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Non-Sensational Gifts



Charisma and Character - Steve Gregg

In his discussion, Steve Gregg explores the idea of spiritual gifts and highlights the importance of non-sensational gifts such as teaching and serving. He emphasizes that while there are various gifts listed in 1 Corinthians 12, not all are mentioned elsewhere in the scripture. He underscores the significance of each person's unique contribution to the church and emphasizes the need for individual study and examination of the Scriptures. Additionally, he highlights the importance of leadership roles such as shepherding and serving in the church.

Transcript

We've been quite a while working on a series of lectures called Charisma and Character, the Normative Working of the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Believer. A long title and a long series, so far anyway. We've taken the entire series up to this point, after a few introductory things, looking at the charismata, the gifts of the Spirit.

And we've tried not to go any beyond what the scripture says. That is, we have not tried to exclude gifts where the scriptures do not exclude them, and we have not tried to emphasize gifts that the scriptures do not emphasize. And by taking a middle ground, we've probably managed to offend both those who don't believe in the gifts at all and those who believe that they should be emphasized more.

And that's what happens often when you take an approach trying to just say only what scripture says and go no further. There are a number of gifts, and this will be our last lecture on gifts. We're going to talk in the weeks following about the fruit of the Spirit.

But there are a number of gifts that we have not had occasion to talk about. We've spent most of our time talking about those gifts that the Bible had most to say about. Not surprisingly, since we're trying to limit ourselves to only say as much as the scripture says, it should be obvious that those gifts that the Bible speaks the most about are the ones that we took the longest to explore.

The ones, however, that the scripture speaks most about are not necessarily the ones that are the most important. One reason, for example, that the scripture speaks more

about the gift of tongues than about most gifts is because of the abuse of it in the Church of Corinth. And it's not so much that Paul wanted there to be proportionate importance laid upon that gift, proportionate to the amount of time he spent talking about it.

But actually, there may have been already too much stress laid upon that gift in the Church of Corinth, and Paul was trying to bring some order. But in so doing, he said quite a bit, and we've tried to look at all the things he said. In Romans chapter 12, which is where I'd like you to look right now, we have a list of gifts of the Spirit that we have not really talked about in our series.

We have now talked about all the nine gifts that are listed in 1 Corinthians 12, verses 8 through 10. That's just one of the two lists of gifts found in 1 Corinthians 12. But it's the best known.

Most people, when they think of the gifts of the Spirit, probably think of 1 Corinthians 12, verses 8 through 10, where we have nine gifts listed, which are the word of knowledge, the word of wisdom and faith and the working of miracles and healings and prophecy and discerning of spirits and tongues and interpretation of tongues. These, perhaps, are the most sensational gifts, because most of them are seemingly of a supernatural nature. There is another list of gifts, though.

Actually, there's more than one, but we haven't done much with the list that's found in Romans 12, which is the next longest listing of gifts, I think. And in Romans 12, verses 4 through 8, I'd like to read these verses. For as we have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function, so we, being many, are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.

Having, then, gifts, differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them. If prophecy let us prophesy in proportion to our faith or ministry, let us use it in our ministry. Or, he who teaches in teaching, he who exhorts in exhortation, he who gives with liberality or generosity, he who leads with diligence, he who shows mercy with cheerfulness.

Now, the word gifts, in verse 6, having, then, gifts, that word in the Greek is *charismata*. It's the same word that's used in 1 Corinthians 12 to speak of gifts of the Holy Spirit. And, therefore, we have here another list like that list in 1 Corinthians 12, but not very much like it, because the list is different in its contents.

The entries on the list are different than those in 1 Corinthians 12, with one exception, and that is that both lists have the gift of prophecy. It is the first one mentioned in this list, and it's somewhat further down in the list in 1 Corinthians 12. But, apart from prophesying, there are six gifts listed in Romans 12 that are not found in the list that is better known in 1 Corinthians 12, verses 8 through 10.

They are the gift of ministry, the gift of teaching, the gift of exhortation, the gift of giving, the gift of leading, and the gift of showing mercy. Now, before we talk about these individually, I'd like to look at a couple of other lists of gifts in the New Testament, which overlap both the earlier 1 Corinthians list and the Romans list. And there is another list at the end of 1 Corinthians 12.

I'd like us to look there, in almost the closing verses of 1 Corinthians 12. I'd like to begin reading at verse 27. Paul says, Now you are the body of Christ and members individually, and God has appointed these in the church, first, apostles, second, prophets, third, teachers, after that, miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, varieties of tongues.

Are all apostles, are all prophets, are all teachers, are all workers of miracles, do all have gifts of healings, do all speak with tongues, do all interpret, but earnestly desire the best gifts, and yet I show to you a more excellent way. Now, this list is not exactly like the list that is earlier in the same chapter, which gives us the impression that none of the lists are intended to be comprehensive, total listings of all the gifts. It is my suspicion that it would be impossible to make a list of all the gifts, because there are probably far more than we could even identify.

There are so many diversities. Paul compares the various gifts to various members of a body. And if I were to talk about the members of my body and its functions, I might speak of my hand, but I could even divide that into separate functions.

The function of my thumb is different than the function of the palm of my hand, and it's even different than that of any of my individual fingers. And so, in the body of Christ, I think that there are people whose gifts would overlap, whose gifts would be broader, and some whose gifts are narrower, and some of them would duplicate a little bit. Some would overlap, some would be entirely separate from what others do.

I don't know that it would be really possible to list all the gifts. As I mentioned, I think, in an earlier lecture, we don't ever find in the Scripture, for example, a musical gift mentioned among the gifts of the Spirit, a gift of music, ministry, or anything like that, although we certainly have known people who have gifts like that. And I don't think that the New Testament lists any of them are intended to be comprehensive.

And if none of them are individually comprehensive, I don't think even combined they are intended to be comprehensive. They overlap one another, but each one has its own distinctive entries on the list. You will perhaps notice that the list we just read near the end of 1 Corinthians 12 has some of the gifts that are found in the earlier 1 Corinthians 12 list and some of the ones that are found in the Romans 12 list.

For example, prophets are in both lists, or all three lists, actually. Teachers are not found in the earlier list in 1 Corinthians, but they are found in the Romans list. Then you've got

miracles and gifts of healings, which are found in the earlier list in 1 Corinthians, but not in Romans.

Then you've got helps and administrations. Now, we haven't encountered those words in any of the lists so far. However, I'm going to contend as we go along here and look at these individually, that helps is nothing else but another way of speaking about the gift of ministry, which is mentioned in Romans 12, but not in the earlier 1 Corinthians 12 list.

Helps and ministry, I would say, are the same gift, and I'll tell you why in a few moments. Likewise, administrations, which is in this list we just read, is not found in those terms anywhere else. In fact, the word administrations here is a Greek word that's not found anywhere else in the New Testament.

But the word is found in other Greek literature, that is, secular Greek literature of the period that the New Testament was written in, and that word means the person who steers a ship, a pilot of a ship, a helmsman. And therefore, since there is a gift in Romans 12 called leading, presumably meaning leading people, leading the church, being leaders in the church, this is probably the same gifting that Paul has in mind when he talks about the helmsman or the person who steers, because the leaders generally do steer. I mean, I'm going to proceed on the assumption that this is the same thing.

And then, of course, the last gifts mentioned in the list we just read are tongues and interpretation, which are found in the earlier 1 Corinthians list but not in the Romans list. So this latter list at the end of 1 Corinthians 12 mixes and matches gifts from the list in Romans 12 and from the earlier list in that same chapter. Then we have one other list we need to take a look at, and that is in Ephesians 4. Now, this passage, Ephesians 4, verses 8, I think, through 13, doesn't actually have the word charismata or charisma in it.

It has another word, another Greek word for gifts, but it's quite obvious that Paul uses this other Greek word interchangeably with charismata because we find that the list contains some of the same gifts that he called charismata or charismatic gifts in the earlier list. In Ephesians 4, starting at verse, well, 7, But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. That is not charisma.

That's another Greek word there. Therefore, he says, when he ascended on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts to men. Again, not charismata.

Now, let's skip over the long parenthesis in verse 9 and 10 and down to verse 11. And he himself gave some, these are some of the gifts he gave, to the apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. We could read further because the sentence doesn't end there, but Paul's sentences go on and on.

And I think we've read the part we need for what we want to make right now. You'll notice that he mentions apostles and prophets in this list, which also headed up the list at the end of 1 Corinthians 12. So we know there's overlap of this list and some of the previous list.

Furthermore, he mentions the gift of teaching. He says pastors and teachers here. Well, we've had the gift of teaching mentioned both in the Romans 12 list and the later 1 Corinthians 12 list, but not in the earlier 1 Corinthians 12 list.

So we've got this one overlapping as well. In Ephesians, however, we have evangelists and pastors mentioned as well. These two are not found elsewhere in the lists.

So we have something distinctive in each list, something that's not found in the others. Now, I'm going to contend in the discussion that follows that evangelists are not really a different gift than what in Romans 12 was referred to as the gift of showing mercy. And I've had a change of mind about what the gift of showing mercy is as recently as this afternoon.

Because I was working from the English translation alone in the past, I know what mercy is in the Bible. In the story of the Good Samaritan, we read of a man who found a beat up victim of criminals and of looters and muggers, I guess we'd say. And this man met the man's needs, helped promote healing of his wounds, transported him to a place where he could receive care and paid for his care.

And at the end of the story, Jesus said to his listeners, who was a neighbor to the man who fell among thieves? And the answer was he who had mercy on him. Obviously, in that case, mercy refers to showing some practical, compassionate concern in doing something for a person who's in need. I have for many years thought that the gift of showing mercy, because the word mercy has that meaning in the New Testament frequently, was perhaps the gift of helping out people in need, perhaps what we might call a gift of hospitality.

By the way, gift of hospitality is another gift that's not mentioned anywhere in Scripture, not by that name. And yet, I think everyone has known people who they would say have a gift of hospitality. Now, the Bible indicates that everyone should be hospitable.

In fact, it says be careful to entertain strangers, because some have accidentally or inadvertently entertained angels by doing so, and that's supposed to be an incentive for us to invite strangers in and show hospitality. Christians ought to be hospitable. And to invite somebody in your car who's out in the weather trying to get a ride, or somebody who's homeless or whatever, to find some way for them to come in out of the rain, or even just to welcome in people into your home and have them feel instantly that they are at home, and that they're not an intrusion, is something that I think Christians should work at, should consider their duty to do in measure.

We can't help every person we see, but we should be so disposed. But the important thing is that I was mistaken until this afternoon as to what the gift of showing mercy was, because I hadn't looked up the Greek word until today. And I have come to see that the Greek word that is used here, showing mercy, is used many times in the New Testament, always with reference to extending God's mercy to sinners.

And to my mind, that seems to correlate with the gift of an evangelist that Ephesians 4 mentions, the person who extends God's mercy to sinners, who brings people to Christ and to the mercy of God. And therefore, I'm going to consider in this discussion that evangelists mentioned in Ephesians 4 don't have any separate gift than that which was mentioned in Romans 12, is showing mercy. Now, pastors are mentioned in Ephesians 4 also, and those have not appeared under that name anywhere in a previous list.

However, I'm going to suggest, and I'll tell you why a little later, that pastors are not really a different gift either than the gift of leading, which Romans 12 used, and of administrations, which was found in 1 Corinthians 12. Now, I've drawn all the neat little lines and boxes on the handout I gave you, so you can see instantly what I just said at a glance. And now maybe you can make some sense, because I've said this to all those chicken scratches on the page.

But as you can see, there's tremendous overlap, although some of these gifts, I mean, they have different ways of being spoken of. There's different ways to label them. Now, one thing that you will notice about virtually all the gifts that we're talking about tonight, which are ministry, teaching, exhortation, giving, leading, and showing mercy, is that none of them share the sensational, supernatural character of some of the gifts mentioned, for example, in the earlier list in 1 Corinthians 12, like working miracles, or healings, or prophecy, or tongues, or interpretation of tongues.

And while I believe in those gifts, I believe that there's perhaps even more people gifted with these less sensational gifts than there are with the more sensational gifts. Just because there's a longer list in 1 Corinthians 12 than this list, doesn't in any way indicate to us the proportioning of these gifts among the members of the body of Christ. For example, the gift of giving is a gift of actually giving financial assistance.

As we study this a little later tonight, we'll see that that has to do with giving financial assistance to the poor, but also to ministers, to those who are doing the work of God. Now, in biblical times, ministers didn't charge. Jesus said, freely you've received, freely give.

They felt it would be wrong for them to charge money. Now, they did receive money. Most of them, Paul says in 1 Corinthians 9, with the exception of Paul and Barnabas, most of them received freewill gifts in support of their ministry from people who had a gift of giving or who simply gave.

But they didn't charge. And because they didn't charge, they were dependent, most of them, except for Paul and Barnabas, who worked and supported themselves. And Paul said he and Barnabas were exceptional in that respect.

He indicates that he and Barnabas may have been the only apostles of whom this could be said. In 1 Corinthians 9, he discusses that. But most of the ministers of the gospel needed support.

Now, in the Old Testament, there was about approximately a tenth of the Jewish population who needed support. They were the Levites. They had no land to farm.

They had no business to conduct except the business of the temple or, before that, of the tabernacle. And because they were in full-time ministry, the rest of Israel had to support them. But you might recall the tithe was instituted to support the Levites.

And because the Levites were approximately a tenth of the population and had to be supported, well, exactly one-tenth of the rest of Israel's income was given to them. Now, frankly, it seems to me that in the body of Christ, the proportion of those who are preachers and full-time ministers is even smaller in comparison to those who are in ordinary vocations, called of God to be in ordinary vocations. I think most people are called to be in jobs, in regular jobs, with regular families and homes and so forth.

I don't think that the majority of Christians are called to go out full-time as missionaries or to be preachers. In that, I may be on a different wavelength than some people who think that probably everyone should go out and preach. But I don't read that in the Bible.

My impression is, for example, from the Church of Antioch, which sent out the most missionaries we know of to the Gentile world, we know of them sending out three altogether. We know of them having five leaders in the Church in Antioch. In Acts 13, it tells us their names were five of them, and they were prophets and teachers.

Now, eventually there may have been more, but I think we are to assume that there was a pretty small number of full-time ministers in proportion to the Church itself at large. And therefore, if in Israel they needed a tenth of the income of 90% of the population to support the other 10%, and if indeed it may be correct to say there are fewer ministers per capita full-time in the body of Christ, then it's not so much that the Church should give more than 10% to support them, but a larger number of people should be giving a portion in order to support them, it would seem, in order that they might be able to conduct their ministry without distraction. Now, therefore, I would suggest, even if it was the same proportion as Israel had, that you'd take ten people working ordinary jobs to support one guy in full-time ministry, which would mean there'd be ten times as many people with the gift of giving than with the gift of preaching or teaching or doing something like that.

Now, I only say that to illustrate that just because we have a certain number of gifts of a certain kind in the lists, it does not necessarily give us any idea what proportion of the body has this gift or that gift or another gift. I am of the impression that probably a disproportionately large number of persons in the body of Christ have the gift of giving and of helps. And I'll tell you why as we get to look at these gifts in particular and what they are.

Although, of course, a person who operates in those areas may also have another gift as well. But there are two areas or two categories of gifts, and these are mentioned by Peter in 1 Peter 4, verses 10 and 11. Now, this is not a list of gifts of the Spirit, which is why we haven't given it as a separate list, but it is more of a general statement about gifts encompassing them all.

And Peter says in 1 Peter 4, verses 10 and 11, As each one has received a gift, this word is charisma, a spiritual gift, a gift of grace. As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God.

If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. Now, you may have noticed that Peter mentions everybody's gift, and then he mentions two categories of gifts, speaking and ministering. Now, in our modern English, we use the word minister sometimes synonymously with a pastor of a church.

That is something we need to get over if we're going to understand the Scripture properly. The word minister is an older English word. It's identical with servant, someone who serves.

The gift of ministry, for example, mentioned in Romans chapter 12, is not a gift of pastoring a church. It is the gift of serving. It's like the gift of help.

And that is simply the meaning of the word. And you may wish to look it up in the Greek if you'd like to, to confirm that. You will be able to confirm it if you do so.

But you might as well be aware that when you read the word minister or ministry, it's very different in meaning than what we in our culture have come to use the term to mean. Because the man who goes into the ministry in our culture is the man who's going into full-time preaching, probably. And biblically, ministry just is a generic word for service or servant.

Now, Peter says, if anyone speaks, and if anyone ministers or serves, and I believe that in this statement, Peter means to encompass all the gifts. There are two categories. Those which have to do with speaking, and those that have to do with serving or doing something practical.

Now, these two categories correspond to the two kinds of needs in the body of Christ. The body of Christ, being made up of humans who are in physical bodies, has certain physical needs. But because we're born again and we're spiritual beings and we have a life in the spirit and we're seeking to be edified in the spirit and to be growing in the spirit and so forth, the body also has spiritual needs.

And God has provided for the meeting of all the needs, physical and spiritual, through these two categories of gifts. Gifts of ministry, which minister or serve the physical needs of the body of Christ, and speaking gifts, which would include a whole lot of them. I mean, if we take the combined lists that we've already looked at, that would include prophecy and teaching and evangelism and exhortation, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, tongues and interpretation.

These are all gifts that have to do with speaking something. And all of them are intended to minister to the spiritual edification of the church. But the gift of helps, the gift of giving, especially those two, more than most.

And the gift of leading also, although leading involves a fair bit of talking as well, speaking. But these are something you do. These are something that is done for, well, especially giving, is giving financially to the physical needs of persons who have need.

Helps has to do with practical service, as we shall see when we look more carefully at it. We're going to look at each of these. But in the gifts that we have not covered thus far, those that are not found in 1 Corinthians 12, verses 8 through 10, there are seven, well, there's six gifts.

The list in Romans 12 has seven gifts, but one of them overlaps the other list, and that is prophesying. But the rest of them in the list, the other six, are new that we need to talk about. And two of them fall in the category of if anyone speaks.

That would be teaching and exhortation. And you know what? I should have put showing mercy there, too, but I made this handout before I really looked that up in the Greek and changed my opinion on that. So showing mercy actually belongs in that category also, if showing mercy is in fact the gift of an evangelist, as I suggested earlier.

So there would be actually three of these gifts in each category. The speaking gifts would have to do with evangelism or showing mercy, teaching and exhortation. And the ministry or helping gifts would be ministry or helps, giving and leading or administration.

So I've put them on the handout in that arrangement. As I mentioned, the second box there in or whatever it is, chart on your handout, showing mercy, which is at the bottom of the second box, should actually be at the bottom of the first box, I think now. So we'll just have to note that correction.

Now, I want to talk about each of these, but not in detail. Certainly the first one, the gift

of teaching, is one I like to talk for a long time about. Partly because, to tell you the truth, it's the gift that I've been involved in as long as I've been in the ministry.

And I don't have much of any other gifts. I don't have a gift in I've never prophesied. I haven't observed a gift of working miracles or healings in my ministry.

I don't know, maybe exhortation would be in there, but I don't think it's the principal thing. I think if I were to identify the gift that I operate in, it would be the gift of teaching. And therefore, I have a lot of ideas.

I have a lot of experiences. I have done a lot of thinking about the subject of teaching. But I can't give as exhaustive a treatment of it here as I'd like.

In fact, years ago, I was teaching a group of teachers and had a teacher training class. And we had many, many lectures on the subject of teaching. But we'll just take an overview of these tonight so we can finish up quickly on this last list of gifts.

I'd like to say, before we look at them individually, that, as I said, these are not very sensational gifts. They are not gifts such as one would look like something miraculous was going on in their life when they're doing these gifts. And yet, Peter says, look, the person who speaks, speak as the oracles of God.

And by that he means let him speak, not just his own opinions, not just his own... don't let him just ventilate his own feelings, but let him speak what the Lord gives him to speak. An oracle in the Bible, well, it's used different ways. In the New Testament, sometimes the oracles of God is a reference to the scriptures, the Old Testament scriptures.

Paul says that in Romans chapter 9 or 10, where he says, what's the advantage the Jews have? Well, chiefly... oh, no, it's in chapter 3. Chiefly, they have the advantage of the oracles of God being committed to them, meaning the scriptures. In the Old Testament, an oracle was a reference to the words of a prophet. Or a prophet himself.

And so when Peter says, if anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God, it means don't let him just speak from his own opinionatedness or from his own... just from research or whatever, but let him speak the word of the Lord. Let him speak a word in season. Let him speak what God gives him to speak.

Now, you might think that would apply only to prophets. Or perhaps those who have a gift of word of knowledge or word of wisdom or tongues or interpretation. But Peter says, if anyone speaks, and that would include certainly teachers and evangelists and those who exhort.

And yet it's not so obvious that God is the one behind those gifts as it is, for instance, in prophecy or some other supernatural seeming thing. Now, the thing about teaching that

is perhaps deceptive is that there are people who can teach well who aren't even Christians. And yet we wouldn't wish to call that a gift of the Holy Spirit since people who aren't Christians don't even have the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the birthright of the Christian, the seal of God's ownership in the life of a believer. And a person who is not a believer doesn't have the Holy Spirit and therefore doesn't have gifts of the Holy Spirit. Doesn't have the manifestations of the Spirit since there's no spirit there to manifest himself in them.

So why is it that some people are very gifted at articulating things and communicating things we'd say great teachers, and yet it may not really be a gift of the Holy Spirit. And what if somebody who has such an ability gets saved and transfers that and begins to teach in the body of Christ? Does that which was just a natural aptitude become a gift of the Holy Spirit? I think most people would say yes. And they'd say the same thing about the gift of leading.

If a person's a CEO of a corporation or has been a politician or has in other ways shown tremendous leadership in the secular world, if that person gets saved, most people are going to think, oh, that person should be a leader. That person should be one of the elders of the church. Now, Paul does say in 1 Timothy chapter 3 that for a person to be an elder of the church, he does have to prove himself to be a leader of his home well.

But he doesn't indicate that a person who's got political background or has corporate president on his name tag, that that somehow makes him qualified to be an elder. Because a spiritual gift is not the same thing as a natural ability. It may look very much the same.

In fact, a person who has the natural ability may turn out to have a spiritual gift in that area as well. Paul was a rabbi, a scholar of scripture before he was saved. We don't know to what degree he was effective as a communicator, but we know that that was his vocation, his training before he was saved.

After he got saved, God used him in those same areas. It's possible that you might be very excellent in some area of practical work, and after you're saved, God puts you into a ministry of doing that kind of work for the body of Christ. You know, the word missionary isn't found anywhere in the Bible.

Maybe we'd call that another gift, too. That's not the gift of being a missionary. But when we think of a traditional missionary, usually a traditional missionary would go into a foreign land and plant a church there and so forth.

But today, a missionary might do any number of things, including fix cars or run computer, you know, program computers or do all kinds of things on the mission field, and they'd still be called a missionary today because they're doing it for the body of

Christ, doing it for the gospel's sake. And that would be a gift that we'd have to call helps or ministry. And the person who, let's say, programs computers for a mission compound or whatever, fixes the cars or does the plumbing and maintains it, now that person probably, in all likelihood, knew how to do those things before he was saved.

Or let's just say he could know how to do it even if he wasn't saved. It's not the kind of thing that only Christians, only spiritually gifted people know to do. And yet he may be called of God to do that as a ministry.

That may become his gift. Now, if so, what has changed? What's changed between a guy who's a teacher before he gets saved, and he gets saved and he still teaches? Or he's a leader in some secular field and he gets saved and he becomes eventually maybe a leader in the church? Or he's good at practical things, but he ends up doing those practical things in the church, too. I believe that the difference is the element of God's anointing.

Now, the word anointing is found in the Bible, not as frequently as it's found in Christian jargon, and especially among Pentecostals and Charismatics, the word anointing is used a great deal. But John uses the term, in 1 John, a couple of times. He refers to the Holy Spirit as the anointing we've received from God.

And I'm not suggesting that the way that I'm using anointing is exactly the same way that John uses it in the Scripture. I'm using it more in the way of our common parlance that we use it today. And if that's not exactly the way the Scripture uses it, forgive me.

It is nonetheless a reality that I think is most easy to use the common word for. When we talk about a person having an anointing, it means not that they shout and dance well on the stage when they speak. It means that the Holy Spirit is empowering them and rendering fruitful the thing that they are doing.

That the Holy Spirit is producing spiritual benefit and using the activity to spiritually bless the body of Christ or whatever. This is what I'm using the word anointing to mean. If you have a different interpretation of it, fine.

You can live with it. I'll just use this word. If you would prefer another word for it, that's all right.

When I talk about the difference between a person with a gift of fixing cars for the body of Christ and a person who is a mechanic before he was even saved, the difference will be in the spirit in which he does it and the blessing that he confers upon the body of Christ through it. Peter says, if anyone serves or ministers, let him do it as of the ability which God gives. Now, if I were a trained mechanic, which I'm not, and not a Christian, I could fix cars as of the ability that I was trained with, the ability I was given through secular training and experience.

But if I had the gift of helping, let's say, keep all the cars of all the poor saints in the church running as a ministry, if I was doing that, I would be concerned that I do it in a way that brings glory to God. Because that's what Peter says, let him that serves do it as of the ability which God gives, that God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ. The difference is the glory that's brought to God and the spiritual blessing that's brought to the church through the activity.

And a lot of people feel that just because they set up the chairs or because they clean up the kitchen after potlucks and maybe no one notices them and they work in obscurity or they mow the lawn of the church when no one's around to notice, that no one's getting blessed by that, that they're not really ministering in a spiritual capacity. But that's simply not true. If they're doing it as of the ability that God gives, that is, they're trusting God to give them the ability to do well and to do it in a way that blesses others, then it is a blessing.

And God brings more blessing out of those kinds of things than probably the participant knows. I know because I don't do those kinds of things very well. I don't fix cars.

I don't build or fix things. I don't have much time for doing the cleanup around the church and so forth. And therefore, I personally notice, I don't notice every time someone does something, but I notice when people are doing that and they're doing it unto the Lord.

They're not doing it to get brownie points. They're doing it because they love the Lord and that's what they feel it's been given them to do. They just have a heart to serve.

And people who have a heart to serve and they're doing it unto the Lord, it's a blessing. It's really a blessing to be around such people and they are blessing the body of Christ in more ways than they know. Of course, it's a blessing just to have the place clean, but it's a blessing to all who realize that somebody is doing that, too.

To realize that somebody is humbly serving in obscurity and volunteering their work and so forth. Those of you who do those kinds of things, you don't know what kind of a blessing that is to those of us who don't very often spend our time doing those things. I have friends, more than one, who are very good mechanics and very good Christians, too.

That's why my car runs. This year I haven't had very many mechanics around me and I've had to pay more than ever to fix things. I had to put a transmission in and so forth.

We have a student who's a mechanic and he's pretty busy. And I'm sure he just raised his hand and wants me to know that he would fix it for me, but he's too busy. We've usually had people on staff who were good mechanics and who had the time and the inclination.

I mean, I didn't even have to. I never would approach them and say, could you fix my car? If they heard a rattle as my car drove up or they heard the brakes squeaking, they'd be right there and say, you're going to have to have me look at those brakes or something. And I'll tell you, it's such a blessing to someone who's as helpless as I am in some of those areas to have someone who just takes on that ministry.

And it's not just for me. I mean, the guys I'm talking about have fixed every car that was broken around that they knew of in the body of Christ while they were here. I mean, it's just what they do for God.

Or one of the things they do. Some of them do other things too. And as I said, that is more of a blessing than I can explain.

And those of you who've been blessed by those who do it know that there's more than just a physical ability there. The attitude, the spirit of it, the way that they glorify God in their activity, you can tell there's a blessing in it. There's an anointing on it.

There's something spiritually being imparted by that. And take a person who teaches. Now, I never taught before I was a Christian because I got saved when I was four.

And I don't recall that I had anyone younger than me to teach at that age. My younger brother was born when I was six, so it was too late to teach him. But I don't know if I'd be able to teach well if I were not a Christian.

I just have never been able to experiment with that question. But I have known other people who could teach well before they were Christians and they became gifted teachers in the church. But I've also known people who never taught at all before they were Christians, never seemed gifted in that way at all.

And yet when they became Christians and when God gifted them with that gift, they powerfully ministered and built up the body of Christ through teaching. Now, the difference between doing it in the flesh and doing it as a gift, I think, is again the blessing that God gives to the people of God through it. It's that invisible, almost undefinable anointing that actually ministers grace to the hearers.

And I have heard some very eloquent teaching that did not minister any grace. I've heard people who were as sophisticated in their teaching, as knowledgeable, as dramatic, as inspiring, as illuminating in their teaching as anyone could possibly be from whom I received no spiritual blessing whatsoever. There just wasn't any anointing there.

And I know that's a subjective thing to say, and maybe some might say, well, someone else got a blessing, and maybe that's true. But I will say this. We're living in an age, and this age has been around for a long time, where the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not considered to be qualifications for ministry in most churches.

If a person is simply trained in a seminary and has learned how to read the Greek and to talk about it to people, he may not have any gifts whatsoever in the area of teaching, but if he jumps through the hoops, in many cases he can get ordained to lead a church or to teach in a church. And that may be good. Frankly, I'm not trying to disparage that kind of training.

I think some very anointed and powerful gifted teachers are also well trained, and I get a lot from them. I listen to them, and I get a lot from them. At the same time, I think a person with the same amount of training and the same amount of eloquence can give dazzling oratories to the body of Christ, even with good stuff in it, good material that they're giving.

And yet, you walk away, and you're impressed, but you're not particularly blessed. You've been dazzled, but you have not been edified. Nothing spiritual has changed in your life.

And I'm not saying that every time anointed preaching is given that everyone's going to get the same degree of blessing out of it as each other, as they do on other occasions, but the point is a gift in the Holy Spirit is that where the Holy Spirit is operating through a person. It may not be obvious from an analysis of it if an unspiritual person was observing simply a naturally skilled teacher and a spiritually gifted teacher and was able to watch them both on video and imperceptive to spiritual reality, they might not be able to tell the difference. But there is a difference if one has a spiritual gift in that area.

It ministers grace. It builds up the body of Christ, as the Bible says, gifted teaching and preaching does. So, Peter is emphasizing the need for those who have these services that they perform, whether it's in speaking or in serving, to do it as of the ability that God gives for the glory of God.

And apart from that, it may be almost indistinguishable from a person who in the natural is skilled in some of these same areas. Now, I want to just go through each of these six gifts quite briefly if I can. The first of them, and we've already said a few things about each of them, really, but I want to look at them individually now, is the gift of teaching.

It says in Ephesians 4 that among the gifts that God has given to the church are pastors and teachers. And these are given for the edifying of the body of Christ, ultimately, for the equipping of the saints, for the work of the ministries so the body of Christ might be edified. In his list in 1 Corinthians 12, verse 28, Paul places teachers third.

In what sense third? I'm not sure. He says God has given first apostles, second prophets, third teachers. Now, whether this means chronologically that first there were apostles, then later there were prophets, and later in the early church there were teachers, maybe that's what he means.

Or possibly he means in terms of priority or importance in what they have to contribute to the body of Christ. I would see that as probable, that the apostles were the most important men in the early church. Prophets who could give a direct word from God verbatim, from what God had said no doubt would be second, only to apostles.

Teachers, I don't think teachers are quite as useful, I mean, they don't speak directly from God like a prophet does. But I think second to prophets, or next to prophets, teachers are probably about the best thing the church has. Because discipling the nations, which Christ commissioned the church to do, is done by teaching them, Jesus said in Matthew 28, disciple them, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you.

So those who teach are one of the principal gifts for conducting the church's commission, which is to disciple or make disciples of the nations. In any case, Romans chapter 12 says that a teacher should, frankly the sentence structure of Romans 12 is very difficult, but a teacher on teaching, he says, which is a really strange expression because it's not a complete sentence, but in Romans 12, when he's talking about the gifts and starts talking about them individually, he says in verse 6, Now what does he that teaches in teaching mean? Well, apparently it assumes some of the phraseology of the previous clause. If a person's got a gift of ministry, let him use it in ministry.

Use it? Use what? Apparently his gift. Let a person who has a gift in ministry use his gift in ministering, and let a person who has a gift of teaching use his gift in teaching. One thing this brings out, I think, is that persons need to, if they know what their gift is, they need to occupy themselves in that gift rather than getting all concerned about whether other people are doing what they're supposed to be doing.

If a person's a prophet, let him prophesy. If he's a minister, let him minister. If he's a teacher, let him teach.

Let him concentrate on what he's been given to do. And I think the more natural thing, especially among carnal people, is in some respects to neglect their own activity in order to make sure everyone else is doing as much as they are doing or doing what they think everyone else is supposed to be doing. Danny Lehman, who's an evangelist in Hawaii, a friend of mine that I grew up with, is partially in the Lord in Santa Cruz years ago, he used to work in the early days of his Christian life on an assembly line at a mushroom factory.

I believe that's where this took place that he tells the story. And this big chute would shoot down a bunch of mushrooms into a flat. I never went in the factory, so I don't know how this all happened, but he'd talk about how there was a certain amount of flats per minute or per hour they were supposed to fill with mushrooms, and they had to, I guess, release the mushrooms from the chute manually.

They said from time to time he'd look down at the line at other workers to see if they were falling behind, if they were getting as much done as they should. And he said every time he looked down the assembly line to see how the others were doing, he'd miss his thing. A flat would go by and he wouldn't get mushrooms in it.

And he was a young Christian, he didn't immediately draw any spiritual parallels to this, but he did after a while. Because every time he was checking on the other workers to make sure they were doing what they were supposed to do, he failed to do what he was supposed to do. And he uses that as a preaching illustration, just like I'm using it as a teaching illustration, that when he just focuses on what God has given him to do and concentrates on doing that one thing without worrying too much about whether others are doing as much work as he's doing or doing better than he's doing or whatever, just make sure everyone else is staying in line, then he doesn't really do what he's supposed to do correctly.

And that's one of the points that Paul's making here. But teachers are supposed to concentrate on their teaching. You know, the apostles in Acts chapter 6 found that they could not do all things well.

And they said so. They were preaching most of the time, but they also had responsibility for the distribution of food to some of the poor in the church. And in chapter 6 of Acts, the report came back to them that some of the widows were not receiving an equal amount in the distribution of food.

And they felt frustrated because they couldn't do everything well. So they said it's not good for us to leave the Word of God to wait on tables. Let's select some men to do that, and we will commit ourselves to the Word of God and to prayer.

So they did. They selected seven men who took over that former area of their responsibility, and they devoted themselves to what they were supposed to do. And I think that an ideal situation in the body of Christ would exist if everybody did just what they were supposed to do, and no one did less, and no one took on more.

You know, an awful lot of pastors get stuck mowing the church lawn, cleaning the bathrooms, directing the choir. Their wives play the piano, and they take the offering, and they do all the stuff in the church, sort of a one-man ministry. And that's what the church wants them to do in some cases.

That's what they're paid to do. I knew a pastor like this in Bandon, where we first had the school for the first six years. In fact, the church I attended, the pastor was really overloaded with stuff.

When the church needed painting, he painted the church. When the weeds had to be pulled in the flowerbeds, he pulled the weeds. I mean, he was the full-time employee of

the church, so by golly, they expected him to do whatever had to be done.

And that doesn't strike me as very biblical. I mean, unless he was called to both the gift of pastoring and the gift of helps, which doesn't seem likely. The apostles couldn't do it all.

I don't know how this man could be expected to. They knew they should devote themselves to the Word of God and to prayer because they were called in the area of spiritual ministry of the Word to the church. There were others, no doubt, who were gifted or could.

They were at liberty to come and do some of these other things, but they just didn't. They just didn't do their thing. Now, the ideal is for every person in the body of Christ to do whatever it is they're supposed to do.

And then all things will be done okay. Everything will be done well because the Holy Spirit gives an anointing to each person for some area of work. And when the pastor gets involved in another area of work, he may not have what I've been calling the anointing for that.

What I mean by that is he may be able to pull weeds as well as the next guy is, but he may be sitting there without the grace for it, saying, boy, someone else should be doing this. I'm really neglecting my sermon preparation, blah, blah, blah. And he'd be, in a sense, right.

It'd be a wrong attitude, but he'd be right. Someone else should be doing that. He doesn't necessarily have that calling to devote his time.

And the proportion of grace he's been given is not for that purpose. It's to serve the church in another way. Well, the teacher has one of the highest responsibilities in the church.

In fact, it says in James 3, verse 1, Brethren, be not many teachers, for we shall receive the stricter judgment, the stricter condemnation. The teachers receive such a strict condemnation or judgment that it's not something for someone to rush into. And when a person is teaching, they are influencing the minds of the whole church, or at least to the portion of the church that sits under them, that hears them.

And therefore, if a teacher is teaching wrong things, then he's promoting false doctrine widespread. And unfortunately, too many people in the church just believe whatever they're taught, rather than study the scriptures for themselves and think for themselves. And so the teacher becomes more responsible because people just buy what he says.

Now, in the early days of the church, the people in the church didn't have any choice but to believe what they were told because they didn't have Bibles. Bibles were not available

to the average person in the church until about the 1500s when the printing press had come along, and now they were able to print Bibles. Until then, no one really owned a Bible, except the leaders of the church had Bibles available to them.

So if a teacher would teach a certain thing, the people in congregation didn't know any better. They didn't have Bibles. They couldn't check it out.

So they just had to believe what they were told. And to a certain extent, the modern church is in a similar situation, though not legitimately. We have Bibles, but most people aren't reading them very much.

Most Christians I've met seem to just go along like lemmings following the lead lemming over the cliff, you know, in knee-jerk fashion, following whatever they're taught. I'm not saying that you guys do that here, but some people might do that here. It would be wrong to do that here.

It's wrong to do that anywhere since we have Bibles available. But since many people don't read their Bibles as much as they should, and many people maybe can't read at all and therefore are dependent on the teachers, the teachers still bear a higher degree of responsibility for the way the church turns out, both theologically, heresies, can be promoted widespread through a gifted teacher, or, you know, in terms of practical teaching. You know, an awful lot of the teaching that a teacher is supposed to do is how to do what Jesus said to do, teaching them to observe all things that Jesus commanded.

And if teachers teach people to do something different than what Jesus commanded, the church ends up doing the wrong thing. Frankly, without desiring to be exceptionally critical, I think that a large sector of the body of Christ in this part of the world is definitely doing a lot of things wrong, which could be avoided if they were taught better, if they were taught more of what Jesus said, rather than what some denominational headquarters or denominational college taught their pastors to teach people to do, or what the culture dictates or something. I personally believe that there's a lot of teachers, of whom James said they have a stricter judgment, who are going to cash in on that strict judgment.

I think they're going to have to pay. And I don't say that with any kind of glee whatsoever. It's frightening to tell you the truth.

But because teachers are responsible for the behavior and for the beliefs of the church at large, to a large degree, a little less so when the church has Bibles of their own that it can be reading. But still, not everyone in the church can read, and not all the people in the church have enough time to read their Bibles as much as a full-time minister does. And therefore, he still shapes the thinking of people more than most, and that is a tremendous burden of responsibility he bears.

Now, to a certain extent, everybody in the body of Christ should be able to teach others. In Hebrews chapter 5 and verse 14, the writer complained that his readers had not yet come to this point. He says, For the time you ought to be teachers, you have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God.

And you become like babies who need milk instead of adults who can eat solid food. Now, the implication of what he said is that if they'd grown properly, the number of years they've been saved, they should be able to teach others. Now, that doesn't mean he expects them all to be teachers in the church, but everyone should be able to answer the questions of a younger Christian or of an unbeliever about their faith.

It says that in 1 Peter 3.15, that you should be prepared always to give an answer to every man that asks you, a reason of the hope that is in you, with meekness and reverence. And everyone should come to that place. Every Christian should know enough about his own faith, and now if you have Bibles you can study, you should know enough about the Bible, that if somebody asked you something at least of the basics of the Christian faith, you could tell them what the Bible says about it.

You could tell them what the teaching of Christ is on that subject. That doesn't make you a teacher in the sense of having the ministry of teaching, because Paul said, Are all teachers? Implying no, not all are. But everyone has occasion to teach.

It says in Ephesians 6.4, that fathers, and presumably all the fathers in the church, whether they are pastors or not, are to be able to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. They are supposed to teach their children the Christian faith. Our children are supposed to receive their knowledge of these things from their parents, and even wives in the church were to learn it from their husbands.

Paul said that in 1 Corinthians 14. In the church, the wives, if they had any questions about what was said, they should wait until they get home and ask their husbands, and presumably their husbands should be able to tell them. Their husbands should be able to teach.

It says in 2 Timothy 2.24, it says, The servant of the Lord must not strive, but must be patient with all men, apt to teach. Now, every Christian, as I said, has a responsibility to communicate what they know, to stand as God's spokesperson in the circle that they're in, whether it's their family, their workplace, their neighborhood. If somebody desires counsel or has questions about the faith, every Christian who has been saved for very long should be able to answer those questions.

But that doesn't mean that they operate in the role of a teacher in the body of Christ. Not all are teachers, Paul said. Some are, and some are not.

And he said that it's not really a gift to covet. Don't be many teachers, James said,

because we have a stricter judgment. Let's go on to the next one, simply because we're going to try to give a light treatment to each of these.

Exhortation. What is the gift of exhortation? This is the fourth gift mentioned in Romans 12. And it is mentioned in this order by me because of the desire to talk about the speaking gifts and then talk about the serving gifts.

Exhortation actually is the Greek word *parakaleo*, which is the word from which the word *parakletos* comes. And if you're familiar at all with any New Testament Greek words, you might know that *parakletos* is the word that Jesus used when he said, I'm going to send you another comforter. A *parakletos*.

A *parakletos* is sometimes anglicized to the word *paraclete*. You may hear Christians talk about the *paraclete* sometimes. The word *parakletos* or *parakaleo* is the Greek word that means one who is called alongside to help.

And it is, as I say, a term that is used of the Holy Spirit. It's also used of Jesus, by the way. It says in 1 John 2.2, If anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous.

Well, the word *advocate* there is *parakletos*, one who's called alongside to help. Now, the word *parakaleo* is used in the New Testament a variety of ways, but frequently it's translated to *exhort* or *exhortation*. It sometimes means to *beseech* or to *implore* somebody.

But it frequently, perhaps most often, means to *encourage* or to *comfort* or to *strengthen*. Now, this activity of encouragement and in treating and imploring people, you might think, well, that's kind of the job, isn't it, of the preacher and the teacher and the prophet? Yes, it is, but probably not exclusively to them. We know that that is a function of a prophet because it says in 1 Corinthians 14.3 that he that prophesies speaks to men for exhortation and edification and comfort.

So, exhortation is part of what a prophet does or what prophecy does. Also, it would appear that it is something that other leaders in the church are called to do. If you'll look at 1 Thessalonians 5, I'd like to read the beginning of verse 12, 1 Thessalonians 5.12. We urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you and who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.

Be at peace among yourselves. Now, we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the faint-hearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. Now, notice there's two brethren, it looks like.

Verse 12, we urge you, brethren. And then verse 14, now we exhort you, brethren. Now, the first brethren are those who are under leadership because he says we urge you,

brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, who are over you in the Lord.

Whereas, the second brethren, in verse 14, would apparently be the other group, the leaders, who are to warn the unruly, to comfort the faint-hearted, and to uphold the weak. Obviously, exhortation or comfort or encouragement is one of the functions there. In fact, the word admonish there in verse 12, which is something the leaders who are over them in the Lord do, is very similar in its meaning to exhortation.

So, exhortation is done by leaders in the church, it's done by prophets, but it certainly is not restricted to those people because, as I'm sure all of you know by experience, there are people who hold no office in the church, and they don't have the gift of prophecy, but when you're in need of a word of encouragement, when you're in need of someone to give you some counsel, or when you're in need of someone to pray with you, and after they do, you just feel a burden is lifted, you feel yourself encouraged, that's a gift. Now, this perhaps is a good time for me to make a point that's going to come out in all these gifts, and that is that each of these gifts, we can find a special class of people in the church that the Bible mentions this gift belongs to, but it seems like many of them can be manifested in persons who aren't in the special category. For example, there are people who have the gift of giving.

The Bible would isolate those who are wealthiest, particularly having the gift of giving, but all Christians are supposed to give. There are people who have the gift of helps. Now, everyone should help, but there are some people who have a special, that's their calling, that's what they do full-time, they serve the church in practical ways.

Everyone should be willing to do that from time to time, but not everyone does it as a calling. Same thing with teaching, as I already mentioned, or exhortation, or edification, and encouragement of the church. Or we could say that about evangelism, or about leading.

Every father and every mother is a leader over their children, but the fact that these activities can be done generically by almost anyone in the church doesn't change the fact that there are groups of people in the church who are given this as their anointed function for the whole building up of the body of Christ. And those, I think, who function well in this before they're in that position, for example, a person who isn't a teacher in the church, but is devoted to teaching other people, that may demonstrate that God is raising them up to be a teacher in the church. A person who is very encouraging, who's always faithful and capable of exhorting and admonishing and encouraging people in the faith, they may not be able to teach, and they may not be a prophet, and they may not really be an evangelist, but they have a different kind of spiritual thing, an impact they have on people when they speak.

Those people may be called to do that more or less full time. Now, I really think that a lot of these gifts are expected today to be invested in one man in the church, and that's the

pastor. He's expected these days to be the evangelist in the church, the teacher in the church, the exhorter.

I'm not really sure that's how it was in the early church, or that's how it was expected to be. Paul said he gave some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers. It seems to me like there were some who did this, and some who did that, and some who did something else.

And we just kind of wrap it all up in one guy and pay him a salary, and expect him to do the whole work of the ministry himself. And I don't believe that that's necessarily what the New Testament teaches anywhere. But the point is probably in the early church, the idea of encouraging, exhorting, and so forth was actually done by a different person than the person who got up and did the teaching, or the person who evangelized.

And maybe it should be that way today. I'm not sure. I was just thinking tonight, as a matter of fact, in the meeting, how even as part of the time of singing at the beginning, which we call worship, and it is worship, it's only one kind of worship, but there might be some prophet in somebody who had a gift in it, you know, sharing something devotional before we even begin to sing.

Sharing something that's... I'm not just saying let's put people on a roster and have an amateur hour here. I'm just saying someone who really has a ministry in lifting our thoughts to God and encouraging us to come into the presence of God. Maybe it'd even be Rob who leads the singer.

It might be somebody else who's got that, who doesn't play music. But somebody who can come and exhort the people would be a different kind of gift entirely than the gift of teaching. But it certainly has its place in the body of Christ, and I think that that is something of what is referred to here as this gift.

Let's go on and talk about... let's skip down to the bottom of the list there, because as I said, I've reorganized this in my own thinking. The gift is showing mercy, which Paul mentions in Romans 12. And I said earlier, I equate that with the gift of the evangelist, and I've only begun to do so since about three hours ago.

And after 26 years of ministry, to have something that's as fresh to me as three hours ago is pretty unusual, especially since I've taught through this material before differently. But I learned from my studies this afternoon that the Greek word for showing mercy, it's one word, it's not two words, it's two in the English, but it's one in the Greek, it's *eleo*, or *eleo*. And there are some scriptures that are given in your notes, most of them in Romans, since it appears in Romans 12, the list.

It's interesting to see that the same word is found several other times in the book of Romans, and Paul uses it, always with reference to God's mercy being shown to

unworthy sinners. Always with reference to God's forgiveness of sinners. His extension of grace and generous mercy to those who don't deserve it.

And the word *eleo* actually is a reference to extending that mercy, or presenting that mercy, or giving that mercy to others. And it seems to me that those who extend the mercy of God to sinners are those who preach the good news to them, the evangelists. The word evangelist is actually an English transliteration from the Greek word *evangelio*, or *euangelio*, or the ending of that word can be different depending on where it's in the sentence.

But it's a word that means good tidings, good message is what it means. And it's the word for the gospel in the scripture. An evangelist is simply one who presents the good message, presents the gospel.

It's obviously the same person who's extending the mercy of God to sinners. Now it's not our place to go to a sinner and just say, I forgive you of your sins like Jesus did. But we can extend the same mercy to them through inviting them, through compelling them, through giving them the ultimatum, if you will, because that's what it's presented as in the New Testament, of the gospel.

That they are to turn to God and trust Him to save them. And He will. And that He'll forgive all their sins.

This message is something that some people present more effectively than others. Now I personally would like to see all Christians more involved than lots of us are in evangelism, but I'm not one of those people who says everybody is an evangelist, because it isn't true. Not everyone is an evangelist.

And I think a lot of damage has been done in the body of Christ by trying to impose a guilt trip on Christians who aren't out actively witnessing. I grew up in a church where from time to time this kind of trip was put on me. And I went out and witnessed.

I did door-to-door witnessing. I witnessed to the people in my high school, and even in junior high I was witnessing. I witnessed to my friends and my neighbors.

No one ever got saved because I wasn't very anointed at it. I didn't have much of a gift in evangelism. I shared the gospel, I think, correctly.

I believe that when I presented it, it was the true message. But it didn't come with power. You know, Paul said to, was it the Thessalonians? He said, we know, brethren, your election from God, because when we preached the gospel to you, it wasn't in word only, but it was in power and conviction of the Holy Spirit.

Now, what's the difference? You present the same words with or without the power and the conviction of the Holy Spirit. It makes a difference. Paul says, we know your election

because you responded, and the power of God went out with our preaching the gospel.

You know, when I listen to Billy Graham, and I've listened to him all my life, he's one of my heroes, I marvel at Billy Graham because the man avoids sophistication in his message, like the plague. I mean, he doesn't say anything new or novel. He doesn't try to come up with something that no one has said before.

He doesn't get into the meaning of Greek words or any of that kind of stuff. He just gets up there, and he talks as simple. When you listen, if you're a preacher, and I'm a teacher, so I like to listen and analyze how people speak.

When I listen to Billy Graham, I think, okay, I'm going to see what it is, exactly how he structures this message to get that response from people. I've never been able to figure out. In fact, when I was in high school, in the early freshman and sophomore years, I took speech classes because I wanted to preach to my fellow students, and my hero then is now, one of them is Billy Graham.

I read his books. I listened to his sermons on records because we didn't have cassettes in those days. I went to bed, and I went to sleep listening to Billy Graham preach on the radio or on discs, on like LPs, whatever you call them.

They're not around anymore, but LPs. I mean, I saturated my mind with sermons by Billy Graham. When I got up to speak, by the way, I was a reasonably good speaker in high school.

I got some awards and so forth in the speech class. Never won a solo, but I preached a lot of sermons, and I could preach with some of the same inflection. I didn't quite have the North Carolina accent that Billy Graham has, but I knew some of the natural dynamics of speaking.

I learned how to do a lot of that. I wrote sermons that technically were probably as good as his, I think, but there was no effect. And I still marvel when I go to hear Billy Graham, and I think, now, what is he doing different than other people are doing? And a lot of people who are cynical might say, well, it's his whole PR campaign and all the hype and so forth about the crusade, but I don't think so.

I think Billy Graham avoids hype a pretty big time. He's got a lot of integrity about that, and when he speaks, I want to go forward again. I've been saved almost forever, you know, and I almost want to go up and get converted again when he preaches.

It's really an incredible thing. But I've decided a long time ago he's got a gift of an evangelist. That's all.

Now, I've led some people to the Lord, too, but I don't do it on a regular basis. For one thing, I'm not at liberty to go out and spend my time with unbelievers, and I don't preach

campaigns. I'm not an evangelist.

I can evangelize, and I think every Christian can with some measure of success, but there are certain people that the Holy Spirit has just set aside and dumped an anointing on them, so when they speak, people get saved. I may have told you before about the guy who, the first preacher I heard at Calvary Chapel in Coast Mesa when I went there in 1970, he was a hippie guy. In fact, if you've seen the new Time magazine with the picture of Jesus on it, it says Jesus on the Internet.

If you haven't seen it, it's just come out. You'll see it. That picture of Jesus on the cover was a painting someone did for Time magazine.

It looks like you might think it's a classic painting of Jesus. It's not. It's a new painting, and I don't know, but I'm almost certain that whoever painted that picture used as a model the guy who was preaching at Calvary Chapel the first day I walked in there when I was 16 years old.

I mean it. I'm not kidding you. He didn't just look like me.

He's identical. In fact, I even think I've seen a picture of Lonnie Frisbee, the guy who was preaching, in that same pose. I mean, it couldn't look more like him if he'd sat for the portrait.

There were photographs of him in Time magazine and Newsweek back in the Jesus moment days because they did cover stories of it, and he was the leading guy. I'm sure that that Time artist went into the archives and found a picture of Lonnie Frisbee and said, now there's a good Jesus model for me. Because he had long hair and long beard and just kind of a blissful expression on his face and so forth.

But this guy, he was an anointed evangelist. When he got saved, he'd burned his brain out with acid so much he couldn't even read. He had a copy of Living Letters, which is one of the early installments of the Living Bible before it was complete, and he could hardly read it.

He'd get up, there were thousands of people sitting at his feet. He'd get up, he'd just struggle to read four or five sentences. Then he'd close it and he'd just start rapping, he'd start talking.

I heard him preach scores of times. I've never heard him preach when 50 people didn't come forward at his altar call. I mean, there never was a time when fewer than that came forward.

And he even, at one point in his life, actually more than one, he backslid after that time. And I think I told you this story, how he was actually living in sin with somebody. And he got up one morning and he turned on the television, and Catherine Kuhlman was on, who

happened to be a friend of his.

And as he listened to her, he got really convicted, and his friend came out and said, what's going on, what's bugging you? And he began to share with that person how he was fallen away from the Lord and so forth, and all convicted. And that person he was living with got saved. He didn't.

He didn't come back to the Lord right away, but the person he talked to got saved. I mean, the guy was just anointed, he couldn't help it. Everywhere he went, people got saved.

It's like the guy with the Midas touch. Everything turned to gold that he touched, even when he wasn't doing well. And I just don't, you know, I envy people like that.

I have nothing I've liked more than seeing people saved. From the time I was a kid in the Baptist church, if anyone ever went forward at the altar call, and it happened about twice a year, someone might. Man, I got goosebumps.

I thought, wow, someone's going to heaven who was going to hell. I was so excited, I just thought, man, I want to be an evangelist when I grow up. But I didn't.

I'm not an evangelist. And, you know, it excites me when I see people who can do that. But that's a gift I don't have.

I've led people to the Lord, and I know how to present the gospel, but it's just I don't have the anointing of an evangelist. So I'm not seeing those kind of results. And I say I envy them just because I think it's a wonderful thing.

I don't really envy them. I wouldn't trade positions with them because I like what I do, too. In fact, I probably like it better.

But there is clearly a gift of an evangelist that's different than just the ordinary sharing your faith that every Christian is capable of doing. There's a special calling and anointing on some people. I consider that to be the gift of extending mercy to the lost.

Now, moving over to the gifts of ministry or of serving, there are three. One is actually called the gift of ministry or helps. In the Greek, this word is diakonia, which you might notice.

You might not if you don't know anything about the Greek. But that's very close to the word that's used in the New Testament for a deacon. Diakonous.

And it's a relative word. It's related to it. A deacon, the word deacon means a servant or a minister.

And the gift of serving is apparently that gift which was formalized by making a person a

deacon or a deaconess. By the way, there are female deacons also. In Romans chapter 16, verse 1, Paul mentions Phoebe, and he uses the word deacon in the feminine form.

She was a deaconess, I guess, whatever that is. But I mean, a deaconess is just the female version of a deacon, and a deacon is a servant. Traditionally, although the Bible doesn't say this, but traditionally the seven men that were appointed in Acts chapter 6, including Stephen and Philip and five others who were appointed by the apostles to attend to the distribution of the food, which the apostles had formerly been responsible for, those seven men who were appointed were like the first deacons of the church.

And they and the apostles between them were a good example of the division of labor in the body of Christ. You had the apostles who said, listen, we'll appoint this business of waiting on tables to these men, and we will devote ourselves to the word of God and to prayer. In other words, we are called and gifted to minister to the spiritual needs, to preaching the gospel, to building up the saints, to teaching the church.

These men will be called to devote their time to service in practical areas. And to this day, there are still those different categories, people who serve. I've already given several examples, and I don't think we need to belabor this, but I will say this.

Being a servant of the church is an honorable function in itself. Even if a person goes to his grave never having done anything but wash the windows in the church and vacuum it every week and pick up after the potlucks the trash off the floor and do all these kinds of stuff, even if they never preach a sermon or do anything like that, Jesus said that the greatest among you is the servant of all. He said that in Matthew 18, 4, that he that would be the greatest must be like a little child, humble like a little child.

And he went on in chapter 20 of Matthew to say that the leaders, those who are really the ones who are chief among you, are the ones who are the servants of all. And to serve is an honorable thing. This is one thing that really, I guess, concerns me about the women's movement as it appears in the church today, because there's such a push on the part of some women to push themselves into the roles of, you know, the seminary and Bible college president roles and pastors of the churches and so forth.

And it's not that the women can't, my complaint is not that women can't do those things as well as men. I think some women certainly can do them as well as some men can. The problem is the attitude.

There are so many times you read the books and articles by these so-called evangelical feminists that they act as if if they can't have those highest positions, they are being oppressed and they won't settle for that. And they won't rest until women can be in these high positions with men. Well, let me tell you something.

What they're calling high positions, the Bible calls low positions. They are thinking in

terms of the way that the rulers of the Gentiles think. Jesus said the rulers of the Gentiles exercise authority over them, but it shall not be so among you.

And that's where Jesus, this is in Matthew chapter 20, and he said those who would be great among you must be the servants of all. So it is a great role to be in, to be serving. Serving in obscurity, humbly serving, doing something practical that needs to be done unto the Lord.

Servants are told to serve not with eye service to please men, but serve the Lord. Colossians chapter 3 encourages those who serve, of course it's talking about actual slaves in that case, but there's a spiritual counterpart in the church, people who serve and do practical things, that we do it unto the Lord, and our reward will be from the Lord if we do that. And it is honorable in itself, but there are many cases in the Bible where someone started out doing that, and God, in a sense, put them in another role, gave them a more visible role in preaching.

Stephen's a good example of that, and Philip is another. These two men started out just waiting on tables in the church in Acts, but by chapter 7, or even by the end of chapter 6, Stephen was preaching and convicting people and got himself killed for it. Philip, later on, became an evangelist.

In fact, he's the only man in the Bible who's called an evangelist. I mean, he's the only man we can name in the Bible who's actually spoken of as an evangelist. Philip the Evangelist, it says.

And yet, Philip and Stephen both started out just as what we call deacons, serving in practical areas. They both ended up being anointed preachers. And actually, both of them also did signs and wonders.

Gifts of miracles were given to them as well. So, I mean, it says in 1 Timothy chapter 3 something like that, that if a person is faithful in the office of a deacon, that God can and may elevate him to another more visible ministry in some other area of the Word. This is in 1 Timothy chapter 3 and verse 13.

Paul said, For those who have served well as deacons, obtain for themselves a good standing and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus. I can't help but think that Paul wrote this with Stephen in mind. Stephen was present.

I mean, as Paul was present, not yet converted, but he was there when Stephen was stoned. And he saw the boldness of Stephen. And he knew Stephen was one of the early deacons.

And when Paul later wrote about deacons, he says, For those who have served well as deacons, acquire for themselves great boldness in the faith. And, sure, starting out as just a servant, you might end up as just a servant. That might be what you do until the

day you die, if God so wills it.

But there are many cases where people start out with no ambitions of anything more than being a servant and ended up the leader. Joshua is a good example. Joshua, through the entire long adult career of Moses, was nothing but Moses' servant.

He just carried Moses' bags, as it were. But when Moses died, God appointed Joshua to lead the country. Same thing with Elisha.

Elisha started out as the one who poured the water over the hands of Elijah. But when Elijah was taken up, a double portion of Elijah's mantle fell on Elisha, and he became the head prophet over the companies of the prophets. I told you about Stephen and Philip, but Jesus is another good example.

Jesus became fairly prominent in the church, too. But he started out the first 30 of his 33 years just serving his family in the carpenter shop, just doing practical stuff. He was the oldest son in a family that was relatively poor.

He worked in a carpenter shop to help support his mom and dad, stepdad or foster dad, we should say. And he did that for 30 of his 33 years. But the last three, he did more important things in some respects.

And now he's exalted because why? Because he humbled himself and took on himself the form of a servant. Philippians 2 says, Therefore God has highly exalted him and given him a name above every name. So those who serve well and humbly better be prepared to stay humble and stay low, but God might not let you stay there.

He might consider that as something he wants to exalt you about. And that is what the gift of ministry sometimes leads to, the gift of help leads to this. The gift of giving, I don't want to have too much to say about this.

There are some scriptures about it that are given in your notes. Perhaps the one that comes to my mind most often on this subject is 1 Timothy 6, 17 through 19, where Paul says, Command those who are rich in this present age not to be haughty nor trust in uncertain riches, but in the living God who gives us richly all things to enjoy, let them do good that they may be rich in good works, ready to give, willing to share, storing up for themselves a good foundation for the time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal life. Let the rich be willing to give, willing to share.

Now the body of Christ does not have, at least in the days of Paul, didn't have many rich. The rich, Jesus said, is harder for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. And there were not very many rich in the early church.

There were some. But they were exhorted to see themselves as having an excess of

wealth because there were people in the church who needed it. One of the guys like that was Barnabas.

Before he ever became an apostle, he had a piece of property. He sold it and he gave it to the poor of the church. That's the first ministry Barnabas ever operated in that we know of.

And that's back in Acts chapter 4. We read of it at the end of that chapter. Barnabas had a piece of property. He sold it.

He brought the money to the apostles to distribute to the poor. He had assets. He liquidated his assets.

That was a ministry of giving. Later he was an apostle with Paul. So giving is something that is particularly incumbent on those who have a surplus.

Unfortunately, in our society, we're often told that if you are godly, God will prosper you financially. And if he prospers you financially, that's so you can live more comfortably and show how much God has blessed you by being prosperous. Actually, God often does bless people who are generous and godly.

By the way, wealth doesn't correlate exactly with godliness in any way or even with faith. The Bible nowhere says that if you have faith, you'll be prosperous and wealthy, although some teach it that way. But the Bible does indicate that if you're faithful with little, God will give you more.

But once he gives you more, you're supposed to be faithful with that, too. You're not supposed to be faithful with a little, like Oral Roberts talked about seed faith. You need \$1,000? Give me \$100.

Send me \$100 and you'll get \$1,000 back. It's God's economy. And then, of course, you can just keep the \$1,000, right? Well, even if it were true that if you gave God \$100 and he gave you back \$1,000, he gave you back the \$1,000 so you could do the same kind of thing with it.

By the way, if Oral Roberts really believes in that seed faith principle, then a few years ago when he needed \$8 million so God wouldn't kill him, if you don't remember that, you're more blessed than I, but Oral Roberts went public a decade or so ago and said that God appeared to him and said that if he didn't raise \$8 million by a certain date in April, I think it was that God was going to kill him. Unfortunately, he did get the money, but he did so by begging. Actually, he got it from a guy who owned a dog racing track in Florida who said that he recommended that Oral Roberts get psychiatric care.

But I'm not trying to badmouth Oral Roberts. I don't know all the problems in his life, and you don't know all the problems in mine, but the fact is if he really believed in seed faith

when he needed \$8 million, he should have started sending money like crazy to other ministries. In fact, I thought about writing to him saying, Hey, Oral, you need some money? You can send a seed faith gift to me if you'd like.

Send me about \$800,000, maybe you'll get your \$8 million by the date necessary. But he apparently didn't believe in his own teachings enough to do that. Anyway, we don't give so we can get back.

Jesus said, Give and lend expecting nothing in return. He said that in Luke chapter 6. We don't give to get back. We give out of love.

It's an expression of the love of God. He has bestowed upon us goods that other people don't have and others need, and it is so that we will express his love and his kindness in giving to those who are in need. Particularly the Bible indicates we should be prepared to give to the poor, especially those in ministry who are poor, but also any other Christians, even non-Christians, but especially to the household of faith, it says in Galatians 6 and verse 10.

One other thing, we need to talk about the gift of leading or administrations. I've identified this as probably related to the pastoral ministry because the word pastor means shepherds. The Greek word for pastor means a shepherd, and a shepherd leads sheep.

One thing I would clarify is that while we usually think of a pastor as a paid professional individual who leads a church, in the Bible it is nowhere used that way. The word pastor is used only once with reference to anyone other than Jesus. The word *poimen*, which is the word pastor, means shepherd, and it is used several times in the New Testament, always of Jesus, except in Luke chapter 2 where it refers to the actual shepherds who came and visited Jesus when he was a baby.

They were actual shepherds of sheep, same word that's translated pastors. The only place where it's not used of literal shepherds or of Jesus is in one place, and that's Ephesians 4 verse 11, he gave some pastors. It's the only place where leaders of the church are called pastors or shepherds.

However, elsewhere the scripture teaches that elders of the church are to shepherd the flock. It says that in Acts chapter 20, it says it in 1 Peter 5, that elders are to shepherd the flock. So apparently what Paul called pastors, and by the way, he never used it in the singular, only in the plural that one time, he gave some pastors.

Every church had elders, plural, and apparently they were to do the pastoral ministry. They were supposed to lead, and they were supposed to do so by example and by servanthood. And there are some scriptures in your notes, I don't have time to go into it.

This, by the way, leadership, studying the whole subject of leadership and authority in

the church, would be a series in itself, not just a long lecture, and I'm only trying to identify what these gifts are rather than trying to expound extensively on them. I am out of time now, and that's why I'm going to quit. But let me, even though we won't get this on tape...