly, when you get to chapter 13, the conversation narrows from these eight or ten gifts that are listed down to four.

[8 : 56] Tongues, knowledge, prophecy, and faith. That's chapter 13, one through four. Then the list narrows again when you get to chapter 14, and it's just prophecy and tongues.

And as you look at the prophecy and the tongues in chapter 14, tongues is the bad boy because tongues does not build anybody up unless it gets interpreted.

And so he is telling them basically to avoid speaking in tongues without an interpreter, but prophecy is what we need to cling to.

In other words, he basically shows that prophecy is better than tongues. So because of those reasons, I tend to think that what the problem is is that you have these tongue speakers who thought they were more spiritual than everyone else, and I think the question might have been something along the lines of who really are the more spiritual people based upon their giftings.

And so Paul wrote chapter 12, 13, and 14 to answer that problem. So with that problem established then, one of the things that you'll notice before we get into the next part is that if you read through all three chapters kind of in one sitting, by the end of the time, you should come out with the concept and the thought and the idea that pursuing spiritual gifts, especially to prophecy, means that our job

is to make sure that whatever is done in worship, the clarity of the teaching of the word is the most important thing.

[10:53] The most important thing. So what he does is chapter 12, he gives us a little bit of the nature of spiritual gifts.

Chapter 13, he gives us the better way of love. In chapter 14, he deals with the clarity of prophecy over tongues. So we're going to deal with chapter 12 today and look at the nature of spiritual gifts. There's four things about that. The first is that they're Christ-centered. The gifts are Christ-centered. That's verses 1 through 3. And let's just read that.

He says, Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to mute idols however you were led.

Therefore, I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says Jesus is accursed, and no one can say Jesus is Lord except in the Holy Spirit or by the Holy Spirit.

[11:54] A couple of things about that. Based upon their background, something about the way somebody spoke led them off to mute idols, right?

Led them into paganism. And he's saying, don't worry about your past. That's not the way it is with God, because you're not going to have somebody tell you something negative about Jesus, who's also speaking by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit's not going to accursed Jesus. Now this is not about saying the mere words, right? If I were to take a parrot and tell the parrot, say Jesus is Lord, and the parrot says Jesus is Lord, that does not mean that's an operation of the Holy Spirit, right?

So this is not just the bare words. This is about what someone is going to teach, what someone is going to say, what someone is going to declare by the work of the Holy Spirit.

Every time a gift is used, it's going to be to promote Jesus Christ. Every time a gift is used, it's going to be used to promote the gospel.

[13:06] Every time a gift is used by the Holy Spirit, it is going to be centered upon Jesus Christ. Because the work of the Holy Spirit is to glorify Jesus Christ.

In John's gospel, and you write this verse down, John 16, 13, and 14, Jesus is with his disciples on the night that he was betrayed, and one of the things that he taught them about was the Holy Spirit. And one of the things that he says about the Holy Spirit is that the Holy Spirit will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.

So when the Holy Spirit speaks to the apostles, he always does so in a way that exalts and glorifies the Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore, none of the gifts can be used for anything other than the promotion of Jesus and the gospel. All right?

[14:19] That's the first nature of the spiritual gifts. The second nature has to do with unity. Has to do with unity. They are, the gifts are an expression of unity.

And we see this in two ways. First, look at verses 4 through 6. It says, Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.

And there are varieties of service, but the same Lord. And there are varieties of activities, but the same God, who empowers them all in every one.

Now did you notice the Trinity? The same Spirit? The same Spirit? Well, you thought, that's the Holy Spirit. Who's the Lord?

That's going to be the Lord Jesus. And here's why. Paul, when he writes in his letters, I think always when he uses Lord, except in one or two instances, is referring to Jesus Christ.

[15:20] And when he uses God, except in one or two instances, he's referring to the Father. You ever notice in the beginning of his letters, he says, The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

That's the way he writes all the time. God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. So, what you have here is that the triune God is behind the operation of the spiritual gifts.

So that there is harmony in what the triune God does in empowering and using the spiritual gift. Such as creation, right?

At creation, the triune God was in harmony in creating the world and the universe. You didn't have the Father speaking, let there be light, light, and the sun going like, you mean horses?

You know what I'm saying? The triune God was in harmony in that work. Just like the triune God is in harmony in the work of our salvation. So any operation of a spiritual gift is going to be the harmonious working and power of the triune God.

[16 : 33] Well, then he talks about an illustration of unity and diversity. In chapter 12, verses 12 through 26. Now, I do not intend to read that whole section.

And the reason is, is because it's one big long illustration. But let me read a little bit of it. And I think you'll get the grip of it. Verse 12 says, For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ.

For in one spirit we were all baptized into one body, Jews or Greeks, slaves or free, and all were made to drink of one spirit. For the body does not consist of one member, but many.

And if the foot should say, Because I'm not a hand, I don't belong to the body, that would not make it any less a part of the body. Now, he continues with this idea of the human body is one with many members.

Your whole body is not an ear. And your foot belongs to the body. And he's using that as an analogy to speak about the usage of spiritual gifts in the body of Christ.

[17 : 46] That not everybody's got the same gift. That there's just one body. And every gift is necessary in order for the body to function. So what he's getting at is that the usage of the spiritual gifts are an expression of that unity.

Right? Both the expression of the unity of the triune God, and an expression of the unity of the body itself. And so the point is, is that the gifts are always to be used in the body, for the body, for the common good of the body, for the building up of the body.

It is about that unity. Now, does that make sense what I'm saying? Okay. So then, we have that it's Christ-centered.

We have that it's an expression of unity. The third thing is that the gifts are a manifestation of the Spirit. A manifestation of the Spirit. This comes from verse 7.

You'll notice he says, To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. If we break that down, the first part, to each, this is about who gets the manifestation.

[19 : 04] And when he says, To each, to each is given the manifestation. To each one who has a spiritual gift, that is a manifestation of the Spirit.

What he's not saying is, everyone gets the manifestation of the Spirit. Because there's a difference between everyone and each.

Paul's focus in this passage, even as he's using the illustration of the body, is not to say, all of you have a gift.

But his focus is, is all who have a gift, that gift is an expression or a manifestation of the Spirit. In other words, Gordon Fee, who's a charismatic commentator, said in his commentary on this particular passage, that Paul's words are not meant to convey that every member has a gift.

That is one of the differences between what I think and what many others think. I don't think that every single member has a gift. Because I think the gifts were used for a particular thing that we'll get into a little bit.

[20 : 24] And so that means that our pursuit of spiritual gifts is not about finding mine, but about making sure that the gifts are still operating the way they should.

He goes on to say in verse 7, To each is given a manifestation of the Spirit. Okay, a manifestation of the Spirit. A simple way to understand what that means is this. If I said the football pass of Tom Brady, the question is, what flies down the field?

The football. Right. Because it would be weird to say that it's Tom Brady flying down the field, as though somebody threw him. Oftentimes when we think of manifestation of the Spirit, we think of it as the Spirit being manifested, rather than the Spirit manifesting something.

This should be understood as the Spirit manifesting something, not as a manifestation of the Spirit. The difference between whether it's the football or Tom Brady going down the field, right?

So what is he manifesting? He's manifesting power. Right? He's manifesting power. He is working in his power through the gift. So these gifts are not personalities or talents or abilities.

[21 : 51] This is not somebody who is eloquent in speech and can hold people's focus and attention because they know the rules of rhetoric.

This is someone who's been empowered by the Holy Spirit to do something, that the Holy Spirit accomplishes something through them because it's a manifestation of this power.

It's a spiritual power working in the gift. Now, you keep reading the verse, he says, to each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

For the common good. In other words, it is for the good of the body that's there, not for the individual that's there.

The common good is about the whole body. So the Spirit manifests his power in the gift when the gift is used in the context of the whole church for the good of the church to build up the church.

[22 : 53] Let me say that again. I think that's important. The Spirit manifests his power in the gift when the gift is used in the context of the whole church for the good of the church to build up the church.

So, for instance, there are some people who just walk up to me and they have before in the past and they've proclaimed that they have a particular spiritual gift and that because of that gift, they now have a word for me and that word they tell me and that word is something about my personal life and what I'm doing.

That gift is not being exercised in the context of the whole church. So when someone comes to me as an individual to tell me that, I have a tendency to look at them and go, in my head, because I'm nice, you're crazy.

You're crazy. Now, if that person comes to me and I think many of them recognize this, that there's something off with what they're doing, many of them will come, 90% of them will come with a verse of Scripture.

And you know what I do when they come to me with a verse of Scripture? I go, thank you. And I take that verse of Scripture and I just go. And then I go look at that verse of Scripture in context to see if it's a good thing that meets the need of the moment.

[24 : 26] You know? Only if it's super egregious would I say something and be like, listen, just don't bring me your stuff anymore because God's telling me that you're not right in the head.

You know, something like that. I don't know. But it's really important to remember that the gift being an expression of unity and a manifestation of Spirit is for the common good.

What do you think that's the first thing that has a good thing? Well, I'll, here in a second, I'll give you another story that'll help even make it, it's more crazy.

The last thing about spiritual gifts, the nature of them, is that they are assigned, the gifts are assigned to offices primarily. They're assigned to offices primarily.

I want you to look at verse 8 through 10 first. In verse 8 it says, For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

[25 : 46] All of these are empowered by one and the same Spirit who apportions to each one individually as he wills. Now when he repeats that list, I want you to notice the difference.

Look at verse 28. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, then prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing.

Now he shifts right here, right? Helping, administration, and various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Expected answer is no. Are all prophets?

Expected answer is no. Are all teachers? Expected answer is no. Do all work miracles? Expected answer is no. Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues?

Do all interpret? Expected answer is no. The idea is that he shifts from talking about a gift to talking about an office.

[26 : 46] He goes from talking about prophecy to talking about prophets. A prophet is an office. We know it's an office.

It's been an office since the Old Testament. There were qualifications for the office in Deuteronomy 18. We know that there are apostles and those apostles have qualifications.

It's an office. They had to see Jesus. They had to see Jesus resurrected. Right? And that's how Judas was replaced in Acts chapter 1.

It's an office. So the gifts are assigned to offices. Another way to think about this is that in Matthew chapter 10 Jesus sends his apostles, his disciples, on a mission.

That mission was to the house of Israel to preach the gospel. He told them in verse 7 and 8 proclaim as you go saying that the kingdom of heaven is at hand and then he tells them to do this.

[27 : 55] Heal the sick. Raise the dead. Cleanse the lepers. Cast out demons. How were they to do that? They were to do that because God empowered them to do that.

They had an office. They were given powers to be able to do those things. They were given manifestation of the Spirit to do those things. So when you come to the Great Commission, now the charge is not just to the house of Israel but to make disciples of the nations.

And then he tells them to wait in Jerusalem to be empowered. And in Acts chapter 2 that empowerment comes down because the Holy Spirit brings about these flames of tongues or these tongues of flames that sit over their head.

Okay, so basically it's just a ball of fire over their head, right? It's not a tongue. It's not a tongue. Oh, fire. That's over them, right? A flame has tongues.

Doesn't it? Because there's little pointy things, right? So flame is over their head and they speak in the languages of the people who are in front of them representing the nations.

[29 : 10] So their new office as apostles to the nations gets empowered with a gift of tongues to be able to go to the nations and teach them.

It was a purpose to it. So what I'm saying is that there is a strong connection between having a gift and being in an office. Primarily.

This is the messy part. You had Caiaphas who hated Jesus who prophesies in John chapter 11 that Jesus would die for the nation.

The text tells us that he made a prophecy. So the gift of prophecy was given to him for a moment but he didn't have the office of a prophet.

Philip's daughters in Acts chapter 21. We're told that they prophesy but they don't hold an office. We're not told that they're prophets just that they prophesy.

[30 : 15] The point is is that sometimes God will give a gift to someone for them to use who's not in an office because he's wanted to do something. And that's God's prerogative.

He can do what he wants to. But the point is is that the gifts are primarily connected to an office. office. And to me one of the things that seems to have happened is that these offices have passed away like nobody can be an apostle again.

A prophet is pretty hard to come by because how are they going to prove that what they say comes to pass, right? The one office that seems to still be that's a teaching office is what he talks about here as third teachers which I think is pastors, teachers in Ephesians chapter 4.

And so there's got to be some giftings in these things and we'll talk about that in a second. So that's the data, okay? That's the data from chapter 12 and I have some implications of this but before I get into that let me just ask you do you understand those four things?

those four natures of the spiritual gifts? Okay.

[31 : 41] So let's then talk about some conclusions based on this some implications. The first is that the gifts are not for selfish ends. The gifts are not for selfish ends.

So when Erin went to college she met this guy who you know described himself as a charismatic and he says he has the spiritual gift of discernment.

He has the spiritual gift of discernment. And one day her facial expressions were downcast or something they were looked a certain way and he came up to her and he said I can tell that you're experiencing emotion X because I have the gift of discernment.

Well on one hand he was wrong just because that's not what because she her face doesn't always represent what's going on for her. Two that is not what the gifts are meant to be for.

It's about the gospel and about Jesus Christ about the whole church. It's not about somebody coming up to me and telling me something. And so so often I think we tend to think of the gifts as something like that because we don't know how to understand the will of God for our lives.

[33 : 08] We're trying to shake the crystal ball and ask the Lord what business do I need to go into? Who do I need to marry? What house do I need to buy? When should I sell my trailer?

You know all these questions we have in our lives and we want to know God's will and rather than really studying what scripture says about that we try to spiritualize the process and if you're charismatic you turn it into a spiritual gift that I need somebody either to speak to me or I need to use my spiritual gift so I can understand what I need to do in my life and I say to you we know what we need to do the Bible tells us when it comes to questions such as which house should I buy what job should I take if there's not a clear commandment from the Lord I mean like if my choice of job is being a sprocket maker or an assassin well do not murder is very clear so I probably shouldn't be an assassin I don't need ooey goey feelings to figure that out and I don't need a word from God through somebody else to tell me that and it's that and living that way is just as spiritual it's just as

good and even better but now if it's between making sprockets or making headlamps then I have to apply biblical wisdom and say is there anything about working for these companies that it's going to make it difficult for me to live the way that I know the

Lord wants me to live well yeah this company only works on Sundays and this company is closed on Sundays well guess which one I'm going with this one does it is it because it's more spiritual to make headlamps no because in God's wisdom I want to be in the preaching of the word on the Sabbath day right but what if they're exactly the same way what is God's will for my life which do you want to do I really like the headlamps okay then but for some reason that doesn't feel spiritual enough to it feels too pedestrian too ordinary too and we're afraid that we might miss God's will for our lives and I say to you no you're not so the gifts are not for these selfish ends they're not for these selfish ends second conclusion is that the gifts equipped the apostles to carry out the great commission the gifts equipped the apostles to carry out the great commission now

I want you to think to yourself for just a second my thought is that all the gifts that we see listed here in verse 8 9 and 10 the apostles had all of them if you'll think about the idea say like of gifts of healing and working of miracles you look at the apostles through the book of Acts you can see them do such things we know they've spoken tongues we know that they were giving prophecy right they were taking Old Testament prophecy and telling us the meaning of it and writing it down right we know that they were able to distinguish between spirits Paul right he knows that this guy who Simon who's trying to pay money to get the baptism of the Holy Spirit Paul knows that he's in the bitterness of Gaul right there's so much that you can see in the lives of the apostles and the reason they had all these is so that they could accomplish the great commission to make disciples of all nations and here's the thing

I said that the gifts are to be used in the context of the whole church for the good of the church do you know that right now we are still benefiting from the exercise of their gifts as we read first Corinthians we are benefiting from the exercise of the spiritual gifts that the apostles made I think that's astounding I said first Corinthians in terms of what we're studying but when I talked about Simon he's in the book of Acts and I can't remember what chapter I think I've got two more things the next one is this the gifts are not what we think in other words the gifts are gospel centered by that

[38 : 14] I mean something like this that the gifts are about proving the validity of the gospel all of the working of miracles and healings if you go back and read what Jesus said Jesus said these things he's doing so that you might believe that the father sent him in Hebrews chapter two we're told that these things happened in order to prove the message but these gifts also help defend the gospel right so they prove the gospel they defend the gospel and we'll get into an example of that here in a second the gifts define and explain the gospel so these gifts are gospel centered now let's give a couple of examples the utterance of wisdom okay in verse eight we're told about the utterance of wisdom or the word of wisdom it's two Greek words logos sophios and when you read anybody who says anything about spiritual gifts many people will say we don't have this word anywhere else we're not sure what it means and then they tell you that this means that you have a supernatural ability with wisdom to know what a person ought to do in their life and I'm going like well how did you know that if you didn't have a definition of that even

Sam Storms he's a very respected guy he's a good scholar but when he goes to define word of wisdom he says the first thing we need to do is go look at Jesus' life and look where Jesus spoke about wisdom or where Jesus spoke with wisdom that is not how you do Bible study you do Bible study by seeing that there's logos sophias and then you ask yourself where does Paul in 1st Corinthians use these words what does Paul mean by logos what does Paul mean by sophias and if you look at the word wisdom particularly in 1st Corinthians don't you know that Paul's already talked about wisdom I mean the part of the problem with the gospel is that the gospel is foolishness to the Greeks he says in 1st Corinthians chapter 1 he says for the Jews demand signs the Greeks seek wisdom but we preach Christ crucified a stumbling block to Jews of Gentiles but to those who are called both Jews and Greeks Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God in other words Christ is the wisdom not the Greeks there's an opposition that Paul is bringing in speaking of Christ as wisdom versus the wisdom of the world you go through the rest of 1st Corinthians and look at the way that he uses this concept of wisdom and I think what you have in this spiritual gift is an ability to defend the gospel against other world views because of who Christ is as the wisdom of God and the manifold wisdom of God that it's Christ in us the hope of glory that

Christ is the better way and so this word of wisdom is this ability to defend the gospel as opposed to other world views let me give you an example that I think might be a part of this and now I will listen to Sam Storms let's go see if we see something like this right and in Luke's gospel Jesus is teaching his disciples and he says this will be your opportunity to bear witness settle it in your minds not to meditate beforehand how to answer when they persecute you and arrest you for I will give you a mouth and wisdom which none of your adversaries will be able to withstand or contradict he was telling those people who are right there that when they're arrested!

And we get an example of that happening because Stephen was brought before everyone accused of all kinds of things but it tells us that they couldn't withstand the wisdom and the spirit with which Stephen was speaking so I think that this utterance of wisdom is not about me being able to tell you what you need to do with your life but about being able to by the power of the!

[42 : 57] Spirit defend the gospel when called upon to do so right all right we can talk about utterance of knowledge I think that utterance of knowledge you trace out do exactly what I just did trace out knowledge in Paul's writings what does Paul mean by knowledge and most of the time he is talking about the idea of the mystery of Christ encapsulated in the Old Testament that it's this idea that of all of the mysteries and the knowledge of who God is like 1 Corinthians chapter 13 he says if I understand all mysteries and all knowledge and so there he's connecting the two and so I think this utterance of knowledge is this idea that the apostles particularly had an insight into Christ in the Old Testament that they then could share with others matter of fact in

Ephesians Paul says when you read this you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ which was not made to the sons of men of other generations as has been revealed to the sons of the apostles and prophets by the spirit of God oh sorry which has not been made known to the sons of men and other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the spirit of God this mystery is the Gentiles are fellow heirs members of the same body partakers of the promises of Jesus Christ through the gospel so this utterance of knowledge is this ability to understand the deep mysteries of Christ in the Old Testament and to be able to proclaim and teach that now I'm not going to define all the gifts I'm just going to do one more and we're going to deal with the gift of tongues for just a second since that's a problem child here's the simplest way to grasp the gift of tongues the word gloss

I can't say the Greek word now gloss that Greek word means languages it also means physical tongue but many of the several of the older English translations of the Bible translated it as languages when you look at it as languages this is somebody who has an ability to speak a known language in Acts chapter two the tongue of fire came over the tops of the heads of the apostles they began to speak in other tongues it says and the audience said this we each hear in our own language tongues is not a babbling tongues is a supernaturally gifted person who's speaking a known language now the question the open question that I don't know the answer to is he speaking a different language language with his mind and heart or is he speaking his own language and is the miracle in what comes out of his mouth or is the miracle in what goes into their ear right I don't know the answer to that but this is about known languages as a matter of fact even what people call a private prayer language so here's with charismatics you get two things you get! the idea of the gift of tongues and they will try to separate Acts 2 from 1 Corinthians 14 but it's the same Greek word and they will try to say that yes there's that gift of tongues but there's also a private prayer language where you can without an interpreter pray in tongues and you can connect God better that's why they will pray in their services in tongues that's why you'll hear from 1 Corinthians chapter 14 verse 14 through 17 Paul says this he says for if I pray in a tongue my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful what am I to do I will pray with my spirit but I will pray with my mind also I will sing praise with my spirit but I will sing with my mind also now all of a sudden none of this makes sense as a private prayer language because

[47 : 57] Paul is basically saying no I'm not going to do something that's contrary I'm going to know what I'm saying right well if you just he's even talking about singing right if you change the word tongues to another language for if I pray in another language my spirit prays but my mind is unfruitful why would your mind be unfruitful if you were praying in Spanish you're having to your heart language you're having to take that that you want to say and translate it and you're using maybe the best words but you're not 100% sure that you're saying everything right because you're translating and Paul is saying I'm not going to I'm going to speak my heart language so that I know what I'm saying in here so these gifts

I then believe are centered on the gospel because wisdom defends the gospel knowledge understands the gospel faith stands firm in the gospel the healings and miracles proves the gospel prophecy teaches the gospel distinguishing spirits guards the gospel and tongues and interpretation spreads the gospel to the nations they are gospel centered that really leaves only one thing I know I'm running late this won't take me long but I do think that the gifts have changed over time and they've changed like this think of a king who establishes his kingdom versus the king who with established kingdom sustains his kingdom when he establishes the kingdom there's maybe military stuff that happens in order to defeat an enemy or maybe it's just the pomp and circumstance! of crowning the king but in the maintaining and sustaining of that kingdom you don't live on pomp and circumstance every day you don't live on military campaigns you have defensive measures then at that point and in that same way something like word of wisdom that was defending the gospel as we take the fruit of that defense of the gospel that's given to us in scripture we can then rely upon that gift to defend the gospel as we take the word of God and we help people understand it it's like this Charles Spurgeon once said when somebody asked him how do you defend the scriptures he said how do you defend a lion you just turn it loose right and what he was saying is that we let the scriptures defend themselves because the defense is there and so we bring that to bear upon people so the use of the word of wisdom spiritual gift is something that all of us can do because the apostles had that gift and they've written down and now we can take that gift and use it because we have the scriptures

I would say the same thing about the word of knowledge I would say the same thing in relationship to prophecy I'm using the prophecy that was given when I take and I open the word and I explain it right and when we think of tongues and interpretation of tongues I mean we're benefiting from the gift of tongues right here because this is in English right it was taken it was written down for the nations and as we've learned how to translate we have these gifts I think that what's happened is that the gifts have gone from extraordinary to ordinary because you have the extraordinary offices that have ceased you have the ordinary office of the pastor and much of what the pastor does still leans and rests upon many of the gifts but in an ordinary way and you even see that as you read through the scriptures Romans comes after 1 Corinthians chronologically and many of these gifts are not even mentioned again and by the time you get to 1 Peter chapter 4 there are only two gifts listed teaching and serving and so by the time that we come to the end and the close of the scriptures all of these gifts seem to just fall away until you get to teaching and serving and so our place then is to use the scriptures and to not try to navel gaze to figure out what kind of spiritual gift I've got because nobody is going to be able to tell you that can't be done this is where the spiritual gifts serve us okay that's a lot that's the one about Aaron and the discerning yeah yeah that was the other story that's right that's right when the next couple weeks we're going to deal with chapter 13 then we're going to deal with chapter 14 and those two really are the application of the section because we're going to ask ourselves okay well then how do we do ministry what's every member ministry look like and the essence of it is pursue love and pursue clarity in the teaching and those are the two things so yeah that's good that verse is key any other questions or thoughts

[54 : 10] I know it's like a massive brain dump and that's that's why I mean when I did this before I did this I this is really packed tight but it's also without all the other fluff that I've done before because I feel like that we just need to get to it and then the next two weeks have sort of the application if you will and so I know that it kind of leaves you going like well that was pretty academic what do we do with that so just hang on you know just hang on the closure is coming that kind of come out with me all the time right it is I have to go back home and get to them with or something else and it's like don't do it you know I had a past few years ago that was talking about the same topic and I just coming back on the day that was he actually told us or his to actually people talking and done and things like that

I wish I had knowledge that I had that because I never really had that time in the way yeah my my best guess and stab at that is that I think that a person is sitting there wanting to connect to God wanting to pray wanting more of God than they're getting because they sometimes feel that the reading of scripture is dry which sometimes it is sometimes their prayer life is dry and that's true and so they just want more so they have been taught to sort of let themselves go it's not a trance but it's something akin to just letting themselves go and just let whatever's in their heart just bubble out and what they're thinking is happening is that the

Holy Spirit is praying for them right they go to Romans chapter 8 verse 26 that when we don't know how to pray the Holy Spirit intercedes with groanings too deep for words and they would talk about that they're just going to groan from their spirit and then these this babbling will come out and they'll say that that's the tongue of angels 1st Corinthians 13 and that that God the Holy Spirit translates that to the Father so that it makes sense and it's what we want and I'm telling you a lot of people do that a lot of people but and I had a pastor who was charismatic and we were talking about Acts chapter 2 I was asking his view of it because I was going to be preaching on it and we got we got deep in the weeds about three hours and at the end of the time he looked at me he said would you like for me to pray for you so that you can get the gift of tongues and I said well what does that mean and and so he said I'll be I'll pray for you and then I what I want you to do is I want you to sort of blank out your mind and just begin to hum deep within your your chest and then just whatever syllable pops into your mind just let it out of your mouth and I thought to myself if the Lord wanted us to pray in a private prayer language like that where are the instructions and they want the Lord and I and I don't I don't disparage their desire to want the Lord but I I just think that what you have here is you have just a lot of confusion and a lot of deception question question I was doing a lot of things, but then he said, I'm going to start the other thing.

I had gone through the car in Libya, but he said, there's someone who has had an eyesight talking, who was on the living, who was born by the American, and he had everybody, he He said, he had her come up there and he said, everybody put out a dollar.

[58 : 52] And I said later, everybody put out a dollar. And there's just one man that could come to you. He put out a hundred thousand dollars. And I never think I'm not proud of you.

And he goes, he got behind her and he just turned around. So you can see. This is how you can see. And my daughter, my cousin, said, he's a man.

And my mother said, we get in the car to leave. And she said, do you see? She was both in the building. She was both in the same family.

And she talked about, you know, I was like, you know, and I just wanted to go. It could happen often. But here's the thing. Even if she could see.

I, that would make me think of what Jesus said. Many will say to me, Lord, Lord, did we not cast out demons in your name? Did we not perform many miracles in your name?

[59 : 54] He said, depart from me for I never knew you. Even someone who's lost like Caiaphas, God's Holy Spirit can come upon them and allow them to do something that is extraordinary.

And I still think that many of these things can happen. You know, I think some of these things can happen. But I think the ordinary way that God works is the way that we need to try to live.

We don't need to try to get God to do something extraordinary. We just need to live ordinarily and pray and depend upon him. And it's like with healing, right? Think about how often we pray for healing.

Do we want God to heal? And do we want him to heal in relation to our prayers? And it be an extraordinary thing where the cancer is gone? And has that happened? Yes and yes.

But what is our ordinary way of living? Please go to the doctor. Why? Because he's given us the gift of knowledge and medicine. And that is a very valuable thing.

[60 : 50] And so we don't need to just poo that away, right? But God can do what he wants to. You know, back where I grew up, Peyton Moore was our director of missions.

He and his wife, they went to Vietnam as missionaries for Southern Baptists. And when you first start, it's language school. Well, they had not been there for very long.

And they got into a home invasion at their house. These guys came in. And they shoved him into the closet. And they were coming after her. And she's just readily sharing the gospel with them.

Just going after it. And they start yelling and all this sort of stuff. They run away. And she gets her husband out of the closet. And he looks at her and he says, I didn't know you were so proficient with Vietnamese.

And she says, I was speaking English. I thought they could hear me. Now, does God still do that kind of stuff? Well, sure. It's his world. He can do what he wants to.

[61 : 48] I'm not trying to limit God in any way. But I'm also trying to understand, how do I obey the commandment that says, pursue spiritual gifts? Particularly when everything that I see looks like a sham.

And like even the gift of tongues has always been defined as other languages until the Azusa Street revival in California in 1901. And then they began to redefine it.

And then your private prayer language came up. And so you just have this thing where people will look at me and say, you're limiting God because you don't believe in the gifts.

And I'm going like, no, I'm not limiting God. I'm just saying, you're acting the fool. Anyway, we probably ought to pray so that.

Yeah. I have a lot of questions.

[62 : 50] Well, let me pray for us. Father, thank you for this time together. And thank you for your word. Lord, I pray, Lord, we want more than anything to rightly divide your word, to understand it properly so that we might live in a way that honors you.

And so, Lord, we pray for ourselves to have the humility that says maybe we don't know all the things. But, Father, help us to never give up, go into the word, to understand and to study.

And, Lord, we just pray that you would help our church to lean and rest in upon you. And we give you all the praise in Christ's name. Amen.