

Series: The Light in You

Session Title: Spiritual Gifts

Date and Time: _____

Number of Students: _____

Materials Needed:

- ☐ Chart paper, board or overhead with appropriate markers
- ☐ Pens
- ☐ Double-sided copies of pages A38-39
- ☐ Bibles

Lesson Objectives:

As a result of this lesson, students will be able to...

- Identify spiritual gifts as a biblical teaching.
- Identify that spiritual gifts are given by the Spirit of God for the common good and the glory of Jesus.
- Identify that believers are meant to exercise their diverse gifts in the context of the unity of the church.

Pastoral Objectives:

Lead In:

Play a game where some part of the students' bodies is inhibited. You may know some already. Some that I know are having shoe lace tying contests where you cannot use your thumbs, pie eating without arms and hands, soccer on one foot; and so it goes. The list is endless. Consider combining several challenges like this into a two-team obstacle course or relay race. Perhaps you could play a soccer match where one team is seriously disadvantaged; for example, they cannot use their arms, their feet are tied together, or they are blindfolded. Be safe; have fun. It doesn't really matter what the game is as long as it

highlights the difficulty associated with the loss of members of the body. Allow the students to describe the experience of being somehow bound or disadvantaged and transition into the first part of the lesson.

Members of the body:

Challenge the group to think of fifty parts of the body. Record their answers on the chart paper or board as they yell them out. Keep track of the quantity until they have fifty. It will be helpful to avoid large areas of the body such as the torso, head, and limbs. The more specific they answers are, the better it will be for the task. Now tell/ask the students to turn to the person next to them and agree on the answer to this question: imagine you could only keep three parts of your body, which three would you choose? Solicit some answers from the group and try to get consensus on which are the most important parts.

Say something like:

Did you know that the Bible addresses this very problem? Yes. That is right. It seems that people in New Testament times were extremely concerned about the relative priority of human anatomical components. Don't believe me? I will prove it to you. In a minute, you are going to gather into groups of four to eight [decide in advance the size of groups that will work for the group]. I am going to give everybody a handout which has questions on it related to the anatomy passage in the New Testament. You have twenty five minutes [or as you decide] to complete all of the questions on that handout and then we are going to gather to take it up.

1 Corinthians 12:

Have your students form groups. You could number them off or let them choose their groups of whatever else will work. Distribute copies of pages A38-39 along with pens and Bibles. Allow students to work together to answer the questions on the handout. This should take about twenty five minutes.

Feedback:

When the full time has elapsed or all groups are done, take up the answers together. This is called feedback and it has several very useful goals. First of all, it should be a time where students can actively question, debate, and disagree. That means you should let them do most of the talking. Second, it is also the time where you monitor their work and help to clarify and correct any parts where they have answered poorly or incorrectly. That's the part where you do the talking.

Here is one way that I often do feedback: on a blank overhead, a piece of chart paper, or a board, write the numbers one through ten. As students finish the handout, hand out markers

and invite them up to the board to fill in the correct answers. For example, if there are five groups give each group one marker and ask them to fill in two correct answers. It is best if they do not write their names on their answers as it allows for a greater degree of anonymity and safety during the discussion. Now draw every student's attention to the answers and ask them whether they agree or disagree with the answers that are on the board. Now wait for the students to read the answers. Give them time to do this. Then ask if there is anything they would like to ask or change. Allow for questions and discussion. Guide the conversation so that at the end of the lesson, the answers on the board are reasonable and accurate.

Here are the standard answers though others are possible depending on one's interpretation:

1. Paul wrote 1 Corinthians and it is a letter.
2. That is ancient code for: "Hey! Listen up! This is important!"
3. Jesus. The point of spiritual gifts is to give glory to the Lord Jesus.
4. I count nine gifts listed in this passage. There are other lists in other places in the New Testament (Romans 12; Ephesians 4; 1 Peter 4). No two lists are the same suggesting that the lists are representative rather than exhaustive. The gifts listed here are the utterance of wisdom, the utterance of knowledge, faith, healing, the working of miracles, prophecy, the discernment of spirits, various kinds of tongues, and the interpretation of tongues.
5. Verse 7 makes clear that the manifestation of the Spirit is for the common good.
6. Verse 11 assigns choice and activation to the Spirit. More generally, verse 18 says that God arranges the members of the body. The most accurate answer would seem to be the Spirit.
7. Paul likes using body imagery to represent the church. The body is the church; the members are the people in the church. The imagery works on many levels. The body is composed of many diverse things, yet they work together harmoniously. That's the idea behind the church and the metaphor.
8. Not good. Pretty simple.
9. This will depend entirely on the context of the participants. It will depend on their age, their denomination, their experience, their influences.
10. The passage that follows is that famous love chapter from 1 Corinthians. Against love there is no law; in love there is no bickering or fault. Love is the most excellent way; the gifts serve love.

Conclusion:

Wrap up the lesson by saying something like:

We are going to spend the next three weeks having a deeper look at the gifts of the Spirit. The point of this first session was to help you establish the biblical grounding for what we are going to learn. Maybe spiritual gifts testing seems trendy to us, what with YM quizzes, careers class, internet personality tests, and all of the talk surrounding personality types and profiles. However, spiritual gifts were real to the people of the early church and they talked about it in the Bible. The Apostle Paul even thought it was very important for them to know that all believers were gifted in the Spirit and that all the gifts were important (not just the flashy ones), and of course, that gifts were for the benefit of others and the glory of the Lord. Next week we will proceed by trying to find out whether we are spleens, tendons, knuckles, or ear wax, all of which are vital to the human body.