

4. The Holy Spirit equips us to serve Christ

- Question is not “Do you believe in the gifts of the Holy Spirit?” but “What are they and what do they look like?”
- 1. Spiritual Gifts are a present from God – 1 Cor 12:4**
 - “Gift” = ‘grace’ = free present (1 Pet 4:10, Rom 12:6)
 - Don’t think of it in terms of ‘giftedness’ or brilliance
 - They are unearned – not a result of being a better Christian
 - They are from God (1 Cor 12:6) – He sovereignly distributes them
 - Not to be pursued or demanded (except love - 1 Cor 12:31)
- 2. To all his people – 1 Cor 12:7**
 - All are given gifts – not so much something to be pursued but developed
- 3. In great variety – 1 Cor 12:4,5**
 - The lists of gifts show great variety (Rom 12:6ff, Eph 4:11, 1 Cor 12:8-11,28, 1Pt 4:10-11)
 - 3 categories:
 - a) Foundational Gifts**
 - Not all gifts mentioned are to be expected today. They served a foundational role
 - Apostles – Christ appointed witnesses to resurrection, unique authority, miracles
 - Prophets – when New Testament wasn’t complete
 - Miracle working – authenticating signs of a new work of God
 - Tongues – known languages. Purpose the early spread of the gospel
 - Scripture, theology & history show the short term nature of these
 - b) Word-based Gifts**
 - Teaching, preaching, encouraging, discernment, wisdom
 - c) Servant Gifts**
 - “A loving helpful response to others physical and material needs” – Packer
 - Serving, leading, mercy, giving, hospitality, helping, faith, administration
 - Many of the gifts are ordinary everyday activities
 - Many are the things we are naturally drawn to
 - Each essential to the running and growth of the church
 - They complement each other – not all equally good at all of these.
 - Esp important for evangelism – some good at introducing people to community, others at building relationships, others at explaining the gospel

4. For the good of others – 1 Cor 12:7

- They are given to build up others – 1 Cor 14:3-5,12,26; Eph 4:12,16; 1Pt 4:10
- Q – How can I use what I am naturally drawn to for the good of others?
- Q is not “What are my gifts?” but “How can I serve others?”
- 5. To bring glory to Christ – 1 Peter 4:11**
 - It is not about drawing attention to us, but drawing attention to Jesus
 - Gifts are defined in terms of Christ – encouraging people in relationship, bringing people to Christ, serving Christians, modelling Christ to all
 - As we use our abilities for the glory of Jesus Christ works through us in this broken world

Q – What have I been doing that God has been blessing?

Q – What do I enjoy doing?

Q – How could I use what I am good at to serve others, to free up others, to encourage, to help?