

How to Discover Your Spiritual Gifts

Part I

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Good morning Lighthouse! Are you ready for the Word of God this morning?!

Today we are going to talk about spiritual gifts.

This is a series of messages that will likely get a lot of hits online; who does not want to know all about his or her spiritual gifts?

We are like kids on Christmas morning when it comes to this subject. If every believer has a spiritual gift (or gifts) from God, discovering those gifts are just naturally important to us.

It is a GIFT! Who doesn't want to open a gift and see what's in it?

The subject of spiritual gifts is one of great controversy and confusion. This is so in part because of some unusual gifts and abilities that were necessary in the early Churches when we did not have completed Bibles and when the authority and the validity of the Apostles had not yet been established.

Many of those early necessary gifts have now become obsolete and thus have ceased having

outlived their usefulness for the good of the Churches.

The Bible is very clear on what those particular gifts are and why they have now ceased.

By the time the book of Romans was written, the miraculous gifts such as the gifts of miracles and healing and tongues had already passed from the scene in the Lord's Churches.

Today's message is not about proving that tongues have ceased or that those claiming to still have these miraculous gifts are disingenuous; which is easy enough to do.

This message is about how that YOU can actually discover your real spiritual gifts and actually practice those gifts to become exactly what God intended you to be. Isn't that what it is really all about; us becoming what God created us to be for His glory?

Our text today will be

Romans 12:1-2:

- 1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.
- 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

It is amazing what gets discovered when you spend real quality time actually studying the Word of God.

This text is almost always preached and taught standing alone. Paul is calling on these Roman Church members to dedicate their bodies; their entire selves actually, to the Lord.

This is defined as being “reasonable service;” that it should be considered normal and average as opposed to exceptional:

That they should not be trying to fit in to the world but rather should immerse themselves in the knowledge of God that they should be changed; transformed (metamorphosis is the Greek word), into someone so different that their lives would truly demonstrate what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

That’s good preaching; amen! That is so good, we could just have an invitation right now and all go home and think about it all week long.

You know we are not going to do that, right?

It just so happens that as good as that application of this text may be and as true as those thoughts are; that is not, at least primarily, what this text is talking about.

There are patterns and consistencies in the Word of God. God is not the author of

confusion and requires that all things follow a pattern of order.

The Bible is not just a collection of random truths popping up here and there; there is consistency and order. It is also good to remember that no chapters or verses existed when this was penned.

Thus, what is said in Chapter 11 is going to always directly apply to what is said in Chapter 12 and so on.

That said; when you read in Chapter 11, verse 29 that **the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.**

Then you read in Chapter 12, verse 6: **that these gifts differ according to the grace that is given to us...**

What is then probable that the 12 verses in between these two verses will be discussing?

Aha!

Once you realize this, you will begin to see some amazing details about your spiritual gifts; and as the Lord has taught us, "Success is in the details."

Today we are going to begin examination of these 12 verses in between and I believe you will learn how to discover and yes how to exercise your very own spiritual gifts.

Romans 11:29-12:8

- 29 For the gifts and calling of God *are* without repentance.
- 30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief:
- 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy.
- 32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all.
- 33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable *are* his judgments, and his ways past finding out!
- 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?
- 35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?
- 36 For of him, and through him, and to him, *are* all things: to whom *be* glory forever. Amen.

Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, *which is* your reasonable service.

- 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what *is* that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

- 3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think *of himself* more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.
- 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office:
- 5 So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.
- 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith;
- 7 Or ministry, *let us wait on our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching;
- 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness.

We are going to take a closer look at three sections of this passage, beginning today with:

I. The Gifts and calling of God.

Romans 11:29 For the gifts and calling of God *are without repentance.*

A. Let's look first at the calling of God.

1. We know that every believer is called; certainly in the sense of being drawn to the Lord.

2. Romans 8:28-31

28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are **the called** according to *his* purpose.

29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, **them he also called**: and **whom he called**, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

31 What shall we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can be* against us?

3. Everyone whom God foreknew that would desire Him and place their trust in Him; He indeed called.

4. Each of you believers know what this means; because you received that call.

5. “calling” is Gr. *klay'-sis*

From a shorter form of G2564; an *invitation* (figuratively): - calling.

6. As you also each know, God’s initial invitation to be saved is followed by many callings thereafter.

7. What we usually refer to as spiritual gifts listed in 12:6-21 are more accurately callings

for which we are given the spiritual talents and abilities and provision to carry them out.

8. We all want our pastor to be called to preach and called to teach and called to minister but let's not forget that every member of the Body (Church) has a calling as well.

9. It could be preaching or teaching or serving as perhaps a Deacon; it could be exhortation or administration or one of many various leadership positions; it could be giving or mercy or childcare or a hundred other callings that each requires something special from God to carry it out.

B. Now let's look at the gifts themselves.

1. Most everyone understands at least to some degree what a gift is; the most outstanding characteristic of which is that a gift is free.

2. This word in our text however, is not the same word as in Ephesians 2:8 which defines our salvation as a gift from God. That word is:

dōron do'-ron

A present; specifically a sacrifice: - gift, offering;

This word in Romans 11:29 is:

charisma char'-is-mah

From G5483; a (divine) *gratuity*, that is, *deliverance* (from danger or passion);

(specifically) a (spiritual) *endowment*, that is, (subjectively) religious *qualification*, or (objectively) miraculous *faculty*: - (free) gift.

3. By definition this “gift” could be:

a. a (divine) *gratuity* God supplying the money for those called to be the givers through whom God supplies the needs of His Churches. (Romans 12:8)

b. *deliverance* (from danger or passion); It could be God delivering you from some evil or addiction to thereby enable you to preach or teach or minister or qualify you to fulfill some other calling.

c. a (spiritual) *endowment*/religious *qualification* Like a pastor who is called to preach.

C. Now see the emphasis that is placed on these gifts and calling:

1. They *are without repentance*.

2. Nearly always “repent” in the New Testament will be the Greek word

metanoeō met-an-o-eh'-o

From G3326 and G3539; to think differently or afterwards, that is, *reconsider* (morally to feel *compunction*): - repent; used for example, in

Mark 1:15 with Jesus saying; **The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.**

3. Usually repent is a change, especially in thinking; first, what you are trusting in and then after salvation, what you actually do.

4. But not here; this word is

ametamelētos *am-et-am-el'-ay-tos*

From G1 (as a negative particle) and a presumed derivative of G3338; **irrevocable**: - without repentance, not to be repented of.

5. Once given; God does not take it back!

a. God does not take back His salvation; that is why He calls it eternal salvation!

b. Neither does God take back His calling; not the first nor those thereafter.

c. Nor does God take back His gifts; not the first, nor those thereafter... EVER!

D. Let me share my own testimony of just how big this really is:

1. Remember last week when the Lord showed us the two ways we get to know Jesus; one being through His Word and the other through the experience of walking with the Lord year after year?

2. We read here that the gifts; the spiritual endowments of the Lord are irrevocable; that is exactly what it says and that is exactly what it means; you cannot get around it.

3. We read here that the calling of God upon your life is irrevocable; it will never go away!

4. What I am going to share with you today is how I experienced this truth.

5. Twenty two years ago, I was the bright and rising star among Independent Baptist preachers; I was winning souls, building a Church; and it was working (like almost no place else, it was working.)

6. Then my life fell apart; it seemed sudden but in reality it was not; it had been a long time coming.

7. There I was; 40 years old, at the peak of ministry and vitality and then in a period of a few months; my marriage, which was never what it should have been and subsequently my ministry, completely collapsed.

8. When you are a somewhat too legalistic Independent Baptist preacher in fellowship with other somewhat too legalistic Churches and you fall like I did; there is no place for you.

9. Seven years I spent on the outside; seven years I learned what it is like where some of you are living every day; seven years with the

exception of two dear friends I was outside the fellowship of other believers. (One of those friends I married, and the other is still my friend today.)

10. For seven years I felt too unworthy to even pray except to simply say thanks for good things that, surprisingly, still continued to come; although at the time I couldn't for the life of me understand why.

11. One night about 2:00 am, God woke me up. He was speaking to me just like He used to back when I was preaching.

12. He put me on my face, completely broken. He began to pour out a message; a sermon, just like He used to. There in the middle of the night I wrote the sermon; it as based on what God did with Gideon.

13. I was instructed (don't ask me how) to go to a certain place of worship the next Sunday morning and was told I would be asked to speak. Lisa and I went, thinking we must be crazy, and without us saying a word except introducing ourselves, sure enough; they asked me to speak.

14. I stood up and preached the message God gave me and I have been doing so in one capacity or another ever since.

15. There is much more to the story; maybe it will become a book someday; if it does, it will be hard to put down.

16. Everything that God called me to do more than 25 years ago is being fulfilled right here before our eyes just like God showed it to me then.

17. God never revokes His call on your life! God never revokes the gifts he provides to fulfill His calling.

In Conclusion:

I don't know who God has brought here today to hear this, but He does and you do.

No believer ought to ever spend 7 years on the outside!

Now, no believer in the sound of my voice will ever have to again!

God has made a place for you; a place where you can heal, a place where you can learn, a place where you can be restored, a place where you can belong, a place where you can fulfill your calling!

The name of that place is Lighthouse Baptist Church!

In the next couple of weeks, you will get to see exactly and in great detail "How to Discover

your Spiritual Gifts” and how to fulfill them as well.

You are not going to want to miss it; but you are going to have to come back.