

Appendixes for Foundations

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Appendix I - What is an accurate view of the Church?

In Matthew 16:18, Christ said, "I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it," and He has done just that! The church, which is comprised of all who have repented of their sin and placed their faith in Christ, is a living organism made up of true believers who "offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 2:5). Christ so loved the church that He died for her (Ephesians 5:25) that He might sanctify her and present her to Himself, in all her glory, blameless and without spot or blemish (Ephesians 5:26-27). Christ both nourishes and cherishes the church (Ephesians 5:2) and exists as head over His bride (Ephesians 5:23).

The church, having been "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Ephesians 2:20), is to function as the pillar and support of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). It is through the church that believers are equipped to mature into the likeness of Christ. "And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; 14 that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, 15 but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head -- Christ -- 16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in

love" (Ephesians 4:11-16) and unbelievers are presented the Good News of the Gospel (Matt.28:19-20).

Because the church constitutes God's primary vehicle for working in this age, it is vital that all believers identify with, function in, and submit to the leadership of a local church (Hebrews 13:17). Believers are to edify one another with their spiritual gifts (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11), regularly assemble together (Hebrews 10:24-25) that they might devote themselves to the teaching of God's Word, fellowship, celebration of the Lord's Supper, and prayer (Acts 2:42). Because of the premium that Scripture puts on this kind of involvement in the local church, a given ministry must seek to foster in God's people a deepening love for and commitment to the church, as well as, a biblical understanding of what it means to function as the church.

WHAT TYPE OF CHURCH SHOULD I BE COMMITTED TO? AND AN EQUALLY IMPORTANT QUESTION IS: WHAT SHOULD THE CHURCH BE COMMITTED TO?

- A Proper View of Scripture. When investigating a potential church home, pay particular attention to how it views the Bible. Does it hold to the inspiration and inerrancy of the Scriptures? Does it believe the Bible is the only rule for faith and practice (2 Timothy 3:16, 2 Peter 1:20-21)?
- Emphasis on Bible Teaching and Preaching. Observe what kind of preaching is done. Is it primarily expository, topical, or evangelistic in nature? Is the main diet repetitive salvation messages each week, or are believers being fed from the Word (Acts 20:27; 1 Timothy 4:13-16; 2 Timothy 4:1-5)? There should be a strong commitment to high-quality Bible Teaching.
- Doctrinal Soundness. Just as you would inspect the soundness of a house's foundation, so you should investigate the doctrinal stance of the churches you visit. Where do they stand on such crucial issues of the Christian faith as the virgin birth and deity of Jesus Christ; the depravity of mankind; the work of Christ on the cross; His death, burial, and bodily resurrection; salvation by grace through faith alone; the second coming of Christ; and the ordinances of baptism and communion?
- Doctrinal Practice. Observe whether the church practices the doctrines it claims to believe and teach. As James said to the church at large, "Prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves" (James 1:22; Luke 6:46; John 13:17).

When satisfied that the foundation and structure are what they should be, the wise home buyer will then look at how functional the house is. Does it fulfill the purpose for which it was designed? Does it meet the needs of the family?

As you observe how a church functions, look for an emphasis on worshipping God. See if the leadership stresses the importance of honoring and glorifying God in all things (1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17).

Also observe the involvement of the individual members. Do they exercise their spiritual gifts among the Body of Christ (Romans 12:3-8; Ephesians 4:11-13; 1 Peter 4:10-11), or do they seem to expect the pastor to do everything? Does the church emphasize evangelism as one of its primary functions? Are home and foreign missions an important part of its ministry (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15; Acts 1:8)? What about discipleship?

Do you see church members and leaders seeking to make disciples and reproducing themselves in the lives of others (2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 2:3-7; Matthew 28:19&20)?

A strong local church is marked by love. Do the members seem to genuinely care for one another? Do they minister to each other's needs? As you become acquainted with the church, do you sense that the members are loving one another as Christ commanded (John 13:34-35)? Notice if friendships form easily (cf. Hebrews 10:24-25; Phil. 2:1-4; Ephesians 4:1-3).

The leadership of the church you choose should be committed to teaching and supporting God's design for the family (Ephesians 5:22; 6:4; Colossians 3: 18-21; Titus 2: 1-8; I Peter 3: 1- 7). Does the church schedule contribute to or take away from the strength of the family?

If you have ever gone house hunting, you know what it is like to walk through and sense the atmosphere of the place. It can feel cold and gloomy or warm and inviting. It can have a homey feel or it can be impersonal, almost like a museum. Doubtless you have had the same experience when attending various churches. Certain observable factors contribute to the overall atmosphere of a local church. Those environmental components are usually manifested in attitudes.

- A High View of God. Proverbs 9:10 says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." It should be obvious that the people, from the leadership down, focus on the glory and majesty of God. Do they take God seriously and exalt Him in all they do? Their view of God will affect every aspect of their lives and ministry. Ask yourself if God is the focus of their worship or if they're preoccupied with each other or themselves.
- The Presence of a Sincere Faith. Is it obvious to you that the church lives and operates by faith? Are the people willing to trust God (Hebrews 11:1, 6; Ephesians 3:20; 2 Corinthians 5:7; I Thessalonians 5:24)?
- Spirit of Sacrifice. Can you see that the church members are willing to sacrifice themselves and their possessions to advance God's kingdom (Romans 12:1; 2 Corinthians 8:3; Matthew 6:33)? Do you sense they would sacrifice themselves for one another (Philippians 2:3-4; John 15:13; Ephesians 5:1-2)?
- Proper Attitudes toward the Pastor and Other Leaders. As you talk with people, be sensitive to how they regard their leaders. Do they appreciate and esteem the pastor and other leaders, "very highly in love because of their work" (1 Thessalonians 5:13)? Are they fully behind them, giving their spiritual, emotional, and material support (I Timothy 5:17-18; Hebrews 13:7,17)?
- Spirit of Unity. This is often the most obvious attitude radiating from a local congregation. An outsider is usually able to sense very quickly whether a church is unified in its ministry. This unity has a great effect on the community and reflects the Name of our Lord (John 13:34-35;

I Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:1-9; Ephesians 4:1-6; Philippians 2:1-5; 4:1-5).

Church membership is a commitment to unite with an identifiable spiritual body of believers who have joined together geographically for specific, divinely ordained purposes.

Responsibilities include:

- Receiving instruction from God's Word (1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 4:2).
- The equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry (Ephesians 4:7-12).
- Serving and edifying one another through the proper use of spiritual gifts (Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-31; 1 Peter 4:10-11).
- Participating in the ordinances of baptism and communion (Luke 22:19; Acts 2:38-42).
- Proclaiming the gospel to unbelievers (Matthew 28:18-20).

There are many obvious benefits to being a member of Hibernia Baptist Church:

- Loving accountability.
- The opportunity to discover and use their spiritual gifts through serving and edifying other members.
- The privilege to pursue and serve in positions of leadership in the body.
- Eligibility for the many privileges reserved for church members.

Although Scripture nowhere states, "Thou shalt join a church," a biblical basis for church membership is found throughout the New Testament. This can be seen most clearly in (1) the existence of church government, (2) the exercise of church discipline, (3) the example of the early church, and (4) the exhortation to mutual edification.

Appendix II - Benefits of a Philosophy of Ministry

- A philosophy of ministry develops a unity of direction. Once your philosophy of ministry has been firmly established, it filters down through the rest of the flock to form a consistent approach to ministry. It also works to encourage consistent communication of your purpose and overall direction. It keeps the congregation on the same page. Keep in mind this does not happen overnight.
- It forces you to determine your month-to-month and year-to-year goals with an overall biblical understanding of ministry firmly in your mind.
- It delineates our biblical priorities for pastoral ministry. Everyone has a philosophy of ministry, whether or not it is perceived or understood, clearly defined, or biblically consistent.

How is a philosophy of ministry developed?

It has been said that if you aim at nothing you will hit it every time. To approach ministry without proper and accurate aim is to miss the intent of the Scriptures clear admonition to set things in order in the church (Titus 1:5).

1. A high view of God.
2. God is holy, righteous, and just (and other perfections).

iii. We must seek to express His communicable attributes(e.g.we then must be holy [practical sanctification]).

Note: A failure to have a high view of God leads to...

- A toleration of sin.
- A focus on man evidenced in teaching and programs.

Result: The church reflects a man-centered ministry that attempts to please peers rather than glorify God.

A commitment to a high view of God leads us to view His Word as the perfect compass for our lives.

A sufficient view of scripture

The Bible is the very word of God (2 Timothy 3:16), and is therefore without error and completely trustworthy in all that it asserts. In a world of no absolutes, God's Word stands as absolute truth to be known and applied in every area of life. Scripture is the very foundation upon which the church is built and comprises not only the content of the message that the

church proclaims but also the methods by which the church operates. Every decision and aspect of ministry must be submitted to the scrutiny of relevant biblical data. A ministry void of the teachings of Scripture will also be void of the blessings of God.

- Inspiration – verbal, plenary inspiration (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:20-21). It is ‘breathed out’ by God.
- Inerrancy – it contains no errors. God conveyed truth to divinely chosen individuals. And what they wrote did not stray from the original formulation of truth as it existed in the mind of God (Psalm 19).
- Authority – simply stated: What it says I must do (Psalm 119)! The ramifications of the authority of Scripture upon a ministry are manifold. For example, the church is never to stray outside of the boundaries given in the Word of God. Every aspect of ministry (whether a sermon, Bible study, program or activity) must be motivated by an understanding of the authority of Scripture and must bring that Scripture to bear upon the lives of believers. Furthermore, since the Bible is completely authoritative for belief and practice, the church need not derive its methods from the culture of the day nor conform its message to that which is acceptable in the eyes of the world. Rather, ministry must be dictated by principles taught in Scripture itself.
- Sufficiency – 2 Peter 1:3-4; Psalm 19:2; 2 Timothy 3:17; Hebrews 4:12. The Scriptures are not only authoritative over every aspect of life and ministry; they are also sufficient for the same. Second Timothy 3:16-17 states, “All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” The implications of this verse are astounding, for it asserts that the Word of God is sufficient for all areas of ministry, including preaching, teaching, and counseling believers unto godliness. Therefore, the primary focus of every sermon, Bible study, or counseling opportunity must be the teaching of Scripture. Any time the church gathers the emphasis must be on the proclamation of God’s Word and the exhortation to obey it (1 Timothy 4:13).

A ministry that believes in the sufficiency of Scripture will do everything possible to bring the Word to bear on the lives of the congregation. The sufficiency of Scripture demands that individuals as well as ministries be devoted to and trusting of the Word of God. In other words, a proper view of Scripture demands our obedience and our belief. It demands our affections, our faith and our understanding.

A belief in the sufficiency of Scripture prohibits any attempt to integrate it with psychology or worldly philosophies.

- Relevancy. It is totally relevant for every situation (Psalm 19; 2 Timothy 3:17; Psalm 119: 105; Isaiah. 40:8). It may not give us an explicit answer to every specific problem, but it will always give us the principles by which we can, through obedience, glorify God.

Note: A failure to recognize the inspiration, inerrancy, authority, sufficiency, and relevancy of the Word leads to:

- Pursuit of comfort, rather than obedience.
- Personal experience as your authority rather than the authority of God's Word.
- Contemporary thinking as your guide for living rather than the principles of divine truth.

Result: The church produces people who pursue their own desires based upon an ungodly standard.

The outgrowth of this essential component, the right perspective of Scripture, will be a commitment to teaching sound doctrine, and then how

Christians are to change and grow.

EVERYTHING THAT HAS LIFE CONTINUES TO GROW

A sufficient view of Scripture of God is the basis of a biblical view of mankind.

A sufficient view of man

Mankind is totally depraved:

- On his own he cannot do good (Romans 3:10-18).
- On his own he is unable to understand or accept the things of God (2 Corinthians 1:18; 2:14).
- His heart is deceitfully wicked (Jeremiah 17:9-10).
- His goal in life is selfishness and only evil continually (Genesis. 6:5; Ecclesiastes 9:3).

That man is depraved means not that he always acts as wickedly as possible, but rather that wickedness so permeates his entire being that he is enslaved to it and is therefore inherently unable to respond to the Gospel in faith and repentance. This reality has profound implications for the ministry of the church, particularly in the area of evangelism. Because the unbeliever is spiritually dead (Ephesians 2: 1; Colossians 2:13), no amount of human logic or reason is able to open his eyes to the truth. And because he is spiritually enslaved to sin, no amount of evangelistic persuasion is able to free him from his unbelief. In light of these truths, the evangelist must depend not on his own rhetorical ability to convince the sinner to come to Christ, for this ability simply does not exist. He must look instead to the One whose power supersedes his own in drawing sinners to faith in the Savior. Simply stated, the evangelist's hope, as he seeks the conversion of the lost, is found in the sovereignty of God.

Man was created to glorify God, but because of sin, he seeks to glorify himself (Romans 3:23).

Note: A sinner is alienated from God, and as a result, he will seek fulfillment from the world's evil system (1 John 2: 15-17). The implications are disturbing: Christ will not be seen as the only solution to man's needs. Substitutes will be provided that promise fulfillment and a better view of self. Felt needs rather than real needs will be addressed.

Result: The church produces people who make choices to solve their life's problems based on what they believe will practically meet their perceived needs.

Knowing this enables us to formulate ministry that seeks to meet real needs, not just felt needs. Therefore, the goal of all true ministries is to lead man to a great relationship with God through obedience to His Word.

An accurate anthropology of man enables us to correctly understand the purpose of the church...to glorify God, to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Appendix III - Spiritual Giftedness

How to discover your spiritual gift(s)

Discovering one's spiritual gift(s) entails following nine rather distinct steps. Knowing the biblical possibilities of the gifts is one thing; identifying what one's own spiritual abilities are is another. This is a discovery that relatively few Christians seem to have made. A theory regarding the gifts is of little practical value unless that theory becomes practical in individual lives. The following process, if followed carefully, should lead a Christian to an understanding of what his or her gift or gifts are.

The first step in the process of learning what one's gift(s) is involves reaching the settled assurance that every Christian has a gift. Each context where spiritual gifts receive specific mention in the: New Testament strongly emphasizes this fact [cf. 1 Cor. 12:7, 11; Rom. 12:3; Eph. 4:7; 1 Peter 4: 10). In everyone of those verses, the Greek word hekastos ("each") occurs. The word individualizes each member with his specific gift. First Corinthians 12: 11, in addition to hekastos, uses idios ("its own"), which makes the expression more emphatically individualistic. The operation of spiritual gifts is not merely for certain parts of the body; it is for the whole body, every single individual member. To the extent that even one member does not function in his or her proper role, that member cripples the whole body. Every part needs to be equipped and be in operation if the body is to have its full effectiveness.

The second step toward the discovery of one's spiritual gift(s) is an awareness of the possibilities and the purposes of the gifts. Speaking as twentieth-century Christians, we can conclude that eight gifts are currently operative in promoting continual growth in the body of Christ. They include the speaking gifts ... and the auxiliary gift. The speaking gifts are evangelism, teaching, pastor-teaching, and exhorting. The auxiliary gifts are helps or ministry, giving, showing mercy, and governing or administration. The speaking gifts strengthen the body of Christ both numerically and qualitatively. Evangelism adds new members to the body of Christ, and pastor -teaching, teaching, and exhorting help the already existing members to walk in service to the rest of the members. The auxiliary gifts in various ways make the speaking gifts more effective, and without them, the speaking gifts could have little impact on the growth of the body.

God specifically designed the remaining ten gifts for the infant church, the body of Christ, in the days of its beginning, each one with specific purposes.

The third step toward discovery is the step of prayer for enlightenment regarding one's gift(s). Though not explicitly named in connection with learning about gifts, prayer sustains an unquestionable connection with zeal for spiritual gifts for which Paul commends the Corinthians. First Corinthians 14:1 commands a zeal for spiritual gifts for which Paul commends the Corinthians. First Corinthians 14:1 commands a zeal for spiritual gifts, even though that zeal is secondary to the pursuit of love in the same verse. The zeal is still there and indicated a degree of intensity in one's quest for spiritual gifts. This, without a doubt, involves prayer towards that

end. First Corinthians 14:12 presents the zeal of the Corinthians for spiritual gifts in a favorable light. Their zeal seems to have been misdirected as to its purpose, but that same zeal with a corrected purpose is desirable. Prayer is involved wherever Christian zeal is involved.

The fourth step leading to the discovery of spiritual gifts is a consideration of one's natural abilities, circumstances, and resources. Such a consideration is not determinative in the final analysis because gifts do not always fall into line with a person's natural background. However, it seems that most of the time, the Spirit chooses to match one's spiritual gifts to one's natural situation.

A conspicuous example of the association of a spiritual gift with natural circumstances is the gift of apostleship. No one could receive such a gift without being an eyewitness of the ministry and resurrection of Christ. Hence the bestowment of the gift presupposed a certain series of personal experiences in the past. An example of the association of one's spiritual gifts with one's natural resources is in the gift of giving. While not an absolute necessity, it presupposes that a person has a significant amount of substance to give. Surely Christians can have very limited means and still makes very wise investments of what they have in the Lord's work, so they may still possess the gift of giving. But the most conspicuous examples of those with the gift of giving seem to be the ones who have been well endowed with material things. In regard to natural abilities, a person with significant difficulty in communicating by speech would hardly receive the spiritual gift of teaching. That is not absolutely true in every case, however, since a person can teach by other means, such as writing. But most often, the gift of teaching will presuppose a substantial natural ability to communicate orally.

The fifth step in this sequence is probably the most difficult of all; yet in a sense it is the most crucial. Experimentation is essential if someone wants to discover his or her gift(s). Believers must try their hand at every possible gift before they can know with certainty whether they have the gift or not. When we speak of experimentation, we are not speaking of one brief attempt to function in a given area during a period of four to six months at least. The discoverer must delve into each of the eight areas of possible giftedness.

That suggestion may seem rather bold and even ill-advised. Someone may ask, "What if I try my hand in a particular area and turn out not to be gifted in that area? Have I not presumed upon the Lord? Have I not plunged into an area of expertise I have no business entering?" The answer is flatly, "No, you have not." Every one of the eight gifts represents a general Christian responsibility, a ministry where every Christian is responsible to God to be active, whether he or she has that gift or not. If you turn out not to be gifted in a given way, you have not sinned, you have simply obeyed God in trying to have a positive effect on the growth of the body of Christ through carrying out duties every Christian should be performing; It is no sin to witness to a lost person and seek to win him to Christ if you do not have the gift of evangelism. You have simply obeyed the Great Commission given to every Christian. You have not sinned by trying to comfort a bereaved brother or sister in Christ without having the gift of showing mercy. That is a service you should perform anyway, whether you have the gift or not. The same is throughout the list of eight operative gifts. Each gift is a duty every child of God needs to carry out even

without that specific specialized ability. In the process of trying out the gifts one by one by one, you will not only discover your gift, but you will fulfill the will of God for your life as a Christian.

Part of the learning process is researching your own spiritual gifts.

The sixth step in the process of discovering these special abilities is the stage of self-evaluation. When a person experiments in one or more of the eight areas, he or she will sense an inner satisfaction not found in the others, a satisfaction consisting of knowing the special worthwhileness of the activity in which he or she has just engaged.

First Corinthians 14:4 observes that a person who speaks in a tongue edifies himself or herself. The self-edifying spoken of in the verse is not a wholesome thing. It is an action contrary to the principle of love in 1 Corinthians 13:5, that love does not seek the things of itself. It is edification, for selfish purposes that are not commendable nor is it to be condoned. Edification of oneself is not a high Christian ideal. We know from 1 Corinthians 8:10 that negative edification can even be a factor in tearing down the body of Christ.

Yet, 1 Corinthians 14:4 does highlight another characteristic of spiritual gifts. When you use your gift for the right purpose, that of building up other members of the body of Christ, as a by-product you, yourself, will experience a degree of edification. Edification of yourself is not your goal in what you do, but you will experience it as a secondary effect of serving others. Though that is not his purpose, the teacher himself experiences growth in the faith. He experiences a subjective awareness that in building up others, his own edification has resulted. This is the satisfaction for which one should be alert in the step of self-evaluation.

The seventh step toward the discovery of one's own spiritual gift(s) is to seek out the reaction of others who are mature and respected Christians. The ultimate test of our ministry for Christ is its impact upon other people. In 1 Corinthians 14:19, Paul points out his preference for having a positive impact on the lives of others. Though the quantity of his ten thousand words in a tongue far exceeds his five words with understanding, the five words with understanding far exceeds the ten thousand words in importance. Why? Because other people receive benefit by way of Christian growth. The importance of seeking the opinions of others is consequently quite apparent.

First Corinthians 14:29 is a further illustration of the value of soliciting the reaction of others. For a prophet's utterance to have been accepted as valid, fellow prophets had to judge it. If their opinion was negative, the church disregarded the speech. The words had not been a true prophecy.

We need the responses of other people. At the point of self-evaluation (step 6), we have some help, but our conclusions may be so subjective that we have evaluated wrongly. One thing or another may be present in our lives to create a blind spot. Double-checking our own opinions is vital; hence we need the confirmations of respected, mature Christians. After engaging in an act of service, seek out these Christians and ask them questions such as, What degree of benefit to others did you detect? What degree of benefit to you was there in my service? Evaluation must

be Love. In verse 1, he speaks of one who possesses the ultimate degree of linguistic ability through the gift of tongues, an ideal but not an actual case for anyone. He says that even if one had such a rich gift, it would amount only to a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal if not accompanied by love. In verse 2, he speaks of the maximum of the gifts of prophecy and knowledge, possibly including the gift of wisdom as referenced in understanding all mysteries. In the same verse, he refers to the ultimate measure of the gift of faith. Such bountiful endowments as these are useless if not exercised in conjunction with love. In verse 3, he refers to the gift of helps or showing mercy, or perhaps even the gift of giving. He speaks of giving all his possessions, which Paul, incidentally, never did; he kept enough to support his own ministerial efforts. He adds the possibility of even selling himself into slavery so as to have additional means to help the needy. But all of this giftedness avails nothing and produces no profit for the rest of the body of Christ, unless a motivation of love lies behind its implementation. That love, in turn, is attainable only through a person's being controlled by the Holy Spirit. The believer walking in harmony with the Holy Spirit loves; one out of harmony with the Holy Spirit cannot love. The fruit of the Spirit is essential in the fruitful use of spiritual gifts.

The major problem in Corinth was the absence of love. The Christian congregation there had rich measures for outstanding spiritual gifts (cf. 1 Cor. 1:7), but they were using their gifts for the wrong purposes. People were insisting on their right to show off their gifts whenever they chose because of the selfish satisfaction they derived from it [cf. 1 Cor. 14:4]. A constructive harnessing of gift potential in submission to the needs of other people was absent.

The eighth step in this sequence must be the allowance that a person may discover more than one gift, even a combination of gifts. That is one feature that keeps two members of the body of Christ from being identical with each other. Paul had the gift of apostleship (1 Cor. 9:1); he also had the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 14:18).- Probably the apostles had all the gifts. Such plentiful bestowment will not characterize our lives, but most Christians will discover more than a single gift, more than a single special ability to perform in the service of the other members of the body of Christ.

Lines of distinction between gifts that are found in combination are next to impossible to draw. The gifts are usually overlapping in nature. For example, the gift of showing mercy and the gift of pastor-teaching may have many characteristics in common. Compassion and sensitivity to the needs of others must be present in both cases. One should not be too concerned whether at any given moment one is exercising the gift of pastor-teaching or the gift of showing mercy. That person should simply be conscious in a general way of the presence of both gifts. What is true of these two gifts by way of overlapping is true of other combinations of the eight gifts under discussion.

The ninth step is recognition of degrees of giftedness. Among those with the gift of teaching, for example there will be a range of ability. Some will be better than others. Because one is not as effective a teacher as some bright person who is highly endowed with communicative skills, that person should not conclude necessarily that he or she does not possess the gift. That person may have effectiveness, though it is not nearly as profound as that of another.

At the same time, however, remember that there is a great gap between those who are in the range of giftedness and those who fall far from that range. The latter group may function as they should in teaching regarding matters that are the responsibility of all Christians, but those without the gift of teaching cannot, in reality, attain the range of ability that characterizes those with the gift. The same is true of all the gifts in regard to whether persons possess gifts to a greater or lesser degree.

The presence of the range of abilities is another factor that makes for variety in the body of Christ. No two members are the same; no two have identical degrees of ability. The variation in degrees of giftedness combined with the variation in combinations of gifts (see step 8) is ample provision for the absolute distinctiveness of every individual member of the body of Christ.

Discovery of one's spiritual gift or gifts is only the beginning of the process, not the end.

There are five practical lessons or principals of Christian living derived from Scripture that one must apply to use gifts to their utmost effectiveness.

The first principle is the lesson of development. In I Timothy 4:33, Paul tells Timothy to give himself to reading, to exhortation, and to teaching. The last two of these, exhortation and teaching, were areas in which Timothy was apparently gifted. In verse 14, Paul tells Timothy not to neglect the gift of God that is in him. The gift spoken of in the singular is apparently a combination of all the gifts possessed by Timothy, including exhortation, teaching, and whatever gifts were his. Paul's direction to him is that he not neglect them but that he pay close attention to them with a view to sharpening and developing them into greater and greater effectiveness.

Getting people to experiment is very difficult. It is hard to experiment; it takes courage. Dozens of objections to undertaking this part of the process will arise, yet it must be done. It is crucial. No amount of spiritual-gift surveys can replace this. Experimentation is the proving ground where actual discovery comes. The acknowledged difficulty will disappear if a person possesses the zeal spoken of in I Corinthians 1:4: 1, 12. If your desire to know your gift(s) is strong enough, you will go out on a limb, take that hardest of steps, and try to function in each of the eight ways.

In 2 Timothy 1:6, Paul tells his younger associate to kindle afresh, or build a fire under, the gift that he has. He was to study ways that the gift could become more effective. He was to practice and practice and practice until the gift developed into a very smooth technique. Over the passage of time, the gift would increase in effectiveness, its value and contribution toward the growth of the body of Christ becoming greater and greater.

A theological seminary and a Christian or Bible college cannot dispense spiritual gifts to its students. Only God dispenses the gifts. First Corinthians 12: 11 clarifies that the sovereign will of God the Holy Spirit determines who in the body of Christ will have which gifts. Training institutions and theological institutions have the responsibility of helping students discover-if they do not know them already-and develop their gifts. Generally those who God calls to study in such a place know their gifts or else they are open to discovering them as soon as possible. In the school environment, they can sharpen those gifts through study, through practice, and

through exchange with faculty and other students. They also have internship opportunities in which to tryout the gifts and find ways of making them more effective. Institutional training can help the development of the gifts, but it cannot give them.

Even after training, servants of God must continue developing their gifts.

They must constantly seek improvement, always looking for ways to enhance their gifts and make them more profitable for people whom they serve. Ongoing development is of prime importance in the use of our spiritual gifts.

The second guideline for using spiritual gifts to the best advantage is to assure that they are in harmony with the fruit of the Spirit. According to Galatians 5:22, the fruit of the Spirit is love. The supreme importance of love is the reason for the inclusion of 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter, between two chapters dealing with spiritual gifts. The Corinthians readers missed that most basic point. They received Paul's strong rebuke for erring regarding such a basic standard. They had devoted their exercise of gifts largely to personal pleasure derived by the users themselves. Paul impressed upon them this shortcoming in an indirect and gentle way in 1 Corinthians 12:31 b- 13: 13. He described the quality of Christian love in general terminology, as it was most applicable to the Corinthians' need. Then in 1 Corinthians 14, he applied the implementation of love more specifically in reference to the gifts of prophecy and tongues.

In 1 Corinthians 13, it is justifiable to label love as the fruit of the Spirit for reasons that may not be so apparent. The listing of the qualities of love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 shows an amazing correspondence to the fruit of the Spirit listed Galatians 5:22-23. The list begins with love, and all the following fruits really describe and define what love is. In Galatians love is defined by joy; 1 Corinthians 13 says love rejoices with the truth. In Galatians love has patience or long suffering; 1 Corinthians 13 describes love as patient or long suffering. Galatians includes kindness in the list headed by love; 1 Corinthians describes it by the adjective kind. Galatians say that love is self- control; 1 Corinthians 13 says that love does not act unbecomingly. The rest of the two listings match each other in a similar way. All the qualities are what Galatians 5:22-23 calls the fruit of the Spirit.

That same love is an indispensable element in the functioning of spiritual gifts. In 1 Corinthians 13: 1-3, the Holy Spirit through Paul talks about the preeminence of love. In verse 1, he speaks of one who possesses the ultimate degree of linguistic ability through the gift of tongues, an ideal but not an actual case for anyone. He says that even if one had such a rich gift, it would amount only to a sounding gong or a clanging cymbal if not accompanied by love. In verse 2, he speaks of the maximum of the gifts of prophecy and knowledge, possibly including the gift of wisdom as referenced in understanding all mysteries. In the same verse, he refers to the ultimate measure of the gift of faith. Such bountiful endowments as these are useless if not exercised in conjunction with love. In verse 3, he refers to the gift of helps or showing mercy, or perhaps even the gift of giving. He speaks of giving all his possessions, which Paul, incidentally, never did; he kept enough to support his own ministerial efforts. He adds the possibility of even selling himself into slavery so as to have additional means to help the needy. But all of this giftedness avails nothing and produces no profit for the rest of the body of Christ, unless a

motivation of love lies behind its implementation. That love, in turn, is attainable only through a person's being controlled by the Holy Spirit. The believer walking in harmony with the Holy Spirit loves; one out of harmony with the Holy Spirit cannot love. The fruit of the Spirit is essential in the fruitful use of spiritual gifts.

The major problem in Corinth was the absence of love. The Christian congregation there had rich measures for outstanding spiritual gifts (cf. 1 Cor. 1:7), but they were using their gifts for the wrong purposes. People were insisting on their right to show off their gifts whenever they chose because of the selfish satisfaction they derived from it [cf. 1 Cor. 14:4]. A constructive harnessing of gift potential in submission to the needs of other people was absent.

That love teaches us to sub serve our own interest to cater to the interests of others is the essence of what Paul teaches in 1 Corinthians 13:4, 5, and 7. Those qualities bring out the submissiveness of love. Patience or long suffering does not fly off the handle quickly at the shortcomings of others or ill treatment by other people. Love is kind; the basic force of the word for kindness is usefulness. Love does what is useful on behalf of other people. Love is free from jealousy. It is glad for, rather than envious of, the success and prosperity of other people. Love does not vaunt or promote itself; it does not insist on a place in the limelight. It does not have to be the center of attention. The reason for its freedom from such tendencies is that love is not puffed up or arrogant; it does not create the settled assurance of being number one in importance or ability. The verse adds that love does not behave itself unbecomingly. The Corinthians had demonstrated very bad manners, even at the time of their "love feast" (1 Cor. 11:20-22). Love does not seek the things of itself, no matter how positive those qualities may be. It does not even seek its own edification (cf. 1 Cor. 10:23-24, 33). The profit that is the purpose of spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:7) is not the profit of the gift's possessor, but the profit of other members of the body for whose benefit the gift functions. Love is exclusively outgoing and other-directed. Love is not provoked to anger in response to the faults of others. It takes it on the chin and does not fight back. It is able to keep a cool head and not lose its temper. Remaining free from anger does not violate the principle of Ephesians 4:26, which allows wrath in a limited sense of being angry at the things that anger God. The provocation that love shuns in 1 Corinthians 13 is a provocation for selfish reasons because another violates a person's personal rights. A further description of love in the list shows that love does not keep a permanent record of the evil or wrong that it experiences. It does not keep a long-term record with a view to future revenge.

The submissive qualities of love continue in verse 7. Love "bears all things," in other words, it puts up with personality difference that would normally irritate. Personality clashes do not occur in relationships among loving Christians. Love "believes all things." It is not suspicious. It takes people at their word and accepts at face value their statements and promises. To be sure, often people do not fulfill their word and they break promises. When this happens, love "hopes all things." It looks to a future time when that other person will solve the spiritual problem that has made him or her unreliable and will become a truthful person who is trustworthy. Lastly, love "endures all things." It holds up under suffering inflicted by enemies of the cross. Persecution comes and creates hardship, but hardship and suffering do not obstruct love. It goes on loving

in spite of all negatives, just as Stephen, when his oppressors were afflicting him, prayed for their forgiveness. That response evidenced love.

The Corinthians were in desperate need of such qualities. Rather than submitting to the best interests of others, they were using every opportunity to take advantage of others. Also needed among them, however, was another side of love, love's strictness, of which verse 6 speaks. They needed to recognize that love has its boundaries. When an action bypasses the righteousness of God, love does not rejoice; it grieves. No matter how humanly worthy a purpose may seem to be, if it violates God's righteous standards, it is not Christian love. Neither does love set itself against the truth of God; rather it rejoices only in fellowship with the truth. Doctrinal error, such as a wrong view of the resurrection that Paul corrected in 1 Corinthians 15, cannot join hands with Christian love. Strict confines set by God's truth are boundaries beyond which love does not operate.

All the qualities described above, both those pertaining to submission and those pertaining to strictness, are relevant to the proper use of spiritual gifts. Those qualities are necessary to exercise to their maximum benefit. Real benefit will come, however, only if they keep themselves under the control of the Holy Spirit in demonstrating the fruit of the Spirit.

A third guideline to be followed in the use of the spiritual gifts requires that the gift be regulated in the light of stronger Christian duties. This involves a consideration of the effects of its use upon others. A set of circumstances may arise where harm will come rather than good in the use of your gift. Sometimes you must refrain from using your gift even when you feel you are more 'gifted' than another whose gift is functioning in the church, or even when you feel that you could bring more benefit to the body of Christ than the one who is currently under appointment to fill the given role. You may

detect a jealous spirit on the part of another or others in the assembly. Your use of your gift under those circumstances would only aggravate and enhance that jealousy. Granted such jealousy is wrong and needs to be corrected, yet for the time being it is better to wait to use your gift until the spiritual atmosphere has cleared.

The fourth principle to be observed in the use of spiritual gifts is avoiding pride. Here is another specific application of love in connection with spiritual gifts. It is quite evident in other parts of 1 Corinthians that the Corinthian Christians were a proud people (cf. 1 Cor. 4: 18). Such arrogance is contrary to love (1 Cor. 13:4). They were also puffed up about their possession of some of the more sensational spiritual gifts. It is quite easy and natural to become proud when one has special abilities that are flashy and attract attention. People with such gifts easily begin believing compliments that people give them about how outstanding they are. Self-centeredness is natural in those situations. God says that this ought not to be.

First Corinthians 12:21 uses the illustration of the human body where the eye, with its marvelous capabilities, could become self-centered and tell the hand that it is not necessary. The verse also poses the case of the head doing the same with the fooling picture form, that is an indication of pride. It is a highly gifted one looking down on those with lesser gifts and telling

them they are not necessary. That is arrogance, which has absolutely no place in the exercise of spiritual gifts.

The fifth guideline in the use of spiritual gifts is to remember that each member of the body of Christ is needed. It is true with the body of Christ as it is true with the human body. If any individual member of the human body fails to function, it cripples the human body. The body cannot operate at its maximum efficiency and effectiveness without that member. So it is in the body of Christ. Every single member is absolutely necessary for the smooth operation of the spiritual body. Every gift, no matter how apparently insignificant, is vital to the effective functioning of the body of Christ. Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 12:15-16 that no member of the body can look at itself and say, "I am not needed." Variety is necessary; all functions must be operative (1 Cor. 12: 17). An individual contribution may appear to be quite small, but its absence initiates a chain reaction of hindrances and far- reaching losses in the growth of the body. Never in this life will a time come when we can sit back and assume that the church no longer need our gifts. We must continue contributing our part, even though it may seem very small in comparison to the contribution of others.

Taken from Understanding Spiritual Gifts @ 1999 by Robert L. Thomas.

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1 There are differing views concerning the number of gifts operating today. For our church's perspective, see pages 297-307 in The MacArthur New Testament Commentary on 1 Corinthians, by John MacArthur.

Recommended reading for further study:

Understanding Spiritual Gifts, by Robert L. Thomas Charismatic Chaos, by John MacArthur

The Body Dynamic, by John MacArthur

The MacArthur New Testament Commentary on 1 Corinthians, by John MacArthur

Appendix IV - THE "ONE ANOTHERS"

One of the greatest joys of being part of a church family is to be used of God to minister to others. God's Word contains numerous "one another" commands that outline specific ways we can do that. As a member of Hibernia Baptist Church, consider how you can fulfill the following scriptural mandates in the lives of those around you.

- PREFER ONE ANOTHER (Romans 12:10) *Outdo one another in honor.*
- BE DEVOTED TO ONE ANOTHER (Romans 12:10) *Devote yourself to brotherly love*
- BE OF THE SAME MIND TO ONE ANOTHER (Romans 12:16) *Have a modest opinion of self*
- DO NOT JUDGE ONE ANOTHER (Romans 14:13) *Each will give an account to God*
- BUILD UP ONE ANOTHER (Romans 14:19) *Pursue peace and build up others*
- ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER (Romans 15:7) *Accept like Christ accepted us*
- BE KIND ONE TO ANOTHER (Ephesians 4:25) *Be pleasant and tender-hearted.*
- BE SUBJECT TO ONE ANOTHER (Ephesians 5:21) *Subject yourself to those over you*
- ADMONISH ONE ANOTHER (Romans 15:14) *Correct each other in maturity*
- SUE NOT ONE ANOTHER (1 Corinthians 6:7) *Do not have lawsuits with others*
- DEPRIVE NOT ONE ANOTHER (1 Corinthians 7:5) *Do not withhold material intimacy*
- CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER (1 Corinthians 12:25) *Avoid division by caring*
- DO NOT ENVY ONE ANOTHER (Galatians 5:26) *Do no envy but be content*
- BE TRUTHFUL TO ONE ANOTHER (Ephesians 4:25) *Speak truthfully to each other*
- ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER (1 Thessalonians 5:11)
- BE AT PEACE WITH ONE ANOTHER (1 Thessalonians 5:13) *Live in peace/harmony with others*
- REGARD ONE ANOTHER (Philippians 2:3) *Consider others as more important*
- DO NOT LIE TO ONE ANOTHER (Colossians 3:9) *Put away lying to each other*
- BEAR WITH ONE ANOTHER (Colossians 3:13) *Be patient with and forgive others*

- TEACH ONE ANOTHER (Colossians 3:16) *Teach and admonish with Scripture*
- LOVE ONE ANOTHER (1 Thessalonians 3:12) *Increase in your love for each other*
- COMFORT ONE ANOTHER (1 Thessalonians 4:18) *Comfort others with Christ's return*
- GREET ONE ANOTHER (1 Peter 5:14) *Greet each other showing you care*
- SEE GOOD FOR ONE ANOTHER (1 Thessalonians 5:15) *Seek after what is good for all men*
- PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER (1 Timothy 2:1) *Pray for brethren and all men*
- STIMULATE ONE ANOTHER (Hebrews 10:24) *Consider how to stir up good deeds*
- DO NOT SLANDER ONE ANOTHER (James 4:11) *Do not speak against your brother*
- BE HOSPITABLE TO ONE ANOTHER (1 Peter 4:9) *Be generous without complaint*
- SERVE ONE ANOTHER -(1 Peter 4:10) *Use your giftedness to serve others*
- BE HUMBLE TO ONE ANOTHER (1 Peter 5:5) *Relate to others in humility*

Appendix V - Lord's Day Reminders

Like any family, the church has guidelines of behavior that promote harmony and reduce discord. The spirit in which these guidelines are given and in which they're meant to be followed—is one of putting God and His glory above all else when we gather together for worship.

- To maintain a worshipful attitude in the services, there are provided structured pre-school ministries and secure pre-school facilities.
- Out of reverence for the Lord and respect for those ministering to us, please arrive on time-ready for worship-so that everyone may benefit from all the Lord has prepared.
- Before the worship service begins, please check your cellular phone, pager, and other electronic devices to ensure they will not disrupt our time of worship.
- Please do not park in undesignated areas. There are convenient parking areas provided for our use. For your convenience, we have parking attendants throughout the outside areas to assist you.

Appendix VI

1. Pray

Biblical way to pray

- Aligned with God's will (1 John 5:14-15)
- Specifically for an open door (Col.4:3)
- For boldness (Eph. 6:19-20)
- That the message would spread quickly (2 Thes. 3:1)

2. Give

The Great Commission will not be fulfilled without givers.

According to the Bible, there are three possessions we can "invest" in the Kingdom of God: Time, Talent, and Treasures. It's not only money that God is concerned with. It is just as bad to waste your time and your talents as it is to waste your treasure. Each of us is accountable to God for all three of these capitals. We must equally invest all three of these into things with eternal value. If you give all of your money to God, but then spend all of your time for yourself, that is not good enough. I held many things in my hands and have lost them all; but whatever I have placed in God's hands, that I still possess. – Martin Luther

God is NOT needy.

"The earth is the LORD's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; 2 for he founded it upon the seas and established it upon the waters." (Psalm 24:1-2)

3. Go

- 6.6 Billion people - world population
- 11,372 - people groups
- 6,512 - Unreached people groups
- 3,100 - Unengaged
- 55.4% of the world's population without adequate knowledge of the Gospel
- "IF TEN MEN WERE CARRYING A LOG – NINE OF THEM ON THE LITTLE END AND ONE ON THE HEAVY END – AND YOU WANT TO HELP, WHICH END WILL YOU

LIFT ON?" William Borden, as he reflected on the number of Christian workers in the U.S. as compared to those among the unreached in China.

"The concern for world Evangelization is not something tacked on to a man's personal Christianity, which he may take or leave as he chooses. It is rooted in the character of God who has come to us in the person of Jesus Christ. Thus, it can never be the province of a few enthusiasts, a sideline or a specialty of those who happen to have a bent that way. It is the distinctive mark of being a Christian." James S. Stewart