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Sermon Notes

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Spiritual Gifts for the Building of the Body

Ephesians 4:7-16

The magnificent and complex human body... a stunning display of the power and wisdom of God

Psalm 139:14 I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made

The various systems of our body are mutually dependent, each of them astonishingly complex

The skeletal system... our bones, making up the structure on which God builds the rest of the body... amazingly engineered to support the stresses of daily life; engineers know how to design strong yet light structural members by putting strong material on the outside of the cross-section, and filling the inside with softer material; they do this because they know that the greater amount of stress occurs on the surface when the structure is subject to bending. So the human bone has incredibly strong material on the outside, and the space inside is used as an amazing factory to manufacture blood cells of various kinds!

The circulatory system is also fearfully and wonderfully made! Your bones are constantly manufacturing new blood cells because about 8 million blood cells die in the human body every second! And the same number are born every second. In an average drop of blood, there are 5 million red blood cells. Those blood cells are pumped by your heart... in an average lifespan, the human heart will beat around 3 billion times! It takes about 20 seconds for a red blood cell to circulate the entire body. Red blood cells make approximately a quarter of a million round trips of the body before returning to the bone marrow—that's where they were born, and that's where they go to die. These amazing red blood cells may live for 4 months circulating the body, feeding the 60 trillion other body cells... feeding them with nutrients gained from the digestive system, and with oxygen gained from the respiratory system

Each of those systems have their own amazing aspects... the lungs expand to draw in the oxygen that the cells of your body need to survive; your lungs contain about 300 million balloon-like structures called alveoli which replace the carbon-dioxide waste in your blood with oxygen... your lungs contain the same surface area as a tennis court! They pass the oxygen on through tiny blood vessels called capillaries to be carried to each of those 60 trillion cells throughout your body

Every cell of your body is thus interconnected and interdependent... each has an amazing role to play... but the body is ONE

So is the image of the body that Paul presents in Ephesians—the church is the BODY of CHRIST... and we are all members of it

In Ephesians 4:7-16, the Apostle Paul is teaching us, every one of us, that we have a VITAL ROLE to play in the Body of Christ

Ephesians 4:15-16 speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

He portrays the Body of Christ, the Church, as immature, needing to grow up to full maturity in Christ... total perfection in Christ... and that this will only happen if EACH MEMBER of the Body does its work

That work is assigned in an amazingly complex way by Christ... apportioning to each of us a unique and well-conceived role

As we each do our role, the Body will keep growing to maturity

For the next few weeks, we'll be looking at the issue of SPIRITUAL GIFTS

My desire is that each member of FBC Durham will listen carefully to what Paul is saying here... that you will understand the doctrine of SPIRITUAL GIFTS... that you will appraise your own gifts properly and evaluate yourselves soberly... that you will come to understand what your role is; that you will DELIGHT in that role, and play that role faithfully

1) Understand gifts generally; 2) discern your gifts particularly; 3) develop your gifts maximally; 4) use your gifts faithfully

GOAL: EVERY MEMBER MINISTRY!!!!

I. Context: Unity and Diversity (vs. 1-7)

A. Overwhelming Assertion of Unity

Ephesians 4:3-6 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called-- ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

God's ultimate plan already revealed:

Ephesians 1:10 ...to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

There is a stunning, supernatural, perfect unity that God is working in us, after the pattern of the Trinity: that all of us will be as one as the Father and the Son

B. Key Word: “But...” (vs. 7)

Ephesians 4:7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

1. Going in one direction, now moving in a different one
2. Had been talking about unity... now talking about DIVERSITY

C. The Body Analogy: Unity and Diversity

1. Three different passages present the church as like a BODY... like our physical bodies

Romans 12:4-8 Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵ so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

1 Corinthians 12:12-14 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body-- whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free-- and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ ¶ Now the body is not made up of one part but of many.

Ephesians 4:15-16 speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

2. This is a beautiful picture of specialization within unity... we have one body, but diverse members/cells/organs within that one body
3. The unity of the human body down to the cellular level is the basis of the use of DNA to identify people at a crime scene
 - a. Only a few cells left at a crime scene can be sufficient for crime scene investigators to place a person there and convict them

- b. That's because every cell in a single human body contains the DNA recipe for the entire body, and it's unique to that person
- c. All of my liver cells and my skin cells and my blood cells are uniquely mine based on the DNA, but they are also specialized... they play different roles in my body

D. Spiritual Gift Definition

My definition: Spiritual gifts are special abilities given by the sovereign grace of God to individual Christians for the purpose of bringing the church of Christ to final maturity by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Wayne Grudem: "A spiritual gift is an ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church.

Spiritual gift lists:

1 Corinthians 12: 28: Apostle... prophet... teacher... miracles... kinds of healings... helps.... administration... tongues

1 Corinthians 12:8-10: [adds] word of wisdom... word of knowledge... faith... distinguishing between spirits... interpretation of tongues

Ephesians 4:11: [adds] evangelist... pastor-teacher

Romans 12:6-8: [adds] serving... encouraging... contributing... leadership... mercy

CONTROVERSY: on the "sign" gifts... such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, miracles... some say they ended during the Apostolic Era, others that they continue to this day... I'm not getting into that topic in my Ephesians sermons... I want to focus on the spiritual gifts that every Christian agrees are still in operation, and ask God to move each member of FBC to evaluate yourself, to assess what your spiritual gift "package" is... (i.e. not just one gift, but an array of gifts that combine to organize the good works God has prepared for you to do)

II. Spiritual Gifts: Particular Grace from Christ

A. Spiritual Gifts Called "Grace"

Ephesians 4:7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

1. Grace is the gracious disposition of God to do us infinite good in Christ, we who deserved infinite punishment

2. We deserve HELL for our many transgressions of God's Law
3. It is AMAZING GRACE that God would not only save us—forgiving us of all our sins—but also that He would USE us to do good works of eternal significance! AMAZING that He has a plan for each one of us and will USE us day after day to build the Body of Christ
4. Our good works were ordained in advance for us to do... and that is GRACE from God

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

5. So Paul calls spiritual gift roles here “grace”... and they are
6. He looked on his own spiritual gift ministry as the Apostle to the Gentiles as GRACE FROM GOD

Acts 9:5-6 Who are you, Lord?" Saul asked. "I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting," he replied. ⁶ "Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do."

Ephesians 3:7-8 I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. ⁸ Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ

1 Corinthians 15:9-10 For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. ¹⁰ But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them-- yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.

Application: thank God for the GRACE of spiritual gifts! Thank God for your own gifts... thank God that He saved you and is choosing to USE you for eternal purposes! Thank God for other people's spiritual gifts! All of these spiritual gifts are a display of God's grace in Christ.

B. Spiritual Gifts Given by Christ's Sovereign Wisdom

Ephesians 4:7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

1. Literally: “according to the measure of Christ”... Greek word is *metron*
2. The idea is that the spiritual gifts are given in a carefully measured-out way; Christ has PONDERED YOU, and is measuring out a gift to you according to His wisdom, according to His knowledge of you and the people you will minister to

3. 1 Corinthians ascribes it also to the Holy Spirit's sovereign wisdom:

1 Corinthians 12:11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

4. But verse 6 ascribes them to God the Father!!

1 Corinthians 12:6 There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

5. So, the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit all THOUGHT about you, and perfectly agreed together to give you a specific spiritual gift package... a carefully measured-out array of special abilities by which you will BLESS HIS PEOPLE

6. "Measure": what gifts you get, and how much of each gift you get

- a. Many people in the church have the gift of teaching and preaching... but not all are equally gifted... some have incandescent levels of giftedness, and centuries later, we are still speaking of them
- b. I think no one living today has as much evangelistic power in preaching as did George Whitefield... or Charles Spurgeon
- c. I think few people alive today have as much doctrinal precision as John Calvin, or as much theological brilliance as Jonathan Edwards, or as much overwhelming compassion as Amy Carmichael, or as much sacrificial generosity as George Mueller, who took care of 10,000 orphans in his lifetime.
- d. So... the gifts are measured out by Christ and poured out by the Holy Spirit in unequal measure, by Christ's sovereign grace

Application: Be not jealous of other people's gifts, but thank God for them! They are your brothers and sisters in Christ; and remember:

1 Corinthians 12:26 if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

7. HOW AMAZING this all is!! That Jesus Christ has pondered you, considered you, made a selection for you; he's taken you to the expensive clothing boutique and looked at you, then turned to the rack of spiritual gifts and picked out an array of clothing, of spiritual gifts, to clothe you with... they are put on you by the Holy Spirit

8. THANK GOD for His grace!!

C. Spiritual Gift "Package" Given to Every Believer

Ephesians 4:7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

1. This is vital for us... every single Christian in this room has already been considered by Christ and will be outfitted with a spiritual gift package with which you will serve Him
2. NO ONE IS LEFT OUT! NO ONE IS WORTHLESS!! NO ONE IS INSIGNIFICANT...
3. No one can say, "That's fine for the pastors, or for the people doing this or that ministry... but I have nothing to offer."
4. To EACH ONE OF US, the text says... no one will be able to stand before Christ empty-handed on Judgment Day and say, "You gave me nothing to do."

Application: Take these sermons very much to heart. Apply them to yourself. If you don't know what your spiritual gift package is, ask God to show you

5. What do I mean by "package"? It's not just one gift... but a wise mixture, like a recipe... fit for the ministry God has in mind for you to do
 - a. In my case, I am called to be a Pastor, with regular preaching duties
 - b. I believe Christ has gifted me to do the whole array of that calling... so not just the ability to preach and teach, but other gifts as well suitable to the calling of a pastor—leadership, administration, counseling, faith, prayer, evangelism, mercy
 - c. These gifts do not come in equal measure... and there are many others in this body that have more of this or that attribute than I do... but it is a wise recipe of gifting that enables me to do the ministry of a Senior Pastor
 - d. So also someone called to do children's ministry, or to run the Caring Center, or to plan and prepare for a short-term mission trip, or to plan and execute a worship service... will have an array of gifts needed to do each of those ministries.

D. Spiritual Gifts Given as Part of Christ's Mission from the Father (vs. 8-10)

Ephesians 4:8-10 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men." ⁹ (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? ¹⁰ He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

1. Paul reaches for a quote from the Old Testament to prove his point... it's from Psalm 68:18

2. As Paul uses it, it portrays Jesus Christ as a conquering hero... he who descended from heaven to earth; who took on a human body

THIS WE CELEBRATE AT CHRISTMAS TIME!!

3. This Jesus, the Conquering Hero, won a great victory over sin, death, and Satan at the cross... and he is pictured in victory procession, leading a train of captives behind him (perhaps it is Satanic enemies, now defeated... or it is we who are FORMER ENEMIES, whom he is leading to heaven... I like that better
4. Anyway, he is leading this glorious victory parade, and pictured as casting off to the wildly cheering crowds a series of GIFTS, which he WON BY HIS BLOOD... all the spiritual gifts are BLOOD-BOUGHT... that's why Paul calls them "grace from Christ"
5. Paul makes it clear that this "ascending" and "descending" of Jesus is essential to the spiritual gifts: Jesus is the very one who DESCENDED from heaven to earth...
- a. Some translations imply that Christ descended to Hades... to hell... to the grave, the "lower portions of the earth"
- b. I do not believe in a "descent to hell" anyway... Jesus told the thief on the cross, "today, you'll be with me in paradise"
- c. But that this verse is teaching it is even more obscure... I think the descent of Jesus is his incarnation... CHRISTMAS!!!
- d. AND the descent he did in Philippians 2

Philippians 2:6-9 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, ⁷ but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. ⁸ And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross! ⁹ Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name

- e. This is the DESCENDING and ASCENDING of Jesus

- f. In Hebrews 2 it is portrayed as a military conquest of Satan and death:

Hebrews 2:14-15 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death-- that is, the devil-- ¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.

g. To the VICTOR go the SPOILS... and the spiritual gifts are pictured as “spoils of war”

h. Christ’s ascent is INFINITE...

“higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe”

6. This Jesus has now received GIFTS from the Father and is pouring them out on his people by the Holy Spirit:

On the Day of Pentecost, the gift of the Spirit was poured out on the church, and the spiritual gifts of tongues and of Apostles and preachers and evangelists began operating, so that 3000 were saved that day!!

Peter explained it:

Acts 2:32-33 God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. ³³ Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear.

7. Thus Jesus “received” the gifts from the Father and “gives” the gifts to the people; and then “receives” the glory and benefit from those gifts as they are used:

Romans 11:36 For from him and through him and to him are all things. To him be the glory forever! Amen

8. This may help to explain why Paul seems to change the meaning of Psalm 68:18

Psalm 68:18 When you ascended on high, you led captives in your train; you received gifts from men, even from the rebellious-- that you, O LORD God, might dwell there.

a. NT quotation of OT texts is sometimes difficult

b. But I think that Christ receiving the gifts FROM MEN is when they exercise their gifts for HIS GLORY... but Paul was focusing on how Christ GAVE the gifts they gave back to him

9. In any case, the point is clear: our spiritual gifts are a vital part of the MISSION OF CHRIST in the world... clearly related to His descending to earth in his incarnation, and his further descent to death on a cross, and His amazing ascending from the grave, and from the earth when he passed through the heavens and sits on the right hand of God

10. Amazing assertion about Christ:

Ephesians 4:10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.

Just as he'd taught earlier:

Ephesians 1:20-23 he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

- a. The picture of Christ is astonishingly glorious...
- b. Christ ascended "higher than ALL THE HEAVENS"... like third heaven or maybe the seventh heaven or beyond... who knows what kinds of spiritual realms there are? But Christ is higher than all of them and rules over all of them
- c. He is seated at the right hand of God
- d. He is moving out to FILL THE WHOLE UNIVERSE... and he does that in part by spiritual gifts

III. The Ministry of the Word Primes the Pump (vs. 11-13)

Ephesians 4:11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers

- A. Christ "Gave Some to Be...": What Does that Mean?
 1. It is a sense in which he gave PEOPLE to the church as GIFTS to the church, the people equipped by these spiritual gifts to fulfill these roles
 2. He gave some who were equipped to be apostles, he gave some to the church who were equipped to be prophets, etc.
 3. The church is the recipient of the gifts, moreso than the individual... Paul has a corporate view in mind
 4. So each Christian should think: MY SPIRITUAL GIFT BELONGS TO THE CHURCH COLLECTIVELY, not to me personally;

Romans 12:5 in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

- B. What Roles Are Listed Here?

1. Apostles

- a. Either in the exclusive sense of the Twelve, the eyewitnesses of Christ, who were the foundation of the narrative of the gospel... the ones who told the stories of Christ's life
- b. Or authoritative leaders similar to them, who came along later, like Barnabas
- c. It is doubtful whether there are still such people today... some wonder if modern missionaries are "apostles," but when you see the exalted view Paul has of the office of Apostle in 2 Corinthians and throughout his ministry, I think that time has ended

2. Prophets

- a. Those who spoke the word of God directly to the people, saying "thus says the Lord"
- b. The gift of prophecy was still operative in those days
- c. Again, it is controversial and highly debated whether such a gift is operative today
- d. Puritans (like William Perkins) called preaching from the pulpit on a Sunday "prophesying"... I think it is preaching/teaching

3. Evangelists

- a. Those who take the word of God to those who have not yet heard it or not yet believed it
- b. They may travel across the street or to the ends of the earth to bring the gospel message to the lost
- c. Philip in the book of Acts was called "the evangelist"
- d. Bunyan in Pilgrim's Progress has such a man begin Christian's journey from the City of Destruction to the Celestial City

4. Pastors

- a. Shepherds of souls
- b. Elders who settle into a locality and minister for a long time to the needs of Christ's flock
- c. Some combine it with the next one, so you get "pastor/teachers"

- d. Pastors use the Word of God to care for the souls of Christ's church
- e. They walk with the people of God through the trials of life, seeing to their sanctification and their final salvation

5. Teachers

- a. Unfold the Word of God to the people, explaining its truths and applying them

C. Common Ingredient: The Delivery of the Word of God

1. Though there are elsewhere listed many other gifts (administration, helps, mercy, faith), why are these singled out?
2. I believe they all have the common ingredient: the delivery of the WORD OF GOD to the people, to the church
3. The Word of God effectively primes the pump for the church to fully exercise the spiritual gifts, the good works that build the Body to full maturity
4. Apostles and Prophets established the word of God on earth... apostles especially called upon to write the New Testament for the people to study; prophets, in those early days, speaking God's Word directly to people before the New Testament was finalized
5. Evangelists taking the message to the elect who have not yet heard it... delivering the Word of God to the lost, advancing the Kingdom of God
6. Pastors and Teachers settling down and patiently unfolding the truths of God's Word to the church over a long period of time
7. The WORD OF GOD primes the pump for ALL THE SPIRITUAL GIFT MINISTRIES THAT FOLLOW

D. The Flow: The Ministry of the Word Primes the Pump for Good Works

Ephesians 4:12-13 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

1. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastor/teachers are given as gifts of Christ to the church to PREPARE THE PEOPLE OF GOD to do the good works
2. The Works of God already prepared: Ephesians 2:10

Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

3. People of God must likewise be prepared to do them!
4. The Ministry of the Word of God prepares the people for WORKS OF SERVICE... those countless, sometimes not even noticed works of service are indeed what builds up the body of Christ to maturity
5. The Works of the WHOLE BODY are needed to build the WHOLE BODY up
 - a. From the most noticeable gift ministry—like the preaching of a sermon in front of the whole church—to the most unnoticed ministry, a quiet word of encouragement spoken in the hall or in a hospital room... or a set of phone calls made to plan a baby shower...
 - b. Everything tends toward the BUILDING UP OF THE BODY OF CHRIST

IV. The Goal of Spiritual Gifts: Spiritual Maturity in Christ (vs. 13, 16)

Ephesians 4:12-13 so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:15-16 speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

A. Clear Picture: An Immature Body, Growing to Full Maturity

1. The idea of “maturity” or “perfection” is absolute conformity to Christ

Romans 8:29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

2. We were originally created in the image of God
3. Sin has severely defaced the image of God in us
4. Christ came to recover that image... to transform us from grotesque rebels, twisted and made appalling by our sin... to total perfection in the pattern of Christ
 - a. Perfectly conformed to Christ in his MIND... thinking his thoughts, totally agreeing with Christ in every major and minor point of doctrine
 - b. Perfectly conformed to Christ in his HEART... loving what He loves and hating what He hates

- c. Perfectly conformed to Christ in his EMOTIONS... feeling about everything what Christ feels
 - d. Perfectly conformed to Christ in his WILL... choosing what Christ would choose
 - e. In the end... perfectly conformed to Christ in His RESURRECTION... in a glorious, eternally perfect spiritual body
5. This is our salvation... and it is NOT COMPLETE YET!!
 6. Many of the elect, chosen by God from before the foundation of the world, have NOT YET BEEN CONVERTED... all of the elect who have come to faith in Christ but who haven't yet died are in the JOURNEY OF SANCTIFICATION
 7. Spiritual gifts are the means by which this journey is completed

Ephesians 4:15-16 speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

B. DOCTRINE FIRST: Unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God

Ephesians 4:12-13 so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

1. "the faith" = body of doctrines
2. So the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers deliver the word of God to make people BELIEVE THE SAME THING... the same doctrine
3. Knowledge of the Son of God = experiential... deeper sense of Christ's love for us, as we discussed in Ephesians 3:14-21

C. Each Member at FBC is VITAL to the journey of salvation that we're on!

V. Applications

A. Come to Christ!

1. The spiritual gifts are given to the church... not to outsiders
2. Part of the joy of this ministry is to see lost people repent and believe in Jesus for the forgiveness of their sins
3. If you do, you will also receive the gift of the Holy Spirit

B. Church: I've given you applications throughout

1. Understand what spiritual gifts are... special abilities that Christ gives to build up the church
2. Celebrate the idea of Christ's sovereign wisdom and power in giving these gifts... they are given according to the MEASURE of Christ
 - a. So trust in His decision and wisdom
 - b. Don't be arrogant about gifts you do have
 - c. Don't be jealous of gifts you don't have
3. Embrace the idea that every single Christian has spiritual gifts
 - a. Look in the spiritual mirror of Ephesians 4:7, and see yourself included there!
 - b. Say to God in prayer, "Lord, I know you have pondered me already and have measured out my spiritual gifts"
 - c. Pray that God would reveal these gifts to you!!
4. Discover what your gifts are
 - a. How? By trying lots of various ministries in the church
 - b. Try evangelistic ministries... try ministries in the city... try mercy ministries... try counseling other Christians...

Illustration: balsa-wood airplanes, with wings set to fly straight and far, or wings set to do barrel rolls... not till it is thrown can you tell... GET SOME WIND UNDER YOUR WINGS by doing a wide variety of ministries... Get feedback from the church... listen for encouragement... "When you pray, I am so blessed by your faith!" Look for what you delight to do!!

Spiritual gifts are a matter of FLOURISHING, not FUNCTIONING... look for things that you FLOURISH at

C. Use Your Gifts Regularly!

Romans 12:6-8 We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man's gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. ⁷ If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; ⁸ if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.

Nike slogan: JUST DO IT!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

1. “Every member ministry”
2. We need “all hands on deck!”
3. You need to use your spiritual gifts... and the Body need it too
4. Ask yourself: what is my ministry? What do I do regularly to build up the Body of Christ?
5. More next week!