

The Gifts of the Spirit

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 17 March 2019

Preacher: Brian King

- [0 : 0 0] Heavenly Father, I just pray now that your Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, would help us so that we would know the truth about your gifts, the gifts of the Spirit that has been given to us, and how we can exercise them, and how we can best use them for your glory.
- So we just pray, Lord, that you help me to be clear, and that you illuminate the minds of all of us, that we might understand what you are saying, and to obey you.
- All this we pray in the name of Jesus. Amen. Today we come to our second last sermon in our series on the Holy Spirit, and I hope you've been enjoying the ride. In our journey so far, firstly, we've looked at the Holy Spirit, and how the Old Testament prepares us for Him.
- And then we thought about how the Spirit and the Word actually go hand in hand together. And then we considered how the Spirit and Jesus relate to one another.
- Then last week, we dealt with what is sometimes called a controversial topic, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. And we saw how that is an initiatory, once-for-all experience, which can be distinguished from the feeling of the Holy Spirit, which is an ongoing thing.
- [1 : 2 3] And today we're going to deal with another topic, which occasionally can also prove controversial, or at the rarely least confusing, the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- Now, I don't think I myself have necessarily sorted out my theology of the gifts down to every single last detail. I'm still learning myself. It can get complicated.
- But I think there need not be discouragement. Because when it comes to the main things, there's actually a remarkable clarity, and even simplicity, on what the Spirit says in His Word about His gifts.
- So this morning, with the Spirit's help, I'll try myself to be as clear and as simple and as true to His Word as I can without ever being simplistic. We'll mainly be anchored in 1 Corinthians 12, verses 1 to 11 today, although occasionally we'll go to other scriptures as well.
- So do make sure that your Bible is open there. There's actually going to be almost nothing on the PowerPoint this morning. It's better to have your Bibles open in front of you. And this morning, let me just give you six truths about the gifts of the Holy Spirit.
- [2 : 3 9] Truth number one, spiritual gifts are sovereignly and graciously given by the one triune God.
- Come with me to 1 Corinthians 12, verses 4 to 6. There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.
- There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone, it is the same God at work.
- Now notice, it's the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit who gives these gifts. Sometimes the phrase spiritual gift could fool us because it makes us think that only the Holy Spirit gives them.
- And yes, He obviously does. In verses 8 to 11, we keep hearing how this gift is given through the Spirit, or that gift is by means of the same Spirit.

[3 : 44] He's clearly the one doing the distributing. But the Father and the Son are not excluded. This is confirmed for us in Ephesians 4, verse 7, where we are told that the Lord Jesus has given gifts to every Christian, and 1 Peter 4, verse 10, where God the Father does the same.

And so the Holy Spirit is executing what the Father and the Son wants to do. These are gifts given by the one triune God.

And that's where the emphasis lies. With the giving, not merely the gifts. This one triune God graciously gives gifts.

Notice in verses 4 to 6, there are actually three different words used for gifts. And they all emphasize the giver. The word gifts in verse 4 is the word charismata.

And the word for grace is actually charis. So you can see that at the root and at the heart of these gifts is grace.

[5 : 00] And that's why in Ephesians 4, verse 7, if you were to look at it, Paul actually calls those gifts charis, grace. You see the same idea in Romans 12, verse 6.

We have different gifts, that's charismata, according to the grace, charis, given to each of us. So whatever gifts we have is actually all the result of God's grace and nothing to do with us.

It's not something that we are entitled to, but granted freely to us. Now, that should be obvious in everyday life, shouldn't it?

Imagine it's Christmas time and you go to a party where you are doing a gift exchange. And so people are opening their gifts one by one from various other people. And so far, people have got one packet of Meggie Mi, or some funny-looking bracelet, or a second-hand comic book.

But then it's your turn, and as you open up your present, out comes a brand-new Samsung Galaxy S10+. Now, after everyone has picked up their jaw from the floor, and they've checked that the guy who was holding the Meggie Mi pocket is okay after he fainted, what is everyone's reaction?

[6 : 27] Well, number one, probably they'll say, lucky you. But number two, their attention now is on whoever gave this Samsung phone. They'll be amazed by the person who gave this gift.

For the gift says something about the giver, that he's exceedingly generous. It doesn't actually say anything about you, the one receiving.

It's all the result of grace. Any gift we possess points back to him, not us.

And the other words used to describe the gifts in verses five and six point back to God as well. In verse five, the gifts are considered kinds of service.

And so we get a hint of what these gifts are meant for. They are for service to the one who gave you these gifts. And then in verse six again, these gifts are actually God himself working in you to fulfill his purposes.

[7 : 38] So these gifts, graciously given by God, are enabled by God for service to God. It's all about the giver.

and he has complete authority over how he distributes these gifts. In verse 11, all these are the work of the one and the same spirit.

And he distributes them to each one just as he determines. It's up to him. He does what he wants.

He blows where he wishes. He gives as he likes. These gifts are sovereignly and graciously given by the triune God.

But who are they for? Well, that takes us to truth number two. Spiritual gifts are for the spiritual, that is, all Christians.

[8 : 37] Spiritual gifts are for the spiritual, that is, all Christians. Now, come back with me to verse one, where Paul starts this section by saying, now, about the gifts of the spirit, or just spiritual gifts if you have the older NIV.

And this is where our English translations hide a little bit what Paul is actually saying. The word gifts, you see there on your page, it's not actually there at all in the original language.

And so, the word charismata we saw in verse four, it's not actually there in verse one. Literally, Paul simply says, now about spiritual things, or spiritual persons.

If you're reading from the ESV version, the footnote makes that clear. And it's a pity that the NIV didn't at least add a footnote. Your English translators say gifts, because they deduce, that's what this section is primarily about.

But it really should read now about spiritual things. So, actually, now that we know how verse one more precisely starts off, and given the context of the whole of one Corinthians, we should understand that although gifts were a major issue, Paul actually has broader concerns in mind.

[10 : 08] you see, all throughout this letter, we've been discovering that the Corinthian Christians were puffed up, because they thought they were really spiritual.

So, for example, earlier in 1 Corinthians chapter 8 verse 1, Paul quotes one of their popular slogans, we all possess knowledge, you can see it right in the middle of the verse.

they were proud, because they thought they knew it all, spiritually speaking. Later on, in 1 Corinthians chapter 12 to 14, the section we're looking at today, we notice that they make a big deal about tongues as a sign of superior spirituality.

And so, Paul is addressing this matter. Before talking about gifts, he wants to make sure we know who are the truly spiritual.

And that matters for our purposes today, since it determines who gets the gifts. And so, in verses 2 and 3, Paul shows the difference between someone who is truly spiritual and someone who is not.

[11 : 21] In verse 2, he describes what the Corinthian Christians used to be like. Even before becoming Christians, they were in one sense spiritual.

After all, they worshipped other gods and other spirits. The problem was, those gods and those spirits were false.

More than that, they were mute and dumb. That's how Paul describes them. You see, these idols in the end can't tell you anything true about the living God.

they cannot communicate right knowledge. In fact, they keep you in the dark. But Paul, verse 1, doesn't want the Christians to be in the dark anymore.

You see, these young Corinthian believers, coming from a pagan background, likely still had many wrong ideas about what true spirituality looked like even after they had converted.

[12 : 27] It would be like someone coming from a Taoist or animistic background, but still bringing their Taoist or animistic ideas into their Christianity. So, for instance, someone like that might equate the Christian pastor with the bombo or the medium in their former religion, thinking that he does exactly the same thing, like making ecstatic utterances or performing sorcery, you know, just in a Christian way, just that you swap the name of Kuan Yin or somebody with Jesus.

See, when we are ignorant, we will have the wrong view of God and his gifts. And if we have the wrong view, we will fall into superstition and delusion.

We would think being spiritual is all about having particular certain abilities. And so Paul corrects them. Verse 3, what being truly spiritual is all about.

The truly spiritual person is simply someone who acknowledges Jesus is Lord over their lives. After all, remember the past few sermons?

If you belong to Christ, you have received the Spirit. If you receive the Spirit, you belong to Christ. In other words, all Christians Christians, by definition, are spiritual.

[13 : 54] They have the Spirit of God within them. Now, of course, Paul isn't saying in verse 3 that if anyone simply says Jesus is Lord, like some sort of magic formula, he's a true Christian.

After all, in Matthew 7, some people were saying precisely that and even declaring that they were doing miracles in Jesus' name. But Jesus tells them, I never knew you.

I was never your Lord. So Paul isn't talking about magic formulas and magic shows. He's simply saying that if your life and your convictions show that Jesus is Lord, that indicates the presence of the Holy Spirit in your lives.

And if your life and convictions show absolutely no sign that Jesus is Lord, well, that indicates the absence of the Holy Spirit.

And here's the key point. No spirit means no gifts. But having the spirit means receiving the gifts. You see, if Jesus is your Lord today, you are guaranteed spiritual gifts.

[15 : 13] Look at verse 7. Now to each one, the manifestation of the Spirit is given. Or down in verse 11, the Spirit distributes gifts to each one, just as he determines.

For all Christians have at least one gift, one charismata from the Spirit. In this sense, all Christians are charismatic. And actually, nowhere in the Bible does it say that you're restricted only to one gift.

The big point is, if Jesus is your Lord, there is no way you have missed out. God has definitely gifted you in some way.

That's a promise. Well, isn't that encouraging? If you've recently become a Christian, well, you have gifts. Even if the world tells you that you are nobody, if you're a Christian, you have gifts.

Spiritual gifts are for the truly spiritual, and that's all Christians. And that brings us to truth number three.

[16 : 28] Spiritual gifts are diverse, not limited. If you were to walk into one of those big Mr. DIY stores today, what would you see?

You would see drills, screw drivers, hammers. You would find hooks, cutlery, car chargers, and even a counterfeit money detector.

They all have different functions. But if you're embarking on a major construction or home improvement project, you'll probably appreciate the wide range of tools needed.

And that's the point being made by Paul here. In verses four to six, he keeps stressing that there are different gifts. He wants to point out the great diversity that we will find.

And that's why also later on in verses 28 to 30, he asks, are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?

[17 : 32] Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? The answer is no. Because different Christians will have different gifts.

For God has an abundance of gifts to give away. In the New Testament, there are four or five places where we find a list of spiritual gifts. In 1 Corinthians chapter 12, we have two lists already in verses 8 to 10 and verses 28 to 30.

There are a couple more lists in Romans chapter 12 verse 6 to 8. 1 Peter 4 verse 10 to 11 and Ephesians 4 verse 11. Sorry, I forgot to put the references on your hand now.

But when we examine those lists, we notice that none of them are the same. There is some overlap, but there would be some in one list that is not in the other.

And so that tells us that these lists are representative, not exhaustive. In other words, this is probably not a master list of all the gifts that God could possibly give.

[18 : 48] These are just examples of the great diversity of gifts God could give. Paul could have easily added the gift of marriage counseling or technological expertise or something like that as well.

And indeed, one of the things we notice when we take those lists as a whole is that God freely mixes gifts that we might call miraculous or supernatural with those we might call natural or ordinary, although I'm not a huge fan of the distinction.

salvation. And so we have gifts of healing and tongues and so on, but we also have service and giving and encouragement and the showing of mercy.

All of them are charismata. All of them poor cause gifts. And actually, when we look elsewhere in the New Testament, even the gift of salvation, for instance, in Romans chapter 5, verse 15 to 16, is called charismata.

Paul calls God delivering him from a deadly situation in 2 Corinthians chapter 1, verse 11, a charismata. And so that means we shouldn't take spiritual gift in a narrow sense, when it is used so broadly, simply to refer to God's free grace shown to us.

[20 : 24] And I think this also means that we shouldn't overplay the differences between spiritual gifts and the natural talents that God has given us, as if the two have nothing to do with one another.

And this brings us to truth number four. spiritual gifts don't make us superior or inferior. Did you notice that all of God's gifts are needed?

Having a different spiritual gift doesn't mean that we are better or worse. That's the point of the rest of 1 Corinthians chapter 12 that we didn't read.

Look at verse 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?

If everyone had the same gifts as me, well, the church would be so poor. There would be no music and no nice flyers and no facilities that work and so on.

[21 : 33] I would be pretty rubbish at all those things. Well, if everyone had the same gifts as our treasurer James Ling, the church would probably be a bit richer because he has multiple talents, but still it would miss out.

That's why verse 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.

And in verse 18, in fact, God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.

And so that means, as the pastor Graham Bean and so helpfully puts it, we must not make any one gift the calling card of the Holy Spirit.

That was the mistake of the Corinthian Christians. They thought tongues was the gift. If you didn't have tongues, the Holy Spirit has them blessed you.

[22 : 38] And so they became proud. Well, maybe for us today, it might not be tongues in particular, but something else. Perhaps we say if you have no gift of healing, or you're not moving in the prophetic, the Holy Spirit somehow overlook you.

Perhaps we say that, oh, if this particular gift is in operation, well, God is really working. But if it isn't, then God isn't working. But that's not biblical thinking.

In fact, if we think like that, we are actually limiting God, as if he doesn't work behind the scenes, but only through spectacular happenings. And this isn't an issue just for so-called charismatic churches.

Well, it's also a danger for the evangelical church. Many evangelical churches rightly value the gift of Bible teaching. But we could also so make it the gift that other gifts are not appreciated.

And so the Bible study leader is complimented, but not the person helping in making the refreshments. But everybody is needed. This past week, we just had our CEP preaching workshop.

[23 : 58] And yes, the gift of teaching was exercised there. But if Catherine and her team had not exercised their gift of administration or helping, well, there would be no workshop in the first place.

And in a church this size, well, it's impossible for the pastor to know and attend to everyone in the same way, isn't it? And that's why I'm grateful for people like Roland, who exercise their gift of encouragement as he does when he makes pastoral visitations.

And so many other gifts are being exercised from those who build and maintain the church website, to those who helped sell our devotionals recently, to those who make special effort to open up their homes and be hospitable to others.

They are all needed and they are all appreciated. So we must not be proud and devalue these gifts.

On the other hand, we must not devalue our gifts either. Sometimes the problem is not that we feel superior, but that we feel inferior.

[25 : 09] But actually that's a kind of pride too. If you think, I don't have any gifts, or any valuable gifts to offer, you are actually saying God made a mistake.

You're saying that you know better than God. That's pride. So don't reject what God has done in your life and what God has given you by putting yourself down.

God says every contribution matters. If you're feeling inferior about your role in the body, well, your feelings are actually off track.

And you should ask the Spirit through the scriptures to recalibrate them. And we should never cause anyone to feel inferior. We do that especially when we constantly complain.

So instead, why not look for ways today to say thank you to people exercising their gifts? Say thank you to the projectionist today. Say thank you to the librarian today.

[26 : 14] Say thank you to our church administrator today. After all, remember last week from Ephesians chapter 5 that a mark of the Spirit filled church is thanksgiving to God?

And we thank him as we thank members of his body. For what is the purpose of gifts? It's not to make ourselves look good.

We now come to truth number five. Spiritual gifts are for the edification of the church. Well, let's look at verse 7 again.

Now, to each one, the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. In 1 Peter chapter 4 verse 10, Peter says that the gifts are there to serve one another.

As I heard one pastor say, we are all public servants when we become Christians. We're all here to build the congregation.

[27 : 17] We're all here to help each other grow in maturity. Well, that's the key principle. And that's why later on in 1 Corinthians chapter 14, Paul has an extended section where he basically shows that contrary to what the Corinthians taught, the gift of tongues was actually not that fantastic because when left uninterpreted, it couldn't edify the church because no one can understand them.

If someone stood up this morning and praised God and encouraged us with Bible truths in Swahili, well, none of us would benefit because none of us understand the language.

And therefore, none of us would be edified. Well, that's the principle. So whatever God has given you and I is for the good of each other in the church.

You might be good at administration or leadership or whatever, but it only really becomes a gift when it's being used to serve the body of Christ.

And it's often that God would use what you are already naturally good at for the good of the church. So right now, if you are asking, well, pastor, how can I find out what my gift is?

[28 : 46] Well, I would suggest why not start with another question first. How can I serve? How can I best build up the church?

church? When I took my first steps into full-time ministry, one of the most helpful things I heard about how to tell whether that was right for me or not was this statement is also on your outline.

The gifts of Christ are discerned by the body of Christ as they are used by the servants of Christ. Let me repeat that again. The gifts of Christ are discerned by the body of Christ as they are used by the servants of Christ.

So as I got opportunities to teach the Bible to children, to international students, to elderly folk, it would become apparent over time whether God has gifted me in that way or not.

And I think it's the same more broadly speaking. As you get serving and thinking about how to edify the church, while you will soon find out what you are good at and what you are not so good at, especially if others offer you loving feedback.

[30 : 00] Well, that's the best way to find out how the Spirit has gifted you. And that means we still serve even when the fit is sometimes not quite there.

At a church plant I was once involved in, there was one Sunday where I had to step in last minute to lead some of the singing because quite simply there was no one else who could. So I'm clearly not the best singer and I wouldn't want to be the regular song leader.

But at that point, the best way to build up the congregation was actually for me to do it in that situation. So if God has given you gifts, are you looking to use it to find out, get serving?

The AV team needs people, the ushers need people, the kids club needs people. Why not ask and serve? But here's another question.

With those gifts, are you using it for the good of others? Are you playing the guitar to show off or to help others sing praises? Are you ushering simply because you've been rostered on, or because you want to make sure the body of Christ is being welcoming, whether to Christians or non-Christians?

[31 : 23] Have you prepared well for the Bible study or Sunday school lesson that you're about to lead? Because your preparation would serve others. Or are you simply turning up and flying blind?

Spiritual gifts are there so that we can be a community of truth and love and grow disciples. Well, is that your goal when you serve others with your gifts?

Our gifts are given so that we might be gifts to others. Now, just before we move on to our last truth, some of you are probably a bit frustrated at this point because throughout this talk, we've been covering things like the purpose of the gifts, the source of these gifts, even the extent of these gifts.

gifts. But we haven't actually defined some of these gifts like those found in 1 Corinthians 12 8-10. Well, that's been somewhat deliberate because it's really, really important to get the main things in place first rather than getting too quickly sidetracked into debates.

But also, it's because Paul himself is the one who is frustrating you, not me, because he doesn't give us nice definitions of every gift.

[32 : 48] If he did, there wouldn't be any debate in the first place over what they are. Now, rather than try to endlessly pour over the definition of each and every gift here, I'm going to do something a little bit different, which I think would be a bit more fruitful.

I'm just going to pick the first two gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12 8-10, and then I will try to model briefly how I worked out what those gifts might be, so that you can see my working and you can learn for yourself about how to do it.

And I'll very briefly touch on prophecy too, since that often comes up for discussion. And then we will finish off with our final truth for today. So let's look at the first two on this list in verse 8.

A message, or literally word of wisdom. And a word of knowledge. Commonly, it's been taught that the first one, a word of wisdom, is something along the lines of a word that is particularly filled with practical and pastoral insight.

Whereas the second one, the word of knowledge, is like a supernatural understanding given by God of another person's sin or struggle. I'm sure some of you have heard that before. that's how I use the thing.

[34 : 12] But I've now changed my mind, or at least I've refined my understanding. You see, when we consider the context of 1 Corinthians, in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verses 20 to 25, Paul explicitly identifies the message of Christ crucified as a word of wisdom that is preached to the world.

in 1 Corinthians chapter 1 verse 30, Jesus is described as the wisdom of God. In 1 Corinthians chapter 2 verses 6 to 7, Paul talks about declaring a message of wisdom, which is once again clearly the gospel in that context.

In 1 Corinthians chapter 3 verse 18 to 21, Paul calls the wisdom of this age foolishness and points people back to the gospel as spelling the end of human pride, implying that the gospel is true wisdom.

And so it seems to me that the gift of the word of wisdom is not mere practical insight, but more specifically, it's the teaching and application of the gospel in such a way that it clearly exposes wrong and worldly ways of thinking that is consistent with the rest of one Corinthians.

So if you have ever seen how Tim Keller, the well-known pastor, does apologetics in the context of his setting in secular New York City, well I think he's probably exercising the gift of the word of wisdom there, as he skillfully shows how the wisdom of God, the gospel, exposes the foolishness of the world.

[36 : 03] What about the second one? Again, looking at the whole of 1 Corinthians, knowledge often has to do with understanding the mind of the Lord and what his will is.

So for instance, we find that in 1 Corinthians 2 and 6, if you track all the instances no or knowledge is mentioned. Elsewhere in post letters, knowledge is often to do with knowing God or knowing Jesus and his will.

So for example, in Ephesians 1, 17, Paul explicitly links knowing God better with the spirit of wisdom.

And so notice in that context, wisdom and knowledge also go together like here in 12, 8. And then in Ephesians 4, 13, knowing Jesus is also linked with a list of spiritual gifts and the building up of God's people, which is exactly the same context as in 1 Corinthians chapter 12.

And yesterday actually in the focus Bible study, I noticed that in Colossians 1, there was another similar kind of dynamic going on. And so the word of knowledge seems to be about teaching or at least words that help people know Jesus and understand his will better.

[37 : 23] So perhaps the sister in Christ is chatting with you and she says something especially appropriate or especially insightful that makes a light bulb go off in your head that advances your knowledge of God or his will more.

Well perhaps she's exercised the gift of the word of knowledge there. Well have you ever had that experience? I certainly have. Now you might not entirely agree with me and that's fine but I want you to see that I didn't arrive at those definitions by simply plucking them out of thin air and reading them into the text.

I did it but what I think is a responsible interpretation as I take seriously the words of the spirit himself in the Bible and consider things like the context of the three camps the first camp is called the cessationist camp which holds that the miraculous gifts are no longer around today including prophecy they have ceased now that is not the same as saying that they don't believe there are any miracles today which is how they are sometimes misunderstood so the people who best represent this camp include

Richard Geffin and Thomas Schreiner whose book on spiritual gifts I just read earlier this year so Schreiner's book is the place to go to if you want a clear and well thought out argument for this position then there is what is called the non cessationist camp which holds that the gift of prophecy is still around today but it must never supersede the authority of scripture and must be exercised in line with scripture and under scripture now there's quite a broad spectrum within this camp some people who hold this position would call themselves charismatics others wouldn't and they have some minor differences among them as well so two big names who are good representatives of this camp are Wayne Grudem and John Piper then there is one more group and the best term that I could come up for them is hyper charismatics so these are those who advocate for prophecies and signs and wonders in a way that undermines scripture so Bill Johnson is a modern day name that falls into this category and let me just state clearly as a shepherd responsible for this flock that this third group should not be listened to they might be popular but they are false teachers so very briefly

I think there is room for charitable disagreement good godly Christians can hold cessationist or non cessationist views and indeed Tom Schreiner dedicated his book to Grudem and Piper who are the non cessationist but for me personally I am in the second camp a non cessationist well as far as I can tell there is not a convincing enough reason to think that prophecy in its entirety has ceased but the key thing to observe is that the New Testament gift of prophecy that continues today is not the authoritative kind that you'll find in the Old Testament so in the Old Testament it's common to find prophecy which if disobeyed is equivalent to disobeying the Lord because the prophet was speaking God's direct but in the New Testament for instance in 1 Corinthians chapter 14 verse 29 we read this two or three prophets should speak and the other should weigh carefully what is said similarly in 1

[41 : 40] Thessalonians chapter 5 verse 21 we are told to test prophecy and so that clearly tells us that the latter is not the same as the former it has to be tested and weak and can be wrong unlike the direct words of God and I don't have time to show this but it's helpful to think of New Testament prophecy in very broad terms to include words of edification of praise maybe even what we said is commonly thought to be a word of knowledge earlier on that is an impression that God might be leading someone to speak to someone or into that particular situation and it's for edification and comfort as 1 Corinthians chapter 14 verse 3 says and I think that generally speaking it's always connected even if indirectly with the gospel so not everything people claim to be prophecy is prophecy in the

New Testament sense and indeed if people claim to prophesy in the Old Testament authoritative way of thus says the Lord well be very careful obviously that's so short and probably inadequate but if you have more questions I'm very happy to chat with you but I think in the end we shouldn't worry too much about the definitions and get on with serving and encouraging and edifying and speaking the truth in love to one another you see as we do that we might actually be prophesying without realizing it you see the labels don't matter too much the point is let's get on with serving one another for what really matters is the final truth that we will end with today truth number seven spiritual gifts must have love at its heart well that's the entire point of the chapter that follows 1 corinthians chapter 12 and it comes right in the middle of 1 corinthians 12 and 14 which is about the gifts and what does

Paul say well let me read from verse 1 if I speak in the tongues of men or angels but do not have love I am only a resounding gong if I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge and if I have a faith that can move mountains but do not have love I am nothing if I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast but do not have love I gain nothing gifts without love is entirely pointless if we were to go to Romans chapter 12 verse 3 to 10 which we read this morning we will notice a similar logic Paul talks about spiritual gifts in verses 3 to 8 but then he also ends with these words in verses 9 and 10 love must be sincere hate what is evil cling to what is good be devoted to one another in love that's the whole point so my brothers and sisters let's love one another by exercising the gifts that

God has graciously given us for the good of each other let's pray for the praise you again that you have given so much to us that you have given us the greatest gift the Lord Jesus but also that you have blessed us with different spiritual gifts for your glory and for the good of your body and that and S