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- C. It is consistent with how a person comes to mature and develops from a child into a man—by the Word of God (I Cor. 3:1-2; I Pet. 2:2; Heb. 5:12-13).
- D. It makes sense when the gift of tongues eliminates itself. The gift of prophecy and knowledge are needed until the Bible is completed but tongues is not. Tongues could pass off the scene by itself as soon as sign gifts were no longer necessary to establish apostolic authority and truth.
- E. It makes sense because it is the Word of God that does reveal “face-to-face” what a man truly is in the sight of God. Any person who will look into the Bible will have his soul cut open (Heb. 4:12). God’s Word will show exactly where a person is in his relationship with God.

Gifts must be studied in view of the entire Bible. We may observe that in the chronology of the four major passages that deal with the subject of spiritual gifts, the order is I Corinthians (A.D. 54); Romans (A.D. 58); Ephesians (A.D. 60) and I Peter (A.D. 64). As the N.T. books increased, the gift lists decreased. I Corinthians lists 14 spiritual gifts, Romans lists 8 spiritual gifts, Ephesians lists 4 and I Peter lists 2. When Paul wrote I Corinthians, only three other letters were written (Galatians, I & II Thessalonians). I Corinthians was written before 23 other books, which must be considered. Most who study spiritual gifts miss this important point.

(Observation #5) - Some spiritual gifts are speaking gifts and some are non-speaking serving gifts.

I Peter 4:11 clearly makes this distinction by stating—“Whoever speaks, let him speak as it were, the utterances of God; whoever serves, let him do so as by the strength which God supplies...”.

In this one verse, the Apostle Peter draws a clear distinction between a speaking gift and a non-speaking serving gift. Unfortunately, many people who love God do not realize this important point and the result may be counterproductive. For example, if one who does not have a speaking gift tries to function as one who does, his ministry will not be effective. It is one thing to take advantage of an opportunity to minister, but it is quite another to take on a ministry when one doesn’t have the supernatural gift of God. In such cases, both the person and the people will be miserable.

If one is to “rightly divide” the subject of spiritual gifts, one must look at each gift and make the following determinations: 1) Is it a temporal gift? 2) Is it an apostolic gift? 3) How may this gift be interpreted in light of completed Scripture? 4) Is the gift a speaking gift? 5) Is the gift a non-speaking serving gift? 6) Is the gift really for today?

(Observation #6) - Some spiritual gifts are gifts given to an individual and some spiritual gifts are given to the church.

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Dr. Paul Enns does a fine job discussing this issue: “Two concepts are involved in spiritual gifts. First, a spiritual gift to an individual is God’s enablement for personal spiritual service (I Cor. 12:11). Second, a spiritual gift to the church is a person uniquely equipped for the church’s edification and maturation (Eph. 4:11-13)” (*Moody Handbook of Theology*, p. 270).

In all reality, all gifts are church related; however, there are specific gifts which are high-ranking gifts which God does give to His church and His people need to recognize this reality.

Question #9 - What are the spiritual gifts?

From the various gift passages, here is a compilation of the various gifts:

1. The gift of an apostle . Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:28
2. The gift of a prophet . Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:28
3. The gift of an evangelist . Eph. 4:11
4. The gift of pastor / teacher . Eph. 4:11; I Cor. 12:28
5. The gift of prophecy . Rom 12:6; I Cor. 12:10; 14:1-40
6. The gift of teaching . Rom. 12:7; I Cor. 12:28
7. The gift of miracles . I Cor. 12:10, 28
8. The gift of healing . I Cor. 12:9, 28, 30
9. The gift of tongues . I Cor. 12:10, 28
10. The gift of servicing . Rom. 12:7; I Peter 4:11
11. The gift of helps . I Cor. 12:28
12. The gift of faith . I Cor. 12:9
13. The gift of exhortation . Rom. 12:8
14. The gift of discernment of spirits. I Cor. 12:10; 14:28; I John 4:1
15. The gift of showing mercy . Rom. 12:8
16. The gift of giving . Rom. 12:8

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17. The gift of administration. Rom. 12:8; I Cor. 12:28

18. The gift of wisdom. I Cor. 12:8

19. The gift of knowledge. I Cor. 12:8

Here then is a list of spiritual gifts. Before we examine these we would like to point out the differences between a spiritual gift and a natural talent:

- 1) A spiritual gift is from God, independent of parents, whereas a natural talent comes from God through a parent.
- 2) A spiritual gift exists from the moment of spiritual birth, whereas a natural talent exists from the moment of physical birth.
- 3) A spiritual gift is to benefit humanity in a spiritual way, whereas a natural talent benefits humanity in a natural way.
- 4) A spiritual gift must be recognized, developed and exercised and so must a natural talent.

Gift #1 - The gift of apostle. I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11

According to God's ranking of spiritual gifts, the gift of apostle was the highest ranked N.T. spiritual gift that a man could have (I Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).

The actual word "apostle" is used three ways in the N.T. It is used to refer to an office (Luke 6:13). It is used to refer to a gift (Eph. 4:11). It is used to refer to a messenger, one like Epaphroditus who worked closely with the apostles (Phil. 2:25). The actual word apostle, in Greek, means one who has been sent to arrange. "Apo" is a preposition that means "from," and "stello" is a word that means to set, place, arrange (*G. Abbott-Smith*, p. 416). Therefore, one who was an apostle was one sent from God to arrange or organize, to set in place the church.

Now to hold the office of an apostle and to have the gift of an apostle there were certain prerequisites which had to be met: 1) One had to have been appointed directly by Jesus Christ (Luke 6:13; II Tim. 1:11); 2) One had to have physically seen the resurrected Jesus Christ (I Cor. 9:1); 3) One had to have been personally instructed by Jesus Christ (Gal. 1:11-12); 4) One had to be empowered to perform the miraculous signs of an apostle (Luke 9:1; II Cor. 12:12).

Now concerning the actual office and gift, there were only twelve apostles, plus Paul. In the N.T., the specific names of the twelve are listed four times (Matt. 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; Luke 6:14-16 and Acts 1:13, 26). In Acts 1:15-26, it is obvious that Matthias met the prerequisites and was chosen to replace Judas, so the number would remain twelve. The only other person to hold the gift and office of an apostle other than the twelve was Paul.

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Paul makes it very clear that the timing of his apostleship was very unique, making him the last of the apostles (I Cor. 15:7-9).

Now this gift of apostle was a foundational gift for the Church Age (Eph. 2:20). What this means is that the apostles laid the foundation for the entire Church Age through their instruction, both verbal and written. The apostles were enabled by God to perform apostolic signs and wonders, which became their credentials.

With the passing of the twelve and Paul, the gift ceased. Their foundation stands and the Church Age moves forward. The impact of this gift is still evidenced.

Gift #2 - The gift of a prophet or the gift of prophecy. Rom. 12:6; I Cor. 12:10; Eph. 4:11

The gift of prophecy or the gift of a prophet was a N.T. gift in which a person functioned as a prophet of God. In both the O.T. and the N.T., a prophet received direct revelation from God. G. Abbott Smith said the primary meaning of prophecy was “telling forth divine counsels.” The noun “prophet” specifically means to receive and communicate the will, the purpose and the counsel of God (p. 390). We may understand the gift of prophecy as **one who supernaturally received direct revelation from God and who communicated that revelation, which included God’s will, purpose and counsel.**

(Question #1) - How important was the gift of prophecy?

- 1) It was ranked by God as the number two gift after apostle (I Cor. 12:29; Eph. 4:11).
- 2) It revealed similar revelation for the Church Age like an apostle (Eph. 3:5).
- 3) It was a gift specifically listed in three key gift passages (Rom. 12:6; I Cor. 12-14; Eph. 4:11).
- 4) It was a gift far greater than tongues (I Cor. 14:5).
- 5) It was a gift that had God-ordained guidelines (I Cor. 14:29-32).
- 6) It was a gift that had God-ordered warnings (Deut. 13:1-5; 18:20-22; Jer. 29:8-9, 21-23; Matt. 7:15; I John 4:1-3).

(Question #2) - What type of information did the gift of prophecy reveal?

When a N.T. prophet revealed the information he received from God, his information was at best partial (I Cor. 13:9). Each bit of information that God revealed through a prophet was inspired, imperative and immediate, but each was a partial ingredient that was a significant part of the whole.

There were many types of information revealed by a N.T. prophet:

- 1) N.T. prophets were able to reveal the selection of Barnabas and Saul (Paul) for sacred ministry and service (Acts 13:1-4).
- 2) N.T. prophets were able to reveal profitable revelation to the church (I Cor. 4:6).
- 3) N.T. prophets were able to reveal instructive revelation to the church (I Cor. 14:31a).