

October 2004: Spiritual Gifts

by Aaron Greenway

When you are born again by the Spirit of God, God gives you certain giftings that give you a place in His family. You do not just have a position based on your eternal status with Him, but you also are important in what He wants to do through the Church in 2004. Some have taken temperament or spiritual gifts tests to help define themselves.

I remember singing in the choir several years ago and watched as the director put men and women into vocal parts that did not fit their vocal timbre. We had men singing tenor that were killing themselves with the high notes as well as women singing men's parts. I guess this happens in almost every church choir and most people don't know the difference. But the ideal is to put people where the best shine. That is what God wants to do with His body. God's eternal purpose is so that He Himself looks good, and gets every ounce of glory coming to Him. So when He gives us spiritual gifts, it is important to use them. And not just use them, but use them within the Body of Christ so that everyone benefits. It is also important to use them properly and Biblically.

There is a certain debate within the Body of Christ over issues of whether the gifts of tongues and healing still exist. I personally do not have either of these gifts. But hermeneutically speaking, I do not believe that any gift has ceased. However, I am very careful about how we use those gifts, making sure we use them in context. Paul said that speaking in tongues can bring confusion to an unbeliever that comes into the church, so it is better not to use

What are your gifts?

Use them to serve your brothers and sisters. We must not ever use them to bully other believers. We could never use them to make ourselves look better than someone else.

Instead, we must use our gifts to bring glory to God and build up His body. That is the purpose.

Also, we must go where there is need. Do you know an unsaved person living next door to you? Is there a church band that could use a good guitar player? Are you a good cook that could bring a hot meal to someone? This is how the Body is nourished, not just physically, but also spiritually.

it. Some who oppose tongues use I Corinthians 13 as a proof text to state their case “Tongues will cease”. However, there’s a small problem with that. Because one should point out that the next part of that verse says “When perfection comes, the imperfect will disappear” (I Cor. 13:10). Perfection will only come when Jesus reigns on the earth. At the same time, I have difficulty with the idea of telling people they are not saved or spirit-filled if they don’t speak in tongues. I have a problem with putting total emphasis on the gifts of the Spirit, and having a church that out of control because of it. I have friends who are on both sides of that debate. And I love all of them, and will break bread with them at any time. Spiritual gifts should never be used as weapons to break fellowship. However you believe, it is important that we use our gifts, and use them right.

Hopefully next year, I will be releasing a fourth recording ... in Spanish. For us, this was the next logical step to reaching those who speak Spanish and do not know Christ. The album will be exclusively engineered to reach the lost. The message is the pure Gospel of Jesus Christ. We believe that giving out CDs and having musical outreaches in South America could bring thousands of people to Christ. Just recently, I spoke with my producer about getting this music into communistic countries. As a result, the album and its songs will be translated into more than just Spanish.

Music is such a powerful tool to reach people when many times people will not go to hear a sermon. A church who takes their music program seriously will have better success with the lost. As a disclaimer, I want to emphasize that I do not mean that music should be used as entertainment to reach the lost, but that, sometimes, it is a way to help them lower their defenses so the Spirit of God can minister to their hearts. For this purpose, when I compose a song, arrange it, sing it, etc., I aim to put together the best of the best. I aim to be as creative and innovative as possible. I put together a package that will have the most impact. I believe that doing my very best, using my gifts, brings glory to God. Music, that is sloppy and halfhearted, can communicate about how we feel about God. This is true of any gift we use in the Church.

Another gift I have is Evangelism. God has given me a heart for lost people. Last month, I moved

from my apartment in South Garland to one in North Garland. For several months before, I had been praying for Kurt, a gentleman that lived below me. He has a blood disease and has worked out of his home as a freelance computer programmer for several years. One night, I went outside at about 2:00 in the morning. He was there and began to ask me some questions about spiritual things. He knew that I had gone to Dallas Seminary. He told me that he had never gone to church and did not grow up in a spiritual family, but that God was revealing Himself to him through His creation (as Paul said in Romans 1:20!). Right there, I ministered the Gospel to Him. However, he did not accept it at that time.

A few weeks later, while I was moving, I had been praying that I would see him before I left. While I was gathering up the last few things, I noticed that he was downstairs by his truck. I went right down and told him that I had been praying that I would see him again. I told him that God wanted His life. And that night, Kurt accepted Christ into His life. The next day, Kurt was to also move out of his apartment. It was a divine appointment because we may not ever cross paths again. He is now back home in Michigan. I would ask everyone to pray that Kurt would find a church quickly and grow in the grace of God.

What are your gifts? If you have them (which you do), use them to serve your brothers and sisters. We must not ever use them to bully other believers. We could never use them to make ourselves look better than someone else. Instead, we must use our gifts to bring glory to God and build up His body. That is the purpose. Also, we must go where there is need. Do you have a Kurt living next door to you? Is there a church band that could use a good guitar player? Are you a good cook that could bring a hot meal to someone? This is how the body is nourished, not just physically, but also spiritually.