

Other Ministry Gifts: 2 Giving, Ruling, Showing Mercy, Helping

LESSON **6**

In our last lesson we studied three of the ministry gifts named in Romans 12. As we moved through the lesson we began to see how every member in the body of Christ receives benefits from the gifts. Some receive special gifts and all are blessed by gifts to the body.

Now we are ready to study four more ministry gifts. Each of these also has an important function and purpose. As our knowledge of these gifts increases, the blessing we receive from them also increases.

You will want to move through this lesson prayerfully, with your heart open to the Holy Spirit. Give praise to God as you sense the importance of the ministry gifts in your own life.

lesson outline

The Gift of Giving

The Gift Defined

The Gift Explained and Illustrated

The Purpose for the Gift

The Gift of Ruling

The Gift Defined

The Gift Explained and Illustrated

The Purpose for the Gift

The Gift of Showing Mercy

The Gift Defined

The Gift Explained and Illustrated

The Purpose for the Gift

The Gift of Helps

The Gift Defined

The Gift Explained and Illustrated

The Purpose for the Gift

lesson objectives

When you finish this lesson you should be able to:

- Explain the purpose and function of the gift of giving.
- Explain the function and purpose of the gift of ruling.
- Explain the function and purpose of the gift of showing mercy.
- Explain the function and purpose of the gift of helps.

learning activities

1. Continue memorizing 1 Corinthians 13. By the time you have finished this lesson you should be able to quote the first nine verses without looking at your Bible.
2. In your notebook make a list of the seven ministry gifts in this group.
3. Read this lesson carefully. Draw a circle around the word which names each gift as you come to it in the lesson. This will help you remember it.
4. Look up in the glossary any difficult words.
5. Do the self-test as you have done for each of the previous lessons.

key words

confusion
generous

intercession
preside

substance
sympathize

lesson development

THE GIFT OF GIVING

Objective 1. *Explain the purpose and function of the gift of giving.*

The Gift Defined

“Whoever shares with others should do it generously” (Romans 12:8). *Sharing* in the King James Version means *giving*.

Giving needs no definition. All of us understand what it means to give. However, *the gift of giving* does need defining. By *the gift of giving*, we mean the gift of God which enables a believer to freely and generously give of what he has to meet the needs of other people and God’s work. *The gift of giving* relates to our money, but it also relates to such things as our time, strength, and talents.

The Gift Explained and Illustrated

Although all Christians should be generous, some are gifted to give abundantly with great joy. The gift of giving comes from uniting man’s ability with God’s ability. Man’s ability is sometimes very limited. But God’s ability is unlimited. How wonderful it is when man’s little ability and God’s great ability come together. This is what happens in the development of the gift of giving.

We will get some very valuable help in understanding Christian giving in general and the gift of giving in particular, if we study carefully Paul’s discussion of the subject in 2 Corinthians 8 and 9. Here are some ideas we find in these verses:

1. *The gift of giving may be developed as we follow the example of others.* “...having given themselves first of all to the Lord, they (the Macedonians) gave themselves by the will of God also to us.” (2 Corinthians 8:5).

2. *The gift of giving is important in a believer's life.*

“But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.” (2 Corinthians 8:7).

3. *The gift of giving is not regulated by rules.* “I am not commanding you” (2 Corinthians 8:8).

4. *The gift of giving was best illustrated by the Lord Jesus Himself.* “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich” (2 Corinthians 8:9).

5. *The gift of giving honors and deeply pleases the Lord.* “for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7).

6. *We are assured that our own need will be met.* “And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need...” (2 Corinthians 9:8).

7. *The gift of giving is an indication of the interest of the Lord in every good cause.* “you will abound in every good work” (2 Corinthians 9:8).

8. *The gift of giving makes possible a great reward.* This last point is not made in 2 Corinthians, but rather in Philippians 4:17, “I desire is that more be credited to your account” (that is in heaven).

In 1 Kings 17:8-16 there is a story which can teach us much about the gift of giving. Elijah, the prophet, went to see a widow woman during a time of famine. When he came to her house, he found her gathering sticks. He asked her for water and bread. She told him all she had in her house was “a handful of flour in a bowl and a drop of olive oil in a jar.” Then she added, “That will be our last meal, and then we will starve to death.”

We can be sure she thought she had *nothing* to give. But, Elijah taught her a great lesson. He asked the widow to use

what she had and make a loaf for him. If we didn't know the rest of the story we would say, "How terrible! The boldness of the prophet to ask such a thing of a poor widow!" Still, Elijah knew what God would do. So he asked that she give all she had. That was the key to a great discovery. Let's remember, we lay the foundation for the gift of giving when we give. The gift of giving does not just drop out of heaven into our hearts. To receive it we must act. We must give of what we have.

Some people would have refused the prophet's request and missed a great opportunity to see God work. The Holy Spirit may speak to us to give, even as He spoke through the prophet to the widow. The gift of giving comes to us only when we obey.

A wonderful thing happened to the widow woman. After she had given in obedience to Elijah, she discovered she still had as much oil and flour left as when she began making the loaf for the prophet. She also made another discovery. She found that she had plenty of flour and oil to last until the famine was ended. She not only had enough for herself, but she also had enough to meet others' needs. "All of them had enough for many days."

Although generally we relate the gift of giving to money, the gift means a joy in giving anything we have. It can include substance, time, strength, and talents.

If we obey the Holy Spirit by giving generously of what we have, our own needs will be met. Even more wonderful than that, we will have more to give to others. When the gift of giving functions as God desires, our giving is not governed only by our ability to give. It is governed by God's ability, as in the case of the widow woman.

The highest reason, then, for the gift of giving, is that we will be able to give more to others.

- 1 The gift of giving is a gift
 - a) by which God wants us to get much for ourselves.
 - b) which requires that we have money.
 - c) which helps us to give freely and generously.
 - d) which enables us to give so we can give yet more.

The Purpose for the Gift

What is the purpose of this gift? Every gift is given for some special purpose. All of the gifts are given to meet the needs of the body of Christ. They also enable the body to carry out its mission. The special purpose for the gift of giving is to supply the needs of the body of Christ—to meet the needs of its members.

- 2 The gift of giving is given to the believer because
 - a) through it the material needs of the body are supplied.
 - b) it is a way believers can get money for themselves.
 - c) people like to give money.

THE GIFT OF RULING

Objective 2. *Explain the function and purpose of the gift of ruling.*

The Gift Defined

Whoever leads should “do it diligently” (Romans 12:8). Authority is called “ruling” in the King James Version; *ruling* means “standing before; presiding.” In 1 Corinthians 12:28 the gift of ruling is called the gift “to direct.” In the King James Version the word for direct is “governments.”

The gift of ruling, then, is a gift given to certain members of the body of Christ for the purpose of standing before (leading) the body, for presiding over the body, and for directing the body.

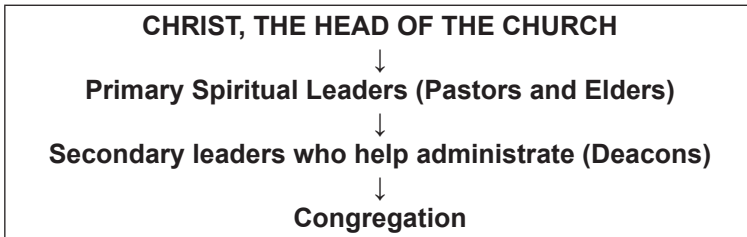
The Gift Explained and Illustrated

Think of what an army would be like without generals and other officers. You can easily guess what problems an army would have if “everyone did as they saw fit” (Judges 17:6).

Such an army would not have much success in a war. The body of Christ also needs men who will stand before it, preside over it, and direct it in its affairs.

Christ, the Head of the body, may be compared to the general of a large army. He is presiding over the whole body and directing its affairs. But Christians are needed to preside over and direct the many groups of believers which are part of the body all over the world. Every group of believers needs someone who is gifted to rule. All believers are commanded to “Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority” (Hebrews 13:17). Therefore the Head of the body gives the gift of ruling to certain Christians.

Not all believers are to be rulers, but there must be some with the gift of ruling. Those who have this gift are given special ability to organize, to manage, and to lead. Their function is very important to the body. “Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task” (1 Timothy 3:1). The diagram below will help you visualize the line of authority that God has established.



Certain names are given in the Scripture to those members of the body of Christ who have the gift of ruling:

1. *Church leader* (bishop, KJV). “He must manage his own family well and see that his children obey him, and he must do so in a manner worthy of full respect. (If anyone does not know how to manage his own family, how can he take care of God’s church?)” (1 Timothy 3:4-5).

The office of a church leader (bishop) is one of the highest responsibilities in the local church. He is called by the congregation to be its overseer or superintendent. He is

also called the elder or presbyter, and is responsible for the administration of the affairs of the church. The bishop is also called pastor because he shepherds God’s people. What we see in the New Testament is organization to meet the need.

The elder-bishop must be apt to teach, but he could bring in others who had a ministry of pastor-teacher to help him. The principal responsibility of the elder-bishop was to preside over and direct the body of believers.

2. *Helper* (deacon, KJV). Some believers, who are not full-time spiritual leaders, such as those named above may also have gifts of ruling. They work under the primary church leaders or pastors. First Timothy 3:8 seems to make this clear; they are called “church helpers.” That is, they help the leaders in directing groups of believers. “Brothers and sisters, choose seven men from among you who are known to be full of the Spirit and wisdom. We will turn this responsibility over to them” (Acts 6:3).

Because government within the body of Christ is necessary, the need for the gift of ruling is easily understood. Where there are none who lead, who preside over, or who direct, there is no government. Where there is no government, there soon will be few left to be governed. Without government and the gift of ruling, the body of Christ is feeble and unable to perform its task. Therefore, the gift of ruling is very important.

- 3** The gift of ruling is
 - a)** the gift of presiding over and directing a group of believers.
 - b)** a gift most believers should have.
 - c)** not necessary to the progress of God’s work.
- 4** Those who have the gift of ruling are able to ,
 ,
 and

- 5** Some of the offices of believers who have the gift of ruling are called
- a)** church leaders.
 - b)** evangelists.
 - c)** elders.

The Purpose for the Gift

The function of the gift of ruling is *governing*. The purpose of this gift is to give unity and strength to the body of Christ, so it can fulfill its purpose in the world. Think of what an army would be like if every soldier decided for himself where to go and what to do. Surely there would be confusion. The function of army officers is to lead, preside over, and direct the other soldiers, so their goals can be reached. So it is in the body of Christ.

- 6** The gifts of ruling are given to the body of Christ so it can
- a)** be like an army.
 - b)** serve God in the best way possible.
 - c)** have church leaders, elders and evangelists.

THE GIFT OF SHOWING MERCY

Objective 3. *Explain the function and purpose of the gift of showing mercy.*

The Gift Defined

“. . . if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully”
(Romans 12:8).

Mercy means “compassion,” or “to have a fellow-feeling with another, that is, to feel *with* another or to feel *for* another.” It also means “to sympathize.”

Therefore, the gift of showing mercy is the gift of showing others that you feel both with them and for them. It is the gift of being able to sympathize with others.

The Gift Explained and Illustrated

There is a great need for the gift of showing mercy both inside the body of Christ and among the people who are not believers. People are sad, lonely, and sorrowful. They have great need for someone who can stand beside them and have compassion for them. The gift of showing mercy provides for this need.

The greatest example or illustration of the gift of showing mercy is the Lord Jesus Himself.

Let's look at His record:

1. "When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd" (Matthew 9:36).
2. "When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick" (Matthew 14:14).
3. "Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes" (Matthew 20:34).
4. "Jesus was indignant. He reached out his hand and touched the man" (Mark 1:41).
5. "I have compassion for these people; they have already been with me three days and have nothing to eat" (Mark 8:2).
6. "When the Lord saw her, his heart went out to her and he said, "Don't cry"" (Luke 7:13).

Jesus felt deeply with people and for people. He also *showed* those people His mercy. In every case where it is said of Him that He had compassion, it is also clear He did what He could for the people involved. It is not enough to feel *for* people and *with* people. We must *show* people that we feel for them and with them, by ministering to them. For the sorrowing there must be the word of comfort. For the lonely there must be friendship. For the discouraged there must be the word of encouragement. For the sinner there must be loving concern.

For example, it is good to feel with and for the fatherless and widows. But, feeling with them and for them is not enough. We must help them in some practical way, also. “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...” (James 1:27).

It is important to have in the church many believers with the gift of showing mercy. It is a gift which supports all the others. For example, a believer with the gift of evangelism must also have the gift of showing mercy. The gift of showing mercy will help him feel for and with people who are unsaved. Then, the gift of evangelism will be effective.

Barnabas is a good example of a person who had the gift of showing mercy. He was a man of great compassion and this great compassion caused him to minister to some very needy people. Read the following Scriptures about him: Acts 9:27; 11:25-26; 15:37-39.

7 Mercy means

- a)** power.
- b)** love.
- c)** sympathy.
- d)** compassion.

8 People need someone to show them compassion when they are

- a)** strong and well.
- b)** sad and lonely.
- c)** evangelists.
- d)** sinners.

9 The gift of showing mercy is

- a)** a gift which many believers should have.
- b)** a gift which only the evangelist needs.
- c)** a gift which ministers to the needs of many people.

The Purpose for the Gift

The *function* for the gift of showing mercy is to enable believers to feel with and for others, and to sympathize with them.

The *purpose* for the gift of showing mercy is to show the needy mercy by actually standing by and helping in times of need. What a beautiful gift!

10 Circle the correct letter below to complete the following statement. When a believer feels for or with another believer in a time of sorrow, we call that the

- a) function of the gift of showing mercy.
- b) purpose of the gift of showing mercy.

THE GIFT OF HELPS

Objective 4. *Explain the function and purpose of the gift of helps.*

The Gift Defined

In the church God has put . . . those . . . to help others” (1 Corinthians 12:28). *Help* means “relief or assistance.”

The *gift of helps* is that gift by which a believer is enabled by the Holy Spirit to relieve or assist another by helpful deeds.

The Gift Explained and Illustrated

No member of the body of Christ needs to feel that there is no spiritual gift for him. Not all can be apostles, prophets, evangelists, or pastors and teachers, but any member can have the gift of helps. It does appear that some believers are especially gifted by the Holy Spirit to be helpers. They are given special ability to give relief to others. Let us examine some Scriptures which will show us how the gift of helps worked in the early church.

1. ““When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the believers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him” (Acts 18:27).

2. “Greet Urbanus, our co-worker in Christ” (Romans 16:9). We are not told what this man did to assist Paul. He may have done some preaching or teaching. Perhaps he helped by leading the people in singing hymns. He may have helped by handling the money for Paul’s team. Then again, he could have

helped by visiting new converts. We can only guess how he helped. We can, though, see how believers with the gift of helps are very valuable to the body of Christ.

3. “I ask you, loyal yokefellow, help these women who have contended at my side in the cause of the gospel” (Philippians 4:3). Some scholars interpret “worked hard with me” to mean “fought by my side.” Here we see that women can also have the gift of helps. Again, we do not know how they helped. Could they have helped by meeting with the new women believers? Could they have helped by preparing food for Paul and his group? Were they helpers by their intercession and prayers? Did they sew garments for Paul and his group, and keep the clothes washed? Possibly, because the gift of helps includes menial tasks.

Some believe that in the early church a special name was given to women with the gift of helps. They were called deaconesses. “I commend to you our sister Phoebe, a servant of the church” (Romans 16:1). The Greek word for *serves*, in this verse, is “deaconess.”

Of course, men who had special gifts of helps were often called upon to serve as deacons. “Those who have served well gain an excellent standing” (1 Timothy 3:13).

There was a small church in South America that had a great move of God. Many people were saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. The pastor-teacher was a faithful brother. He shared the Word of God and visited many people. Among the believers, yet very unnoticed, was a quiet little woman. She did not have much to say in public, yet she seemed always to be praying. She greatly assisted the pastor. Through the Holy Spirit, she had the gift of helps.

11 Place a **T** before each TRUE statement and an **F** before each FALSE statement below.

- ... **a** The gift of helps provides assistance and relief for others.
- ... **b** There is need for only a few believers to have the gift of helps.
- ... **c** Both men and women may have the gift of helps.
- ... **d** In the early church women with the gift of helps were called deacons.

The Purpose for the Gift

The function of the gift of helps is to give believers in the body of Christ the ability to help the leaders and the church in general with their work.

The purpose for the gift is to help get the actual work done to extend God's kingdom. The function speaks of ability to help. The purpose speaks of the actual help.

For example, we may say a certain brother has a special ability to pray. That is a function of the gift of helps. His ability, though, to pray will not do the church any good until he exercises his gift of helps by praying. When he prays, the purpose for his gift is being accomplished.

12 A Spirit-filled brother has a special gift for helping his pastor visit sick people. Does this statement indicate the function or the purpose for the gift?

- a)** Function.
- b)** Purpose.

self-test

1 Name three ways in which a person can minister through the gift of giving.

.....
.....

2 Give three names used for those who have the gift of ruling.

.....

3 After each of the following definitions, write the gift which is defined.

a Presiding over and directing a group of believers

.....

b To relieve or assist another by helpful deeds

.....

c To give freely and generously to meet the needs of others

.....

d Showing others that you feel with them and for them

.....

4 The person who is exercising the gift of.....
has the ability to organize, manage, and lead.

5 A gift, the purpose of which is to help others in financial need, is the gift of

6 Look up the following Scripture references. After each one, write in the blank space the gift that is manifested.

a Acts 15:37-39

b Acts 18:27

c 1 Kings 17:8-16

d Acts 6:1-3

e Mark 1:41

7 Name the three other ministry gifts studied in the previous lesson.

.....

answers to study questions

- 1** **c)** which helps us to give freely and generously.
d) which enables us to give so we can give yet more.
- 7** **c)** sympathy.
d) compassion.
- 2** **a)** through it the material needs of the body are supplied.
- 8** **b)** sad and lonely.
d) sinners.
- 3** **a)** the gift of presiding over and directing a group of believers.
- 9** **a)** a gift which many believers should have.
c) a gift which ministers to the needs of many people.
- 4** lead, preside, direct.
- 10** **a)** function of the gift of showing mercy.
- 5** **a)** church leaders.
c) elders.
- 11** **a** T
b F
c T
d F
- 6** **b)** serve God in the best way possible.
- 12** **b)** Purpose.



UNIT THREE:

UNDERSTANDING GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Lessons

- 7** Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Faith
- 8** Healing, Working of Miracles, Prophecy
- 9** Discerning of Spirits, Tongues, Interpretation