

MOTIVATIONAL GIFTS - PART 1

SERVICE, TEACHING, & EXHORTATION

Motivational Gifts: | Romans 12:6-8

6 We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; 7 if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; 8 if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

GIFT DESCRIPTIONS

Service

The gift of serving is the divine strength or ability to do small or great tasks in working for the overall good of the body of Christ.

Teaching

The gift of teaching is the divine strength or ability to study and learn from the Scriptures primarily to bring understanding and depth to other Christians.

Exhortation

The gift of exhortation is the divine strength or ability to encourage others through the written or spoken word and Biblical truth.

NEW TESTAMENT EXAMPLES OF EACH GIFT IN ACTION

Read the following stories:

- **Gift of Service:** Acts 6:1-7
- **Gift of Teaching:** Acts 18:24-28 & Titus 2:1-8
- **Gift of Exhortation:** Acts 9:26-28 & Acts 11:22-24

LET'S OBSERVE THE TEXT...

Gift of Service - Observe Acts 6:1-7

- What need was presented? (Google: "Hellenistic Jews of Acts 6" and read the overview on the top of the page)
- Observe the Apostles response to the need. Was their need rebuked or ignored?
 - How was it dealt with?
 - Read verse 3.
 - Who was present?
 - What was the criteria for serving?
 - Did the Apostles keep their attention on the servers or did they direct their attention elsewhere?
- Look at the names of the 7 chosen to serve. A diverse group of men from different cultural, ethnic, and former religious backgrounds, all working unified for one purpose...to serve vulnerable populations in need.



CONCORDANCE



Service (diakonia)
Strong's G1248
Found in Romans 12:7



Teaching (didaskó)
Strong's G1321
Found in Romans 12:7



Exhortation (parakaleó)
Strong's G3870
Found in Romans 12:8
as "exhort" or "encourage"

Gift of Teaching - Observe Acts 18:24-28 & Titus 2:1-8

- "*Apollos, a native of Alexandria*" - a major Roman trade port located in Egypt, highly populated with Hellenistic (Greek) Jews.
- His foundation of learning was strong, and his teaching of Jesus accurate, but not a complete teaching without the knowledge and power of the Holy Spirit.
 - Read Acts 19:1-7 - Paul picked up where Apollos left off and taught them through the Gift of Teaching the full gospel; the work of Christ and the Holy Spirit.
- *For deeper understanding of the Book of Titus, and for greater context, grab the **Holman Illustrated Bible Handbook** from your basket. Open to page 330 and read the bottom paragraph "*Purpose*".
 - Titus chapter 2 is Paul's instruction to Titus on what to teach the various demographics of believers.

Gift of Exhortation - Observe Acts 9:26-28 & Acts 11:22-24

- Paul attempted to join them, but he was rejected because of his past. Barnabas' credibility and reputation with the believers made it easier for them to accept Paul into the fold. The Hellenistic Jews did not like his debates, so he the believers who once rejected him but now accepted him now urgently protected him by sending him out of harms way.
- **Read Acts 11:19-21** for context of Acts 11:22-24.
 - When encouragement was needed, Barnabas was God's man of choice. Where there was once a trail of brokenness, discouragement, and hopelessness, God would move. Then here comes Barnabas; fanning the flame of encouragement. When he was through with them, they were edified, uplifted, and they grew in maturity and numerically.



ONLINE RESOURCE ACTIVITIES

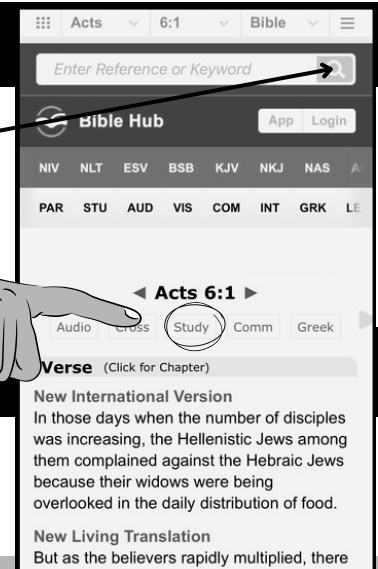
Observe Acts 6:1 & Acts 18:26

- Go to BibleHub.com and do a search for Acts 6:1 in the "Enter Reference or Keyword" box and then click on the magnifying glass.
- Once it loads, click on the button titled "Study"
 - Read the **Study Bible** section.
 - Do the same for Acts 18:26.



LET'S INTERPRET...

- What do you believe all of these verses mean?
- What is God speaking to you personally through this study?
- Read a trusted commentary and compare to your interpretation.





LET'S READ THE AFTER-SUMMARY TOGETHER

The motivational gifts in Romans 12 remind us that God did not design anyone to drift through the Christian life without purpose. Paul explains that every believer has been given a unique grace gift, and these gifts are meant to serve the body of Christ in real, practical ways. Some people naturally step into the background and lift the load for others. Some teach Scripture with clarity. Some come alive when encouraging discouraged believers back into hope. These gifts are more than personality traits. They are spiritual strengths shaped by the Holy Spirit and placed in us for the good of the church.

The gift of service shows up clearly in Acts 6, where the early church grew so quickly that practical needs started slipping through the cracks. The Greek speaking widows were being overlooked in the daily food distribution, and the tension grew loud enough that the apostles had to address it. Instead of ignoring the issue or blaming anyone, they raised up seven Spirit filled, wise, dependable men to make sure every widow was cared for. Service in the kingdom looks like that. It pays attention. It steps in. It protects unity by taking responsibility for needs that others may not even notice.

Teaching is another major gift, and we see it beautifully in the ministry of Priscilla, Aquila, and Paul. Apollos was bold, passionate, and knowledgeable, but he did not yet understand the full work of the Holy Spirit. Instead of embarrassing him, Priscilla and Aquila quietly took him aside and filled in the missing pieces. Later, Paul continued that same teaching work in Ephesus, helping believers understand the gospel with depth and clarity. Teaching in the New Testament is not about sounding smart. It is about giving people truth they can stand on so their faith becomes rooted, strong, and unshakable.

The gift of exhortation shines through the life of Barnabas. When the believers in Jerusalem were terrified of Paul and did not want anything to do with him, Barnabas stood up for him and helped the church see what God had done. Later, when the new church in Antioch needed strength and encouragement to stay faithful in a difficult season, Barnabas was sent to lift their spirits and call them upward. His words built courage in people who felt overwhelmed. His presence helped the church grow both spiritually and numerically. Exhortation is not simply cheering people on. It is stirring faith, correcting with love, and helping believers rise into what God has called them to be.

All three gifts remind us that the church thrives when people operate in what God placed inside them. Some gifts meet practical needs. Some build understanding. Some fan the flame of courage. None are more important than the other. When we learn to recognize our gifting and walk in it with humility and joy, the body of Christ becomes healthy, unified, and effective. The early church grew because everyone contributed. The same happens today when we choose to serve, teach, and encourage with the grace God has given us.

APPLICATION QUESTIONS

GIFT OF SERVICE - Acts 6:1-7

Application Question:

Where do you see a need like the widows in Acts 6, and what small step could you take this week to help meet it?

Deeper Question:

When you look at the criteria in Acts 6:3 being full of the Spirit and wisdom do you feel your heart leans toward serving people quietly, or do you find yourself hesitating because the work feels unseen? What does that reveal about how God may be shaping you?

GIFT OF TEACHING - Acts 18:24 - 28 & Titus 2:1-8

Application Question:

Priscilla and Aquila helped Apollos understand the way of God more accurately. Is there someone in your life who needs clearer teaching or guidance, and how can you come alongside them the way this couple did?

Deeper Question:

In Titus 2, Paul expects teachers to model sound doctrine with their lifestyle. When you think about your own walk with God, do you see areas where what you teach or believe is strong, but your personal example is weaker? How might the Holy Spirit bring those into alignment?

GIFT OF EXHORTATION - Acts 9:26-28 & Acts 11:22-24

Application Question:

Barnabas encouraged both Paul and the church in Antioch when they needed support. Who around you right now seems discouraged, overlooked, or unsure, and how can you speak life into them this week?

Deeper Question:

Barnabas had credibility because his character matched his encouragement. When you look at your ability to speak courage into others, does your life carry the weight and consistency that makes your words believable? What is one area the Lord may be calling you to strengthen so your encouragement has greater impact?

CLOSING PRAYER

Holy Spirit, we thank you for inviting us to participate in your amazing work in building up God's church. We acknowledge that our motivation, spiritual instincts, and effectiveness comes from you. Remind us to stay focused on the main thing...loving on others as we point them to Christ. Forgive us when our gifts have been unused or misused. And give us a greater sensitivity for the opportunities to use these gifts for Your glory. May others be transformed into the image of Jesus through our Spirit-empowered encouragement. In Jesus name we pray, amen.



WHAT'S AHEAD...

Next Session

Motivational Gifts - Part 2

Homework

Read Romans 12