

Copyright © Two Journeys Ministry

Andrew M. Davis

Sermon Notes

www.twojourneys.org

Please use in accordance with the copyright policy found at twojourneys.org

Spiritual Gifts Build the Body of Christ toward Perfection

Ephesians 4:7-16

What is God doing in the world? And what are you doing in the world?

For Christians, these two questions come together magnificently! God has a majestically glorious work that he is doing—building the church of Jesus Christ to final perfection. He has a specific role for you to play in that glorious work.

For the second week, we are going to contemplate the powerful doctrine of SPIRITUAL GIFTS... one of the most astonishing truths imaginable, if you take the time to ponder it scripturally. Christ has specifically pondered YOU, and has made you and shaped you and prepared you to play a specific role in his glorious church. And you MUST play that role if you are to grow into maturity, and if the church as a whole is to grow into final perfection. Spiritual gift ministry is not optional. This is not window dressing... this is not some extra frill in the redemptive plan of God. It is ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL that each part does its work.

So this text is staring you in the face... like a mirror. And you are called to study your life... study the way you spend your time, the way you engage the church, other Christians. ARE YOU FULFILLING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT PURPOSE???

Gaining context and perspective:

Ephesians 1-3: God's awesome salvation plan from a 50,000 foot altitude...

Overarching goal: the unity of all things in Christ (Ephesians 1:9-10)

God's saving purpose toward that end:

Election before the foundation of the world

Predestination in love

Adoption as sons

Redemption, forgiveness of sins thru

The Blood of Christ, shed on the cross

Grace, wisdom, understanding

Included in Christ by hearing the gospel

Faith

Sealing of the Spirit

Understanding of the greatness of God's power and the glory of heaven

Understanding of the terrible plight we were in

The destruction of barriers, dividing wall...

One new man

Understanding of the glorious spiritual temple being built

Paul's ministry as Apostle to the Gentiles

The "unsearchable riches of Christ"

Paul's prayer for the Ephesians: a grasp of the infinite love of Christ

Ephesians 4-6: Summed up in one verse... 4:1

Ephesians 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Last week: Ephesians 4:2-6 Strong sense 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.

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

Then... "**BUT...**" = DIVERSITY... spiritual gifts, specialization

Vs. 7 "to each one" = universality of spiritual gifts... EVERY SINGLE CHRISTIAN has a spiritual gift

"grace has been given" = spiritual gifts are amazing grace from God to the church (both to us individually and to the church corporately)

"as Christ apportioned it" = according to the wise measure of Christ; not all gifts given equally, but all gifts given intentionally, as the fruit of careful consideration by Christ of each of us... WHAT GIFT YOU GET, and HOW MUCH OF THAT GIFT... a wise measurement

Vs. 8-10: Paul quotes Psalm 68 and applies it to Christ... these spiritual gifts are part of Christ's resurrection victory!!

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.)

Vs. 11: "He gave some to be Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers..." = examples of spiritual gifted servants that Christ has given to the church, to build the church up to maturity; also, all of those gift have one thing in common: THE WORD of GOD!! They are a delivery system for the Word of God

Vs. 12: "to prepare God's people for works of service so that the Body of Christ will be built up" = as the Word primes the pump, the people do the works, and as the people do the works, the body of Christ is built up

Goal... perfect conformity to Christ

SPIRITUAL GIFTS are special abilities given by Christ through the Holy Spirit to individual Christians to enable them to build the Church to spiritual maturity...

Flourish not function:

Like the wind at the perfect angle to the way your sails are set

I. God's Goal: Perfect Conformity to Christ (vs. 13, 15)

- A. Concept: Hostile, fractured human race brought into perfect UNITY by CONFORMITY to Christ

Ephesians 4:13 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.

The word "mature" is sometimes translated "perfect"... the Greek of verse 13 is fascinating...

^{ESV} Ephesians 4:13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ

^{CSB} Ephesians 4:13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, growing into a mature man with a stature measured by Christ's fullness.

“to a mature man” = the concept of a male who has grown from infancy through toddlerhood, to boyhood, through the teen years, to early manhood... finally to MATURE MANHOOD

[Paul chose a strongly masculine image here... perhaps to link back to Jesus’ own development to perfect humanity

Luke 2:52 And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

Fully mature in ALL RESPECTS... mature in mind, heart, body, relationships with other people and with God

Unity comes by our increasing CONFORMITY to Christ as we grow more and more like Him

Also, verse 14-15...

Ephesians 4:14-15 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

A strong picture of growth to maturity... not an infant, but a mature adult...

Unity by conformity to the Head... we will all be made LIKE CHRIST... LIKE HIM

B. Unity: Already Seen this Again and Again

1. First time: Ephesians 1:10

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

2. Again in Ephesians 2:14-15

Ephesians 2:14-15 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵ by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace

3. Strongly in Ephesians 4:3-6

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.

4. Based on Trinitarian unity: John 17

John 17:20-23 I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: ²³ I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity

Literally... may they be made PERFECT into ONE

This is God's final goal for the elect from all nations on earth

Think of how much churning division and strife and conflict and warfare there is on planet earth

Isaiah 57:20-21 But the wicked are like the tossing sea, which cannot rest, whose waves cast up mire and mud. ²¹ "There is no peace," says my God, "for the wicked."

Galatians 5:19-21 The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: ... hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions ²¹ and envy

But heaven is a WORLD OF LOVE... and WORLD of perfect peace and unity... and of WORSHIP for God and for Christ:

Revelation 5:13 Then I heard every creature in heaven and on earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all that is in them, singing: "To him who sits on the throne and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!"

This is what God wants... UNITY... and he gets it by working CONFORMITY to Christ

C. Conformity to Christ

1. God's original intention

Genesis 1:26 Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness

2. Sin fatally marred the image of God

Genesis 6:5 The LORD saw how great man's wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time.

3. God willed a salvation BACK INTO the image of God

Ephesians 4:24 ... the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

4. Predestined for it... Romans 8:29

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.³⁰ And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.

5. Also Ephesians 1

Ephesians 1:4-5 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love⁵ he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ

6. By all the elect coming to perfect conformity to Christ we will also be perfectly ONE IN HIM

D. Positionally Conformed... but not Practically Conformed

1. At the moment of justification, we were made immediately perfect POSITIONALLY... by faith, God sees us as perfect in Christ

Hebrews 10:14 by one sacrifice he has made perfect forever those who are being made holy.

2. BUT because of indwelling sin, we still have a great deal of growing to do in our salvation

Romans 7:21-25 So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me.²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law;²³ but I see another law at work in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within my members.²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body of death?²⁵ Thanks be to God-- through Jesus Christ our Lord!

3. He wants ALL THE LOST ELECT rescued out of Satan's dark Kingdom by evangelism and missions

4. Then, he wants all the JUSTIFIED ELECT to grow more and more into Christlikeness by sanctification... by growth in the Word

5. Spiritual gifts are God's means to achieve this amazing building of the Body of Christ

E. What is Perfect Conformity to Christ

1. **Conformity of the MIND**: to think what Christ thinks about everything... to agree with Jesus about everything there is to think about; to ponder what

Christ ponders, to think only what is TRUE, NOBLE, RIGHT, PURE, LOVELY, ADMIRABLE... all the time

2. **Conformity of the HEART**: to love what Christ loves and hate what Christ hates with the same intensity with which he loves and hates... perfectly conformed to Christ's heart in everything... yearning for what he yearns for, celebrating what he celebrates, willing what he wills, rejecting what he rejects
3. **Conformity of the BODY**: to have a resurrection body as glorious as his...radiantly shining with the glory of God; completely free from all corruption and from death itself

Philippians 3:21 will transform our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body.

1 Corinthians 15:42-44 So will it be with the resurrection of the dead. The body that is sown is perishable, it is raised imperishable; ⁴³ it is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; ⁴⁴ it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If there is a natural body, there is also a spiritual body.

1 Corinthians 15:49 And just as we have borne the likeness of the earthly man, so shall we bear the likeness of the man from heaven.

PERFECT CONFORMITY TO CHRIST... in every way!

F. Who? ALL THE ELECT... from every tribe, language, people, nation... all over the world... that every elect male and female will be brought to perfect conformity to Christ and therefore to each other... NOT A SINGLE ONE LOST!!

G. When? Progressively now... perfected only in heaven

II. God's Word Gives Life and Growth (vs. 11-16)

A. Throughout this Passage... the Word of God is Central

1. All things come about because of the Word of God's power
2. It is by the word of God that the universe was created and continues to exist

Psalm 33:6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made, their starry host by the breath of his mouth.

Hebrews 1:3 The Son is the radiance of God's glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.

3. It was by the word of the gospel that salvation first comes to every individual sinner

Ephesians 1:13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit

4. As we've noted, the five gifted offices initially mentioned in this passage all have the WORD OF GOD in common:

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

5. The Apostles and Prophets were the original source of the inerrant Word of God
6. Evangelists bring the word of the gospel to distant places and to people who have never heard it or not yet believed it... the evangelists TRAVEL with the word of God and bring it to the people
7. BUT THEN, the pastors and teachers settle in and TEACH the word of God over years and years to bring about full maturity in Christ

B. The Immediate Effect of Faithful Teaching: Works of Service Done by the People

Ephesians 4:11-12 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹² to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

1. The Word of God is faithfully taught and shepherded by the pastors and teachers in verse 11...
2. SO THAT God's people (the saints) are PREPARED to do works of service

Note that God prepares BOTH SIDES of the equation in this WORKS:

He goes ahead of us and prepares the works for us to do

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.

But he uses pastors and teachers to prepare US to DO THE GOOD WORKS!!

As you hear good teaching from the Book of Ephesians, you will be prepared to do WORKS OF SERVICE... or literally "the work of ministry"

STOP: what is your ministry?? Do you have a regular pattern of ministry that you are doing consistently?

3. The result of the work of ministry BY ALL GOD'S PEOPLE: the Body of Christ is BUILT UP

- a. Amazing mixed image both in Ephesians 2 and Ephesians 4
- b. Ephesians 2 pictures the church as a BUILDING, a spiritual temple... the verb used for its development is GROWTH (a biological image applied to an architectural metaphor)

Ephesians 2: 21 ... in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.

- c. But here we have a BIOLOGICAL metaphor for the church—the BODY OF CHRIST—in which an architectural verb is used

Ephesians 4:12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ

- i) A temple that grows like a plant, and a body that is built like a building!!
- ii) How complex and beautiful is the doctrine of the church

C. Goal: Doctrinal Unity

Ephesians 4:13 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. Unity in “THE FAITH”

- a. The faith is a body of doctrines... a set of truths that we believe
- b. This body of doctrines is delivered to us in the Word of God
- c. As the Apostles and Prophets wrote the scripture, as the evangelists carried it to the distant reaches of the inhabited globe and won souls to initial faith in Christ, as pastors and teachers settle in and disciple the people in the scriptures, they are little by little understanding the FAITH of Christianity... the complex body of doctrines—of milk and of meat—that will make for full spiritual maturity
- d. It is a DOCTRINAL image that Paul gives here... unity that comes from the steady diet of the Word of God:

Romans 12:2 Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

- e. As that is happening to everyone in the church, the church is more and more unified...

2. Unity in the faith **AND IN THE KNOWLEDGE of the Son of God**

- a. This is doctrinally based but also experiential as we saw in Ephesians 3

Ephesians 3:18-19 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-- that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

- b. Right teaching leads to DEEPER FELLOWSHIP with Christ

- c. Doctrine about Jesus leads to love for Jesus

- 3. Result of this steady stream of good teaching: WORKS OF SERVICE that result in MATURITY in Christ

Ephesians 4:13 attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

- 4. Paul's eye is on BOTH the individual Christians AND the overall BODY OF CHRIST... the WHOLE grows to maturity as the INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS grow to maturity

D. Doctrinal Maturity Clearly in View in Verse 14

Ephesians 4:14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.

- 1. Paul is very much focusing on the doctrinal maturity of the Body of Christ here!
- 2. The contrast is between a doctrinal INFANT that is tossed by the undulating waves of false teaching... buffeted by the howling, gusty, and swirling winds of false doctrine... and a stable, strong, doctrinally MATURE Christian, that is deeply rooted in the truth of scripture and easily sniffs out false teachers
- 3. Satan is constantly assaulting the church with false teaching... their smooth talk and flattery can be effective in deceiving the minds of naïve people
- 4. The picture is one of instability... to the doctrinally immature, sketchy things SOUND PLAUSIBLE, because they don't have the discernment and know enough of the scriptures to refute the false doctrine
- 5. Paul mentions the CUNNING and CRAFTINESS of men in their DECEITFUL SCHEMING... human false teachers are diabolically skilled in winning the immature and unstable to themselves
- 6. BUT behind all of this is the cunning, crafty, scheming DEVIL HIMSELF

2 Corinthians 2:11 in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.

7. Paul is clearly presenting the gradual upbuilding of the church in terms of DOCTRINAL MATURITY... transformed by the renewing of their minds by the Word of God
8. The mature are able to resist the false doctrines of the age:

Titus 1:9 [An elder] must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.

Revelation 2:2 I know that you cannot tolerate wicked men, that you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them false.

9. DOCTRINAL MATURITY leads to TOTAL CONFORMITY to Christ... So also verse 15:

E. Speaking the Truth in Love

Ephesians 4:15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.

1. Many take this verse out of context and use it to refer to faithfully giving a hard message to confront someone living in sin, but doing it gently
2. Other verses do teach that:

Galatians 6:1 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted.

3. But “the TRUTH” here in context means MATURE DOCTRINE... maturity in THE FAITH... the whole body of Christian truth
4. Yet... right doctrine is NOT ENOUGH, as important as it is... it must result in a heart transformation, LOVE... love for God and love for others...

1 Corinthians 8:1 Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

1 Corinthians 8:2 The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know.

5. Doctrine should result in love... just as all spiritual gifts should be done in love

1 Timothy 1:5 Now the goal of our instruction is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith.

1 Corinthians 13:1-6 If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but have not love, I gain nothing. ⁴ ¶ Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

III. God's People: Spiritually Gifted to Serve (vs. 16)

A. All This Maturity Happens as each Member Uses His/Her Gifts

Ephesians 4:16 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. The Process of Actually Using Your Gift is the Matrix of Your Own Growth

C. AND Your Exercise of Your Gift is Essential to Other People's Growth

D. Paul Strongly Emphasizes Human Works Here

1. He knows that God builds the church

Psalm 127:1 Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain.

2. He knows that Christ builds the church

Matthew 16:18 I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

3. But yet, he says the church GROWS AND BUILDS ITSELF UP IN LOVE

4. AS EACH PART DOES ITS WORK

5. Our spiritual gifts are essential to this growth

E. How Spiritual Gifts Build the Body

- a. As this stream of good teaching is going on, the entire Body of Christ is mobilized to do their spiritual gift ministries

- b. As those ministries are happening, the church is growing more and more like Jesus

- i) As those with leadership gifts exercise them, they organize God's people in fruitful outreaches to win the lost in their community... the leaders lead out boldly and give courage to the members of the Body

of Christ to witness for Jesus... this wins the elect lost in the community

- ii) As people with gifts of hospitality use their gifts, they provide a warm, inviting matrix for fellowship, for bible instruction, for friendship, for community
- iii) As people with gifts of service exercise them, the thousand behind the scenes details needed for a worship service or a mission trip are done with great joy and detailed effort... as people with humble gifts of service use their gifts, they attend to details of caring for the sick, or meeting the needs of the poor in the church... think about the first deacons in Acts 6 who organized the food distribution to the Greek-speaking widows... that took skill, organizing, diplomacy, and hard work... and it enhanced the unity of the Body
- iv) As people with gifts of prayer exercise their gift, often in secret where no one but God can see or hear, God answers prayers and amazing things happen: doors of ministry open in the community, government officials grant visas for mission trips, school principals grant permission to church plants to use their gym for worship on Sundays, hardened neighbors get softened... ALL IN ANSWER TO FAITH-FILLED, PREVAILING PRAYER
- v) As people with gifts of generous giving use their gifts, the financial needs of the vocational pastors are met, enabling them to give their full-time to preaching, teaching, prayer, and leadership; as the givers give, buildings are built, missionaries are sent out, medical bills are paid, literature is printed
- vi) As people with gifts of counselling use their gifts, broken marriages are healed, frustrated parents are taught how to raise teens, suicidal lost people are comforted with the gospel, depressed Christians are pointed to Christ
- vii) As people with gifts of discernment and wisdom use their gifts, the church is able to go in a wise direction strategically for reaching their community with the gospel; also young married couples are given wise counsel for key decisions they are making about their future

F. As all these WORKS OF SERVICE, this work of the ministry is done, the WHOLE CHURCH GROWS UP into maturity in Christ

IV. God's Call on You: Discover, Develop, Deploy Your Gifts

A. We Must Apply this to ourselves!!!

B. Non-Christians: trust in the gospel of Jesus Christ!

1. Spiritual gifts are given to Christians to help build up the Body of Christ
2. If you are not yet a Christian, you are on the OUTSIDE of this glorious building project... you are excluded, under the judgment of God for your sins...
3. God sent His Son into the world to die on the cross for sinners like you and me
4. TRUST IN CHRIST! God raised him from the dead on the third day to give eternal life to all who call on his name
5. If you call on his name, he will forgive you... and he will give you the gift of the Holy Spirit... you will be immediately involved in building the Church by your gifts!!

C. FBC Members... DO YOU HAVE A MINISTRY?

1. Is there a regular pattern of service in your life?
2. Are you devoting yourself to the use of your spiritual gifts?
3. LOOK IN THE MIRROR:

James 1:22-25 Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. ²³ Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like a man who looks at his face in a mirror ²⁴ and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. ²⁵ But the man who looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues to do this, not forgetting what he has heard, but doing it-- he will be blessed in what he does.

D. Three Key Words on Spiritual Gifts: Discover, Develop, and Deploy

1. **Discover** your spiritual gifts
 - a. Look at the doctrine of spiritual gifts here in Ephesians 4, and understand that, if you are a Christian, you have a contribution God wants you to make... he's given you a "gift package" to use for the upbuilding of his church
 - b. Look at the various lists of spiritual gifts in the NT: Romans 12 lists some, 1 Corinthians 12 lists some... go online to get a comprehensive list of what the gifts are
 - c. Begin praying about your gifts and what they are
 - d. Romans 12:1-8 is the key passage in the Bible on discovering your spiritual gift
 - i) First: live your whole life in view of the mercies of the gospel

- ii) Second: present your body to God as a living sacrifice
- iii) Third: make sure you are putting to death any known sin... “holy and pleasing to God”
- iv) Fourth: do not think in a worldly way about your life... do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world
- v) Fifth: be transformed by the renewing of your mind
- vi) Sixth: you will then be able to TEST and APPROVE what God’s will is for you... his “good, pleasing, and perfect will”...
- vii) Seventh: that involves SPIRITUAL GIFTS (for that is the next thing Paul talks about in Romans 12: 4-8
- viii) Eighth: do not think too highly of yourself
- ix) Ninth: THINK OF YOURSELF WITH SOBER JUDGMENT
 - (i) Remember: spiritual gifts are those areas on ministry in which you FLOURISH, not merely FUNCTION
 - x) Tenth: DO MINISTRIES... try things out... see what you love to do, what you’re good at; get feedback from other Christians who know you well
- e. This is how you DISCOVER your spiritual gifts... study, and try things out!

2. **Develop** your spiritual gift:

- a. get GOOD at it!!
- b. Study it!!
- c. Key passages:

1 Timothy 4:14-15 Do not neglect your gift, which was given you through a prophetic message when the body of elders laid their hands on you. ¹⁵ Be diligent in these matters; give yourself wholly to them, so that everyone may see your progress.

2 Timothy 1:6 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.

- d. Preachers and teachers of the word of God should get continually better at preaching and teaching by studying the art

e. So also should those with the gift of giving!! Read Randy Alcorn's books on stewardship and become EXPERT givers

f. So also those with gifts of hospitality, or leadership, or music, or prayer... anything we're good at we can become EVEN BETTER!!

3. **Deploy** your gift: (that means USE it!!)

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.

Parable of the talents:

Matthew 25:18 But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money.

Matthew 25:24-27 "Then the man who had received the one talent came. 'Master,' he said, 'I knew that you are a hard man, harvesting where you have not sown and gathering where you have not scattered seed. ²⁵ So I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.' ²⁶ "His master replied, 'You wicked, lazy servant! So you knew that I harvest where I have not sown and gather where I have not scattered seed? ²⁷ Well then, you should have put my money on deposit with the bankers, so that when I returned I would have received it back with interest.

Every member of this church should have a regular spiritual gift ministry

If you withhold your spiritual gift and don't use it, you will NOT GROW as you should, and neither will the church

If you use it, you will be BLESSED by growth now and REWARDS on judgment day:

Hebrews 6:10-12 God is not unjust; he will not forget your work and the love you have shown him as you have helped his people and continue to help them. ¹¹ We want each of you to show this same diligence to the very end, in order to make your hope sure. ¹² We do not want you to become lazy, but to imitate those who through faith and patience inherit what has been promised.