

Everybody needs to have Spiritual Gifts

1 Corinthians 12:1,7; 12:31-13:1-3; 14:1,12

Without the exercise of spiritual gifts, a church group may soon become a social gathering. If we want our group to be vivacious and dynamic and to experience transformations in people's lives, we must often use the gifts of the Holy Spirit to serve one another in the group.

This is a true story that happened in the early days of SCC:

There was a group in the adult zone that was struggling. Although the group activities were full of fun, the group members had little interest in spiritual matters. Several of the group members were non-believers, and it seemed difficult for them to believe in the Lord. We brought this situation to the meeting of zone co-workers , and everyone earnestly prayed that the Holy Spirit would intervene in this group and turn the situation around.

One time, the group met as usual and nothing special happened. But the presence of the Holy Spirit was evident. At the end of the meeting, a brother felt burdened to pray for his friend who was sitting next to him. This person had not yet believed in the Lord, but was unemployed and had not found a job for some time. As everyone prayed for him, it was revealed that he would find a job that week. After the prayer, a young female member said, "My jaw bone have been loose for two years. I have seen several doctors, but there has been no improvement. Can you pray for me?" Everyone gathered around her and laid hands on her and prayed. Although this member was not healed immediately, she experienced God's presence. Then another girl, a non-believer, wanted to be prayed for. A word of knowledge came to her: "You appear strong and capable on the outside, but you are weak and lonely on the inside." After hearing this word of knowledge, she began to cry because she knew that the Holy Spirit understood her, and she also felt that God and the people in the group loved her.

This is not the end of the story. The next morning, the lady with the loose jaw woke up and found that her jaw problem was completely cured. The unemployed friend also found a job two days later. Both of them believed in the Lord within two weeks. Then the whole group experienced a revival together. Two or three months later, ten members of the group were baptized, and the number of people in the group doubled and divided into groups. Hallelujah.

When a group uses the gifts of the Holy Spirit to serve one another, the group enters a supernatural dimension and changes occur. In order to release the gifts of the Holy Spirit among us, we need to have three correct attitudes towards the gifts.

1. To have knowledge

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be ignorant." (12:1) Ignorance brings confusion. Many people confuse spiritual gifts with natural talents. Natural talents are not the same as spiritual gifts. Natural talents are in-born or learned, and possessed by both believers and non-believers; but spiritual gifts are only possessed by Christians and are given to people of God after they believe in the Lord. Natural talents are directed toward the needs of the natural level so that the needs of the natural level can be met. But spiritual gifts are supernatural and are aimed at people's spiritual needs, so that their spiritual needs can be met. Spiritual gifts are necessary to accomplish spiritual work. 12:8-11 mentions nine of the gifts that help us operate in the supernatural.

2. To use it in love

1 Corinthians 12 through 14 discuss the gifts. Chapter 13 is between Chapter 12 and Chapter 14. The entire chapter 13 is about love. Love and grace are inseparable. "Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts." (14:1) Both need to be developed in a balanced way. If there are gifts but no love, the exercise of gifts will lead to competition, jealousy and division, just as it happened in the Corinthian church in the past. Furthermore, this kind of service has no eternal value. (13:1-3)

3. To desire earnestly

"Pursue love and earnestly desire spiritual gifts." (14:1) To desire something means to be very eager to get it and to feel that you cannot live without it. So do not be afraid of trouble or embarrassment, and do not give up on asking. If you desire to see greater power and breakthroughs in your ministry, you must desire spiritual gifts.

Discussion Questions

1. Of the three important attitudes regarding gifts, which one do you personally lack the most?
How to strengthen this attitude?
2. Are you satisfied with the degree to which your group's gifts are being used? How can your group strengthen the use of gifts so that the group can better build up one another and bear witness to the reality of the Holy Spirit?