

Elder Training Series

Session 14 - The Spiritual Gifts of 'Message Of Knowledge', 'Message Of Wisdom', 'Teaching' (NIV based)

(Repeating) NOTES: - - 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.
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MESSAGE OF KNOWLEDGE:

"...to another [there is given] the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,..." - 1 Corinthians 12:8

- - The spiritual 'gift of **the message of knowledge**' is the Holy Spirit-given special ability: to subjectively and deliberately study the Bible; to observe and discover biblical facts; to draw out, accumulate, analyze and clarify information that is pertinent to the growth or well-being of the church Body; and then to present that information to persons as the Holy Spirit urges and provides opportunity.
- - Believers with the spiritual 'gift of the message of knowledge' learn information pertaining to God, the kingdom of heaven, and the Scriptures. As described in Matthew 13:10-18, they see (or read) the information (v.16), they hear it (v.16), they are open to it (v.15), they inquire about its meaning (v.10; cf. Luke 8:9), they receive the meaning of it (v.18), they gain understanding of it (v.13), they retain all of this long-term (v.12), and over time they accumulate more of it (v.12).
- - In regard to this spiritual information, these believers are eager to learn it, they have a long attention span for it, they are able to absorb and retain unusual amounts of it, and they may be very comfortable being totally immersed in it.
- - They actually strive to gain an ever-increasing "**thorough knowledge of the Scriptures**". (Acts 18:24)
- - These believers have excellent memory skills - easily, quickly, and accurately memorizing and retaining this spiritual information long-term.
- - They even have an amazing referencing ability - to know where a particular verse, or phrase, or story, or account is located in the Scriptures.
- - They are good at acquiring, organizing, and remembering information in the Scriptures, such as: characteristics and details of various topics and narratives; definitions and descriptions of theological doctrines, words, concepts, commands, and etcetera; distinctive characteristics and facts about cultures and philosophies; constructing time lines of historical events; and etcetera.
- - On a side note: Apparently, up until the point in time when the New Testament of the Bible was completed in written form, God extraordinarily empowered some of His servants with the 'gift of knowledge' that enabled them to instantly and perfectly retain in memory the entirety of everything they saw or heard Jesus or His twelve disciples or His

apostles or select persons do or say or preach or teach, word-for-word exactly perfect, presumably so that this information would be carried forward and precisely written into the New Testament books of the Bible (1 Corinthians 13:8-10; in a manner similar to the dynamic described in 2 Peter 1:20-21). It is plausible that God likewise extraordinarily empowered some of His servants during Old Testament times to instantly and perfectly retain in memory the entire contents of direct revelations that He gave to them, or accounts of certain stories, or specific statements by select persons, so that this information would be carried forward and precisely written into the Old Testament books of the Bible.

-- From the discourse that Jesus spoke to the 'Pharisees' and the 'experts of the law' in Luke 11:37-53, several concepts can be extracted that would pertain to believers with the spiritual 'gift of the message of knowledge':

- - - they do not manipulate the usage of the knowledge of Scriptures to enhance their position and status within the church or ministries; (v.43)

- - - they always possess, and maintain, and promote only an understanding of the Scriptures that correctly aligns with God's perspective and values (rather than their own perspective and values) and properly fits with other relating Scripture verses; (vv.38,42,46)

- - - they personally possess and maintain an inner rightness with God - an inner genuine righteousness that comes from God, that submits to God, and that He delights in; (vv.39,44,52; Romans 10:1-4)

- - - they properly promote and facilitate other people in learning the Scriptures; (v.52)

- - - when confronted about an error that they have in their knowledge of Scriptures, they respond appropriately, re-evaluate all of their Scripture knowledge that pertains to the error, make all of the necessary corrections to their Scripture knowledge, and then humbly accept that they have been corrected - in other words, they remain teachable and correctable, even if they have become an 'expert' in their knowledge of Scriptures. (vv.53,52)

- - By means of this spiritual 'gift of the message of knowledge', these believers minister to people by presenting a message from Scriptures that contains knowledge from the Scriptures that pertains to some topic of discussion or to some situation that is being encountered.

- - The Holy Spirit brings to their recollection a relating Scripture verse or phrase or section of verses, and then prompts them to present a message that highlights that Scripture.

MESSAGE OF WISDOM:

"To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom,..." - 1 Corinthians 12:8

- - The spiritual 'gift of **message of wisdom**' is the Holy Spirit-given special ability to take the facts of biblical knowledge and, with a spiritual understanding of God's will, make a skillful application of the facts and then present that application to the listener(s).

- - While different than accumulating wisdom through experience, the spiritual 'gift of message of wisdom' is Spirit-empowered, focusing on the biblical interpretation of truth to produce biblical solutions for problems or to apply biblical knowledge to spiritual life.

- - This spiritual gift pertains to the regarding and considering of spiritual matters, spiritual issues, or spiritual problems.
- - To draw a distinction between the spiritual 'gift of knowledge' and the spiritual 'gift of wisdom', the believer with the spiritual 'gift of knowledge' readily knows what the information, principles, instructions, and commands are from the Scriptures that pertain to the spiritual problem, whereas the believer with the spiritual 'gift of wisdom' readily knows how to properly and effectively apply that information, principles, instructions, and commands from the Scriptures to the spiritual problem.
- - The emphasis here for this spiritual gift is on the skill of application for obedience rather than the knowledge of facts.
- - The Holy Spirit "enlightens the understanding" of this believer, particularly empowering him/her to know how to apply the Scriptures to spiritual matters, spiritual issues, or spiritual problems - ultimately for spiritual growth of the listener towards spiritual maturity and spiritual productivity. (Zodhiates p.1300, Strong's #4678 - 'wisdom', in 1 Corinthians 12:8)

- - A believer with the spiritual 'gift of message of wisdom' knows how to get to the heart of a spiritual problem quickly, has a practical mind, and is a problem-solver.
- - The empowering of the Holy Spirit produces a natural flow and tendency in this believer's thinking to easily and immediately engage and then complete the mental process that ultimately constructs a plan of implementation for spiritual matters.
- - When detecting or encountering a spiritual problem, thereby, this believer with the spiritual 'gift of message of wisdom' consequently naturally and readily engages in listening, observing, noticing, examining, investigating, inquiring, searching, analyzing, evaluating, reviewing, studying, researching, critiquing, scrutinizing, hypothesizing, contemplating, testing, verifying, learning, formulating, customizing, adapting, and modifying a practical biblical solution or biblical course of action for the spiritual problem.
- - For this believer, all of these elements of this mental process flow easily and naturally - and even sometimes occurring in the middle of the night when the surrounding environment is quiet and dark, with no distractions and better able to be attuned to God.

- - Thus, these believers with the spiritual 'gift of message of wisdom' are very good at drawing out and emphasizing application steps from Scripture phrases, verses, doctrines, narratives, and etcetera for inclusion in Bible lessons, sermons, and 'messages of wisdom'.
- - Their messages always promote godliness, righteousness living, and corresponding doing of good works. (James 2:17; 3:13-18)
- - They will humbly provide godly and wise insights for spiritual problems, they may become known and consulted among their associates, they have little difficulty in making consistently wise decisions, and they can conjecture with a high degree of accuracy what the outcome of those decisions will be.
- - By virtue and result of this 'spiritual gift of wisdom', these believers also know how to pray wisely and thereby effectively.
- - Of course, they put into practice and consistently implement in their own life the various aspects of this spiritual gift, including exercising godly wise self-control and self-restraint in their own thinking, speech, and behavior.

- - Because of these Spirit-given abilities, these believers are really good at being highly effective as biblical counselors to believers and as ministry advisors or consultants to churches or ministries.
 - - Indeed, God has specifically and intentionally gifted, empowered, ordained, and sent these believers to the church Body to present a "**message**" of practical spiritual wisdom for its benefit, and thereby God does **not** intend for these believers to be treated as or told to "Sit down and shut up!!" in church meetings and ministry meetings. Ministry leaders would be wise to accept and even invite input from believers with this spiritual gift rather than view them as a threat.
 - - When a believer with the spiritual 'gift of message of wisdom' speaks and presents a message from this spiritual gift, other members of the church Body should recognize that truth and wisdom have been spoken and that a right and biblical course of action has been recommended.

 - - On a negative note: For the believer whose personality is naturally-oriented towards and is furthermore exceptionally-empowered by this spiritual 'gift of wisdom', this believer consequently essentially instantly initiates analyzing of potentially everything and everyone every day throughout the day - which can easily facilitate and lead this believer into the pitfall of having a critical spirit and/or an "I'm-always-right" attitude.
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TEACHING:

"**...if it is teaching, let him teach;**" - Romans 12:7, (also listed in Ephesians 4:11 and 1 Corinthians 12:28)

- - The spiritual 'gift of **teaching**' can be described as "a Spirit-given ability to simply, compassionately, and searchingly build into the lives of believers a knowledge of God's Word and its application to their thinking, speaking, and conduct, with the goals of conformity to the likeness of Christ" and fostering other believers to one day likewise becoming teachers of the Word. (Graham 215; 2 Timothy 2:2)
- - The teacher passes on truth and established doctrine in a broad and systematic way, explaining the content of God's Word clearly and applying it practically so that the believing listener is fed spiritually. (MacArthur 115; Gangel 75; Putman 1213)
- - While relying on the Holy Spirit, the teacher utilizes preparation, study, learning, and verbal skills to effectively hold the attention of the listeners, transfer to them knowledge and understanding from the Scriptures, persuade them into accepting the information, and motivate them to implement the corresponding course of action. (Hillman 35; Gangel 75)
- - By means of the empowering of this spiritual gift by the Holy Spirit, this believer 'naturally' or readily or automatically knows how to properly and effectively present God's Word in engaging and interesting ways so that it connects with the listeners at their level and within their frame of thinking.

- - Even though the Holy Spirit substantially empowers and facilitates the usage of this spiritual gift, nevertheless there is some responsibility on the part of the believer who has this spiritual gift. (James 3:1)
- - This believer must possess sufficient knowledge of the Scriptures and hold sound doctrines so that he/she is competent to teach the Scriptures. (1 Timothy 1:7; Romans 15:14)

- - This believer must be sufficiently living his/her life in obedience to the Scriptures in order to teach others how to live in obedience to the Scriptures. (Romans 2:17-23)
- - This believer must be successfully applying the Scriptures to his/her life in order to teach others how to successfully apply the Scriptures to their life.
- - This believer must be spiritually mature in order to teach others how to be spiritually mature. (Ephesians 4:11-13)
- - Consequently, the believer with the spiritual 'gift of teaching' must be an authentic good role model of living in obedience to the Scriptures, in order to be acceptable to the Holy Spirit to greatly empower the using of this spiritual gift, and in order for the listeners to be open to the instruction and open to imitating this teaching believer. (1 Thessalonians 1:1,4-7; cf. Hebrews 13:7)

- - One problem that every believer, who teaches the Word of God, needs to be aware of is that **"The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned"**. (1 Corinthians 2:14)
- - By God's deliberate design, unbelievers cannot readily understand and accept teachings from the Scriptures because they view, process, and determine such teachings as being "foolishness, silliness, and absurdity". (Strong's #3472 in 1 Corinthians 2:14)
- - So, the believer, who teaches the Word of God, needs to stay aware that unbelievers in the audience need assistance from the Holy Spirit, time, and excellent thorough explanations of teachings from the Scriptures in order to eventually attain some understanding of those teachings.

- - Another problem that every believer, who teaches the Word of God, needs to stay aware of is that some persons in their audience may be in bondage to sin that the Scriptural teaching relates to, so those persons may react by **"opposing"** and **"quarreling"** about the teaching. (from 2 Timothy 2:24-26)
- - So for this problem also, patience, **"gentle instruction, kindness, not quarrelling"**, and excellent thorough explanations of teachings from the Scriptures need to be exercised by the believer who is teaching the Word of God, waiting for the Spirit of God to work in the hearts of those persons through the Scriptures that are being taught. (from 2 Timothy 2:24-26)

(Repeating) 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?

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