

Strawbridge: Spiritual Gift Survey

Spiritual Gifts by Passage

Romans 12 <i>charisma</i>	1 Corinthians 12 <i>pneumatikos/ charisma</i>	Ephesians 4 <i>doma</i>	1 Peter 4 <i>charisma</i>	Misc. Passages
exhortation	administration	apostle	speaking	celibacy
giving	apostle	prophets	servicing	hospitality
leadership	discernment	evangelists		martyrdom
mercy	faith	pastors		missionary
prophecy	healings	teachers		voluntary poverty
service	helps			
teaching	knowledge			
	miracles			
	prophecy			
	teaching			
	tongues			
	tongues interpretation			
	wisdom			

1 Peter 4 Categories

Speaking Gifts	Serving Gifts
exhortation	giving
knowledge	administration
wisdom	discernment
leadership	faith
prophecy	healings
teaching	helps
tongues	service
tongues interpretation	miracles
apostle	mercy
evangelism	celibacy
pastor	hospitality
	martyrdom
	missionary
	voluntary poverty

Strawbridge: Spiritual Gift Survey

Spiritual Gifts (01) - Gifts of the Spirit

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. 2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. 4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord. 6 There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. 12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:1-12

Several passages in the New Testament address gifts (Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Ephesians 4, and 1 Peter 4). The *charismata*, related to *charis* (grace) are "grace-gifts." The list of these is not exhaustive: administration, apostleship, discernment, faith, healings, helps, knowledge, miracles, prophecy, teaching, tongues, tongues interpretation, wisdom, exhortation, giving, leadership, mercy, prophecy, service, teaching, apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers (some say pastor-teacher), celibacy, hospitality, martyrdom, missionary, and possibly voluntary poverty.

Are These Gifts of the One Holy Spirit? (vv 1-5) - They have been led astray regarding spiritual gifts, just as pagan idol worship led them astray. The connection between this topic and vs 3 is not immediately apparent. Perhaps a "hyper-spiritual" fanatical leader had been spewing falsehoods about Jesus. It seems Paul is bringing them back down to the basic point: this is how it looks when it's the Spirit and this is how it doesn't look. Therefore, though gifts vary, there is only one Holy Spirit, one Lord, one God. God doesn't contradict Himself. He is not "inspiring" people to curse Jesus.

If They Are Gifts of the Spirit, They Must Build the Body? (vv 6-13) - Now the emphasis is on the purpose of gifts of the Spirit: the common good. The emphasis comes through in vs 12-13: "For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit." This theme of edification of the Body rather than individual experience continues through chapters 12-14.

Which Gifts Are Given by the Spirit? (vv 8-10)? The term for gift here is *charismata*, related to *charis* (grace). "Grace-gift" is a reasonable translation. The list in 1 Corinthians 12 is for Paul's purposes here in terms of their correction. It is not complete. We have in 1 Cor. 12-14: administration, apostleship, discernment, faith, healings, helps, knowledge, miracles, prophecy, teaching, tongues, tongues interpretation, and wisdom. In Romans 12 there is exhortation, giving, leadership, mercy, prophecy, service, and teaching. In Ephesians 4 gives the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers (some say pastor-teacher). In 1 Peter 4, speaking and serving are mentioned. Other texts indicate other gifts also, such as celibacy, hospitality, martyrdom, missionary, and possibly voluntary poverty.

Strawbridge: Spiritual Gift Survey

Spiritual Gifts (02) - Love

If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. 4 Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, 5 does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, 6 does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; 7 bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. 8 Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. 9 For we know in part and we prophesy in part; 10 but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. 11 When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. 12 For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. 13 But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love. 1 Corinthians 13:1-13

The Prerequisite of Love (vss 1-3) - All believers love this marvelous passage; it is beautiful. Though the context does not usually shine through in the way this passage is used (e.g., at weddings), Paul is addressing spiritual gifts and division in a congregation. Love is here urged toward other believers. The nature of this “love” is not emotion-based, or romantic, or even natural-familial. It is *agape* which is to love without reference to the object of that love’s worthiness (Rom. 5:8). In vss 1-3 he conveys the contrast of love and spiritual gifts used poorly in five conditional sentences: If I speak in tongues; If I have the gift of prophecy; if I have all faith; if I give all my possessions; if I give my body to be burned. But without love any such gift is nothing. *Love is a prerequisite for any spiritual fruit, regardless of the gift or sacrifice.*

The Portrait of Love (vss 4-7) - While we may feel as a result of receiving this love, it consists in actions, not feelings. There are 15 verbs that are used to paint a portrait of *agape*. Our translations don’t capture this, “love IS *patient*.” In the Greek text the word “patient” is a verb. “Agape suffers long” is one way to capture it, or “Love be’s-patient” (bad grammar, good theology). So it is with all these descriptions; they are actions (verbs). Here’s a more literal translation to bring this out: “The Agape suffers long and acts kindly; the Agape does not act jealously; the Agape does to brag or act arrogantly, act inappropriately, seek its own, does not provoke, does not reckon resentment, does rejoice at unrighteousness, but rejoices in truth, accepts all, believes all, hopes all, waits upon all. The Agape never falls.” This paints the picture vividly. This is the picture: “On a hill far away stood an old rugged cross...” “When I survey the wondrous cross on which the Prince of glory died.”

The Priority of Love (vss 8-13) - In the final section, the temporal is contrasted with the eternal. Because of their pride and strife, the various gifts bringing division, are put in their place. These things will pass away. Even faith and hope will pass away. Prophecy will be done away; tongues will cease of themselves (middle voice); knowledge will be done away. When the “perfect” comes the “partial” will be done away. “For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face” (v 12). Then we will see “face to face.” Paul thus calls them to maturity, a frequent

Strawbridge: Spiritual Gift Survey

theme (14:20, Eph. 4:13-16, Phil. 3, Col. 1:28, Heb. 5:14). Stop fighting like children over toys. Remember what is at stake eternally. The term “perfect” (v 10) (*teleios*) means, *mature*, and it is usually translated that way when it applies to people (e.g., 2:6, 14:20). Note v. 11, “When I was a child . . . when I became a man.” If we link this passage as parallel with Ephesians 4, a good case can be made that as the Church matures beyond the foundation of the apostles and prophets and is no longer tossed around by every wind of doctrine, some gifts will cease and others may be morphed into different form. Agape is what we should strive to do. Love is the greatest because it is the final form of the proper use of the temporal good gifts. Love continues eternally.

Spiritual Gifts (03) - A Theology of Gifts, Tongues, and Miracles

Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy. 2 For one who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God; for no one understands, but in his spirit he speaks mysteries. . . . Brethren, do not be children in your thinking; yet in evil be infants, but in your thinking be mature. 21 In the Law it is written, “BY MEN OF STRANGE TONGUES AND BY THE LIPS OF STRANGERS I WILL SPEAK TO THIS PEOPLE, AND EVEN SO THEY WILL NOT LISTEN TO ME,” says the Lord. 22 So then tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers; but prophecy is for a sign, not to unbelievers but to those who believe. 23 Therefore if the whole church assembles together and all speak in tongues, and ungifted men or unbelievers enter, will they not say that you are mad? 24 But if all prophesy, and an unbeliever or an ungifted man enters, he is convicted by all, he is called to account by all; 25 the secrets of his heart are disclosed; and so he will fall on his face and worship God, declaring that God is certainly among you. 1 Cor. 14:1 . . . 20-25

A Theology of the Gifts - Several passages address gifts and list various gifts (Rom. 12, 1 Cor. 12-14, Eph. 4, and 1 Pet. 4). In 1 Corinthians, gifts are the source contention. To correct this, in ch. 12, the emphasis was on unity through the Spirit in the Body: 1) Though gifts vary, there is only one Holy Spirit, one Lord. 2) Gifts are to edify the Body, rather than for individual selfish conceit or ecstatic experience. 3) These Spirit utilizes the *charismata*, “grace-gifts” for building up others. In ch. 13, the contrast is made between temporary gifts and abiding love (*agape*). Love is a necessary motivation for the right function of gifts. Love acts, rather than feels. Love abides forever, but as the Church matures (Eph. 2/4) at least some gifts will be “done away” or “cease of themselves” (1 Cor. 13:8-10). Paul exhorts: be mature and act in love toward the Body.

A Theology of Tongues - In vss 20ff, we find a lesser explored part of the study of tongues. The background to tongues involves the history of Babel/Babylon. Pentecost (Acts 2) is the new creation undoing of Babel when 17 languages (symbolic of the nations) hear the gospel. There are three instances of the rise and fall of Babel/Babylon: 1) the original tower of Babel (Gen. 11) when as a judgment, God “confused their language.” (v7); 2) Babylon under idolatrous Belshazzar sees the “handwriting on the wall” as is judged: “your kingdom has been divided and given over to the Medes and Persians” (Dan. 5:28); and 3) the *mystery form of Babylon* in which the great Mother of harlots is destroyed (Rev. 17:5; Zech. 5:4-11). So Babylon(s) have a false religion that gets judgment via “tongues.” The final judgment of “Babylon the Great” comes through the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 14:21-22). In the context of Isaiah (quoted in 1 Cor. 14:20), we read: “Therefore, hear the word of the LORD, O scoffers, Who rule this people who are in Jerusalem” (Is. 28:14). Tongues were a sign for unbelieving Israel.

Strawbridge: Spiritual Gift Survey

A Theology of Miracles - If 1 Cor. 13 is parallel to Eph. 4:11ff, then as the Church matures beyond the foundational (apostolic revelation), some gifts will cease and others may be taken on a more permanent form. An initial miraculous Spirit work is followed with a more permanent form of the miracles. Consider the four major miracle stages in biblical history: 1) in the Exodus, Moses performs judgment signs that quite literally destroy Egypt in the process of delivering Israel. After this the Israelites destroy the Canaanite world with fewer miracles. 2) Prophets Elijah and Elisha perform resurrections. So also, Israel was told that they would go into exile and be resurrected (e.g., Jonah, Ezekiel's valley of bones, etc.). 3) In Christ's ministry with the Apostles, their miracles mirror the Levitical priestly work (uncleanness, demons, leprosy, lameness, blindness, and especially resurrection) and so the apostles preach that believers are the true temple of God and the false temple will be destroyed. 4) Likewise, the post-resurrection apostolic miracles are very prophetically based (pentecost, tongues, prophecies, Spirit-filled preaching, visions of mission activity). After the apostolic age we have the NT Scriptures in a tongue (Greek). The Church's work (including mercy ministry) especially requires the translation of the Word to the nations (Matt. 28:19f). So, it appears that the more permanent form of the prophetic gifts is the translation, preaching, and teaching of the Word of God written.

Four Affirmations about Spiritual Gifts

They are for the building of the Body, not for the individual's interior experience
They must be motivated by Christ's love
They must be used with the goal that the unbeliever will understand gospel truth
They must be genuinely miraculous/supernatural if they are "sign gifts"