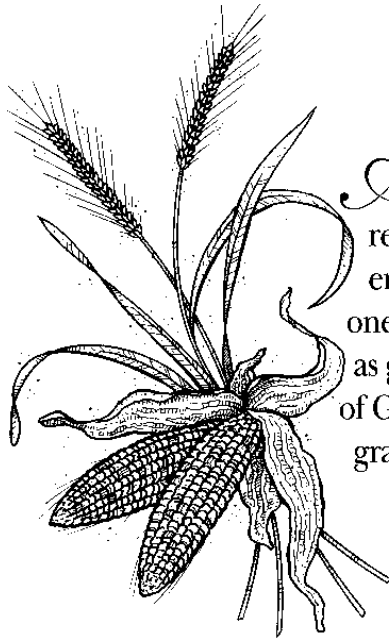


# SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS FOR ADULTS

## LESSON 9



As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace.

## DIFFERENT SUPERNATURAL GIFTS

*Scripture Texts: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, 1 Corinthians 12: 27-31; Ephesians 4:8-13; 1 Peter 4:10-11*

God's plan for accomplishing the work of the church is by gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are abilities given to Spirit-filled people.

Jesus left a commission for His church to carry out (**Matthew 28:19-20**). He sent the Holy Spirit to endue **with power from on high** to carry it out (**Luke 24:49**). We cannot do it without the skills He gives. He must give the gift and the power within us to use it. Look at each gift. How necessary is it to the work of converting sinners or nurturing saints?

**MEMORY VERSE:** *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*

—1 Corinthians 12:7

### DAILY READINGS:

- Mon.—1 Corinthians 14:1-20 Place of gift of tongues.
- Tue.—1 Corinthians 14:21-40 Orderly direction of the gift.
- Wed.—Ephesians 4:1-16 Gifts and their purpose.
- Thu.—Acts 19:1-20 Paul using gifts of the Spirit.
- Fri.—2 Timothy 1:1-11 Our gift needs stirring up.

**Devotional Reading: Romans 12:1-9** Using the gifts.

### Different Gifts, but Same Spirit

**1 Corinthians 12:4-6** By observing the church, we will agree that different people have different gifts and talents. Yet the same divine qualities of love and Truth are common to all. One Spirit gave them. One Lord over all binds into the body of Christ, one church. (See **verses 12-13**.) The gifts are abilities, not natural ones, but specially given ones, supernatural ones. Differing gifts supply all the functions necessary to the perfect working of the church. One Spirit being the source of them assures harmony. The church is compared to the human body— one body, but many parts performing different duties.

God did not plan His church to stumble along as hit-and-miss, unskilled laborers. Yet we must admit that much of it is doing just that. Where are the gifts? Are we aware of them? Do we seek them and expect to receive them? Are we working **as of the ability which God giveth**? Does each know what is his gift, his skill from God, his special place of service? Are we as individual members capable of leading a sinner to Christ? Can you imagine workers going to their place of employment not knowing what their work is? In the church, everyone has a place. **But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body . . . (verse 18)**. This is God's plan. Yet there is so little seeking for spiritual gifts. In **verse 31** Paul wrote, **But covet earnestly the best gifts**—not best in earthly gain or praise, but best in the glory they bring to God. Seek Him in prayer, consecrate fully to Him, greatly desire gifts, ask for the gifts He wants you to have. Ask His help in using them.

### Gifts Given to Profit All

**1 Corinthians 12:7-11** The gifts are a **manifestation of the Spirit**. He does the works using the person as a tool, yet not without or against the person's will in the matter. **The spirits of the prophets are subject to the**

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**prophets (1 Corinthians 14:32).** We can refuse to let Him use us as He wishes, but this would be turning from Him to sin.

Each gift is given **to profit withal**—(1) to bring spiritual growth to the person and to the rest of the church, (2) to bring sinners to the Lord, (3) to bring glory to God. Some gifts are named here. **Knowledge** is a store of facts and understanding of meanings. **Wisdom** is ability to use knowledge to lead to the best results. **Discerning of spirits** is the ability to know what spirit is controlling a person or situation. **Prophecy** is the receiving of a message from God and passing it on to others. **Tongues** are languages. The gift enables one to speak a tongue he has not learned.

Read in Acts how the church was governed by the Holy Spirit through the gifts. Where there is usurping of the Spirit's place, troubles arise. Men try to run things in their human strength. They elect or appoint people to the various positions. They make rules and form doctrines. They plan and execute those plans. All according to their own best judgment. God knew the problems of the church would come from within and provided for all the problems the church would meet.

### Specific Gifts

**1 Corinthians 12:27-31** Exercise of the gift one has makes him a skilled workman in that line. An apostle, for instance, is not made by electing a man one. He is made one by receiving gifts from the Holy Spirit and using them in the work of an apostle—planting the Gospel in new places. It is the same with all the gifts. By means of gifts, God sets people in their places in the church (**verse 18**), some **apostles . . . prophets . . . teachers . . . workers of miracles . . . healings, helps, governments . . . tongues**. It is a supernatural operation, not a human arrangement.

### Purpose of the Gifts

**Ephesians 4:8-13** When Jesus left the earth, He sent back spiritual gifts to men. Then He gave the gifted men as gifts to mankind. They were apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. What are they for? (1) **For the perfecting of the saints**—to aid the spiritual growth of every saved one from conversion to maturity in Christ. (2) **For the work of the ministry**—all the work of the church, not preaching only. (3) **For the edifying of the body of Christ** (the church), their uplift, culture, education in things of God, spiritual development. Their goal is to make the church like Christ, perfect in holiness, to bring **the unity of the faith . . . unto a perfect man . . . of the fullness of Christ**.

### Using the Gifts

**1 Peter 4:10-11** The use of our gifts is not optional with us. God does not give us a choice. The gifts are of the grace of God, given from His very life. We are but **stewards** of them. They must bring honor to God. Whatever we do in speaking or serving in any way, we must **do it as of the ability which God giveth**. That is, we must let God work through us by means of our spiritual gift and not depend upon our own natural human ability.

God not only fits a man for the work, He fits the work to the man. God does not force into unwilling servitude. He makes us **laborers together with God (1 Corinthians 3:9)**. He takes us into His confidence, calls us not servants but friends (**John 15:15**). With His gifts comes a desire to use them. In using them is a fullness of living joy unknown to one who is a mere member in a human organization. The gifts and their use are supernatural.

### JUST A THOUGHT

**The glory of God is wonderful, but the God of glory is much greater.**