

**I. Introduction and review.**

**II. Think seriously about your spiritual gifts. v. 3**

**A. What is a spiritual gift?**

1. Not merely a natural talent, but a special God-given ability given for ministry.
2. Every believer has at least one spiritual gift. I Co. 12:7 I Pe. 4:10
3. God bestows different gifts and different degrees of gifts upon different people.
4. Make a sober assessment of the gifts God has given you.

**B. Don't think too highly of yourself. v. 3a Gal. 6:3**

1. Those who are especially gifted can be tempted to exaggerated self-esteem.
2. Pride robs God of His glory and harms the body. I Co. 3:3-4 III John 9
3. Your gift is sovereignly bestowed by God. It has nothing to do with your merit!  
v. 3c, 6 I Co. 12:6-7,18 4:7 3:5-7 John 15:5
4. Paul recognizes his Apostolic gift is only by God's grace. v. 3a 1:5 15:15 I Ti. 1:12f

**C. Don't think too little of the gifts God has given you. v. 3b I Co. 12:15-16**

1. Those who have the less visible gifts may be tempted to denigrate themselves.
2. Those who undervalue their gifts tend to underuse them.
3. Don't envy the gifts of others.
4. God distributes gifts according to His purpose. I Co. 12:18
5. You are a steward of your gift. Lu. 12:48

**III. Understand how your gifts function in the body (church). v. 4-5**

**A. The body is an important metaphor for the church. I Co. 10:17 12:27 Col. 1:24 2:19 3:15 Eph. 1:23 4:4,12,15,16,25**

**B. God has made us purposefully diverse.**

1. There is a great diversity of grace gifts among God's people.
2. Every believer has a unique function in the body.
3. We should enjoy the diversity among us.
4. There is even diversity among those who have a particular gift.
5. I believe that there is also a diversity among local churches.

**C. God has designed our diversity to organically unite us. I Co. 12:12-18**

1. None of us has all of the gifts.
2. None of us is independent of the others.
3. The body functions as a whole.
4. Your gift is given so that you might edify (build up) the body. I Co. 12:7 14:12
5. Our interdependence reinforces humility.

**D. You must be a committed member of a local body in order to function properly.**

1. If you aren't in a local church, you cannot be built up by the gifts of others.
2. If you are not a member, your gift is not being used to edify others.
3. Is church membership biblical? Heb. 13:17 I Th. 5:12-13 I Co. 12:12
4. Church membership alone is not enough.

**E. These truths have implications for how the church is to be run: plurality and opportunity. I Pet. 2:5 I Co. 14:26,40 Eph. 5:19 Col. 3:16**

#### IV. Exercise your spiritual gift. v. 6-8

##### **A. General principles regarding the use of gifts.**

1. Devote yourself to exercising your particular gift(s). I Pet. 4:10-11 I Ti. 4:14-16
2. Don't waste your time trying to use other people's gifts.
3. Each gift has its particular pitfalls.
4. How many gifts are there? The lists in Scripture are exemplary, not exhaustive.

##### **B. Revelatory gifts were foundational in the early church. v. 6b Eph. 2:20**

1. Prophets served as God's mouthpieces, through whom He revealed infallible truth. Ex. 4:16 7:1 Dt. 18:18-22 13:1f Eph. 2:20 4:11 I Co. 12:28 14:1 Acts 11:27-28 21:9f Prophets were to prophesy in accordance with the faith. I Th. 5:19-22 I Co. 14:29
2. Revelatory gifts ceased when the Scriptural canon was closed and the Apostles passed off the scene. Eph. 2:20 Heb. 2:3-4 II Co. 12:12

##### **C. Some of you have gifts of utterance.**

1. Teaching. v. 7b II Ti. 1:11 2:2 Acts 15:35 Mt. 28:19-20 Js. 3:1f
2. Exhortation. v. 8a Acts 4:36 15:31 13:15 14:21f I Ti. 4:13 Heb. 10:24-25 II Ti. 4:2

##### **D. Many of you have gifts of helping.**

1. Serving. v. 7a 15:25-27 Acts 6:1f I Ti. 3:8-13 I Pet. 4:11b I Co. 12:28 Eph.
2. Single-minded giving. v. 8b 15:27 I Jo. 3:17-18 Acts 2:45 4:32f 5:1f II Co. 8-9
3. Diligent leadership/administration. v. 8c I Th. 5:12 I Ti. 3:4-5 5:17 I Co. 12:28
4. Cheerful mercy. v. 8d Pr. 14:21,31 22:8 17:22 Mt. 6:3 Js. 1:27 II Co. 9:7

#### V. Concluding applications:

##### **A. Each of the gifts is exemplified in our Lord Jesus Christ.**

1. He is your Prophet. Deut. 18:18-22 Mt. 13:57 21:11
2. He is your Servant. Isa. 52:13 53:11 42:1 49:1-7 Mt. 20:28 Phil. 2:7
3. He is your Teacher. John 13:13
4. He is your *Paraclete* and He sends the Comforter. I John 2:1 John 14:16,26
5. He has given Himself for you. II Co. 8:9
6. He is your Leader/Head. Col. 1:18 2:19
7. He has shown you mercy. 11:30-32 Mt. 25:31f Lu. 4:18-19

##### **B. Your gift comes as a result of Christ's victorious work and when you use it, you are a minister of His grace. Eph. 4:7f**

##### **C. How can you know what your spiritual gift is?**

1. Pray: Tell God you don't care what you do, as long as He is using you. Ps. 84:10
2. What kind of ministry do you desire?
3. Serve where there is a need. Try various areas of ministry.
4. Ask others to confirm your gifts.

#### Discussion questions for family worship.

1. What is a spiritual gift?
2. Why does God give spiritual gifts?
3. What are two broad categories of gifts?
4. Which gifts are no longer given? Why?
5. How can you know what your spiritual gift is?
6. Why shouldn't you be proud of your gift?
7. Why shouldn't you be ashamed of your gift?
8. How is the church like a body?
9. What harm results from people trying to serve in areas in which they are not gifted?
10. What is your spiritual gift? How are you using it?