

How to Recognize Your Spiritual Gift?

Text: Ephesians 2:8-9

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not by works, so that no one can boast. Grace, Grace, Marvelous Grace...

But why have we been saved? What does the word saved means? There are three components to salvation: Our souls, our bodies, and our life. At the moment of salvation we can say, **"It is well with my soul."** That is confirmed in Romans 5:1, **"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."** We are no longer in the wrong family; we are no longer at war with God.

The second component is our body's an earthly body. Dr. J. Vernon Mc Gee said, "The older I get the more scriptural I am." Then he would quote the Corinthian passage in, "this body we do groan." My groans are accelerating each year. But God will save my body; He has prepared me a GLORIFIED BODY. The apostle wrote in the resurrection chapter, I C.15. There are also heavenly bodies and there are earthly bodies, "so it will be in the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown (buried) is perishable, but it is raised imperishable. Sown in dishonor or weakness, raised in glory." So that phase is what is called GLORIFICATION. Rom. 8:30. The apostle John said, "We shall be like Him (Jesus)."

Now there is a time between the moment our souls are saved and the time we die and receive a new body. It is called our life each day, Monday through Sunday, week by week, year by year of living. That brings us to verse ten of chapter two of Ephesians. We were saved to serve. This is that third component THE SAVING OF OUR LIFE. Being saved is not merely a fire insurance policy, just saved to escape hell. We are saved to fulfill God's plan for our life. Notice how it is put in I Thessalonians 1:9-11 the report of the believers there is that they turned from idols to serve the living and true God. Jesus put it this way in John 15:16 (read)

The believer enters God's field. I Cor. 3:9. For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field. I PLANTED THE SEED, APOLLOS WATERED IT, AND GOD GAVE THE INCREASE. Listen! The moment that your soul was saved, God gave you at least one spiritual gift. "But each person has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that." I Cor. 12:7. "Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good." This church and her pastor are called upon to help you discover your spiritual gift and to equip you to use it. Eph. 4:11-12.

There are four lists of gifts in the New Testament books. Romans 12:4.ff. list 7 gifts, I Cor. 12: 8-10 there are 9 and in 12: 28-30 there are 8 more. I Peter 4:9 list one, Ephesians 4:7ff list 4 gifted positions **Together that would be 29 gifts.**

In the book written by Charles V. Bryant entitled *Rediscovering Our Spiritual Gifts* he identifies from the Scripture 39 gifts. This may indicate that these numbers are representative and that there are more gifts according to the need and the people willing to meet that need. Don't discount singleness, suffering, martyrdom, intercessory prayer, voluntary poverty, and ability to give generously, craftsmanship (the first mention of being filled with the Spirit is found in Exodus 35:30 (Bezalel) a man skilled in molding, carving, drawing, and construction.) He constructed the Tabernacle. Comfort and humor can be spiritual gifts to the body.

So these gifts can be divided into three categories:

- Speaking gifts like teaching/ preaching.
- Doing gifts like helps.
- Knowing gifts like understanding, wisdom, administration

A few hints that will help you to recognize your gift.

Experiment: be a willing member to serve where there is a need.

Choir: it may be apparent to the singer next to you that your gifting is elsewhere. Find a place to serve and try it and see if it fits.

Know your passion and heart: You love to drive, to paint, to build, to care for landscape, music, to do drama, work with youth, children, the elderly, to read, to do computer work, to organize, to cook, to organize. WHAT TURNS YOU ON?

Know your temperament and passion: If you are a compassionate person your gift might be mercy. You might be well wired to visit hospital, convalescent homes. If you have a super positive mindset you might have the gift of faith. If you are an extrovert you might have the gift of evangelism (a soul winner.)

Sharpen your skills: If you believe God has given you the gift of teaching or preaching then you will have embarked on a life-long learning curve.

Don't boast about your gift, but don't bury it: Remember the parable of Jesus in Matthew 25:14-30. This needs to either be read or summarized by the speaker.

How did we drive cars before power steering? Some old cars and trucks were so hard to turn, but one thing that helped is to get it moving. It's easier to turn if it is moving. Many church members need to start moving and God will direct you.

[The communicator can find from his/her experience a congregation that put into practice a program of gift recognition and enabling. I shared what I considered a major work of God in Anacortes, WA where I served in 2005-2006]

[I closed a story about Elvis Presley who died at forty-two from drug addiction and obesity. Priscilla, his wife said he felt that he missed the real calling in his life. Only one of his many records received a Grammy. It was a religious recorded twenty five years into his career. There is a song in it that describes his desire that when all or life is over he would like to bow before Jesus and hear him say, "Well done." I'm sure that this story can be found on the internet. A woman was so impress with it that I gave it to her.