



PIERCE
the
SILENCE



YOU HAVE A
GIFT!

BU WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Ministry Gifts

To equip the saints for the work of the ministry

Manifestation Gifts

To demonstrate His power

Motivational Gifts

To serve the church

Fruit of the Spirit

Non-optional evidence of salvation

**HOLY
SPIRIT**

Matt 7:20

Given at salvation

Desire earnestly

Leadership gifts to bring safety and order to the church

YOU HAVE A GIFT!

God has given each of us a different “Spiritual” gift. These specific gifts are listed in Romans 12:5-8 and are called the “MOTIVATIONAL” gifts because they define or express our basic motivation in ministry. Knowing our gift and developing it, is God’s plan for fruitfulness in our lives.

Romans 12:5-8 says: “so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another. Having then gifts according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith; or ministry, let us use it in our ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”

1 Cor 12:27 says “All of you together are the one body of Christ and each of you is a separate and necessary part of it.

Eph 4:11-13 “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.”

Eph 4:16 says “Under His direction the whole body is fitted together perfectly and each part in its own special way helps the other parts, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

2:8 It is by grace that you have been saved, not of works, it is a gift from God.

The questionnaire below has been designed to help you consider what your gift is. It is only a guide to help you think about yourself. In the process of discovering your particular gift we suggest you consider the following:

Some guidelines for completing the survey:

1. Complete the survey questions as directed.
2. Transfer your answers to the gift evaluation table. You will discover that you scored higher in some gifts than in others. This is the first step in discovering your gift.
3. Ask someone who knows you well to also complete the questionnaire on your behalf and compare their evaluation of your gifts with your survey results (or at least discuss each question with them to see if they agree with your answers.)
4. Read the section entitled “A Closer Look at Each of the Gifts” to see which gift seems to apply to your life the most. (Again, do this with someone who knows you well and ask their opinion.)
5. Experiment with the gifts. If you do not try a particular gift you will have a hard time knowing whether you have it nor not. Look for opportunities to use some of the gifts. As you do you will find out if you have the gift or not.
6. Consider what areas of ministry excite you. Examine your feelings and desires. Together with each gift God gives us a desire to see that gift expressed. Think about what motivates you. What you enjoy doing. Chances are these are in line with your gift. Also the opposite of this is sometimes true. Often when we have a particular gift it causes us to feel frustrated when we see certain needs being unmet. The frustration is often because the gift has enabled us to see the need and this is a sign that God want us to use our gift to fill that need.
7. Consider what areas of your life have been fruitful in the past. When we operate our gift we will see evidence of success.
8. Expect confirmation from other Christians.

No gifts can be discovered, developed or used alone. We need the confirmation of other Christians. They will often recognise God’s gifts in us.

NB If you feel you have a particular gift, but no-one else agrees that you have it, be very suspicious of your assessment of the matter.

Below are 35 statements which may help you discover your basic gift or gifts. Rate yourself with the following scale by writing the appropriate number in the corresponding number square. Score yourself based on what fulfils and satisfies you, not on personality biases and traits.

3 = Always

2 = Occasionally or some of the time

1 = Hardly at all

0 = Not at all

1. I have a deep desire to speak direct messages from God that edify, comfort and motivate others. This desire compels me to seek God intensely for this ability.
2. I am prepared to overlook my own personal comfort in order that the needs of others (particularly if practical) may be met.
3. I find great delight in explaining the truth of passages of Scripture or spiritual concepts in a way people can clearly understand.
4. My greatest desire is to see scriptural principles put into action, and dislike teaching which does not give practical direction.
5. I am able to and enjoy managing my financial affairs efficiently so that I can give generously to the Lord's work.
6. I find planning jobs for others and then supplying them with the details to enable them to work efficiently, easy and enjoyable.
7. I readily find myself sympathising with the misfortunes of others.
8. I often have a strong sense of what God wants to say to individuals or groups of people and I am prepared to share it even if at times it confronts, irritates, shakes or challenges them.
9. I enjoy doing work that is practical, behind the scenes, particularly if it means that others, especially key people can be released to do the tasks God has specifically called them to.
10. I enjoy spending hours doing research on a subject, and love passing on to others as many facts about a subject as I can.

11. I love to come alongside people and help them to grow, but can get discouraged with those who seem to be wasting my time.
12. I am cheerful about giving material assets so that the Lord's work can be furthered.
13. I can visualise the result of a major undertaking, and what it will take to accomplish it, but I don't like being involved with petty details as my focus tends to be on the final product.
14. I enjoy visiting those in hospital, or the shut-ins.
15. I am more loyal to the truth than I am to people and am quite willing to suffer rejection for the sake of truth.
16. When I do a job I need to know that it has been appreciated and it has been a blessing to others. I need encouragement to motivate me to continue reaching out.
17. I am concerned that truth should be presented clearly and logically and in balance with proper attention given to the meaning of words, so that it will be understood correctly.
18. I get great pleasure out of motivating people to have a vision for their spiritual lives and enjoy working out projects and ways for them to reach their goals.
19. I have no problem in joyfully entrusting my assets to others for the work of the ministry.
20. I am very conscious of the need to have efficient running administration so that every aspect of a project runs smoothly.
21. I have great concern for those who are in trouble.
22. I can usually detect when something or someone is fake, and have a strong desire to bring out the truth of the situation, even if it could mean possibly offending the person.
23. I have an ability to see practical needs that others don't see and when meeting those needs, I often like to add extra touches to finish off the job and to bless those I am working for.

24. I am diligent in my study of the bible and desire to gain as much knowledge as I can.
25. I am at my best when helping those who feel like giving up or who have been spiritually wounded.
26. I am concerned when the work of the Lord is hindered or people unable to function in ministry effectively because of a lack of finance.
27. I enjoy coordinating the efforts of many to reach a common goal and can motivate and inspire my workers to action.
28. I work happily with those who are ignored by the majority, and find myself naturally drawn to these people.
29. I find it relatively easy to sense exactly what God wants to do at any point in a meeting, and have strong desire to share these thoughts verbally whether in a prophetic message to the group or individually.
30. I am able to remember the likes and dislikes of people and have a great ability and/or desire to find out and remember the special interest and occasions of the people I relate to, so that I can use that knowledge to make those occasions special.
31. When I hear people making important statements, I have a desire to verify them and also desire to find out the qualifications of those who teach me.
32. I am actively aware of the things that hold people back in their spiritual development and long to help them overcome their problems.
33. I am careful with money and continually pray over its proper distribution in the work of the Lord.
34. I can break down a large task into achievable goals and can then delegate those jobs to others.
35. I am able to relate to others who are emotionally hurting and gain satisfaction from being able to help them.

A	1	8	15	22	29	TOTAL	GIFT
B	2	9	16	23	30		
C	3	10	17	24	31		
D	4	11	18	25	32		
E	5	12	19	26	33		
F	6	13	20	27	34		
G	7	14	21	28	35		

KEY TO YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT

Row A = Prophecy

Row B = Ministry/Serving

Row C = Teaching

Row D = Exhorting

Row E = Giving

Row F = Leading/Organising

Row G = Mercy

YOU HAVE A **GIFT!**

1

PROPHECY

Romans 12:6 *Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith;*

Description

The Greek word here is: propheteia and means: to speak forth the mind and counsel of God.

It contains the following ideas:

- The ability to see things the way they really are
- To discern good from evil
- To disclose the motivations of the heart
- To understand the mind of God in a particular situation

And involves the activities of:

- Warning
- Exhorting
- Instructing
- Judging
- Discerning
- Comforting

Motivation

The prophet is motivated to help bring people's lives into line with God's revealed will and has a tendency to view any person, group or situation in the light of their lives before God and in the light of His moral standards.

Note this gift is not necessarily linked to the popular understanding of a prophet as "one who foretells the future" but rather is better described as "one who speaks God's mind and counsel into a particular situation".

Illustrations

Peter (as per Strengths and Weaknesses.)

YOU HAVE A GIFT!

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Gift of Prophecy

STRENGTHS

Desire to communicate

Prophets feel compelled to communicate their insights and convictions to others, particularly when they promote the truth in doing so. Peter was an important communicator within the early church and there are more accounts of him speaking than any other disciple. (See Acts 2:4, 3:12, 4:8, 11:4).

Convincing presentations of truth

Prophets are able to give convincing presentations of the truth. Peter addressed the crowd on the Day of Pentecost, saying “you have taken by lawless hands, have crucified, and put to death,” (Acts 2:23) and the validity and directness of his accusations had a powerful impact.

Willingness to sacrifice relationships

Those with the gift of prophecy are committed to the truth, even if it damages their relationships with others. Regardless of what the other disciples decided, Peter told Jesus that he would not leave Him because He spoke the words of eternal life. (See John 6:57-69).

Rebuke those who sin

Because of their hatred of sin, prophets are firm when they deal with those who sin and aim to bring them to repentance. They are fully aware that “a little yeast works through the whole batch of dough”. (1 Corinthians 5:6) and thus seek to dispel any sin amongst believers. Peter asked Christ how many times a sinner must be forgiven before he could. Prophets tend to speak out immediately give up on them. (See Matthew 18:21).

WEAKNESSES

Failing to restore sinners

Prophets are concerned with preventing evil so that justice and righteousness will prevail. They will often unveil the sins of others in an attempt to bring about reconciliation with God. However, if a prophet only unearths the sin, without restoring the person, they will contradict the instruction in Galatians 6:1.

Incorrect categorising

Prophets have a tendency to use two dimensional vision, seeing everything as either black or white. If a prophet disagrees with one part of an activity or behaviour of a person, they may class the entire activity or behaviour of the person as wrong and will concentrate only on its negative points without considering the possible good aspects.

Spontaneity

Prophets are usually spontaneous people, they make hasty decisions and can often be observed changing from one extreme to another. Peter was quick to implore Jesus to wash his hands and his head also, having just refused to let Him wash his feet. (See John 13:6-10).

Making assumptions

Sometimes prophets arrive at premature conclusions based on very little evidence and will only then search for confirmation. This may cause them to view situations and people out of context, in an attempt to support their conclusions.

Undying commitment to the truth

Prophets are prepared to face persecution for their commitment to the truth and for doing what is right. Peter was flogged for not compromising his devotion to God and we see that he was glad to have been “counted worthy to suffer shame for His name”. (Acts 5:41).

Examples of honesty

Prophets desire honesty in others and tend to set an example by being transparent characters who are honest about their faults. Peter acknowledged his failures when he said to Jesus, “Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord”. (Luke 5:8).

Discernment of deception

A prophet can discern beneath the outward appearances of people and situations and completely dislikes any deceit or falseness. Peter was driven to question Ananias and Sapphira about the money they received for their land, indicating that he must have first suspected their deception. (See Acts 5:3-10).

Immediate and accurate insights Prophets are able to make quick and accurate assessments of people's words and actions and are frequently observed to be first in voicing their opinions. Of the disciples, Peter spoke first on more occasions than any of the others. (See Matt. 14:28, 15:15, 16:16,22, 17:4, 19:27, John 6:68, 13:16).

Eagerness to be involved

Prophets tend to give their unreserved attention to activities with which they are involved and will respond rapidly to opportunities for advancing their cause. After realising that Jesus was walking on water, Peter was eager to accompany Him. (See Matthew 14:28).

Speaking too early

Prophets tend to speak out immediately against anything with which they disagree. In so doing they sometimes neglect to consider whether they have all the facts or whether a rebuke is necessary.

Rebuking out of turn

When rebuking others, prophets tend to be straight to the point, regardless of whom they are dealing with. This may result in humiliating themselves if they speak out of turn or without due respect. For example, Peter tried to correct Jesus for not informing the disciples of His forthcoming death. (See Mark 8:31-32).

Impatient with unrepentance

We have seen that prophets aim to elicit repentance by unveiling the sins of others. They may, however, become frustrated when people do not instantly turn from their sins even if, in exposing the sin, they have acted inappropriately or with a wrong attitude.

Struggle with forgiveness

Prophets often find it difficult to stop from excluding the sinner along with the sin. This makes it easier for sinners to personally accept any rebuke of the sin. To prevent this from occurring, they must be both firm and compassionate, as Peter was.

Being self critical

As prophets strive to “practice what they preach”, they may become excessively critical of themselves, condemning themselves severely when they fail. After Jesus' resurrection, the angel instructed “Go tell His disciples and Peter” (Mark 16:7), as he knew Peter would be feeling somewhat worthless after having denied Jesus.

2

MINISTRY/SERVING

Romans 12:7 *or ministry, let us use it in our ministering;*

Description

The Greek word here is: diakonia and means: to attend as a servant, to aid or give service.

It contains the following ideas:

- To give practical assistance or help
- To relieve the burden of others by helping out
- To serve others

It involves:

- The ability to see and do things that need to be done

Motivation

The server is motivated to demonstrate love by meeting practical needs and rendering assistance and often works for others.

Illustrations

Timothy (as per Strengths and Weaknesses)

YOU HAVE A GIFT!

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Gift of Serving

STRENGTHS

Addressing practical needs

Servers have the ability to identify practical needs that they can then try to meet.

Although their help is practical, it has the potential to minister to the spirits and souls of others. Paul recognised Timothy's gift of serving, saying: "I have no man like minded who will naturally care for your state" (Philippians 2:20).

Remember important details

Servers are usually able to remember little details. They often make a note of special occasions in the lives of others so they can strive to make these memorable events for others. Servers are often those who remember the favourite birthday cakes, colours and places to visit all of their friends.

Giving more than is required

Servers are prepared to go above and beyond what is required for each of their tasks and do so cheerfully for the glory of God. For example, they may take flowers along with the meal they have cooked for a sick friend.

Responding to requests for help

In thinking of others first, servers find it difficult to say "no" to further requests for help and will do their utmost to meet all the legitimate needs with which they are presented.

Think of others first

Servers are aware of the significance of their work. By concentrating on their tasks and the people they are helping they are often able to continue despite physical or mental weariness, lack of time or financial difficulties.

WEAKNESSES

Being interfering

Sometimes servers are more preoccupied with what they are doing than why they are doing it and whom they are helping. If servers identify other people's needs before they do, and proceed to meet them, they may seem to be interfering.

Being frustrated with unseen needs

Servers sometimes make the mistake of thinking everyone else notices all the little details, just as they do (which of course, is not true). Thus they become annoyed when needs which appear obvious to them are overlooked by others.

Difficulty with time limits

Because servers are continually adding finishing touches to their tasks, they tend to feel restricted by time limits, preferring to work to their own schedule. Paul said to Timothy, "Make every effort to come to me soon" (2 Timothy 4:9,21).

Neglecting personal responsibilities

In thinking of others first, servers may neglect their own family or church responsibilities, especially when it seems that they receive more appreciation from others than they do at home.

Being self motivated

At times, servers may forget that their motivation should come from the Lord. When they begin carrying out tasks for others rather than for God, they will become resentful whenever their work goes unappreciated.

Respond to appreciation

Servers prefer to work in cooperation with others rather than in sub-servience to them. They are able to maximise the impact of their ministry when they are given careful guidance and when their work is appreciated. Paul knew the importance of this and he encouraged Timothy and provided him with more direction than any other helper. (See 1 & 2 Timothy).

Meets immediate needs

Servers prefer to deal with immediate needs rather than long term projects on which they can become impatient. Paul encouraged Timothy to continually pursue God's will for his life, part of which was serving others. (Timothy 4:16, 2 Timothy 2:3).

Releasing others into God's plans

The fulfilment of the server does not only come from providing practical assistance, but also because they know that their help enables others to be freed to pursue the plans God has for their lives. Paul's ministry was helped to function effectively because Timothy served him "...as a son with the father...". (Philippians 2:22).

Prefer to work individually

If they can, servers prefer to meet the needs of others personally rather than discuss and plan with others in committees. To them it seems more efficient to work individually.

Reluctance to delegate work

Because they are consistent and reliable, servers are sometimes given positions of authority where matters of practical work are involved. However, because of their tendency to meet needs personally and their difficulty in declining from requests of help, they may attempt to carry out all the work themselves, rather than distributing it among others.

Forcing their ways upon others

Sometimes servers may view their methods as being superior to others. Because they have difficulty in delegating work and sticking to time limits, they will often force others to work in accordance with their methodology and time schedule rather than arriving at a compromise.

Opposing God's will

Sometimes God uses physical situations to initiate repentance, so if a server meets these needs they are meddling with the will of God. For example, the prodigal son may not have returned to his father so readily had a server aided him in his adversity.

3 TEACHING

Romans 12:7 ... *he who teaches, in teaching;*

Description

The Greek word here is: didasko and means: to teach or give instruction

It contains the following ideas:

- To clarify truth
- To impart knowledge
- To indoctrinate
- To reveal truth

It involves:

- The ability to explain and lead others into revealed truth

Motivation

The teacher is motivated to search out, validate and impart knowledge.

Illustrations

Luke (as per Strengths and Weaknesses)

YOU HAVE A GIFT!

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Gift of Teaching

STRENGTHS

Clarify the truth

Teachers clarify the truth with reference to the Bible. They then confirm this using writings which have been established as trustworthy. Luke made reference to the other gospels and to the Old Testament in his writing. In addition, he credited the Bereans with having “noble character for they examined the Scriptures everyday to see if what Paul said was true”. (Acts 17: 11).

Research thoroughly

Teachers like to research topics and compile many facts which they can then use in their teachings. At the beginning of Acts, Luke refers to his Gospel as being a complete account. (Acts 1:1). Not only is his Gospel the longest, but we find information in Luke that is excluded from other Gospels.

Relevant information

Teachers ensure that the many facts they gather are accurate and relevant so that their research is thorough. Luke’s Gospel contains more dates and names of people and cities and his descriptions tend to be lengthier and full of vivid detail.

Verify statements

After hearing the statements or ideas of others, teachers will want to gather evidence to either support or refute them, especially with regard to the work of God. This will be particularly important if teachers, themselves, wish to use the statements. Luke’s Gospel was written “so that you may know the certainty of the things you have been taught”. (Luke 1:4).

WEAKNESSES

Over dependence on human reasoning

Because of their systematic methods, teachers may develop a dependence on logical reasoning rather than the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In addition, because teachers so highly regard research and study, which the other gifts make little use of, they may see their gift as being superior to the others.

Including irrelevant detail

Teachers have difficulty in giving a statement without detailing the logic they used to arrive at the conclusion. This can cause them to include irrelevant details which detract from the impact of the conclusion, itself.

Reading the Bible without God's inspiration

There are many scholars who are knowledgeable concerning the Bible but who are not Christians and who tend to misinterpret passages or read them out of context. Christians with the gift of teaching need to rely on the Holy Spirit for their interpretation of Scriptures, to avoid Godless theology.

Being proud of knowledge

Teachers are usually extremely knowledgeable people because of their continual research. If they forget that this is a God given gift, they may become boastful of their intelligence. Paul, aware of this risk, says that “knowledge puffeth up”. (1 Corinthians 8:1).

Correct mistakes

If teachers find that they have made errors during their research or presentation of the truth, they are likely to be thorough in determining exactly where and why they went wrong so as to prevent this from occurring again.

Systematic presentation of truth

Teachers like to present the truth in a logical, systematic and accessible way. Luke tried to remain true to the chronological order of events in his Gospel, his aim being “to write an orderly account”. (Luke 1:3).

Unsatisfied with experience as truth

Teachers are reluctant to derive the truth from personal experience. They know that subjective experience must be complemented with the teachings of the Bible. Teachers tend not to speak until information has been confirmed and tested and we see that none of Luke’s own words are included in his writings.

Commitment to reliable presenters of the truth

Schools, writings and leaders which are respected for their reliable presentation of the truth, are, likely to have the complete support of teachers. Paul spoke of Luke’s undying loyalty to him in prison, saying “only Luke is with me”. (2 Timothy 4:11).

Identify false teaching

Teachers are quick to identify falseness as they investigate the validity of the facts. Teachers seek to establish their own authority before speaking to others. Luke saw this necessary and in commencing his Gospel, he stated the information was provided by eye witnesses and that he had “carefully investigated everything from the beginning”. (Luke 1:3).

Failing to apply Scriptures to life

Teachers risk being so preoccupied with the Bible as a source of information that they overlook one of its most important functions,-practical applications to peoples lives. Paul tells us that the Bible should be used “for doctrine, reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness”. (2 Timothy 3:16).

False teaching

False teachers arise when some parts of the Bible are concentrated on too heavily while others are disregarded, or when verses are used out of context. These teachers cause dissension and will lead people away from God.

Focussing on minor disagreements

Many parts of the Bible can be interpreted in different ways and there is a possibility for conflict to arise between teachers who have different interpretations. Rather than concentrating on these disagreements, teachers should focus on the fundamental truths of the Bible so as to promote unity in the body of Christ.

Judging by credentials

Teachers may wrongly judge others according to their intelligence, qualifications, or credentials. Such assessment of character would seem to favour a highly qualified yet spiritually immature person over a wiser but less academically oriented person who has a closer relationship with God.

4

EXHORTING

Romans 12:8 *he who exhorts, in exhortation;*

Description

The Greek word here is: parakaleo and means: to call near, or to urge one to pursue some course of action.

It contains the following ideas:

- To admonish
- To invite
- To entreat
- To invoke
- To implore
- To beseech
- To call people to action

It involves:

- The ability to encourage people to grow and to meet successfully the experiences of life

Motivation

The exhorter is motivated to stimulate the faith and personal growth of others and is primarily concerned with future actions and progress of others rather than the past.

Illustrations

Paul (as per Strengths and Weaknesses)

YOU HAVE A GIFT!

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Gift of Exhorting

STRENGTHS

Desire to see spiritual growth

The main desire of exhorters is to witness spiritual growth in the lives of others, and they try to elicit this growth through continual encouragement. Paul was an exhorter and laboured to “present everyone perfect (mature) in Christ” (Colossians 1:28). He said to the Galatians, “I am again in the pains of childbirth until Christ is formed in you” (Galatians 4:19).

Identification of spiritual maturity

Exhorters are able to sense where others are at in God. Paul knew that he must speak carefully to the Corinthians, since they were “mere infants in Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:1). Exhorters try to locate and deal with anything which prevents spiritual growth while reinforcing those things which encourage growth.

Desire for openness

An exhorter knows that honesty and openness are needed for spiritual growth. Paul says “I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some” (1 Corinthians 9:22). Exhorters understand that maturity will not develop where there is hidden iniquity and guilt. A clear conscience was required to “fight the good fight” (1 Timothy 1:18-19).

Turning mourning into dancing

Exhorters use times of tribulation as learning experiences and know that God stays close to those who suffer. Paul rejoiced during his trials because his relationship with Christ was being strengthened (2 Corinthians 1:1-7).

WEAKNESSES

Neglecting other God given priorities

Exhorters are so determined to help others reach their potential in God that they are prepared to sacrifice much time to see this achieved. However, they must not let this cause them to shirk important responsibilities to their family or church. The Bible tells us that married people have a responsibility to their partner which should not be neglected. (1 Corinthians 7:32-34).

Accepting personal credit

Exhorters set achievable goals for those they work with and encourage them continually, ensuring they are followed through. It is easy for them to feel responsible for the spiritual growth of others and to accept credit rather than giving the glory to God. If this occurs, exhorters may become satisfied only with the appearance of change rather than a true change of heart.

Giving wrong instruction

By observing others, exhorters gain insight into human behaviour and can usually make wise judgements. However, they risk wrongly categorising problems by making assumptions where there is insufficient information. This may cause them to give inappropriate instruction which is rebuked in Proverbs 18:13.

Unfaithfulness in completing work

Those with the gift of exhorting can become impatient with any long term work and can be tempted to neglect incomplete projects for new, more exciting challenges.

Visualise spiritual potential

Exhorters can see spiritual potential in others and give practical assistance to help them fulfil this potential. They encourage reliance on the Holy Spirit as well as spiritual discipline. Timothy was warned by Paul to “flee the evil desires of youth, and pursue righteousness, faith, love and peace” (2 Timothy 2:22).

Using others as illustrations

To illustrate how God can use people, exhorters will point to others as examples. Paul’s own life was an example of how God can use even the worst of sinners for His glory (1 Timothy 1:15). In his writings, Paul also used churches as examples to encourage other churches (2 Corinthians 9:2).

Gain knowledge by observation

Exhorters observe others to find patterns of human behaviour which will help them to understand and then encourage. This insight should be balanced with Scriptural truths.

Need to be with those they encourage

Those with the gift of exhorting feel the need to encourage others face to face to demonstrate a genuine interest in the other person to sense what they are feeling. Paul constantly yearned to be with those he encouraged. (1 Thessalonians 2:17, 3:10, 2 Timothy 1:4).

Devise plans for growth

Exhorters share with teachers a love of systematic reasoning and they use this to set out steps for spiritual growth. Paul’s logical reasoning is illustrated in many instances including in 1 Corinthians which has been studied in universities for its logic.

Being untrustworthy

Exhorters realise the effectiveness of using real illustrations from the lives of others. This can cause problems when they share things which were told to them in confidence, when they use illustrations without permission or when they name those they are speaking of.

Having wrong motivation

Exhorters continually search for people in which they can, by the grace of God, elicit spiritual growth. They may carry out this searching with the wrong motivation, looking for challenges rather than fulfilling God’s will.

Over dependence on subjective truth

Exhorters can disregard Scriptures or other teachings which do not have obvious relevance to practical living and this causes them to be vulnerable to false teaching. Teachers, with their uncompromising focus on the truth, need to work alongside exhorters.

Losing commitment to difficult cases

Naturally, exhorters wish to see fruit for their labour. This desire may cause them to persist only with those who respond to their direction rather than with more difficult cases. Remaining committed to the harder projects develops character and spiritual growth in the people they work with and in themselves.

Giving no indication of time

Spiritual growth is a long term process but exhorters sometimes forget to make this clear to those they are counselling. Although they may set realistic goals, they fail to give any indication of the time it will take to achieve these and thus cause frustration and misunderstanding on the part of the person they are working with.

5 GIVING

Romans 12:8 ... *he who gives, with liberality;*

Description

The Greek word here is: metadidomi: and means: to give a share of, to impart.

It contains the following ideas:

- To give of your own self or substance

Motivation

The giver is motivated to see the work of God and the ministry of others go forward and succeed.

Illustrations

Matthew (as per Strengths and Weaknesses)

YOU HAVE A GIFT!

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Gift of Giving

STRENGTHS

Giving of personal assets

Givers are able to find and utilise opportunities for investment. Their desire is to give practical assistance through gifts of their time, money or material items so that God's will may be carried out unhindered. Givers have this ability regardless of the extent of their personal assets.

Giving unto the Lord

Givers minister their gift unto the Lord and need to know that they are giving according to God's purposes. The Macedonians were praised by Paul for they "first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God". (2 Corinthians 8:5).

Set an example in giving

Not only do givers meet the practical needs of others, but they set an example for others to follow. They encourage those around them to be generous by their words, their example and by providing financial assistance to those who give.

Avoid personal credit

Givers desire to glorify God, not themselves. To avoid any personal credit, they desire to give humbly and, wherever possible, anonymously. Of the four gospels, Matthew is the only one to point out the importance of giving secretly. (Matthew 6:1-4).

Consider the impact of their gifts

Givers are fully aware of the spirit of materialism and will try to give in a way which will not cause corruption in others who have less wisdom with regard to money matters.

WEAKNESSES

Failing to minister their gift

Continual and faithful giving helps to maintain a fear of the Lord and this is why tithing is so important. If givers cease to minister their gift and start collecting resources for themselves, they will become ineffective and will lose their fear of God.

Manipulating through giving

Givers detest reckless handling of finances and like to ensure that their gifts are received and put to use wisely. If they carry this concern, they may appear to manipulate others through their giving.

Procrastinating in giving

Givers need to learn immediate obedience to the directions of the Holy Spirit. If they procrastinate in their giving, they may give at an inappropriate time or fail to meet a need when it was most desperate.

Neglecting to give secretly

If givers do not give anonymously or very humbly, they may cause others to seek provision in them rather than in God. This also enables selfish people with ungodly motives to discover their generosity and abuse it for their own gain.

Failing to meet personal needs

It is important for those with the gift of giving to avoid any preoccupation with large financial projects so as not to overlook the personal needs of people.

Meet Unseen needs

When listening to the Holy Spirit, givers will sense needs which are not obvious to others and can then give accordingly. They may later discover that, in responding to the Holy Spirit, they have been used by God to answer someone's prayers.

Giving what God asks

Givers prefer to respond to God's instruction rather than the appeals of man. After hearing from God about how much and to whom they should give, they often desire confirmation from another Christian, for example a marriage partner.

Able to discern value

Those with the gift of giving are granted wisdom in assessing the value of things and use this ability to give items of the best possible quality. Matthew emphasises the value of the gifts Christ received more than the other gospel writers. The only reference to "the treasures" given by the Magi is in his account (Matthew 2:11) and he tells us that the perfume which Mary used to anoint Jesus with was "very precious" (Matthew 26:6-11).

Demonstrate frugality

Givers demonstrate constant discipline with their finances as well as original initiatives for saving and investing. Frugality is a character trait held in high esteem by them and exercising it enables them to gather resources with which to bless others.

Neglecting own financial needs

It is easy for givers to forget that God desires to bless them as they give to others. They can then feel guilty about giving their own assets and about purchasing things for themselves.

Disregarding requests for help

If givers do not listen to the Lord in preference to the appeals of man, they may be deceived into wrong giving. On the other hand, if they disregard all appeals for assistance, they may miss the chance to help meet a genuine need, not realising that God may have been using the appeal to speak to them.

Obsession with quality

If givers place too much emphasis on quality, they can become excessive and buy far more luxurious items than are required for a need. This may also cause those receiving the gifts to become hungry for better quality possessions than they already have.

Being stingy with family

In exercising thriftiness with their personal assets, givers must be careful not to be stingy with their family as this will cause their family to become hostile towards the ministering of their gift. Thus, givers need to be just as generous to their own family as they are to others.

6 ORGANIZING

Romans 12:8 ... *he who leads, with diligence;*

Description

The Greek word here is: proistemi and means: to stand before, to lead, to attend to.

It contains the following ideas:

- To rule
- To protect
- To give aid
- To facilitate
- To maintain

It involves:

- The ability to see long-range goals and to equip and organize others in the right tasks.

Motivation

The organizer is motivated to co-ordinate the activities of others to achieve common goals.

Illustrations

Nehemiah (as per Strengths and Weaknesses)

YOU HAVE A GIFT!

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Gift of Organizing

STRENGTHS

Keep from distraction

Organisers set their sights on the completion of their tasks and do not turn to the left or right until they achieve it. They remain strong against any opposition which they face from either their own workers or from outside the group. Nehemiah was subjected to much opposition from his enemies and yet he remained committed to his task. (Nehemiah 4:8-18).

Work to realistic plans

Organisers do not see any God inspired task as impossible and have the ability to devise workable steps towards its accomplishment. The Jerusalem walls were huge and towering but, by delegating a section to be built by each family, they were eventually erected. (Nehemiah 3:1-32).

Able to make quick decisions

Organisers are able to make fast and wise decisions on matters which arise within the task and this is because of their counsel with God and their focus on the completed task. Although Nehemiah was, on numerous occasions, requested to meet for discussion with his enemies, he quickly and firmly declined. (Nehemiah 5:1-3).

Competent in handling minor details

Organisers see the importance of each little detail and are careful not to overlook any. They also ensure that they are not distracted by minor details by concentrating on them rather than the completed task. Nehemiah took care of all the financial hindrances but did not personally participate in the building the walls. (Nehemiah 5:1-3).

WEAKNESSES

Treating others only as resources

Organisers, with their focus on the completed task, run the risk of seeing others only as resources and treating them accordingly. This is especially so when they are in a position of authority and are not as exposed to challenges from their workers.

Ignoring ideas of others

Those with the gift of organising have a tendency to see their ideas and methodology as superior to others and can disregard other suggestions or problems raised by the workers. They need to be open to listen to their workers and must especially be submissive to the instructions of their authorities.

Impatience with people of other gifting

People with the gift of organising sometimes forget that not everyone shares their gift and they will then react to what they see as disorderly methods and short sighted planning. In doing so, they may damage invaluable relationships with their workers.

Abusing authority

Organisers can abuse their authority to manipulate others into helping them pursue selfish desires which are not of God. Even when working on God inspired tasks, they may incorrectly concentrate too heavily on the work while disregarding the time and family commitments or physical strength of the workers.

Need for supportive workers

Organisers require the complete faithfulness and commitment of those they work with so that each step towards the final goal will be carried out efficiently. Nehemiah instructed that the “Nobles and officials take an oath to do what they had promised”.

Faithful in finishing tasks completely

Those with the gift of organising motivate their workers through encouragement, guidance and appreciation. Their pleasure comes from seeing tasks completed according to God’s will and they know that this involves cleaning up and restoring things back to order even if this means a different order to what existed before.

Efficient and thorough

Organisers tend to be efficient people and make use of their workers in a way which maximises efficiency. They also like to ensure that they have all the required resources before they commence a task. Nehemiah checked that there was enough timber for the walls before the building was begun.

Distribute tasks wisely

Organisers are able to distribute tasks wisely. They can discern the capabilities of their workers and how much guidance each requires. They know that they must be responsible for some tasks while others should be delegated to fellow workers. Nehemiah personally dealt with the enemies but delegated the building of the walls to others.(Nehemiah 4:13).

Favouritism with workers

Organisers realise the importance of the loyalty of their workers in achieving the goals which they set. This may cause them to favour key workers on whom they are heavily dependent and thus create disunity and perhaps jealousy within the group.

Failing to maintain finished projects

Although organisers may be faithful in seeing a project through to its completion, they may neglect to ensure that it is properly maintained afterwards.

Giving inadequate explanation

People in charge of tasks may wrongly assume that everyone will understand their idea and plans and so fail to provide any explanation of them. Workers will feel that they are being used if their orders are not explained and their work is unappreciated.

Delegating all the work to others

It is easy for organisers to use delegation to prevent them from getting their hands dirty. If others become aware of their laziness, workers will lose respect for their leader so that their authority is undermined. Even if God alone sees their slackness, the organiser will be robbed of the spiritual growth and character strengthening which they might have otherwise received.

Accepting sin amongst workers

Organisers in positions of authority can, in their attempt to carry out tasks efficiently, overlook serious flaws in their workers. Thus, they may employ a compromising Christian who is more efficient than the mature Christian. Others may see this as an acceptance of compromise on the part of the leader.

7 MERCY

Romans 12:8 ... *he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.*

Description

The Greek word here is: *eleeco* and means: to have compassion, to feel sympathy with the misery of another.

It contains the following ideas:

- To have a fellow-feeling with another
- To feel with or for another
- To show personal support
- To empathize with others
- To give help to those in need

It involves:

- The ability to feel where people are and to identify with their need

Motivation

The mercy person is motivated to identify with and to comfort and relieve those who are in distress or need.

Illustrations

John (as per Strengths and Weaknesses)

YOU HAVE A GIFT!

Strengths & Weaknesses of the Gift of Mercy

STRENGTHS

Sense hurt in others

Mercy people have the ability to discern which of those are hurting around them. They are capable of experiencing a large range of empathise with hurting people. John speaks of many diverse emotions in his first epistle, including love, hope, joy and fear (1 John 1:4, 3:2-3, 4:18).

Capable of sincere

Mercy people have an ability to sincerely love others. This makes them potential victims for being emotionally hurt by those to whom they are close. The word “love” is used more by John in his gospel and epistles than it is by any other disciple.

Attract hurting people

People with the gift of mercy are capable of much empathy and can relate to those who are hurting. As a result, hurting people are attracted to them. Before His death, Jesus asked John to look after His mother during her mourning.

Express physical affection

Those with the gift of mercy are usually physically affectionate people and judge their acceptance by their closeness with others. John wanted to be seated next to Jesus not only at the Last Supper but also in glory. (Mark 10:35-37).

Committed to friendships

People with the gift of mercy tend to be committed to their friendships and they will defend friends who are criticised. John thought about calling down fire to destroy the Samaritans who did not accept Jesus. (Luke 9:54).

WEAKNESSES

Interfering with God’s discipline

People can develop emotional problems after having defied the will of God or his standards. Mercy people need to be listening to the Holy Spirit so that they give sympathy to those who have a genuine hurt rather than those who need to be brought to repentance.

Living by emotions

When faced with important decisions, the sensitivity of mercy people can cause them to listen to their emotions rather than God’s direction. They must be careful not to neglect parts of God’s word which seem severe to them.

Misusing gifting to attract opposite sex

Mercy people tend to be affectionate, loving, devoted and willing to listen and these character traits appeal to the opposite sex. It is important that people with the gift of mercy do not use these traits to take advantage of people of the opposite sex.

Being possessive of friends

The need for deep friendships may cause those with the gift of mercy to be possessive and overly demanding within friendships. This will repel their friends rather than attract them.

Lack of cooperation with other gifts

Mercy people tend to side with and defend those being hurt. They must learn to work in cooperation with people who have other motivation gifts. Prophets can have insight regarding the source of hurt while exhorters can devise steps to learn and grow through it.

Need for loyalty in relationships

Mercy people need to be involved in close friendships where there exists a two way loyalty. John was mentioned as the “disciple whom Jesus loved” and it is evident that he shared a closer friendship with Christ than most of the other disciples. (John 13:23, 19:26, 20:2, 21:7-20).

Remove the roots of hurts

Mercy people desire to see the sources of peoples hurts removed. This contrasts with exhorters who see hurts and trials as stepping stones in spiritual growth. John encourages Christians to love and not hate each other to prevent hurts from developing. (1 John 3:11-15).

Necessity of firmness

People with the gift of mercy learn that being firm and decisive helps the ministering of their gift to be more effective. John’s bold and firm decision not to deny Jesus astonished the Sadducees. (Acts 4:13).

Complement the gift of prophecy

Mercy people tend to be drawn towards those with the gift of prophecy. The two work well together, with the insight and firmness of the prophet complementing the empathy and compassion of the mercy person. John spent much of his time with Peter, who was a prophet. (Luke 22:8, Acts 3:1-11, 4:13-19, 8:14).

Questioning God’s will

Those with the gift of mercy look on hurting people from a very different perspective to exhorters. Rather than seeing tribulation as an opportunity for spiritual growth, they find it difficult to accept that God allows people to be hurt. They must be careful not to become annoyed with God, but learn to accept His will.

Lack of firmness

People with the gift of mercy are careful not to offend or hurt others and so they find it difficult to be firm with those who need discipline. This can be especially damaging when mercy people are in positions of leadership.

Rejecting the insensitive

Mercy people find it difficult to relate to others who do not share their sensitivity. They run the risk of rejecting insensitive people even though these people may be hurting deeply.

Being overly affectionate

Not all hurting people are going to be physically affectionate people and those with the gift of mercy must keep this in mind. In addition, they must be careful to anticipate the response of those the hurting person is close to before expressing affection towards them.

YOU HAVE A GIFT!