



"Triumphant In Christ, Victorious In Life"

Wednesday Teaching Series: *The Gifts, Manifestations, and Ministry of the Holy Spirit*
Topic: "Gift and Generational Challenges"- Wednesday, July 19th, 2017

1 Corinthians 12:12 – 31 (NLT) – ¹² The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. ¹³ Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit. ¹⁴ Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. ¹⁵ If the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand," that does not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear says, "I am not part of the body because I am not an eye," would that make it any less a part of the body? ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? ¹⁸ But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. ¹⁹ How strange a body would be if it had only one part! ²⁰ Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. ²¹ The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you." ²² In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. ²³ And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, ²⁴ while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. ²⁵ This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. ²⁷ All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it. ²⁸ Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church: first are apostles, second are prophets, third are teachers, then those who do miracles, those who have the gift of healing, those who can help others, those who have the gift of leadership, those who speak in unknown languages. ²⁹ Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? ³⁰ Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not! ³¹ So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts. But now let me show you a way of life that is best of all."



GIFT CHALLENGES:

We are living in amazing days. There are more people alive on the planet than at any other time in history, and the potential for the Church to impact a sighing, crying, and dying world with a life-giving message and life-changing power has never been greater. But are churches ready? Are _____ ready? Personalize this question... Am _____ ready? Are the laborers that Jesus prayed for equipped and energized, or are believers barely hanging on, trying to merely survive? Are we regularly practicing "activating the anointing and gifts" God has deposited in us to build-up, bless and benefit the believer, the Church and the Community around us? Are we actively respecting and properly relating to the gift of God in others in our natural and spiritual family? This brings us to the question, "Who does God use?" We know that God posed the question to Isaiah, "*Whom shall I send, and who will go for Us?*" And we know straightforward and sincere response, "*Here am I! Send me*"

(Isaiah 6:8). How many are responding to God today with such heartfelt eagerness? I'm not simply referring to who will become a preacher or a missionary, but how many—regardless of a call to full-time ministry or not—are surrendering their all to God? How many are totally sold-out to serving God whether it be in their local church, the marketplace, the work place or elsewhere? I suggest that there are three things the enemy and his cohorts try to do each us to either _____ us or _____ us to our God-given gifts and purpose from God:

- (1) _____ our gifts [**Refuse** = to express oneself as unwilling to accept]
- (2) _____ our gifts [**Misuse** = to mistreat; to use incorrectly; misapply]
- (3) _____ our gifts [**Abuse** = a corrupt practice; maltreatment; improper]

Over the years, I've seen a progression, of sorts, in people putting themselves in a place where they can be used by God. While there are certainly other factors involved, let me take you through five very important components that people embrace in order to increase their usefulness in Kingdom work and overcome GIFT CHALLENGES.

- (1) _____ - The willing are those who present their very lives as an unqualified "yes" to the Lord. God is not a thief, and He will not take from us what we do not willingly offer. He does not force people to serve Him against their will. God will plead with us, beseech us, implore us, and influence us, but He will not violate our free will. This is why times and seasons of consecration are important; those moments when we (like Jesus) say, *"...not My will, but Yours, be done"* (**Luke 22:42**). Sometimes people struggle with the issue of willingness because they realize that part of their being doesn't want to surrender entirely to God. Some then feel guilty and pull away from Him. If you relate to that, let me encourage you. What you're feeling is normal. That's the flesh and the un-renewed mind doing what it naturally does—seeking to please and serve itself. If you struggle with willingness, don't get under condemnation; talk to God about it. Tell him that you want to be willing, and acknowledge that you need His help. **Sometimes willingness begins with the willingness to become willing.** Admitting that you can't do it on your own can be a necessary step of humility that positions you to receive grace from God to do what you can't do on your own. Remember **Philippians 2:13 (AMP)** which says, *"[Not in your own strength] for it is God Who is all the while effectually at work in you [energizing and creating in you the power and desire], both to will and to work for His good pleasure and satisfaction and delight."*
- (2) _____ - Willingness is vital and foundational, and it is an important heart-issue in serving God. However, there is a practical and logistical side in serving God as well, and this brings us to the issue of availability. You can have the best heart in the world, and you can pray many prayers of consecration, but practically speaking, if you don't have some availability to offer, your willingness will never find practical expression. Remember, the best ability is AVAILABILITY! If every time the pastors present opportunities to serve, an individual says, "Wow! I'd love to do that, but I'm too busy," that person will never do anything in spite of their good intentions. I realize that people have jobs, family obligations, etc. but having time designated to serve God indicates well-set priorities and a disciplined approach to life. Remember that Jesus said, *"...seek first the kingdom of God..."* (**Matthew 6:33**). He didn't say "seek exclusively the kingdom of God..." He knows we have practical things to take care of, not just spiritual things. **But God should be our highest priority.** We should put Him first in everything. To me, this means that I'm going to put God first and make sure I've got time to serve Him. It is good to note here that serving God can also take place spontaneously and informally through relationships in the course of our day-to-day lives, but it's optimal that we also serve God

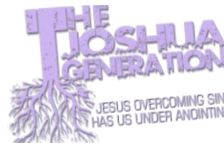
consistently through positions in the local church. It's good to be available to God in every way possible.

- (3) _____ - If a Christian is willing and available, they will be put to work somewhere. Every spiritual leader will tell you that there is more work to be done than there are people who are willing and available to serve. However, if individuals are willing and available, but fail to demonstrate faithfulness, they will be great starters but poor finishers. Remember, **the FAITH to step up and step out is worthless, without the FAITHFULNESS to stick it out.** Once we've established a willing heart and made ourselves practically available, it is essential that we be faithful in carrying out our assignments. Faithfulness among workers creates reliability, dependability, and consistency; it is an essential ingredient to quality ministry. Yet as important as faithfulness is, it is not a trait demonstrated by all believers. A.W. Pink said, *"Faithful people have always been in a marked minority."* Solomon echoed the same sentiment when he said, *"Many people profess their loyalty, but a faithful person—who can find?" (Proverbs 20:6, NET).* Faithful people are those that show up regularly, serve eagerly, and follow through on their commitments. They are a tremendous blessing to their pastor because of their unfaltering trustworthiness. It is not uncommon for a pastor to introduce me to someone in their church, describing the individual as someone they can always count on. "Anytime we have a need, this person is willing to step in and do whatever it takes to get the job done. They may not even be gifted in that particular area, but they'll fill the gap, and will give their best efforts to the task at hand."
- (4) _____ A person can be willing, available, and faithful, but in many situations, it is important that he or she also be skilled. There are areas in ministry (as well as in life) where specific skill sets are necessary. For example, if my car has a mechanical problem, attitude and character issues can play a role in the person I choose, but ultimately, I need the person working on my car to have certain skills, those which come from extensive training and experience. David's example in serving God vividly demonstrates that it is possible to have both a great attitude and high proficiency. **Psalm 78:72** says, *"So he shepherded them according to the integrity of his heart, and guided them by the skillfulness of his hands."* Notice that both integrity and know-how are involved. Integrity speaks of the character, while skillfulness speaks of expertise in doing the job well. **A commitment to skillfulness does not mean that a person will be perfect before they start.** If that were the case, no one would ever start, and it's important to remember that practicing is an important part of developing skillfulness. Often, our performance at the beginning of a project reflects our lack of experience, and that's OK. **But let's never be content to stay mediocre in what we do for God.** It is important to have a culture of continual improvement as we serve Him; the Lord certainly deserves our very best. In secular endeavors, quality and excellence are usually highly valued. Henry Ford once said, "There's a better way to do it. Find it!" Becoming a life-long learner and a commitment to constant improvement is important in serving God well, and we should endeavor to offer to heaven that which reflects excellence.



- (5) _____ - In a very real sense, every believer is “called.” We are all called to be His children, called to love Him, honor Him, and represent Him in the earth. Different ones, though, have specific callings relating to certain tasks. Not everyone is called to be a pastor, or called to be a youth minister, or called to be a worship leader. Specific callings are accompanied by corresponding gifts and graces. Many will testify that when they were called by God to a certain task, an anointing of the Holy Spirit was also given to help them perform their assignment. When we cooperate with our Caller and cultivate our calling, great things happen! A calling does not take the place of the other attributes we have mentioned (willingness, availability, faithfulness, and skill), but incorporates and builds upon them. Those characteristics, when properly established and maintained, serve to enhance and fortify our calling.

GENERATIONAL CHALLENGES:



Isaiah 3:5 (NIV) – “People will oppress each other—man against man, neighbor against neighbor. The young will rise up against the old, the nobody against the honored.”

1 Corinthians 12:18 – 27 (NLT) – “¹⁸ But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. ¹⁹ How strange a body would be if it had only one part! ²⁰ Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. ²¹ The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you.” ²² In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. ²³ And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, ²⁴ while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. ²⁵ This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad. ²⁷ All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it.”

- We must understand that in the Body (the Church) are different ages, stages and generations. With these differences, there are conflicts and _____ that occur because the enemy and our flesh magnifies these differences.
 - Discord, disunity and disagreement is often rooted in the magnification of differences (age, color, class, culture or category) through hate (the withholding and absence of the love of God).
- How do we get young and old to interact? How do we effectively transition in ministry? How do we relate and maintain *unity* with diversity in the community of the local Church?
- The CHALLENGE generationally is to care, connect and _____ with each other in order to COMPLETE each other and not COMPETE against each other.
- Let’s look at the relationship between Moses and Joshua to glean some wisdom, insight and understanding for overcoming generational challenges.
- **MOSES Model:**
 - Moses looked for young people God was _____ for the future. What did he do, how did he relate and interact with them?
 - He allowed them _____ in his journey.
 - Moses involved them in key _____ for the future.
 - Moses prayed for and _____ in them.
 - He understood there were places only _____ leaders could take them.
 - He knew when it was time for the _____.

- **JOSHUA Model:**

- Can you serve in someone's _____?
 - "Don't tell others about being the "Joshua Generation" if you have never served in someone's shadow."
- Can you learn in the second _____?
- Can you appreciate the _____?
- Can you handle it when they are _____?
- Can you grow without you being on the _____?
 - "If you think getting on the stage will grow you – it will destroy you."
- Can you wait your _____?
- Being Joshua takes _____?
- Like David learned, there are some principle which are only learned over time.
 - **Psalms 37:25 (NKJV)** – *"I have been young, and now am old; Yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, Nor his descendants begging bread."*
 - Going through multiple _____, allows you to gain multiple _____.
 - This is important because of the _____ factor.
 - **OLD:**
 - Why don't they _____ it?
 - "Some perspectives are lifelong perspectives that only longevity can possess."
 - How many times do I have to _____ them?
 - Why don't they _____?
 - **YOUNG:**
 - Of course I _____ it.
 - "There are somethings that you can not know how to do until your life is full with experiences."
 - All they do is _____.
 - Why don't they let _____ do it?

- **KEYS TO WATCH FOR:**

- _____ **Titus 2:2 – 4 (NKJV)** – *"² that the **older** men be sober, reverent, temperate, sound in faith, in love, in patience; ³ the **older** women likewise, that they be reverent in behavior, not slanderers, not given to much wine, teachers of good things— ⁴ that they admonish the **young** women to love their husbands, to love their children"*
- No matter what your age, there are _____.
- To the OLD – **If you are not dead, you are not done!** No coasting. You don't get to _____ from the will of God. We can retire from a position, but we can not retire from doing the will of God.
 - (1) _____; (2) _____; (3) _____ - these are three jobs we cannot retire from no matter how old you are we have Christian responsibilities in our:
 - _____ life; _____ life and _____ life.
 - Who, where, when – don't sit on the _____.
 - Be answers to **young** believer's _____. Things of Faith, Family and things of Function.
- To the YOUNG – It is your job to _____.
 - Note: Older, experienced – it is not your job to chase them down to get them to want to learn.
 - Learn what? (1) How do you just do _____ (2) How do you just do _____ and (3) How do you stay _____.

- **CHARACTER: It changes**

- Older Christians must model Christian character.
 - The Apostle John – **Luke 9:54 (NKJV)** – “And when His disciples James and John saw this, they said, “Lord, do You want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, just as Elijah did?”
 - John was one of the youngest disciples chosen, yet we are given a good picture of how he grew in character.
 - Idealistic, Fire, Kids...
 - A Lesson to Learn from John’s early life: Other _____ aren’t wrong.
 - **Mark 9:38 (NKJV)** – “Now John answered Him, saying, “Teacher, we saw someone who does not follow us casting out demons in Your name, and we forbade him because he does not follow us.”
 - Another Lesson from John’s Life and Character is: He was known for his enduring _____. **John 21:20 (NKJV)** – “Then Peter, turning around, saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following, who also had leaned on His breast at the supper, and said, “Lord, who is the one who betrays You?”
- **MOTIVATION:**
- **Read 1 Kings 12:8 – 18 (NKJV)** (Rehoboam)
 - Two sources of advice:
 - OLD – “Do what is best for the people”
 - YOUNG – “Do what is best for yourself”
- **EXPECTATIONS:**
- **Acts 15:38 (NKJV)** – “But Paul insisted that they should not take with them the one who had departed from them in Pamphylia, and had not gone with them to the work.”
 - All in - _____.
 - Occasionally in - _____.
- **OPTICS:**
- **1 Kings 11:28 (NIV)** – “Now Jeroboam was a man of standing, and when Solomon saw how well the young man did his work, he put him in charge of the whole labor force of the tribes of Joseph.”
- **1 Timothy 4:12 (NKJV)** – “Let no one despise your youth, but be an **example** to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”
- People watch your _____ long before they listen to your words.
 - Young people – you are interviewing for a job long before you interview for a job. Your life, behavior, character is being watched. When you are young, your life is your _____. Your life creates a _____ for your words.
 - It doesn’t matter how much you have to say. Your _____ speaks louder than your words.
- **ATTITUDE:**
- **Job 32:6 (NIV)** – “So Elihu son of Barakel the Buzite said: “I am young in years, and you are old; that is why I was fearful, not daring to tell you what I know.”
- **1 Peter 5:5 (NKJV)** – “Likewise you younger people, submit yourselves to your elders. Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for “God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.”
 - It’s one thing to have confidence. It is another to lack _____.
 - Learn the power of _____.
 - _____ you say something is as important as what you say.
- **INTEGRITY:**
- **Psalms 119:9 (NIV)** – “How can a young person stay on the path of purity? By living according to your word.”
- Don’t Sin! **Read Ecclesiastes 11:9**
 - Grow in your God-sized _____. **Read Isaiah 40:30**