

VICTORIOUS LIFE CHURCH BIBLE STUDY SERIES: DISCOVERING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS- UNLEASHING YOUR POTENTIAL IN THE SPIRIT. PASTOR WILLIAM A. LEE, II

ACTIVATING THE GIFTS IN YOU

Learning our spiritual gift(s) is a fun and powerful thing because we get to discover something about ourselves that we may not have known before. We have discussed the fact that our spiritual gift is something God has chosen specifically for us so that we can help with the advancement of the church on earth by serving and using our special ability. Just discovering our spiritual gift is not the goal and neither is just attaining spiritual gifts. These two things are just the gateway. They are not a hobby to play with—they are tools to build with, weapons to fight with. We will be more effective as we put them to use for God's glory and not our own. So the last step in our journey is putting out gift to use by activating our spiritual gift. There are some things that we need to understand that will help us to understand the importance of and how we can go about activating our gift.

I. Be Aware that *Each Spiritual Gift Has a Special Place in the Body of Christ.* Every gift that God has placed in the body of Christ, the church, is important. Some gifts such as preaching, teaching, and prophesying may seem more important than others such as hospitality or service. But God has given all of these gifts to build up his church. None of these gifts should be looked down upon or treated lightly.

1 Corinthians 12:15-26 New International Version Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of

the body. 16 And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" 22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

Romans 12:4-5

New International Version

4 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, 5 so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

1 Peter 4:10-11 says that each of us should use whatever gift we have received in order to serve others.

11 If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so 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.

1 Corinthians 14:3-4, Paul says that those who prophesy "speak to men for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort;" and that he who prophesies "edifies the church."

Besides strengthening, encouraging, and comforting the body, spiritual gifts, properly used, grow the body. The image isn't of every part of the body doing the same thing (v. 17-19), but every part of the body contributing to the same purpose. In a symphony, everyone plays different instruments, but they are all playing the same piece.

There are several diseases, such as muscular dystrophy, multiple sclerosis, and cerebral palsy that attack the central nervous system and affect the body's ability to communicate with itself. The brain knows what it wants to do, but can't make the body respond. The mouth knows what it wants to say, but can't make the tongue cooperate. Every step is a struggle because the body has lost its coordination. As a result, the body loses its capacity to function the way it is supposed to.

II. Be Aware that Spiritual Gifts Are to Be Used.

It is possible to let a gift go unused. In doing this, however, you disobey God and cheat the church of a blessing. For this reason, we must use those gifts he has given us. In fact, it must be insulting to God for us to demean some gift his Holy Spirit has instilled in our life by saying that it just isn't important enough to use.

Matthew 25:14-30 English Standard Version

14 “For it will be like a man going on a journey, who called his servants^[a] and entrusted to them his property. **15** To one he gave five talents,^[b] to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability. Then he went away. **16** He who had received the five talents went at once and traded with them, and he made five talents more. **17** So also he who had the two talents made two talents more. **18** But he who had received the one talent went and dug in the ground and hid his master's money. **19** Now after a long time the master of those servants came and settled accounts with them. **20** And he who had received the five talents came forward, bringing five talents more, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me five talents; here, I have made five talents more.’ **21** His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant.^[c] You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ **22** And he also who had the two talents came forward, saying, ‘Master, you delivered to me two talents; here, I have made two talents more.’ **23** His master said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful over a little; I will set you over much. Enter into the joy of your master.’ **24** He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, ‘Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, **25** so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.’ **26** But his master answered him, ‘You wicked and slothful servant! You knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed? **27** Then you ought to have invested

my money with the bankers, and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest. 28 So take the talent from him and give it to him who has the ten talents. 29 For to everyone who has will more be given, and he will have an abundance. But from the one who has not, even what he has will be taken away. 30 And cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness. In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

III. Be Willing to Enquire and Experiment

How do we determine which gifts God has given us?

- Ask yourself, when looking at the gifts, do any resonate with me? Perhaps that could be the gift or gifts you have been given.
- You can ask your Christian friends or Spiritual leader which gifts they identify in you—very often they can see what you cannot and can observe which skills God has divinely assigned to you.
- You can pray about it; if we ask God to lead us toward whatever gifts He has given us, he can make it clearer to us.
- Some churches offer spiritual gifts classes to help you discover yours. Ask a leader at your church if this is something they offer.
- You can also take an online spiritual gifts test.

Once you determine which gift or gifts you have, start using them to glorify God. By using your spiritual gifts to volunteer in a ministry or around your church, you are moving the Kingdom of God forward. And that applies no matter how small the job may seem. Find a place to serve (sometimes volunteering is referred to as “serving”) that utilizes at least one of your gifts, and you’ll be amazed at how blessed your time will be. You may notice how easy you find it; God has given you a divine gift that you are inherently good at, and it just comes naturally! You may be surprised at how much you enjoy flexing that new gift muscle too. The best place to start is at your church; ask a leader where volunteers are needed and see what might fit for your gifting. For example, if you have the gift of mercy, a hospital or prison ministry may be the right place

for you. Or if you have the gift of hospitality, greeting new people or setting up for events may be the best fit. The gift of exhortation could make you an amazing addition to a prayer ministry. Remember that your gifts can be used in many different ways, so don't feel like you have to do something just because it looks, on the surface, as if it's perfect for your gifts. If an assignment isn't filling you with joy, find an opportunity that does. Joy is a great indicator of what your gift may be; if a task makes you happy, that's a good sign you've found your skill and fit. Now go and discover what gifts God has given you, and make sure to use those gifts in the Kingdom!

IV. Be Grounded in The Word of God

The word of God is a lamp unto our feet and a light unto our pathway. Psalm 119:105. It is very important to understand that the gifts of the spirit are the outgrowth of a close relationship with the Lord. It is the basis of everything we will do in life and ministry. **It is important to know the word of God if you are to operate in spiritual gifts.** The Bible is our weight and balance. If God tells you to do something or say something, it should always line up with scripture.