

# Chapter 18

## ***IDENTIFYING AND DEVELOPING YOUR GIFTS 9***

**“THE BEST GIFT CANNOT BE BOUGHT OR SOLD,  
IT IS GIVING A PART OF ONESELF”**

- I. The gift of giving is the special ability of sharing material assistance; finances, possessions, time, energy and love. It is sometimes referred to as the hands of the Body of Christ as is the gift of serving. It is a gift of support; the support of others. Those with this gift will have the ability to handle and give assets. They want to see needs met and the work of God go forward and succeed. (Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7; 2 Corinthians 9:2-8)
  - A. Those with the gift of giving not only give finances, but material things and spiritual things. They are also willing give of themselves in service and support to others. They will also love to share the gospel. (Luke 3:11; Romans 1:11; 2 Timothy 2.2; 1 Thessalonians 2:8)
  - B. The gift of giving has many characteristics, but the person with the gift is not always quick to recognize the gift in themselves. The giver believes in tithing and giving beyond the tithe. They very much believe that God is their source. The person with the gift of giving will have an ability to make wise purchases and investments. They prefer to give quietly (doesn't like the pressure of publicity); but they do like to use their giving to motivate others. They will many times have an alertness to needs others might overlook. If married, the one with the gift of giving will depend at times on his partner's counsel to confirm the amount of the gift to be given. They have great joy when the gift they give is an answer to a specific prayer. They want their gift to be of high quality, but will also look for a good bargain. The giver likes to feel a part of the ministry or group that he gives to. Many times they will see hospitality as an opportunity to share and give.
  - C. As with all the gifts there are sometimes misunderstandings that arise. Their ability and even need to deal with or handle larger sums of money may appear to focus on temporal values. Sometimes the desire to increase the effectiveness of a ministry by their gift may appear as an attempt to control. As they attempt to encourage others to give it may appear as a lack of generosity on their part or even unnecessary pressure. A lack of response to pressure appeals may also appear as a lack of generosity. Because of their own personal frugality, it may seem at times as selfishness by family and friends in not meeting their needs.
  - D. A key to developing the gift of giving is to start where you are now. Look for opportunities to share and give of what you have. Ask God to show you special needs that you can meet. Think of giving as sowing seed. Look for good ground to sow seed in. (Exodus 35:21; 2 Corinthians 8:12)
  - E. There are Biblical examples of the gift of giving we can look at for encouragement and insight. The Macedonian believers gave generously even in a time of extreme poverty. Jesus gave us the example of the widow and her mite and told us that she gave more than the wealthy because she gave all she had. (Mark 12:41-44; 2 Corinthians 8:1-2)

- F. From the life of Abraham we can see many aspects of the gift of giving. God entrusted him with assets (Genesis 12:2; 24:1). Abraham was known for his liberal spirit and generosity toward others (Genesis 13:9-10). When he saw a valid need he was ready to act (Genesis 14:14-16). Abraham was a tither (Genesis 14:20). He was careful to give God all the glory in his giving (Genesis 14:23). Without a lot of fanfare, he would give all if he knew God required it (Genesis 22:1-3).
- II. The gift of helps has been described as the “glorious company of the stretcher-bearers.” (Mark 2:1-12) They are the people whose names you never hear, but who make possible the ministry of many people whose names are very familiar to us. They are as the arms of the Body of Christ; holding up the hands of others and giving support as needed. (Exodus 17:11-12; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 16:1-2; Acts 9:36; Luke 8:2-3 with Mark 15:40-41)
- A. The gift of helps is often a one-on-one ministry. Unlike the gift of mercy, however, the recipients of the benefits are not the down and out but other Christians exercising their gifts. Jobs like editors, ghostwriters, secretaries, receptionists often are done by a person with the gift of helps.
- B. To develop the gift of helps look for jobs to do that will help someone be freer to do what God has purposed for them to do. Also work at developing practical skills that will aid you in being helpful; computing skills, typing skills, decorating skills, driving, etc.
- C. As Biblical examples we see Aaron being the mouth-piece for Moses in bringing the people out of Egypt (Exodus 4:14-16). Then we see the need of Aaron and Hur holding up the hands of Moses while Joshua fought the Amalekites. (Exodus 17:8-13) Joshua became known as Moses’ aide. (Exodus 24:13, Exodus 32:17)
- III. The gift of (showing) mercy has the capacity for showing love through personal support and empathy. Those with this gift feel where people are and identify with their needs. They can meet sympathetic and emotional needs. Those with the gift of (showing) mercy have compassion, pity, gentleness, and forbearance. These people can also detect insincerity and hard-heartedness. They are turned off by these attitudes and probably will have no time for them. The gift of (showing) mercy is one of most familiar and needed of the gifts. Those with this gift are often strong feeling people. Men with this gift are many times misunderstood or considered to be weak. After all “men aren’t supposed to show feelings or express their emotions.” (Romans 12:8; Mark 9:41; Acts 16:33-34; Luke 10:33-35; Matthew 20:29-34, Matthew 25:34-40; Acts 11:28-30)
- A. People with the gift of (showing) mercy can feel an atmosphere of joy or distress in an individual or group. They are attracted to or have an understanding of those in distress. Most of all they want to remove hurts and bring healing. They will have more concern for mental than physical distress. The gift of (showing) mercy will avoid firmness unless it will bring benefit. They are always interested in justice and fairness.
- B. Because those with the gift of (showing) mercy avoid firmness, they can appear weak and indecisive. They will seem to be guided by emotion rather than logic. Their care, attraction to, and understanding of those in distress may be misinterpreted by the opposite sex. They have to be careful not to take on another’s offense. Their ability to detect insincere motives may cause some to feel they are hard to get to know.

- C. The gift of (showing) mercy is developed in one-on-one relationships. Seek out those who need help and develop a personal ministry with them. Learn to show a practical, compassionate love. Remember kindness comes naturally, and expects no repayment. While the gift of exhortation helps people mainly with words of love, the gift of mercy helps people mainly through deeds of love. The recipients of the gift of (showing) mercy are the ill, the retarded, the prisoners, the blind, the poor, the aged, the ugly, the handicapped, the shut-ins, the mentally ill. The gift should be directed to both believers and unbelievers. It involves giving a cup of cold water in the name of Jesus. Every Christian is expected to be merciful. This is a role that reflects the fruit of the Spirit. But those with the gift of (showing) mercy make compassion and kindness their life-style. Continually seek opportunities to show pity for the miserable. A thought to consider and remember; showers of mercy are “deep feelers” and they must allow their gift to function; especially men. Those with the gift of (showing) mercy can be prone to depression if feelings are bottled up or kept in. Also, if the feelings of compassion and care are not expressed properly they can lash out in anger or grieve inwardly.
- D. The Biblical example of the Good Samaritan from Luke 10:29-37 shows us the following about the gift of (showing) mercy:
1. v. 33 The Good Samaritan had compassion and could feel for the injured person in his distress.
  2. v. 34 The Good Samaritan went to him. Those with the gift of (showing) mercy reach out to the broken, the under-dogs.
  3. v. 34 The Good Samaritan bound up his wounds. The gift of (showing) mercy wants to relieve hurts.
  4. v. 34 The Good Samaritan took care of him. Those with this gift are concerned for the person.
  5. v. 35 The Good Samaritan paid the bill. The gift of (showing) mercy is always aware of delicate matters that might bring hurt.
  6. v. 35 The Good Samaritan trusted the innkeeper because he had the ability to discern sincerity.
- IV. The gift of missionary is the special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to minister whatever other spiritual gifts they have in a second culture. This particular gift is not a stand-alone gift. It must be exercised along with other gifts. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23, Acts 8:4, Acts 13:2-3, Acts 22:21)
- A. The key purpose of the gift of missionary is church growth or the expansion of the Kingdom of God. Within the church there is to be internal growth - the spiritual growth of church members. Also there should be expansion growth - adding people to the church. Extension growth should also be taking place; planting new churches. Finally, bridging growth which is the growth that is uniquely dependent on the missionary gift. This growth requires reaching across cultures, generations and even ideas. It is a top priority for world evangelism to be effective.

- B. The millions of people who have not yet heard of Jesus Christ and who need someone from outside their own culture to bring them the good news are often called the “hidden people” (Approximately 2.4 billion).

Foreign countries are most often thought of as the mission field because that is where the majority of “hidden people” are; the Chinese, Hindus, and Muslims. But today they are also in our own communities: The world has come to London and many other centers in the world.

There are many differences even within our own cultures; more now than ever before. The traditional missionaries sometimes tended to “culturize” more than evangelize. We need to remember that there is room in the church of Jesus Christ for different expressions of worship, etc.

The importance of Third World missionaries being sent out is increasing. There is less likelihood of western culture being imported. Those from developing countries can have more understanding of the life-style and thus may be better able to focus more on the truths of God’s Word.

- C. There are many who enjoy travel, contact with those from other countries, enjoy other languages; enjoy seeing the sights, and tasting the food. Some may live in a community with other races, cultures and get along and even have close friends from other cultures, but do not have the heart of a missionary.

Others become “one of us.” Learn the “ways” of the people group they are with; the slang, the body language, why they do things as they do. Above all they don’t judge them or try to change them.

- D. A World Christian is aware, gives support, stays informed and up-to-date with what is happening in the world and the needs that are there. They will be involved in short-term missions trips and projects. Those that are World Christians need to be careful not to confuse that with the Gift of Missionary. We as Christians today should all be moving toward being active World Christians. Being involved as a World Christian in short-term trips and projects is the best way to develop the gift of missionary.

- E. In our Biblical examples for this gift of missionary we see Paul as the missionary and Peter as a World Christian (Galatians 2:7-21). Paul, Missionary:

1. Paul’s background (Acts 22:3-5, 23:6)
2. Paul’s conversion experience (Acts 9:15)
3. Paul and Barnabas as the first official missionaries (Acts 13:1-3)
4. Paul defended the Gentiles to the Jews (Acts 15, 21:27-29)
5. Paul’s gift of missionary explained (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)
6. Paul’s concept of his mission (Ephesians 3)

**QUESTIONS FOR STUDY AND DISCUSSION**

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1. The person with the gift of giving is not always quick to recognize the gift in themselves. What are some reasons for this? How can the person with the gift of giving prepare to use the gift well and how can one avoid being manipulated or misused?
2. It may be more difficult for a man to express the gift of mercy than for a woman. Why do you feel this is? What are the main pitfalls one must beware of in exercising the gift of mercy? How can they be avoided?