

# THERE ARE DIVERSITIES OF GIFTS 2

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We're going to continue speaking on the gifts this morning. The first thing I would like us to remember is that we should not be feeling that the gifts are for somebody else, that we don't have a gift in our life.

First of all remember: on the day of Pentecost, Peter said *repent, be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus for the remission of sins*. Amen Then he said *and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*. [Acts 2:38] Praise the Lord. So if we have received *the gift* which is the Spirit of God, the Spirit of God will also impart *a gift* to our life.

Sometimes there are certain things that the Lord does, we might not even think of it as the operation of a gift, we just say: I thank the Lord for doing this or for doing that and we don't necessarily realize that it's a gift.

There are nine gifts mentioned [1Corinthians 12:8-10] but probably many times when we think of gifts, we think of the vocal gifts that are expressed during a service. Now we might not all have one of those vocal gifts. In our own assembly we know how the Lord has used my dad for tongues and interpretation. We thank the Lord for that.

Don't feel: He can't ever use *me*. I mean: *you* thinking that, because that's in the Lord's hands. There may be somebody else that the Lord uses as well but He doesn't need to use everybody for the same gift.

We are *one body in Christ*. Paul speaks of this in the chapter that we've been reading. *One body has many members*. Amen. *And every member has their function*. [1Corinthians 12:12] Praise the Lord.

What we want to do is to be walking close to the Lord so that whatever gift the Lord does desire to operate in our life, we are in a place where He can operate that gift. Praise the Lord.

We're not going to have the full manifestation of what the Lord desires to do in our life if we're caught up in the daily things of life, the materialism and everything that exists today. We need to have a certain time that's dedicated to the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Let's go to First Corinthians chapter 12.

I know we already read a good amount of this on Wednesday. We might get into studying some of the actual gifts today but I also want to look at how the Lord uses them in our life and some things to be careful about. Let's start in verse 7 just to connect a little bit with what we looked at on Wednesday.

1 Corinthians 12:7

*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*

Everyone who is a true child of God will have a manifestation of the Spirit. *Every one*: that is *brother and sister*. The first thing we need to do if we've had some kind of a feeling that the gifts are for others, we need to get that out of our mind. Yes the Lord will use others, but He's going to use us too.

Now He's the One who determines when and how, but if in our mind He's not going to use us, then when He comes to express some gift, we can have our mind closed and not let Him in to express that. So we have to know that *everyone has a gift*.

Again that goes back to that dream I had in the 90s and how they said: we have a gift for everyone. And everybody who was sitting in a seat had a gift. Praise the Lord

1 Corinthians 12:8

*For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;*

1 Corinthians 12:9

*To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;*

1 Corinthians 12:10

*To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another diverse kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues;*

1 Corinthians 12:11

*But all these worketh that one and self-same Spirit,*

That's the Spirit of God.

1 Corinthians 12:11

*dividing to every man severally as he will.*

Notice in verse 10 it speaks of *discerning of spirits*. Why would there need to be discerning of spirits? That lets us know that not everything that is manifested is of the right spirit.

There is certainly a lot of misunderstanding about that in the religious world. If somebody does speak in tongues, or interprets, or gives a prophecy, or if there is some other manifestation, it seems like it's almost always received: praise the Lord, the Lord spoke to us this morning.

I have to say: first of all, I hope the Lord speaks to us every time we have a service *through His Word*. That's the highest order of how the Lord speaks to us. Praise the Lord.

We see this also in the ministry. Paul speaks of things here that many times are expressed in the ministry. Sometimes even among ministers we see the wrong spirit. We don't like to see that, we don't like to say that, but we read this time after time in the Old Testament. We can think of Elijah's day, there were all these prophets who said: Baal is God, and there was *one* who said: Jehovah is God. [1Kings 18:22] Praise the Lord. And that *one* was right. [1Kings 18:39] Praise the Lord.

So we can't say: what's the popular route? But everything has to be according to the Word. Praise the Lord. And what we judge, now I did *not* say: *who* we judge, did we hear that? But I said *what* we judge has to be according to this Word.

Now let me just speak about how a gift can be used in a wrong way. I hadn't thought of reading this so I hope I go to the right place. Let's go to the book of Matthew.

Many times when we go to Matthew 16, I really love to read when Peter answered Jesus' question and said *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God*. [Matthew 16:16] Peter had a gift. In a sense we can say that he was the most vocal, we could maybe say *the spokesperson* for the eleven or for the twelve apostles.

Here we know Jesus asked: who do *you* all say that I am? And it was *Peter* who responded. Amen. We see in many other places like in Acts 2 that Peter was the one who preached the sermon.

Does that mean the other eleven were thinking: I wish I would have been the one to say it, or Peter is saying it wrong? No, they were *in unity with Peter*. They were looking at the same picture but God chose Peter to be the one to speak. He was a *chief apostle*.

Now let's continue. Jesus says *Peter I'm going to give you the keys to the kingdom.* [Matthew 16:19] I believe Peter probably felt so joyful and so happy to hear that.

But we get further down:

Matthew 16:21

*From that time forth began Jesus to show unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.*

In one part of this, Jesus is saying *I'm going to be killed.* I don't believe any of the disciples rejoiced in hearing that, but it was a hard thing to hear. It was hard for Peter to hear that. So here comes along *a spirit*, really trying to persuade the Lord, but the spirit uses Peter. We don't see it yet, we just see what Peter did.

He says here:

Matthew 16:22

*Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.*

To the flesh that would be a wonderful thing to hear, right? Do we remember: Jesus even prayed *Lord if there's a way that I don't have to partake of this cup, let it pass?* [Matthew 26:39] Amen.

He says here:

Matthew 16:23

*But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan:*

Now remember: Peter was the spokesperson. I believe the others also felt that their Lord should not suffer this. We don't see John and James going and grabbing Peter: hey! Leave him alone, you shouldn't do that! But they are observing.

Then Jesus says:

Matthew 16:23

*Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offense unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.*

Was Jesus literally calling Peter: Satan? We know that can't be. He had just said *I'm going to give you the keys to the kingdom.* One thing for sure: he's not giving the keys of the kingdom to Satan. Amen.

So what's going on?

Jesus sees that Peter has allowed *the wrong spirit* to motivate him. It's something that we can say is pleasing to the flesh, to the natural man. Peter gave an entrance to that spirit and now Peter is speaking but Jesus says *get behind me Satan*. Amen. Jesus is not really speaking to the man Peter, but to the spirit that was motivating him.

When he gets to the part *thou savourest is not the things of God but the things of men*, this is now more focused to Peter: how he's letting his carnality give entrance to this spirit.

So what's the point in this? We can have a true gift but we still have to take care that it's the Spirit of God that operates the gift.

Let's go to the book of First Kings chapter 22.

I really love how the book of Joshua and the books of Samuel, Kings and the Chronicles have been divided in chapters. Sometimes if you don't know what to read, just pick a chapter. It seems you can read an entire story in just one chapter, it's concise and you can get a beautiful picture of something.

I'm obviously not going to read the whole chapter but here we have the king of Israel who wants to go against Ramoth-Gilead. And the king of Judah who was righteous says *inquire of Jehovah*. So the kings are together and they ask the prophets *should we go up to Ramoth-Gilead?* And they're all saying *oh yes, go up*.

One prophet even made some horns out of iron and I guess each horn represented one of the kings. The picture I imagine would be as a bull would push with these horns. He said *you're going to push back and have the victory*.

But the king of Judah wasn't convinced. He says *is there not another prophet?* The king of Israel says *well there is one but he never says anything good about me*. That was King Ahab. How could you say something good about him, right? So they call that prophet. Even the one who goes to call him puts on some pressure and says *now all the prophets have said he should go, so you say that too*.

The way I read it, it's almost like a sarcastic response as he's asked by Ahab *should I go?* The prophet Micaiah says *go, the Lord will prosper*. Then Ahab says *how many times do I have to adjure you? Only speak what the Lord gives you*. So Ahab himself knew that the prophet wasn't really speaking what the Lord had given him.

Let's go ahead and read. The summary is in verse 17.

1 Kings 22:17

*And he said, I saw all Israel scattered upon the hills, as sheep that have not a shepherd: and the LORD said, These have no master: let them return every man to his house in peace.*

Now it doesn't take a lot of spirituality to understand what this is saying. If all the house of Israel has no master, this means their king has died, right? What Micaiah is really saying here is *you're going to die if you go to battle.*

So he says here:

1 Kings 22:18

*And the king of Israel said unto Jehoshaphat,*

That's the king of Judah.

1 Kings 22:18

*Did I not tell thee that he would prophesy no good concerning me, but evil?*

1 Kings 22:19

*And he said,*

Now this is not Ahab, this is Micaiah again.

1 Kings 22:19

*And he said, Hear thou therefore the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing by him on his right hand and on his left.*

1 Kings 22:20

*And the LORD said, Who shall persuade Ahab, that he may go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead? And one said on this manner, and another said on that manner.*

1 Kings 22:21

*And there came forth a spirit, and stood before the LORD, and said, I will persuade him.*

1 Kings 22:22

*And the LORD said unto him, Wherewith? And he said, I will go with forth, and I will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets. And he said, Thou shalt persuade him, and prevail also: go forth, and do so.*

You can continue to read how one of the prophets got angry and smote Micaiah.  
[1Kings 22:24]

Then Ahab said *we're going to keep you in jail until I get back.* [1Kings 22:27]  
And Micaiah said *listen everybody, if he comes back, the LORD has not spoken by me.* [1Kings 22:28]

And we know that Ahab didn't come back. [1Kings 22:37]

The point here is: these men were *prophets*. They were. It wasn't that they claimed to be prophets but they were not. They had that gift to prophesy but their heart was not right. They did not serve the true God but there was still a spirit to operate that gift. And the spirit itself said *I will be a lying spirit.* [1Kings 22:22]  
Amen.

So one thing we have to know: we can't just see some spiritual manifestation and say: praise the Lord, that's the Lord. But we have to be able to weigh it. And everything that we weigh has to be according to the Word of God, the *revealed Word*. Praise the Lord.

This is a real obvious example but one time there was a minister who went to some of Brother Branham's meetings. The minister took a sister from his church. She was *not* his wife: he left his wife at home but he went with this sister.

I forget how Brother Branham found out, whether it was a vision or whether somebody told him but he called that man in to speak to him and basically said: what are you doing? And the man said: the Lord gave me a dream, I saw myself going to your meetings and this sister was with me.

Well I guess the dream was true because he did go to the meetings with the sister, but that's not the point. Brother Branham told him: hey, you had the dream but that doesn't matter. That runs against everything else we know to be right. You go with your wife or you don't go. So Brother Branham corrected that.

Here we have a case that if we're not careful, sometimes our emotions can get a little too involved and the enemy can find an entrance. We may actually have a true gift but it's not always the right spirit that motivates the operation of the gift.

Now on the other side of that, let's go to the book of Matthew and we're going to see something different.

Jesus says here:

Matthew 7:21

*Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven;*

I'll put it in our terms: not every one who says *I'm a Christian* is going to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Not every one who says *I'm your brother* is going to enter in.

He says here:

Matthew 7:22

*Many will say to me in that day,*

He doesn't say there are going to be *some*, even *that* would be scary enough, but he says *many*.

Matthew 7:22

*Many will tell me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name?*

Now we've already read that *prophecy* is a gift, right? So they have operated a gift.

Matthew 7:22

*and in thy name have cast out devils?*

Remember when they accused Jesus of doing that? He said *if Satan cast out Satan, then his house is divided*, right? [Matthew 12:26]

Matthew 7:22

*and in thy name done many wonderful works?*

When we read Jesus' response, he does not say: oh that's what happened back in First Kings 22. He does not accuse them of operating a gift with a false spirit but what does he say? He says:

Matthew 7:23

*And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you:*

Does that mean he did not know they existed? What does that mean? It means he never knew them in the intimate relation of *revealing His Word*.

Let's keep reading.

Matthew 7:23

*I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

These people are not saved. This is the same as the tares. He never says that the spirit working through them was not the Spirit of God.



So what is it? Their *motivation*, they never really knew the Lord in the first place, even as their Saviour. To obtain salvation there is a portion of the Word that He has to reveal to us, right? We have to see John 3:16. We have to see Acts 2:38.

They never knew him even as their Saviour, much less walking in the light of His Word. But they had a selfish purpose and yes, there was a gift in their life.

I don't see it as much now, but I remember seeing this often in the 80s, especially when I was in high school. Later in the 90s and even today we still see this on television. Back then, flyers would be passed out when you would go get your groceries, you'd come back to your car and there'd be something on the windshield. It said Minister so-and-so has a great gift of healing and he's going to have meetings the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, and 11<sup>th</sup>. Did he have a gift of healing? Yes. Were people healed? Yes.

The tare or the unbeliever, they're the same, and don't think that they can't operate a gift. They have gifts too. And it can even be the true Spirit of God that manifests or uses the gift.

Let's go to the book of Romans. I'm just going to read one verse.

Romans 11:29

*For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.*

Every person who is born with natural faculties has a certain potential and gift in their life. The second part: *without repentance* is really not something that the believer has to worry about for himself because the believer will never fall in this category. Praise the Lord. The believer is going to do the will of his or her Heavenly Father. Praise the Lord.

We may have troubles now and then, we may have tests and trials. Sometimes we feel we're up on the mountain, sometimes we feel like we're knocked down. I don't think Peter felt very good when Jesus turned and said *get behind me Satan*. Amen. Nonetheless, as true children of God, we have our growing process and we will never be those to whom Jesus will say *I never knew you*. [Matthew 7:23]

We also have to understand: if we see somebody who seems to have a true gift but for some reason they're not walking in the light of truth: that is scriptural. Jesus said *there will be many*. [Matthew 7:22] Those are his words.

Those are a couple of things to look at but above all, as we study the gifts, we need to know that we can't ever just accept something because it came through a gift. We still have to check it with the Word.

There's also another aspect of this: as we grow and as the Lord begins to use a gift in our life, especially if it's one of the vocal gifts like tongues, interpretation or prophecy, we have to understand that there's a learning process.

Just as a child learns to walk and sometimes they get excited, they walk too fast and they fall on their face, there is a learning process as we learn to operate a gift. As part of that process sometimes we can make a mistake. We can use the gift when we shouldn't be using it. You may say: how could that happen? We will look at this later but that's one thing that could happen.

Sometimes we can fail ourselves. We spoke about how we want the true Holy Ghost to inspire the gift. One thing that could happen: there could be a wrong spirit to use the gift.

But there's something else that could happen: sometimes if we're not careful it could be just our own natural desire. I know a brother, his sister had cancer and he had a gift of prophecy. I don't question his gift of prophecy. He prophesied that his sister was going to be healed and have the victory over the cancer. Well she didn't: she died.

Does that mean the brother doesn't have a gift of prophecy? It doesn't mean that but he needs to be more careful to discern between his desire and emotions and really what the Spirit of God would inspire him to speak.

So that's another thing: sometimes it's our own emotions. Again it's kind of difficult to tell, but sometimes it can be our emotions that open the door and the wrong spirit uses that gift. And it's because we desire something to be. Eventually what we need to want, as Jesus said when he was praying: *not my will, but Your will*. [Matthew 26:39] Amen.

Let's go now to First Corinthians and let's study a little bit these gifts.

1Corinthians 12:8

*For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom;*

*The word of wisdom, what is that? Well the key here is wisdom.*

Now we know there's a natural wisdom: work hard, save twenty percent, who can do that? Like I've said before: early to bed, early to rise makes a man healthy wealthy and wise. That's just natural earthly wisdom. It's good to have some of that but that's not what Paul is speaking about here.

We know that wisdom helps us make decisions. A condition or a situation can come up where we *have* to make a decision. We either have to go to the left or to the right. Either we're going to do something or we're not going to do it. Sometimes we look at the situation and we don't know what to do.

Sometimes we even try to find some direction in the Word. We try to see: is there something in the Old Testament, like an example, or is there some instruction in the New Testament? When there is, praise the Lord! God can use that to help us know what to do.

But other times we just can't find that, and we really need to know what to do. So we can pray, we can read, and one way or the other, the Lord can show us: *you need to do this*. What is that? That's *the word of wisdom*.

How does it come? There are different ways it could come. There could be a *vision*, there could be a *dream*, or we can just begin to feel *an assurance in our hearts*. Those are different levels of operation, a vision being the highest.

We don't all have visions, in fact very few of us have visions. In a vision: you're there. It's as though it's happening but you haven't fallen asleep. A vision is not a dream, it's sort of like a dream but you haven't fallen asleep, you're still awake and you can see something happening as though you're a part of it. That's the highest level of operation.

A dream is another way. With a dream: you're asleep but you still see and you feel like you're a part of it. I will also say this: *word of wisdom* and *word of knowledge*, they are different but sometimes it's a fine line.

I'll just give a little example: I had just graduated college and what do you do when you graduate college? You get a job, right? It's time to go out and work. I had gone to a convention at True Light Tabernacle. That was a while back, I believe Brother Dodson was still the pastor but I'm not sure on that.

There was a man there from Pennsylvania. We were talking and he said: hey, I've got this grant, a million dollar grant. Back then a million dollars was a lot of money, it's not that much anymore. Anyway, he said: I'm going to be able to set up a school and we're probably going to need a math teacher.

I began to think about that and one thing for sure: I needed to work somewhere, right? And it sounded like he had a lot of money to start this school. I began to pray about it. The one thing I did think though was: I didn't really know of a church out there, that was important. He was a brother but I didn't know him.

Anyway, I was praying about it and a few months later I had a dream. I dreamed that I was in a city, a very urban environment. I was working as a teacher but almost every time I turned around I was getting beat up, young people were beating me up. In the dream it seemed like they were beating me up because I was white. It was awful getting beat up in that dream.

When I woke up, I was still in a little bit of pain. I'm not kidding about that.

But you know what woke me up? It was a phone call. I went to the phone and it was the same brother from months before. He said: we've got the school going and I want to offer you a job. He said: you'll be working in Philadelphia and you're going to be our math teacher. *Instantly I knew* that it was *not* the Lord's will and I had to just tell him: thank you but I'm looking for something else.

I thank God that He gave me that dream to show me. He gave me *wisdom* about what I should do. I didn't have any other job waiting for me. Here I was: fresh out of college and I needed a job. And here I had somebody say: here's your job. I didn't even have to apply!

The thing is: I had prayed about it and God intervened. He showed me: that's not the right place, that's not My will for you. It might have been His will for the brother in Philadelphia to have the school but it wasn't His will for me to go there.

The same thing happened when I was getting ready to go to college, in my senior year of high school. I was thinking: where am I going to go to college? Of course all the people want to go to Harvard or Stanford, you know, the Ivy League.

One day I had a dream that I was in a room where a lot of people were talking. Somehow I was able to pick up on two men who were on the other side of the room and they were talking about me. They said: he's kind of intelligent. Now I'm just telling that because it was in the dream whether it's true or not. Then they said: we need to introduce him to our sweet sister Mary.

At that time I had just done a lot of study about the Catholic Church and in this room *I knew exactly* what they meant: they were talking about the Virgin Mary. They wanted to persuade me to be a part of their Catholic system and it scared me because of what I had studied. And if you knew all the things that the Catholic Church has done it would scare you too.

I was afraid that if I left the room, they would see me leave and they would come and get me. But if I stayed, I was afraid that they were going to come and talk to me, and I felt trapped.

Then I woke up, thank goodness it was a dream. I went to get the mail and there was a brochure from a college. I had never asked them to send me anything but I knew this was one of those elite schools. I didn't know a lot of detail about them but I knew they were a school that was very recognized. Not everybody got entrance into that school but here was this letter: *please apply, we think you'd be a good candidate*. Oh I was just so excited!

I began to read through the brochure and it got to the point where it said: *as a Jesuit Institution, all of our classes are taught by priests. They have such great knowledge, etcetera*.

By the way, if you want to know it was Boston College.

On the one hand, it might be easy to say: I know I'm not Catholic. I could still go, get the education and get the degree. It wouldn't be such a hard justification to make: I know I'm not Catholic, I'm just going for the education, but *after just having that dream* I threw it all away. The Lord used that avenue to help me.

Again, this is where the fine line is: He helped me make a good decision which is *wisdom*, right? But he also gave me some *knowledge*.

That leads us to the next gift. It says here:

1 Corinthians 12:8  
*to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;*

What is *knowledge*? Well it's just what it sounds like. God knows everything. Amen?

Remember when Jesus told his disciples: *go and tell a certain man in a certain place to get the place ready?* [Mark 14:13-15] He also said: *go and throw a hook into the lake because the fish you will get, there's going to be money in its mouth.* [Matthew 17:27] Remember that?

How did Jesus know that? God knows all things. God *showed him* that. That was *knowledge*.

This gift operated in Brother Branham's life. People would come up to Brother Branham and he would say: this is your name, you live in this city on this street. Sometimes he would say: I saw that there was an accident and he could tell them details about the accident. What was that? That was *knowledge*. There was no way Brother Branham could know that, but God showed it to him.

In the Old Testament there was a prophet and it was said: *the things that are said in secret in the king's chambers are revealed to this prophet.* [2Kings 6:12]

We're not all going to have the *word of knowledge* like Brother Branham had it but if God sees there is something we need to know that we could not know otherwise, He can show it to us.

I'm out of time now, but He did that one time with me related to healing: I had insomnia. I had no idea what was causing it but after six days, I have to say: it was torture when nightfall came. Oh it was joy when the sun came up, but torture going through the night when everybody was sleeping.

Now this is a place where I don't really know whether it was a dream or a vision, I think it was more like a vision. I'm not going to tell the whole thing right now but the Lord showed me there was a medication I was taking that was causing my insomnia.

When I saw that, when *I knew* that, I stopped taking it. I had been taking it every day at a certain time, but that day when I went to take it, that's when it clicked. I didn't take it and I slept beautifully. I mean, if you can imagine going six days with no sleep, you're going to sleep beautifully once that's over.

I will go ahead and close this morning. I know we didn't get too far into this but we'll continue later.