

Whether you turn to the right or to the left,
you will hear a voice saying, "This is the road!
Now follow it."
Isaiah 30:21



Decisions

Liberty Towers Church of the Nazarene
Men's study

MEN TO MEN
M2M
REAL MEN...REAL ISSUES...REAL FAITH

A graphic with a light green background and a dark green vertical bar on the left. A red arrow points right from the bar. The text 'Study question methodology' is centered. Below it are five items, each with a red arrow icon: 'Shine', 'Question', 'Cross', 'Think', and 'Apply'. To the right of these items is a vertical column of five icons: a lightbulb, a circular arrow, a cross, a head with gears, and a running person. In the bottom right corner is the 'MEN TO MEN M2M' logo with the tagline 'REAL MEN...REAL ISSUES...REAL FAITH' below it.

Study question methodology

- Shine
- Question
- Cross
- Think
- Apply

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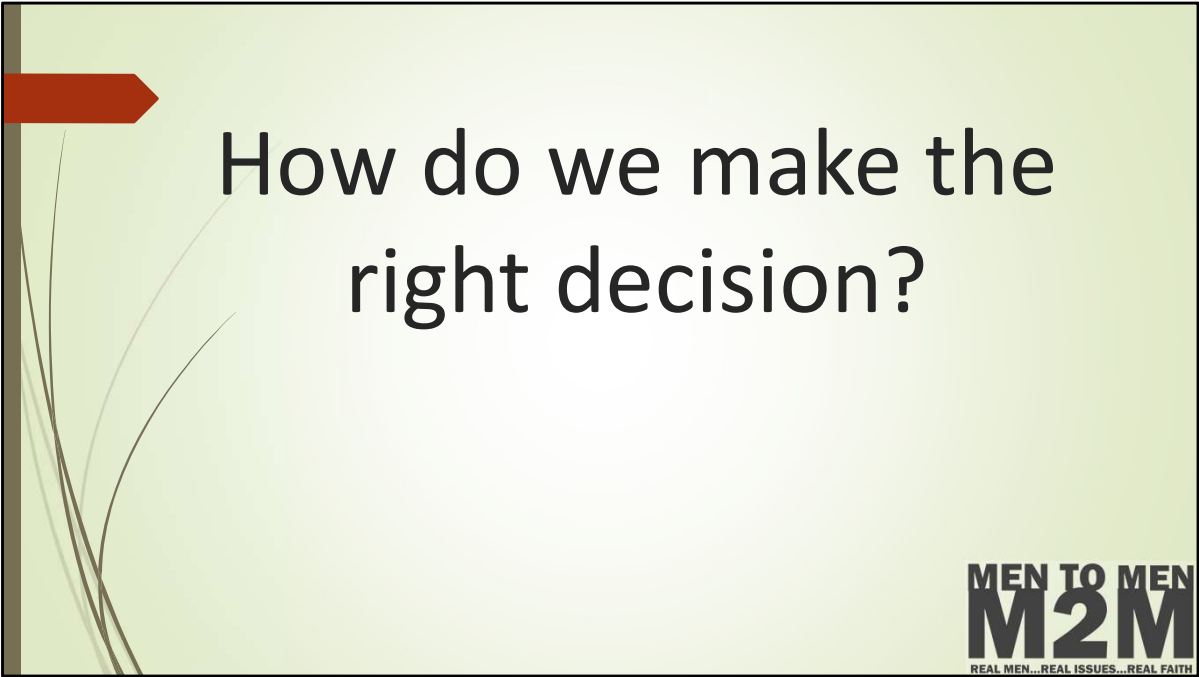
Shine - What do you remember for last week that had the brightest light

Question – What idea or concept raised a question

Cross – What idea or concept revealed something about the character or ministry of Jesus

Think – What idea or concept made a difference in your life this past week

Apply – What did you do differently this week because of the lesson



How do we make the right decision?

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So if we are to be kingdom impactors


How do we do that?

I would contend you don't have to do anything in your own strength

We only do in the power of God bestowed upon you

Individually

Corporately.



Definition of decision

- ▶ A conclusion or resolution after consideration
 - ▶ Consideration of your new relationship
 - ▶ Consideration of God's Priority
 - ▶ Consideration of God's Expressed will
 - ▶ Consideration of God's freedom
 - ▶ Consideration of God's Plan
- ▶ Formal judgement



A conclusion or resolution after consideration

Consideration of Your new relationship - salvation

Consideration of God's Priority. Seek first the kingdom of God ...

Consideration of God's Expressed will – Obey the revealed Will of god

Consideration of God's freedom – our free will brings responsibility

Consideration of God's Plan - Kingdom impactor

Formal judgement

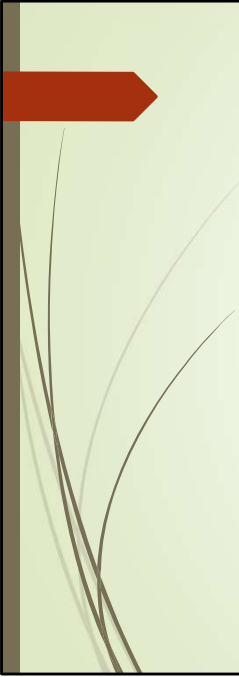
A decision is not a decision until it is made.

At issue is God's work in the church is not to be done by consideration and personal judgement

So far we have hinted at something more.

God's work in the church is not something we do by our own skill, knowledge, motivation, or even strength.

God's work in the church is God's responsibility. We may sow, water, weed, but it is God that gives the increase.



There is a difference between Strengths and gifts.

► Galatians 3:5

So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard.

There is a difference between talents, natural ability, strengths and the perfect gifts of God.

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Testimony.

I see order in chaos. To see the undercurrents amid great rapids of life. That is how my mind works. It is something I have nurtured and honed for many years.

It is an excellent understanding which provides very constant outcomes.

Project manager

Analyst

Strategic planner

Process manager

But it is not a gift.

It is not an expression of My faith for the building up of your faith.

Galatians 3:5

So again I ask, does God give you his Spirit and work miracles among you by the works of the law, or by your believing what you heard.

Keeping the law is my effort

No matter how good I may be at a task

No matter the perfection of the result

If I am not depending upon God

If I am not aiming to help others to build up their faith

Then it is not a gift.

Gifts flow from faith to faith

Worldly view of doing

- Skills – acquired by constant near perfect repetition
- Knowledge – Acquired by the accumulation of all the information necessary to do the job
- Motivation – external or internal
- Strength /talent – Nature and nurture how our synaptic pathways have developed


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Skills can be improved in specific area. I can bounce a basketball a million times
Knowledge can be acquired through training and education. Learn all the rules of basketball, strategies,
Motivation. I can pay you to do well, I can give you acknowledgement, satisfaction of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, even (internal) the gratification of doing something well makes you want to do it again.
Strength/talent - can't do much about it but you can work around your weakness

But all of these is about you. Your accumulated skills, Your accumulated knowledge, Your motivation, Your talents.

It leaves out God.

Gifts of the spirit have nothing to do with YOU. It is God's Grace.



A new criteria for decision making I Corinthians 12:1-3

Now about the gifts of the spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.

You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray by mute idols.

Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the spirit of God says, "jesus is cursed," and no one can say, "jesus is lord," except by the Holy Spirit



What is the current situation in the Corinthian church?.....

Brothers and Sisters were present
Wanted them to know more about something
Gifts of the Spirit

What was the previous state of each of the brothers and sisters?

Pagans
they were influenced
influenced by mute idols

Whether you turn to the right or to the left, you will hear a voice saying, "This is the road! Now follow it."

Said, "Jesus was cursed"

What is a characteristic of speaking by the Spirit of God

Jesus is Lord.
Only possible by the outflowing of the Holy Spirit.

What is the basis for the decision to speak either a curse or a blessing?

Fifth Guideline for Christian Decision Making

Follow your gift

- ▶ You are gifted
- ▶ By the Holy Spirit
- ▶ God's choice
- ▶ To build up the kingdom
- ▶ Not for personal glory or edification
- ▶ Appointed by god



By the Holy Spirit for the common good

To build up the kingdom

"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good."

1 Corinthians 12:7

Not for personal glory or edification

"All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines." (1 Corinthians 12:11)

Spiritual gifts are given by God's choice; we cannot choose our gift. So anyone who is unhappy about how God has designed them is, in effect, complaining about God not giving them the gift they wanted. This is like a spoiled kid unwrapping a present only to complain about it.

Danger in Gifts

- ▶ Possession of Gifts
 - ▶ Pity, Sympathy Empathy Compassion
 - ▶ But that was pointed to the man on the street corner
 - ▶ It was about a perceived need
 - ▶ It was about an action
 - ▶ It was about a doing.
 - ▶ Giving a buck is not enough unless you are giving faith to strengthen.
- ▶ Pride of ownership

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It would be simple to just give you a list and let you take your test and SAY “I have done my Job”

Lists are not as important as the principals behind the intent and purpose of the Giver.

Start with there are specific dangers associated with Gifts

This one is mine

Everyone wants a gift, to possess, to own, to have, to display, to show

Exercising a gift is more than compassion

I see someone that needs encouragement, or low

How Can I help

it is the Spirit of God that leads to the answer

It is a supernatural thing

The spirit will lead to the use of gifts he has given you.

No place for I HAVE THAT. You don't deserve it

Just keep it quiet and just do. Gifts do not make you special. It is a tool for doing by grace.

We can be hung up on Naming and claiming

TEST is your test. I will score it and give you some insight but it is not something to displayed as a badge

We are doing what we can to strengthen the faith of God to the people around us that is gifted compassion

It is not about knowing what your gift is but there is a deeper problem

It is knowing that whatever they may be that they are to be used for faith building.

A gift sees a deficit of faith and stepping in with whatever you have.

Not an excuse for not helping

I only have the gift of teaching. Outside of the classroom I have no responsibilities

I don't have to shovel snow

I don't have to give a word of encouragement to someone that is hurting.

I don't have to share joy with a little child going down a hill for the first time.

Garbage.

PRIDE OF OWNERSHIP

do something in the spirit of God, exercise of the Gift God has given you.

You get encouragement, a great hand shake and a big Thank you.

Don't get so excited about praise. I am not here to show you myself sacrifice., all my work, all my hours. I am here to give. Something given to me

And it is in the giving of the gift I have an inner joy in it.

That is good enough.

"I was doing what I like to do."

The Purpose of Gifts

1. To mutually Build faith
 - ▶ Romans 1:11-12
2. Build up the church
 - ▶ I Cor 12:7
 - ▶ I Cor 14:3, 12,26
 - ▶ I peter 4:10
3. Witness to Christ
 - ▶ I Cor 12:1-3
4. Demonstrate God's grace
 - ▶ Romans 12:6
5. Praise God
 - ▶ I Cor 14:14-15
 - ▶ I Peter 4:11
6. To show love
 - ▶ I Cor 12

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It would have been much easier to tell you what the gifts are and give a test and you go about your business


More important than the name of the gift or gifts you have is to understand the purpose of these gifts.

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New Testament speaks to the gifts of the Spirit

Need you to discover your understanding. About these gifts.

you need to find the answers yourself.



1st purpose of the Gifts:

Mutually Build up faith of believers

Romans 1:11-12

I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong

That is that you and I be mutually encouraged by each other's faith

The context of the Gifts of the Spirit are always for someone else and in the church.



Why did Paul want to visit the church? What was his motive?

A gift to make you strong

Mutual giving

building up Faith

GIVEN TO BE GIVEN.

Gifts are always for others.,

Not something to be possessed

Not be hoarded

The gifts I have been given I need, I desire, I long, I pant as a thirsty person for water to give you something

To strengthen. Make them strong in body in the face of persecution?

To make them stronger in faith?

You would think Paul had it together. Faith good enough to get him by.

Times were coming when it will get worse much worse.

I have enough faith for now in this room.

But it is my faith

I will get home, when I get cut off, when I get myself in trouble.

But it is my faith

Gifts are not for that.

My gifts are for others

when they are in trouble

When their ship is sinking

When someone else has a loved one with cancer

My gifts are for someone facing death

My gifts, given by God to me as he wills, are not mine to keep, they are for you.

Mutual Encouragement

Romans 1:11-12

I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong

That is that you and I be mutually encouraged by each other's faith

The Gifts of the spirit are an expression of Faith which aims to strengthen faith. Nothing more nothing less. My gifts are activated by faith with the purpose to act and react with the faith of others.

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Same as verse 11 but in new words

I want us to be mutually encouraged, strengthened, enlightened.

Paul needed something

Paul needed to be encouraged

Encouraged by other believers.

They had something Paul did not have.

"I look forward to you helping me."


Verse 11 is to encourage them

Verse 12 is to encourage Paul

The Gifts of the spirit are an expression of Faith which aims to strengthen faith.

Nothing more nothing less.

My gifts are activated by faith with the purpose to act and react with the faith of others.



2nd purpose of the Gifts: Build up the church

- ▶ I Cor 12:7 “For the common Good”
- ▶ 1 Cor 14:3 “For their strengthening, encouragement and comfort”
- ▶ I Cor 14:12 “Try to excel in those that build up the church”
- ▶ I Cor 14:26 “Everything done so that the church may be built up”
- ▶ I Peter 4:10 “To serve others as stewards”



All the gifts are to be used in context.

I Cor 12:7 “For the common Good”

1 Cor 14:3 “For their strengthening, encouragement and comfort”

I Cor 14:12 “Try to excel in those that build up the church”

I Cor 14:26 “Everything done so that the church may be built up”

I

When every part is “working properly,” the result is both bodily growth and spiritual building up in love ([Eph. 4:16](#)).

The beautiful reality is that believers are not only united to Christ the head, they are also united, like the physical body, to all other members ([Eph. 4:16](#)).


Within the community of the church all “members touch and ‘symphonize’ with one another

Just like a hand must be attached to an arm, and fingers attached to a hand, so must every member of the church be attached to the rest of the body. Peter 4:10 “To serve others as stewards”

A key phrase for Paul is: “For the body is not one member, but many.”^[5] According to Paul, God has placed every member in the body “just as He desired.”

WE CAN NOT MAKE IT ON OUR OWN.

Even if you were endowed by every gift. (Paul says that it is impossible) you would never have enough to go it alone.



I PeTer 4:10-11

- We are to use them
- To serve others
- As stewards
- In various forms
- All to the Glory of God



Gifts for all

If you are a child of God, part of your inheritance is a gift

Everyone has been bestowed by God's grace

The number of gifts, the amount of the gifts, the place for your gifts.

EVERY GIFT IS TO BE USED IN A SPECIFIC CONTEXT

Steward – as an office

Given by the ruler or king or sovereign

To be a representative of that sovereign

To govern in stead

To manage or look after

To keep order of

WE are stewards of Grace

We receive God's grace

We represent God's grace

We Govern God's grace

We manage God's grace

We keep in order God's grace

WE DISBERSE GOD'S GRACE

What we receive should be well spread out

Give grace in the same measure as it is given you. THAT'S STEWARDSHIP.

Our response to grace given is to give out

VARIOUS FORMS

Word oriented

as the words of God

Not my thoughts or my ideas

But God's ideas

God's grace
By God's grace

I may well not be able to quote chapter and verse But if I am being a steward of my Gift, I must use God's words.

Deed Oriented

SERVICE

Not to be done in your own strength.

If it is me doing it, it is not a gift

It must come from grace

Must go to others

From God to others, I am only an intermediary

Verse 11

All to the glory of God

The aim of giving is spread out our grace

The aim of stewardship is to distribute it freely

The aim of speaking is to encourage others

The aim of action is to bring glory to God

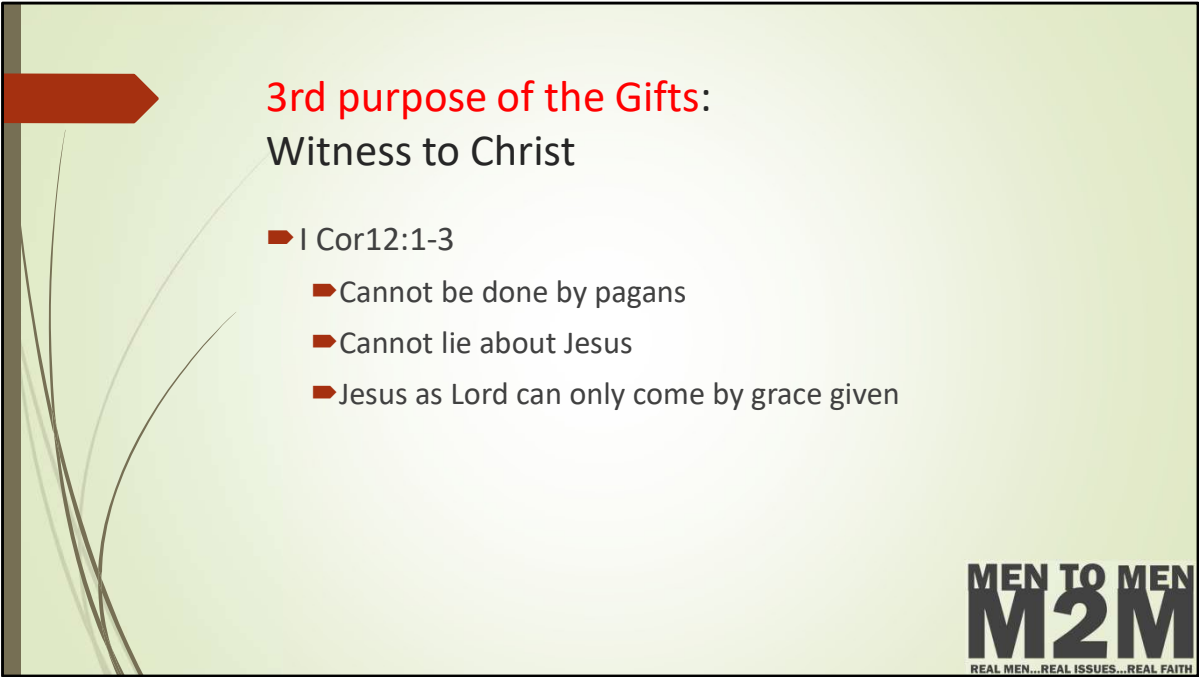
Our gift is more than our little talent

Our gift must point toward God

Our talents point only to ourselves

But God can use gifts to display, to reveal the power of God

And all of us together will accomplish the furtherance of God's Kingdom
Kingdom impactors by GRACE.



3rd purpose of the Gifts: Witness to Christ

► I Cor12:1-3

- Cannot be done by pagans
- Cannot lie about Jesus
- Jesus as Lord can only come by grace given

1 Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware. 2 You know that when you were pagans, *you were* led astray to the dumb idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I make known to you, that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, “Jesus is accursed”; and no one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit.

A distorted view of what it means to be spiritual is not new. One of the prominent areas of difference between Jesus and the religious leaders of His day was the definition of what it means to be spiritual. The scribes and Pharisees measured spirituality on the basis of external appearances.

The Corinthians were confusing spirituality and spiritual gifts.

certain spiritual gifts are the evidence of superior spirituality, while the absence of these gifts is proof of spiritual inferiority.

Paul distinguishes true spirituality from the false in terms of its origin.

False spirituality originates from the unclean “spirits” and thus, ultimately, from Satan himself.

True spirituality originates from the Holy Spirit of God. Paul then sets down one test for distinguishing the Spirit of God from other spirits.


He challenges the way in which we interpret and apply these gifts. True spirituality does not judge one’s spiritual status or importance on the basis of the gift or gifts one has been given. True spirituality does not employ the spiritual gifts one has been given to enhance oneself, but rather employs them sacrificially to the edification of others.

Verse 3 is necessary in the light of verses 1 and 2. Since the Corinthians are naive, ignorant of all that they should know concerning spirituality and spiritual gifts, Paul must “**make known**” to them a test by which the Holy Spirit is distinguished from all other “spirits.”

Spirituality is sourced from God

The Gifts of the Spirit are sourced from God

By Grace



4th purpose of the Gifts: Demonstrate God's Grace

- ▶ Romans 12:3-8
 - ▶ Grace in Grace out
 - ▶ Be sober
 - ▶ We must do it with Zest
 - ▶ Amount of gift is dependent upon God



Don't get too excited about naming your gifts

Don't get too excited in owning your gifts

many lists... 7,9,14, 18, 20, 21, 23, 24, 39

I believe the gifts of the spirit are not limited to a list.

There may well be thousands. And even more combinations

God does not limit this gracious gifts to his children.

If there were only 7 there would be 823,543 combinations

If there are 14. more than the total population on earth.

If there are 39 more than every sand on the earth.

You are gifted but just you. So be sober about it.

You aren't special.

Verse 5

Your gift is not yours to possess. ONE BODY

And each is owned by the others.

Verse 6

Different gifts, not two are alike

According to God's benevolence with our favor

Prophecy, do it according to faith

Serving, do it in service to others.

Teaching, to others I am not in the teaching business I am in the facilitation of your learning.

Encouraging... then give it up

Giving... do it more and find more to give

Leading... do it diligently and keep it up don't hold back it is for them

Mercy... with cheer, joy and with a smile.

ZEST

Varying Measure

Iowa preacher in a storm

“If only one cow shows up, I don’t give him the whole truck load.”

Romans 12:3

Not only the gift is by grace but also the amount is by grace.



5th purpose of the Gifts: Praise to God

➤ I Cor 14:14-17

➤ I Peter 4:11




I Cor 14:14-17 For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. ¹⁵ So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my understanding; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding. ¹⁶ Otherwise when you are praising God in the Spirit, how can someone else, who is now put in the position of an inquirer, ¹⁴ say “Amen” to your thanksgiving, since they do not know what you are saying? ¹⁷ You are giving thanks well enough, but no one else is edified.

In the church every gift is for the body of believers. It is not to be without understanding. It is praise to God, It is understandable, it is edifying, it is communal

1 Peter 4:11 New International Version (NIV)

¹¹ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

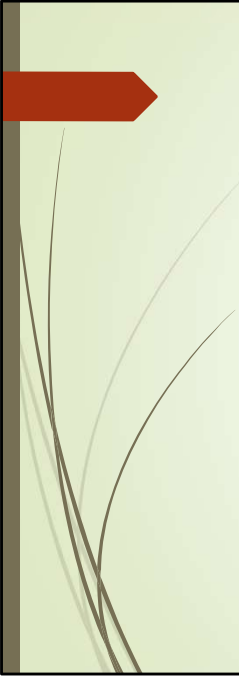
It is by His strength, It is pointed toward Jesus Christ
To give Him Glory and Power (praise for what he is doing in the church)



Misunderstandings

- ▶ Differ from natural talents
- ▶ No perfect list
- ▶ Given different portions of a gift
- ▶ We must be willing to serve outside of our area of gifting
- ▶ Passions and opportunity and talents are not gifts
- ▶ Gifts are related to being, our desires, our joys, our effectiveness
- ▶ Gifts are for impacting the world but for the church

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6th purpose of the Gifts: They are always subordinate to love

- ▶ I Cor 12:31-13:3 – The greatest of these is Love
- ▶ I cor 13:8-11 – Gifts will disappear
- ▶ I Cor 13:13 – Love will always remain

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1 Corinthians 12:31-13:3 New International Version (NIV)

³¹Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.

Love Is Indispensable

And yet I will show you the most excellent way.

13 If I speak in the tongues^[a] of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ²If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. ³If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast,^[b] but do not have love, I gain nothing.

1 Corinthians 13:8-11 New International Version (NIV)

⁸Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away. ⁹For we know in part and we prophesy in part, ¹⁰but when completeness comes, what is in part disappears. ¹¹When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.

1 Corinthians 13:13 New International Version (NIV)

¹³And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love.

Conclusion

You really don't need to know the specific gift.

- You really don't need a specific definition of that Gift.
- You really don't need a job description that goes along with a gift

- You are to desire it because you want to build up the kingdom of God
- You are to desire it because it is God's plan for my life
- You are to desire it because it is the fulfilled in the greatest gift of Love
- You are to desire it because it is serving in God's strength
- You are to desire it because it is perfect praise and honor to God

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But I still want to know.

No you don't you desire the Gift that God wants for you

Because it is given in love to love

"Make love your aim, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy."

You should earnestly desire a spiritual gift of.

Do you really?

It is a great responsibility to take your part in the Body

But I don't even know what gift I have or what it means.

Pray about it.

Earnest seek the greatest thing Love.

Do you think that when you ask God for bread, he will give you a stone? Or do you trust him enough to say: If a gift would help me build up people and honor Jesus, show me what it is and give it to me please?

In love to love.