

## **Generosity – Gifts and Abilities**

What if we, as the Body of Christ, began to realize just how Generous God has been in gracing our lives with Gifts and Abilities?

Ephesians 4:7 (NLT) However, he has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ.

And then began to respond as His stewards?

**This relates to ministry and mission.**

**1 Corinthians 4:1-7 (NLT)** <sup>1</sup> So **look at Apollos and me as mere servants of Christ who have been put in charge of explaining God's mysteries.** <sup>2</sup> Now, a person who is put in charge as a manager must be faithful. <sup>3</sup> As for me, it matters very little how I might be evaluated by you or by any human authority. I don't even trust my own judgment on this point. <sup>4</sup> My conscience is clear, but that doesn't prove I'm right. It is the Lord himself who will examine me and decide.

<sup>5</sup> So don't make judgments about anyone ahead of time—before the Lord returns. **For he will bring our darkest secrets to light and will reveal our private motives. Then God will give to each one whatever praise is due.**

**1 Corinthians 3:10-15 (NLT)** <sup>10</sup> Because of God's grace to me, I have laid the foundation like an expert builder. Now others are building on it. But whoever is building on this foundation must be very careful. <sup>11</sup> For no one can lay any foundation other than the one we already have—Jesus Christ. <sup>12</sup> Anyone who builds on that foundation may use a variety of materials—gold, silver, jewels, wood, hay, or straw. <sup>13</sup> **But on the judgment day, fire will reveal what kind of work each builder has done. The fire will show if a person's work has any value. <sup>14</sup> If the work survives, that builder will receive a reward. <sup>15</sup> But if the work is burned up, the builder will suffer great loss. The builder will be saved, but like someone barely escaping through a wall of flames.**

<sup>6</sup> Dear brothers and sisters, I have used Apollos and myself to illustrate what I've been saying. If you pay attention to what I have quoted from the Scriptures, you won't be proud of one of your leaders at the expense of another. <sup>7</sup> For what gives you the right to make such a judgment? **What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift?**

What do you have that God hasn't given you? And if everything you have is from God, why boast as though it were not a gift? (v7)

If you are going to realize the God sized dream that He has for you, then you must fully exercise the gifts and abilities He has already given you.

## The Ephesians Principal (Demonstrating that Gifts have purpose)

Ephesians 4:11-16 (NLT) <sup>11</sup> Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. <sup>12</sup> Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

<sup>13</sup> This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

<sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth. <sup>15</sup> Instead, we will speak the truth in love, growing in every way more and more like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church.

<sup>16</sup> He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Reciprocating stewardship

As stewards use their gifts to develop others they become stewards of their giftedness.

***"I am more than I am, but less than we are." - Tim Hansel***

***"The Power of Partnership"***

***"The spirit of interdependence will not cost us more than it's worth. On the steep slope ahead, holding hands is necessary. And it just might be that we can learn to enjoy it."***

***- Paul Harvey***

Why do we need to start using our gifts? ***To build up the body of Christ***

***The Stewardship of Your Talents and Becoming the Church God intended Are Directly Related.***

***It is not just our natural ability but the supernatural empowerment given by God that enables us to do His will.***

Philippians 4:13 (NKJV) "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me."

It is that faith filled mindset that we need.

***God expects us to invest what He has given us into fulfilling the purpose He has created us for!***

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT) "For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."

- a) For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus (v 10a)
- b) We have been created anew in Christ Jesus so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

***The key is being faithful to what we have received from the Lord.***

***As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (1 Peter 4:10)***

Rick Warren, author of The Purpose Driven Church challenges us to determine our SHAPE, the acronym he developed that stands for:

**S - Spiritual Gifts**  
**H - Heart or Passion**  
**A - Abilities or skills**  
**P - Personality type**  
**E - Experiences**

Five elements of SHAPE: What *spiritual gifts* do you think you have? For what or whom do you have a *heart* or passion? If you knew you couldn't fail, what would you do for God with your life? What skills and *abilities* do you have? What is your *personality* type? What has your spiritual journey been like? What kinds of *experiences* have you had--school, work, and ministry? What painful life experiences have you had that you could use to encourage someone else?

The SHAPE process helps a person determine what his or her ministry should be. Every person is uniquely designed, or shaped, by God to do certain things. By identifying and understanding the five SHAPE factors, we can discover the unique way God intends for each of us to serve Him.

**With our gifts comes responsibilities:**

**We have a responsibility for the stewardship of the Gifts and Talents God has blessed us with. (v 14-30)**

God will give u more greater works than Jesus

***"God is looking for (people) through whom He can do the impossible --what a pity that we plan only the things we can do ourselves."***

**- A. W. Tozer**

**We have a responsibility to the Body of Christ, and to the world,**

***What we do with our gifts and abilities not only affects our destiny but the destiny of others also.***

1 Peter 4:7-11 (NLT) <sup>7</sup> The end of the world is coming soon. Therefore, be earnest and disciplined in your prayers. <sup>8</sup> Most important of all, continue to show deep love for each other, for love covers a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Cheerfully share your home with those who need a meal or a place to stay.

<sup>10</sup> God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. <sup>11</sup> Do you have the gift of speaking? Then speak as though God himself were speaking through you. Do you have the gift of helping others? Do it with all the strength and energy that God supplies. Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ. All glory and power to him forever and ever! Amen.

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(NKJV) Be hospitable to one another without grumbling. (v 9)

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Greek: an utterance (of God):--oracle.

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1 Corinthians 12:7 (NKJV) But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

1 Corinthians 12:11 (NKJV) But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

1 Corinthians 12:18 (NKJV) But now God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased.

Luke 12:48b (NKJV) "...For everyone to whom much is given, from him much will be required; and to whom much has been committed, of him they will ask the more.

1 Peter 4:10 (NKJV) As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

***As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (v 10)***

***We need the encouragement of others!***

***The history books are full of stories of gifted persons whose talents were overlooked by a procession of people until someone believed in them. Einstein was four years old before he could speak and seven before he could read. Issac Newton did poorly in grade school. A newspaper editor fired Walt Disney because he had "no good ideas". Leo Tolstoy flunked out of college, and Werner von Braun failed ninth grade algebra. Haydn gave up ever making a musician of Beethoven, who seemed a slow and plodding young man with no apparent talent -- except a belief in music.***

Colossians 4:17 (NLT) And say to Archippus, "Be sure to carry out the ministry the Lord gave you."

*Archippus*, who was one of their ministers at Colosse. They are bidden to admonish him to mind his work as a minister, to *take heed to it, and to fulfil it* to be diligent and careful of all the parts of it, and to persevere in it unto the end. They must attend to the main design of their ministry, without troubling themselves or the people with things foreign to it, or of less moment.

- Observe:**
1. The ministry we have received is a great honor; for it is ***received*** *in the Lord*, and is by his appointment and command.
  2. Those who have received it must fulfil it, or do the full duty of it. Those betray their trust, and will have a sad account at last, who *do this work of the Lord* ***negligently***.
  3. The people may put their ministers in mind of their duty, and ***excite*** them to it: *Say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry*, though no doubt with decency and respect, not from pride and conceit.<sup>1</sup>

***Little is much! God is the one who determines significance, our responsibility is to be faithful.***

Job 8:7 (NKJV) Though your beginning was small, Yet your latter end would increase abundantly.

***As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. (v 10)***

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Ephesians 4:7 (NLT) However, he has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ.

**Crayons**

**We were created anew in Christ Jesus to do the things he planned for us long ago!**