

The Speaking Gifts

Session 6

(The Gifts that Ground us in God's Word)

Introduction: Do you enjoy studying the Bible? Do you enjoy talking about what God is showing in His word? Are you convinced that the Bible is God's commentary on human life? Do you feel burdened to share God's word with others? If you answered yes to any of the above, you are likely to have one of the speaking gifts.

These gifts can be expressed in other ways than speech. Although most of these gifts are presented by talking, others communicate these gifts through music, art and drama.

The speaking gifts of prophecy, exhortation, teaching and shepherding were critical to the growth and survival of the first-century church and are essential today as well. Paul explained to Timothy that those who preach and teach God's Word do so with a variety of results in mind. (Read: II Timothy 3:16-17) This verse says that "All scripture is inspired by God." What is the Word of God profitable for?

(Read: II Timothy 4:2-3) This verse says that we need to proclaim the message. Another translation says "Preach the Word." Why is it important that we proclaim or preach the Word of God? According to verse 3, there will come a day when people will not care to hear the truth. People today are buying in to the myths of men and the lies of Satan. That is why we need to keep teaching and preaching the truths found in God's Word.

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

The gift of prophecy is the ability to proclaim the Word of God boldly to build up the body and lead to the conviction of sin. (Read: Romans 12:6) In this verse, the Apostle Paul is stressing the importance of prophecy in the church. When people think of prophecy, they may think of prophets of old foretelling things to come, but today prophecy refers to powerful preaching. All people who are in Christ are eligible for the gift of prophecy. We all should be ready to share the gospel with those who need to hear. (Read: I Peter 3:15) So prophecy today is not foretelling but forthtelling which means forcefully speaking the truth. The ones who have this gift love to speak in front of large crowds.

Below are characteristics of those who have this gift:

- 1) They proclaim the Word of God with passion.
- 2) They see the message they share is one of urgency. They speak with conviction.
- 3) They do not care too much about what others think about what they say.
- 4) They speak with authority when they proclaim the Word of God.
- 5) They can often be accused of talking too much but just can't seem to help it.
- 6) They edify or build up, exhort or encourage and console or comfort. (I Corinthians 14:3)

THE GIFT OF EXHORTATION

The gift of exhortation is the ability to encourage members to be involved in and enthusiastic about the work of the Lord. (Read: Romans 12:6-8) The Apostle Paul had the gift of exhortation because he loves to encourage the churches, even while he was in prison going through persecution.

The one who has the gift of exhortation has two roles: They are a counselor and they are a comforter. The counselor is like an advocate. Jesus was known as an advocate. (Read: I John 2:1) Some think an advocate is like an attorney. Jesus is the one who speaks to the Father on our behalf or our defense. A comforter is taken from the Greek word “paraclete” or one who is called to our side to help us. In this life, we need comfort and Jesus is our comforter, but people who have the gift of exhortation are people who can make others feel comfortable.

Below are characteristics of those who have this gift:

- 1) They are ones who believe that the truths found in God’s Word work in the lives of believers.
- 2) They are more comfortable dealing with folks one-on-one or in small group settings.
- 3) They are what some may call a “spiritual cheerleader.”
- 4) They won’t just say everything is going to be okay, they will stay with you to see that a plan is in place to help you in your time of need.
- 5) They are going to stay with you during difficult circumstances.
- 6) They are more people centered than teaching or preaching centered.
- 7) They enjoy comforting those who need comfort or to encourage those who need encouragement.
- 8) This verse is their motto: (Read: Hebrews 10:23-25)