

Ten Truths of the Gifts, Part 1

George O. Wood

“Follow the way of love, and eagerly desire spiritual gifts.”

1 Corinthians 14:1 NIV

The Bible teaches us ten truths about spiritual gifts. Today we will look at the first five:

1. *The gifts are for Christians.* You can't receive the gifts or function in the gifts—which are meant to glorify God, to build up the Body, to save the lost, to serve human need—unless you first receive the gift of salvation. The gifts are meant to flourish among those who are baptized in the Spirit. Spirit baptism plunges a person into new dimensions of intimacy with God and empowerment for witness.

2. *The gifts are given for the benefit of the Body and for Christ's work in the world.* No gift is more glamorous than another. The gifts are not given that we might be bigger stars, but that we might be better servants.

3. *The gifts should never be divorced from love.* Paul told us in 1 Corinthians 14:1 to “*follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts.*” First Corinthians 13 is a reminder in the middle of a section dealing with spiritual gifts that we are to walk in the way of love.

4. *The gifts should not be confused with spirituality.* Some people measure spirituality on the basis of their gifts, but the gifts actually have little to do with spirituality. They have to do with getting the work of the Lord done. I've known people who have had real gifts of the Spirit in operation but who have been apostate in their life and character. The gifts are not to be confused with spirituality, so we shouldn't follow after people simply because they have gifts.

5. *The gifts are often matched with natural inclinations and abilities.* People who have a tender heart are often the ones functioning in the gift of mercy. People who are highly organized are often functioning in the gift of teaching. The gifts aren't natural inclinations, but they often build from a base of natural inclinations.

Adapted from George O. Wood, Living in the Spirit: Drawing Us to God, Sending Us to the World (Springfield, MO: Gospel Publishing House, 2009).

What is the Holy Spirit saying to me?

ACTIVATION

- Think about the spiritual gifts listed in Scripture. If you do not already know what your strong gifts are, ask the Holy Spirit to reveal them to you.
- Set yourself apart for God's purposes, and do not allow the gifts He has given you to be used for fleshly things.
- Thank God for depositing His gifts in you!

FURTHER STUDY

Romans 12:3–8; Ephesians 4:7–13; 1 Corinthians 12:1–11; Romans 11:29