

Elder Training Series

Session 12 - The Spiritual Gifts of 'Serving', 'Help Others', 'Contributing To The Needs Of Others (Giving)' (NIV based)

(Repeating) NOTE: Perhaps it would be prudent for you to mark or highlight the items in this document that you suspect you need to study further, or accept, or correct, or develop, or work on, or improve in your life.

- - It is important to note that Scriptures do very little to describe, expound, or explain what some of these individual gifts are and how they are manifested in believers' lives.
 - - Consequently, many of the following descriptions of these spiritual gifts are based on a combination of biblically-based logic and reasoning, defining of original Greek words, relating Biblical statements, experiential evidence and observations, Holy Spirit-guided insights, and the supporting opinions of several well-respected authors.
-

SERVING:

"If it is serving, let him serve;..." - Romans 12:7, (also listed in 1 Peter 4:11)

- - The word "**servicing**" (Romans 12:7) literally means "giving aid or service as an attendant or servant to the ministry" (Strong's #1248), with the original Greek word being "diakonia", from which is derived the church position of 'deacon', as described in 1 Timothy 3:8-13.
- - The spiritual 'gift of serving', therefore, is "the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to identify the unmet needs involved in tasks related to God's work, and to make use of available resources to meet those needs and help accomplish the desired goals". (Wagner 226)
- - Believers with the spiritual 'gift of serving' actively look for practical ways "to take a burden off of someone else in the ministry and place it on himself/herself". (Hillman 70; MacArthur 127)
- - These believers eagerly serve the church, its people, and its leaders, providing physical assistance, help, and logistical support, while being very accommodating and subservient under the oversight and authority of the ministry leaders.
- - In reality, they minister in the sense of physically carrying out or administering in physical actions the decisions and policies of the church, its ministries, and its leaders.
- - In effect, they acquire a substantial sense of fulfillment from their service, because they see and appreciate that they are contributing to the optimizing of the functioning of a church or ministry for spiritual healthiness, effectiveness, and logistical maintenance.
- - Thus, these believers genuinely enjoy taking on tasks that serve others in the ministry, and they willingly and cheerfully work at those tasks without grumbling or looking for ways to terminate their commitment to a task.
- - They are reliable and contented in their service to ministry work, not seeking any attention or accolades, controlling authority, lofty status, or compensation for their service, because they know that they are serving the Lord.
- - Their enjoyment, reliability, strength, contentment, commitment, and sense of fulfillment, that these believers experience from performing the spiritual 'gift of serving', come directly from the empowering of this spiritual gift by the Holy Spirit. (1 Peter 4:10-11)

- - Some examples of the functions that a believer with the spiritual 'gift of serving' would typically perform in a church or ministry are: the setting up and cleaning up of events; being ushers, greeters, and parking lot attendants; making repairs to the facilities; cleaning of rooms and carpets; preparing and serving of food or meals or communion elements; moving of chairs and tables; mowing the grass; trimming trees and bushes; sweeping the floors and sidewalks; physically acquiring and distributing benevolent supplies; collecting the offering; and etcetera.

Some relating verses:

- - John 12:26 - **"Whoever serves me [Jesus] must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be. My Father will honor the one who serves me."**

- - Galatians 5:13 - **"You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love."**

- - Ephesians 6:7-8 - **"[Slaves,] serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free."**

- - 1 Peter 4:10,11b - **"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms." "...If anyone serves, he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen."**

HELP OTHERS:

"And in the church God has appointed..., also... those able to help others,..." - 1 Corinthians 12:28

- - The spiritual gift of **"help others"** (1 Corinthians 12:28) pertains, in essence, to "providing relief" or compensate for losses that have been incurred". (Strong's #0484 with *AHD* 'remunerate')

- - The spiritual 'gift of help others', therefore, is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the Body of Christ to identify the unmet needs of a person who has suffered a catastrophic loss of physical belongings or property, and then to acquire and utilize available resources to meet those needs and thereby help that person suitably recover from that catastrophic loss.

- - This scenario implies that the catastrophic loss has propelled the person into serious deficiency or destitution - "extreme need of resources or the means of subsistence". (*AHD* - 'destitution')

- - Logically, this scenario also implies that the catastrophic loss could certainly include the person experiencing the loss of, or the inability to, or the struggle to generate sufficient income.

- - Fundamentally and more broadly, believers with the spiritual 'gift of help others' have an innate compelling desire to help other people.

- - They especially want to help those persons who need help but do not have the means to acquire the training / skills / knowledge / finances / resources to solve their predicament on their own.

- - So they naturally gravitate toward assisting low-income, downtrodden, or destitute people. (Hillman 70)

- - Believers with the spiritual 'gift of help others' particularly want to provide that help at no cost or sacrifice to the recipients.
 - - Therefore, believers with the spiritual 'gift of help others' excel at being resource persons - accumulating and maintaining a list of a variety of potential resources that are ready to be utilized as needed for specific situations.
 - - Furthermore, these believers maintain themselves in a state of flexibility and readiness to work, always being very willing and ready to adjust their schedule in order to go and meet someone's urgent need without delay.
 - - An equally-important objective for these believers with the spiritual 'gift of help others' is to overtly represent the Kingdom of God, using outreach techniques such as: talking about and sharing Scripture verses and concepts with the person as the believer is meeting that person's needs; talking about and inviting the person to become involved in the believer's church and its ministries; looking for and acting upon any opportunities to likewise draw in other people that are present with the person whose needs the believer is meeting; and etcetera.
 - - Thus, these believers have a purposeful underlying spiritual intention and desire to minister verbally as they are ministering through actions to meet needs. This, too, motivates and compels them.
 - - Even though these believers with the spiritual 'gift of help others' are edified while they are performing the meeting of a person's needs, they are especially edified when they have successfully and sufficiently met someone's need, and even more edified if they were able to also engage in outreach and ministering conversations with the person.
 - - And of course, the Holy Spirit is actively working to orchestrate, empower, and drive this whole process, by means of influencing the mind, heart, words, and actions of the believer who has this spiritual 'gift of help others'.
 - However, the believer can easily derail the activities and goals of the Holy Spirit here in this process by doing such things as:
 - - - - failing to do what he said he would do;
 - - - - failing to arrive when he said he would;
 - - - - failing to complete the work or project like he said he would;
 - - - - behaving in a carnal, angry, or cussing manner when things do not proceed as planned or desired;
 - - - - failing to communicate sufficiently and/or honestly with the person;
 - - - - refusing to do work in the manner or to the specifications that the person wants, and instead doing the work in the way that the believer wants;
 - - - - doing poor workmanship;
 - - - - leaving a mess for someone else to clean up;
 - - - - damaging other parts of the person's property;
 - - - - speaking about the believer's own church, its leaders, or its ministries in a disparaging way;
 - - - - misrepresenting the Scriptures and/or promoting false doctrines; and etcetera.
-

CONTRIBUTING TO THE NEEDS OF OTHERS (GIVING):

"...if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously;..." - Romans 12:8

- - The spiritual gift of "**contributing to the needs of others**" (or 'giving') involves "to give over or share" one's material possessions with others. (Romans 12:8; Strong's #3330; Hillman 85)
- - Romans 12:8 proclaims that believers with the spiritual 'gift of contributing to the needs of others' should share "**generously**", in a manner that has the characteristic of being "abundant - fullness to the extent that is plentiful and overflowing in amount". (AHD 'generously', 'abundant')
- - Furthermore, these believers are to maintain "sincerity" as they share abundantly, not possessing, harboring, "disguising, or concealing sinful intentions, appearances, or feelings". (Strong's #0572 with AHD 'dissimulation')
- - Likewise, within their abundant sharing, they are not to possess nor pursue "self-seeking" - formulating and implementing any scheme that attempts to bring any kind of benefit to themselves. (Strong's #0572)
- - Believers, who have the spiritual 'gift of contributing to the needs of others', enjoy sharing what they have, not giving begrudgingly or out of a sense of compulsion, not possessing any selfish ulterior motives, but instead with willingness, eagerness, and cheerfulness. (2 Corinthians 9:5,7; Gangel 85)
- - They persist in always being watchful and ready to give in ways that are helpful, meet needs, and further God's kingdom.
- - Their perspective is that God has abundantly blessed them, now they are going to abundantly pass on those blessings to others. (in contrast to James 5:3c)
- - Thus, the spiritual 'gift of contributing to the needs of others' can be described as "the Holy Spirit-given ability to voluntarily give of one's material goods and financial resources with joy, eagerness, and delight without any motives of self-benefit but rather with the single motive of sharing with others out of compassion and love, to the glory of God". (Gangel 83; Hillman 84)
- - While those with the 'gift of contributing' strive to give anonymously as often as possible in order not to compromise their motives, their "ongoing generosity will nevertheless inspire others to give". (Hillman 86)
- - Generally, the Scriptures indicate that when the resources are limited or scarce, there should usually be consideration for priorities of who receives those limited resources first, with the local (true) church having top priority, then of descending priority are specific ministries of the local (true) church, then (true) ministries outside of the local (true) church, then specific needy believers within the local (true) church, then specific needy believers outside of the local (true) church, and then unbelievers. (2 Corinthians 9:5,12-13; Galatians 6:10)
- - When resources are plentiful, then resources should be given "**generously on every occasion**" - "**in all things at all times, ...abound in every good work**". (2 Corinthians 9:11,8)
- - The inner qualities and virtues, for this spiritual gift of extraordinary generous joyful giving, are empowered by the Holy Spirit, and they naturally bring glory, honor, and praise to God.
- However, God is not honored nor pleased when a believer corrupts this spiritual gift by operating from the flesh in such ways (actual examples) as:
 - - - - contributing to needy ministry persons or missionaries only if the contribution results in a tax deduction being achieved for the giver;

- - - - inappropriately manipulating the bookkeeping system of a church or ministry in order to achieve a tax deduction (from the giving) for the giver;
 - - - - bargaining with God to receive a gigantic windfall (such as a huge inheritance or lottery winning, for examples), giving an extremely minuscule amount of it to the church, keeping all of the rest for oneself, and then considering oneself as having been very virtuous, pious, and generous in the handling of this gigantic windfall;
 - - - - exerting or "**showing favoritism**", for example giving a sizeable generous amount to one needy person but giving nothing to another person who is likewise in exactly the same situation, under the same conditions, and at the same time. (v.1 in James 2:1-9)
-

APPLICATIONS AND IMPLICATIONS:

- - Do any of these 3 spiritual gifts jump out at you, inciting in you a reaction of "I think I have this spiritual gift."? If so, think about, meditate on, and pray about whether there are any improvements or adjustments you can make to maximize appropriateness, effectiveness, and productivity of your engaging in each of these 3 spiritual gifts that you think you might have.
 - - Do you know of any other believers in your church or ministry from which you see evidence that they might have one or more of these 3 spiritual gifts? If so, do you think God would want you to speak up to each of those persons, and express your opinion and cite specific examples to them that you see evidence that they may have one (or more) of these 3 spiritual gifts?
 - - How about your spouse, or children, or parents, or relatives, or friends who are true believers? In this same above manner, can you speak to them about your observations that seem to indicate that they may have one (or more) of these 3 spiritual gifts?
 - - And when you encounter one of these people you are talking to who seems to agree that your evaluation of them may be correct, you could offer to go through the description from this document with them, pertaining to the spiritual gift(s) that they seem to agree they may have.
 - As may be evident, the big hurdle to overcome here is for each true believer to correctly ascertain (as soon as possible) which spiritual gift(s) he (or she) has.
 - - - - Upon that realization, then they can forthrightly look for and pursue opportunities to exercise that (or those) spiritual gift(s).
 - - - - Thereby, you will have significantly helped each of those true believers to get on the path to becoming a fruit-bearing disciple, doing ministry work that God has gifted and is empowering them to do.
 - - - - Do these actions sound like some things that you could or should do now, as an actual or a potential future elder, overseer, pastor, or ministry leader?
-

Works Cited:

The American Heritage Dictionary (AHD). 3rd ed., ver. 3.6a (CD-ROM). Cambridge, MA: SoftKey International Inc., 1994.

Bible. "The Holy Bible: New International Version." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

Gangel, Kenneth O. *Unwrap Your Spiritual Gifts*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1994.

Hillman, Robert J. *27 Spiritual Gifts*. Melbourne, Australia: Joint Board of Christian Education, 1983.

MacArthur, Jr., John. *Spiritual Gifts*. Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1985.

"Strong's Greek Dictionary." *The Bible Library CD-ROM*. Oklahoma City, OK: Ellis Enterprises, 1988.

Wagner, C. Peter. *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1979.

Copyrights:

Scriptures taken from Holy Bible, New International Version®, NIV®

Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.®

Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Copyright © 1996, 2020, 2023 Mel W. Coddington, and permission is hereby granted that this document may be used, copied, and distributed non-commercially to non-profit organizations, individuals, churches, ministries, and schools worldwide, provided the copies are distributed at no charge and retain this sources documentation as supplied herein. This document is not for sale, resale, or for use as a gift or premium to be offered in connection with solicitations or contributions.

File name: eldertraining-session12.____ (.htm, .rtf, .doc, .pdf)

Translation used: NIV, quoted or referred to in various places within this document

Source: www.BelieverAssist.com