

**Gratitude: Spiritual Gifts: Team Concept, Romans 12:4-7****E. The Team Concept of Spiritual Gifts in Romans 12:4-8**

**Romans 12:4** - For just as we have many parts [many spiritual gifts] in one body [royal family of God], and all parts do not have the same function,

There are seven operational spiritual gifts that are distributed to the several members of a local church. These gifts are needed in order for the body of the local church to function efficiently. The Holy Spirit is the Agent in charge of dispensing spiritual gifts which occurs as a part of the 40 things imputed to the new believer at the moment of salvation.

A good way to illustrate this idea is the team concept. As a coach determines who performs best at any given position on the team likewise the Holy Spirit distributes spiritual gifts.

**Romans 12:5** - so we who are many are one body in Christ and each part of the body [each spiritual gift] belongs to all the other parts.

No team can field an ineffective player at any one of its positions and expect to win consistently. Imagine playing an entire season in any sport when one of the players rejects the authority of the coach, calls into question his coaching philosophy, or views his coaching techniques as inferior. Or, he simply doesn't know how to play the position assigned him.

A team's success is dependent upon every player doing his job at his position every game therefore every member of the team is interdependent upon each other. Your spiritual gift determines which position you play on the team and your area of assignment is just as important as any other gift.

All of the spectacular gifts have been retired, such as, apostleship, the working of miracles, the power of healing, and evangelism in foreign languages (unfortunately referred to as "*speaking in tongues*"). With these and other temporary gifts no longer being distributed, then the ones remaining are sometimes quite obvious but with the exception of the gift of evangelism are rarely spectacular.

Both pastor-teacher and evangelist are gifts that function in public while the others are more subtle in their application. The more subtle gifts are just as important in the function of the local body as the more public ones.

Never question or be disappointed about the gift you were issued. To do so is to question the wisdom of the Holy Spirit. You have a position to play on the team and the team is weakened if you decide not to play or resent the position the Coach has assigned you. Therefore, it is important to enumerate how each gift is to function and that's the subject of Romans 12:6 and following.

**Romans 12:6** - We have different gifts according to the grace given to us. If the believer's gift is prophecy, let him prophesy in proportion to his doctrine.

A prophet had two functions: (1) to proclaim God's revelation to believers and (2) to predict the future. All revelation, whether proclamation or prediction, had its direct source from God and expressed the content of the Eternal Logos.

In the field of prediction, divine omniscience has always known every event in all of human history. The future is as perspicuous to God as is the present or the past.

There are a few areas of knowledge regarding future things which God desires for the believer to know. He makes that knowledge available ahead of time by means of the gift of prophecy. Only that portion of future history which effects a complete revelation of His plan for mankind does He desire to make known.

The study of the biblical passages which deal with future events is called eschatology and includes all predictions which were unfulfilled at the time of their writing. Once the Apostle John completed the book of Revelation, the Bible was finished. All that we are to know about the future is contained in the pages of its 66 books. Therefore, John was the last person to possess the gift of prophecy and once Revelation was completed, he no longer had the gift either.

The conclusion is that no one today can predict any future event in human history which is not already contained in the Scripture. And understanding the content of Scripture is a part of the gift of pastor-teacher as well as one of the assets of the royal priesthood. A believer with a large frame of reference can read the Bible and get the gist of most passages.

With the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit as the synaptic connection between what the pastor teaches and what the human spirit understands, the Eternal Logos is made fully perspicuous to the finite human soul. The Holy Spirit becomes the synaptic connection Who links academic understanding with *epignosis* knowledge but the equivalent of the neurotransmitter is human volition. However, no person can acquire an understanding of the Eternal Logos which goes beyond that portion contained in the completed canon of Scripture. To do so would require the gift of prophecy and for one to claim possession of that gift is to deny the clear statement of:

**Revelation 22:18** - I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book;

**Revelation 22:19** - and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.

These verses verify that the canon is closed, ignorance of which has contributed to the ascendancy of certain false prophets such as Joseph Smith, Muhammad, and Catholic popes issuing bulls ex cathedra.

**Romans 12:7** - If his gift is the gift of service, let him function in the sphere of his service. If his gift is the gift of teaching, let him teach.

All gifts are necessary in the efficient function of the body of Christ in a local church. Thus, it is important for each believer to relax and permit the Holy Spirit to use him in the way that contributes to the “*team work*” concept of spiritual-gift function. The principle here is, do not try to play someone else’s position. If your gift is the gift of service, then serve, don’t try to get involved in helps, showing mercy, or becoming a pastor.

It is not uncommon for men as new believers, suddenly exposed to the dynamics and power of biblical truth, to assume they have the gift of pastor-teacher. All too often the simple function of GAP and rapid spiritual growth due to positive volition is misinterpreted as the dynamics of the gift of pastor-teacher. What you have is rapid spiritual growth unique to the royal priesthood. But one’s spiritual gift is imputed at the moment of salvation.