

## Romans 12: 6-8 - You are Gifted by God -18 November 2012

We are nearing Christmas, isn't it? Just about a month away. Christmas is a time for celebration, is a time for giving gifts and so this morning I like to speak to you about gifts and in particular, spiritual gifts. If you are a believer of Jesus Christ today, you have been gifted by God. Every single one of us who believe in Jesus, you are gifted by God.

Two weeks ago, I gave all of you a building block of different shapes and sizes and on it was imprinted those words, "I'm gifted by God" and I'm thankful for how God has used that to encourage some of you. I know some of you had put it in your pencil case or wherever it is and I hope it has been a reminder that we are all building blocks in this body of Christ. And all of us, in order to be building blocks are gifted by God to do so. I want to encourage you from some of the postings on Facebook. I've sought permission from every one of them and they are reminded that we being many, are one body in Christ and every one are members one of another. Why?..because 'I'm gifted by God' and we are placed by God into His body. We saw that we are one body in Christ. Each and every single believer is the church building block. The church is made up of each one of us, and each one of us have a role and a purpose and a place in this body.

Some of you have very nice phone applications and you just don't take simple photos but have fanciful heart-shaped style and is beautiful. I want to show it to all of you.. 'I'm gifted by God' is a beautiful thing. It's a gift of grace, is a gift of love from our Father and we had a wonderful activity. We built or we sought of build the tallest building in GLCC and this is a picture of it. Someone said this is the most exciting church activity ever. I hope there will be more to come, all right? But we thank God for the fun and activities that allow us to remember the lessons together. Some of you have even interesting twists to things. You put this block near an animal,..this is from Joey, very interesting. I took the picture... I took this picture from the Facebook post, and she reminds us or herself of 1 Peter chapter 5 that our adversary is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour...and though we all are gifted by God, we are part of the body of Christ, the devil won't have it easy for us. Some of you remember the sermon in this way, this is from Pat, a medical student, as he said 'I'm gifted by God' to be a lipocyte, which is a fat cell that is useful in the body of Christ and not to be a lipoma which is a tumor or liposarcoma which is a cancer..so she said recognizing that God has gifted me to serve and not just to feed and to grow myself alone. This is from Yue Fan, another medical student, and she said serve one another and be a lipocyte, not a lipoma or liposarcoma. You know medical students talk the same way

and she said this is the geekiest Sunday sermon ever. Very geeky and all the intellectual stuff. But I like her post because is neat and we gave her the block which says 'I'm gifted by God' and on the other side, she wrote down Romans 12:5 and she highlighted that in the Bible and I thought is beautiful to remind us of spiritual realities.

Today I hope you will remember once again you are gifted by God..say to yourself, 'I am gifted by God'..say with me..'I am gifted by God', you are gifted. When I was studying in primary school..I study in Rosyth primary school. People always ask me 'si mee'(hokkien for what is it?) roadside primary school. During my time, it was a good school. I think, even right up til today. It's one of the good schools and they have this program called the gifted program. Now those who are in gifted program, they may 'yaya papaya'(proud).. 'wow! I'm gifted' and the rest are not gifted and those of us who are not gifted will look at 'ya! you are gifted and we are not gifted'..we are a different class. So you know, you have a gifted class and the non-gifted class and you feel lousy about yourself.

But let me tell you about God's gifted program. This is not MOE gifted program, it is God's gifted program. If you have believed in Jesus, you are gifted. None excepted. Every single one of us is gifted by God to serve him. You have unique abilities. God has shaped you in a very very special way..you are gifted by God. However, not all our gifts are similar, we are all very different, and that's why last week, I gave you..I didn't want to give you lego blocks because they may all look the same but gave you wooden blocks of different shapes and sizes, different colors to illustrate the fact that we are all gifted by God. But gifted in very different ways. Many, many kinds of gifts. So this morning, I want to share with you about spiritual gifts. What does it mean if God has gifted me with spiritual gifts? How will this impact my life? How will this shape my life? I want to share with you because gifts are so important, isn't it? Gifts are the result of the finished work of Jesus on the cross. Is because he died on the cross, He rose again that He received these gifts and he poured it out on the church. We are recipients of the grace of Jesus because of the cross today that we are enable to serve.

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So let's look at spiritual gifts and I dare say if you really listen in and do what the Scripture says it will change your life. Trust me in that. The first question is this. Pastor, what is spiritual gifts? We talk alot about gifts but what are they and what is it all about. I want to give you a definition by a well-known pastor today. He said,

“A spiritual gift is a skill or ability that enables each Christian to perform a function in the body of Christ with ease and effectiveness.”

This is a quote from Charles Swindoll.

Is an ability or skill that enables you to perform a function in the body of Christ with ease and effectiveness. This is something that God gives, is not something you earned. Is an ability but not something you train for. Not something you work for, not something you earn but is given by grace. Because in Romans 12:6, we are told that these gifts differs according to the grace that is given in some areas of your life. Is not because you are better than others or because you're more intelligent than people. God gave it to you, sovereignly, freely and graciously and is an ability for you to serve God. You say, what kind of abilities? The Bible says that there are several kinds. In Romans 12 verses 6 to 8, it gives you some 7 examples.

One, there is the gift of prophecy. Two, there is the gift of ministry. Three, there is the gift of teaching. Four, the gift of exalting. Five, the gift of giving. Six, the gift of ruling and seven, the gift of showing mercy. So these are the 7 examples found in Romans 12. Let's look at them because I think some of us and most of us will have somewhere some gifts along this line. Of course, there are more gifts mentioned in other passages but for a sampling, let's look at them.

Prophecy..it simply means to speak forth. Pro is forth. 'phecy' is to speak. So prophecy is simply declaring God's Word. There are people gifted with prophecy who are able to look at given situations and people and have an appropriate word of Scripture for them to build them up, to encourage them and to console them. That is the gift of prophecy to speak forth a relevant word for a relevant situation. That is the gift. Some of you who are gifted in this area are looking for people to comfort, to give a word to, to encourage and to build up lives. Paul says, if you have this gift of prophecy in Romans 12:6, he said, prophesy according to the proportion of your faith. Means, make sure you prophesy according to the teachings of the Bible. Don't anyhow talk, anyhow say. People gifted with the gift of gap, may talk alot and sometimes it may not be based on Scriptures. So, the advice, the warning, the caution given by Paul is with the gift of prophecy, speak forth according to the teachings of the Bible, according to the measure of faith.

The second gift is the gift of ministry.. serving. These are people gifted not so much to use their mouth but gifted with their hands. These are people that use their hands or legs to serve. They are the one that carry things..who are willing to come early, lay the chairs and cables. These are people with a servant's heart. These are people who

work with their hands. They delight to use their hands for the glory of God. These are people who clean the church building. The people who would serve behind the scenes. Often times, people gifted with the gift of ministry are not very keen to stand before people to have the limelight. Therefore they are usually not visible. You don't know who they are. They work behind the scenes, but not visible doesn't mean not valuable. In God's eyes, they are precious because they are uniquely gifted with their hands and legs. You know there are people who are very good at telling people what to do..”you do this..you do that”. They use eye power. People with the gift of ministry use muscle power, they really serve God with their hands. Gifted with ministry, they will be looking for opportunities to serve. These are people whom when they see a need, will be the first to rise up and meet those needs. Gifting, that's how God has shaped them.

What about the gift of teaching? The word ‘teaching’ is the word ‘didasko’, which means to instruct, to give doctrine, to teach and these are people who are able to explain God's Word. Give them a passage of Scripture, they unlock the truths because that's how God has gifted them. And when you meet someone with the gift of teaching and when he exercises that gift, you will be able to say “Ah!..now I see”. These are people gifted with the gift of teaching and they are always looking to help people in scriptures. They are looking to teach.. looking to explain.. they want people to know God and His word. That's the gift of teaching.

Then you have the gift of exhortation. The word exhortation is the word ‘parakaleo’, same word for the Holy Spirit comforter. And the gift of exhortation is really someone who comes alongside another to comfort and to encourage. Now you love to hang around people with the gift of exhortation because they are people who put their hands around you and they will encourage you, they lift you up. You feel good about such people. These are people with such gifts and people with such gifts are looking to serve others in encouraging them. They see people who are down and out, they encourage them. They are always looking out to build up others, encouraging people.

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Then there is the gift of giving. This one no need to explain, right? The gift of giving however comes with a caution. If you want to give.. if you have the gift of giving and you want to give. Then the Bible says, you do it with simplicity in the King James. The word simplicity means sincerity because some of you have been enabled by God to earn more. Some of you have been given by God, a generous heart to give more but

the danger of a person gifted with the gift of giving is that he may give it out of pride to show himself as the big giver, or he may do it in order to gain leverage or influence with people. In other words, you buy influence. Now that is not giving with simplicity, that is giving with duplicity. You are giving with other motives. So, the person gifted to give should do it with sincerity, pure heart, to bless the body of Christ for the glory of God. That's the challenge for those gifted with giving. By the way, the people gifted with the gift of giving, they are looking for opportunities to give. When you asked for love offering, he is excited to give. He is not like..”err..I’m afraid I’m not coming here”. If you are someone like that, you are probably not gifted with the gift of giving. But it doesn't mean you don't give. By the way, when we talk about this spiritual gift, you said “I don’t have, I don’t have.”, doesn’t means you don’t have to do any of it. Is just that you're not particularly equipped to do it, but it doesn't mean we don't teach the Bible to our kids. It doesn't mean we don't serve in a family nor serve others. It doesn't mean we don't give, we do. But these are unique giftings to excel in specific areas.

What about the gift of ruling. The word ruling means to stand before. That's literally the Greek word. To stand before people to direct, to lead, to point, Is the gift of leadership. And the gift of leadership is not only to the pastors, it can be given to many people because God wants us to be leading people,small groups, individuals and some of you may be gifted in leadership and you don't realize it. But those gifted in leadership, this is the qualification to using this gift. You got to do it with diligence. In the Greek, this is the word ‘spoude’ from which you get the word ‘Speedo’(brand of swimming trunk). Spoude means haste, speed, urgency, power, strength.. that is the word. In other words, you do it with all your heart, you do it with diligence because when you lead, it's easy to slack, it's easy to be discouraged because people are blur, people are stubborn..they are like sheep, the Bible says. So, if you are gifted with leadership, its easy for you to say..they are not going to listen, let's give up but the Bible says if you're leading, do it with diligence. Demonstrate an enthusiasm and commitment that is above that of others. Don’t give up. I think it's also important for us to be leading with diligence because leadership is first by example. Peter says to the elders, shepherd the flock.. how? Not as lords over God's heritage. You are not there as a dictator. You are there as examples. If you want to lead people, you have got to put in diligence. You said you want punctuality, you better be punctual for yourself. You said you want commitment, make sure you're doing it yourself. That's why leadership needs diligence. That's why a lot of leaders don’t work out well because they are leading by command, by instruction but not by exemplification..Is got to be by your life. So gifted with leadership, back it up with

your life. If you have the gift of the gap, if you have the gift of influencing people, back it up with diligence. It's so important.

Time stamp 16:50

Then there is the gift of showing mercy. These are people who have an eye to the down and out. These are the people who will visit the people in the hospitals, in orphanages, in the homes, in prisons, gift of mercy. And the gift of mercy sometimes can be unappreciated. People don't know and the people you show mercy to, can't pay you back. You feel lousy, you feel sour, you feel bitter about things, you feel unappreciated. Therefore, the Bible says if you are showing mercy as a gift, then you got to do it with cheerfulness. Don't be a sour face, vinegar soak-kind of person. "I got to visit this..". No, no, if you are gifted with mercy, you got to do it with cheerfulness. You know what is the Greek word for the word 'cheerfulness'? The greek word for 'cheerfulness' is the word "hilaros" from which we get our English word 'hilarious'. Sure must laugh/joy (someone in congregation laughing hilariously). That's the kind of response we should have when we serve the poor. If you are gifted with the gift of mercy, you look forward ..you are excited about serving the poor. You don't look at it as a drag or a drear, you are excited.

These are the seven examples of spiritual gifts and in the body of Christ, we need all of them. I wanted to show an usher and you see, the people with gift of ministry do not want to be shown.. Is amazing (laughter in congregation). Alright, there are people who are serving the gift of ushering, right?. Let me say this that ushers are often seen but not seen (laughter again). Why? When you come in, you see them but after that you don't really remember them. Frankly speaking, most of us ignore them. That is why the gift of ministry is needed. You are willing not to be seen but just to serve people. Bring them to the chairs, bring them to the seats and welcome people. That's the gift. We have other people who have the gift of ministry, serving behind the scenes every Sunday morning. You all enjoy all the good food but there are plenty of people working behind them. You don't know them but they serve God. They want to be a blessing to you. They want to exercise their gift using their hands and they don't talk much. Not like me talk a lot but they work a lot but different gifting, you see. And there are people who are doing the accounts, dministration behind the scenes at the tables. I don't think most of you even know their names but these are people that God uses. There are people who teach, teach the children. We always think about a pastor preaching but teaching is more than that. Helping people, small groups, children, the elderly, doing Bible studies, discipleship groups. There are people with the gift of encouragement. They will put their hands around someone.

You want to be around them because they build you up. They encourage you to make you feel good about yourself. Some people you stand beside them, you feel lousy about yourself but there are some others you really feel good when you stand beside them, gift of encouragement.

The gift of mercy. In our church we want to reach the poor and there are people here regularly bringing bags of food visiting the homes. I am told the next time, this has been going on monthly visiting these poor families. The next time we are visiting them is by cleaning and painting their houses. Gift of help, gift of mercy, gift of ministry. These are the people that will come along and serve the poor. Some of you may not be keen. Some of you may be very keen because that's the way God has shaped you and gifted you. But is through these things that we touched lives. Through gifts that we reach people. People in York Hill (referring photo). I pray for many other more communities here in our tiny island Singapore. That's how they come. They come to Jesus and Kay Hong is shocked on how come they can come? (Referring photo) Because we are all serving them. That's the beauty of the church of Jesus Christ. Imagine if all of us are preachers. There will be chaos up here (referring the stage). Everybody fighting to preach, nobody serving but the beauty of the church is because God is sovereign.. He is wise. He knows who to give the gifts to and all of us fitted together is beautiful, is beautiful! Now, no gift is inferior. You can't say, oh, that's not an important gift. All gifts are important and need to come together to meet needs. Let me give you an example, suppose you are having a birthday party for a little boy and this little boy is having a great time, but someone suddenly, said something bad and he got upset. He was denied his toy and so on. And during dinner, he got so upset and took his plate and threw it into the air and the food begins to fly all over the place. The plate crash to the ground and shatters. Everything is dirty, messy. Everybody's mood is spoiled . Just a mess. Imagine that. But in this birthday party, there are 7 people. Seven people from the church. Seven people gifted by God with different gifts and now this is how the different giftings can possibly work together to salvage this situation. The person with the gift of encouragement, with the gift of exhortation comes to the mother. "Honey! I understand how you feel that my son did this too but don't worry, you'll be fine. Come let's pray..". The gift of encouragement kicks in. The person with the gift of ministry doesn't say a word, saw this mess and immediately got up. Went to the kitchen, brings out the mop and starts to mop the floor, gift of ministry. The person with the gift of leadership begins to arise.. "Alright, I see that we have this situation. You, you, can you do this?". He organizes and directs the people. The person with the gift of mercy comes to the little boy "son, I understand you have a difficult time, can I

talk with you?” . The person with the gift of giving says, “how much does the plate cost?” (laughter from congregation). The person with the gift of teaching and prophecy says, “Now because this is the situation and because these..these, etc..these are the 5 steps and 5 principles of the Bible you need to take note of” . But you see, everybody got to chip in, do their part and in this situation it was so messy and difficult, turn out to be glorious. Now that is just a hypothetical scenario, but let me give you a real scenario.

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A real scenario that looks like this, a member of the church, a man with a young family loses his job because of poor performance at work. Traditionally, when we are presented with this situation, we bring this man to the pastor and the pastor is suppose to solve all his problems. I am not kidding. Is true, right?. This is what you are thinking about, right? We got our pastors so they can solve all our problems. But you see, that is because we fail to understand gifting. We fail to understand the beauty and the diversity of the body of Christ. When someone goes through this, it takes more than one man, generally. It takes more than 2 men, generally. It takes the body. It takes a group and different people would exercise their gifts in different way. Again, let's look at the person with the gift of exhortation, encouragement. Straight away, 10 minutes time, he got this call, he rushes to the house, sits beside the man, puts his hand around this man's shoulders and says, “Brother! let's pray” ,.. come alongside to comfort and to encourage. Then the person with the gift of leadership again, comes to understand the situation. He goes back to the church, “Well guys, we have a situation, you, you, you, you, you are good at this, please help” and is able to organize the people and coordinate the efforts for a common course. The person with the gift of service, comes and say, “Hey John! I realize you've lost your job and I want to help you. Your kids, no one brings them to school.. let me do it for you and take care of the kids. Let me serve you.” Doesn't have to say a lot but practical ministry. The person with the gift of prophecy comes in and gives him the word appropriate for the season..tells him,.. “Even though you've lost your job, God did not lose you..” An appropriate word for an appropriate season. The person with the gift of mercy comes and say, is there anything else you need me to do. Anything and I'm willing to do it. The person with the gift of teaching tells him the 5 things he needs to know in order to do well in job in his workplace But he does expound the Word of God to him. And then the person with the gift of giving says, “How much do you need to tide over this time?. I know you, I trust you and am willing to help you”. You see, when a person gets into a crisis, you need all these gifts together to gather.



Have you ever wondered why your needs are not met even though you have met your pastor, spoken to different people, because you have not experience that body life that is supposed to operate in such interconnected ways. Your needs are holistically met by the body of Jesus Christ in the church. So this is the point, "I'm gifted by God". The gift is an ability, a skill given to every believer to function in the body of Christ with ease and effectiveness. That's a gift. And now, you ask Pastor. What's my gift? How can I discover my gift? And I'm really glad you ask that because the Bible says "neglect not the gift that is in you". 1 Timothy 4:14. You got to discover your gifts and one of the tragedies of life is hidden talents, hidden gifts. Have you seen this kind of a YouTube videos on singing competitions..in Chinese saying, "Crouching Tiger, hidden Dragon" hidden talents. I've seen this one where he was a used car salesman. He doesn't look the cut.He is sloppy, just look sleepy. He walks on the stage and they ask him what he wants to sing. He said he wants to sing this Italian song, an opera song. And the judges gave him the kind of look that he cannot make it. But the moment he opened his mouth, he sang so well that everybody was awed. By the way, he is now a worldwide phenomenon. But imagine that he was a hidden talent for a long, long time selling used car. But there was a genuine, world-class talent in this man. The tragedy of life is Christians have world-class giftings in us but it's totally hidden. We do nothing about. Its a tragedy but at the very same time when you discover your gift is exciting. Your life is never gonna be the same again. So how can you and I discover our spiritual gifts. Let me say this. If you want to discover your spiritual gifts, you will never discover at home sitting on the couch and watching your tummy. You will never discover your spiritual gifts, watching television and looking at Internet. Your gifts are not discerned in such ways. You say why? Very simple. Look at the definition of gifts. A spiritual gift is a skill or ability that enables each Christian to perform a function in the body of Christ, you realized that? The gift is for a function in the body of Christ. You want to discover your gift, is discerned in the body of Christ. As you are connected to God's people. You discover it when you are connected to God's people, and when you commit to serving God's people. The key to discovering spiritual gifts is in ministry to God's people. Not sitting around and wondering what is your gift. Get up and get working. Get up, get observing and then start to meet those needs that you see. As you observe and as you serve. The people will be able to tell you what you really good at and you be discerning for yourself what you are able to do. Charles Swindoll says Is when you have this such gift you realize that when we serve people, there's a certain ease and effectiveness. I like to add one more word to his definition and it is this.. to serve the body of Christ with ease and effectiveness and excitement. Why? Because that's the way God gifted you. You are really good at this..you You are effective in this and you enjoy doing this.

Some of you look at the preachers like this, preachers have to do a lot of work and is very difficult. Yes, in a sense it is a lot of work. But you know, for me, it is easy. Not because I am better than you. Just the way God gifted me..its easy. Putting a lot of hours but is still easy. I hope is effective. Some ways, little ways and I'm excited, is never a chore. I may sleep late. I may have to squeeze a lot of time but I am genuinely excited to do it. But if you asked me to sit at the table and do accounts, it is very difficult for me, although I studied maths before, but is very difficult to tally the things. It is terribly ineffective for me to do it and it is awfully frustrating for me. I rather preach for you a 100 sermons than you get me to do the accounts for one day. But you see what is difficult for me maybe easy for you. That is the way God shaped each one of us. We are all very diverse, very different. We don't have a copy someone. God made you the way you are. Be a triangle, be a square, can be a circle. Don't be something else, be yourself. Discover your gifts and you discover it in the midst of serving. And you discover it as you serve that people will see you are effective. They will tell you that. "You are really good at this". You feel that this is easy and you are excited about it. That's why I say to you folks. If you want to be part of the kingdom of God in a real way. You want to discover who God has made you to be, you got to live your Christianity in community. There is this wave of thinking you know in a church.. that as long as I'm listening to the sermon, I'm being a good Christian. What a lie that is. There have been people today who want to just go to church on Internet. Watch Internet sermons. Ok, very good. close it and that's my Christian duty for the week. Let me tell you that is the lie of the devil because Christianity is best live out in community because it's when you serve one another that you start to discover your spiritual gifts and you experience the life, the power and the love of Jesus flowing through you and flowing to you from others. I wonder how's your Christianity? Ah pastor, I'm a good boy, a good girl. I come to church every Sunday. Good! you come to church every Sunday, that's a good start. why do you come to church? Oh, I hear a sermon. Very good, and then, that's all? What about body life? What about your spiritual life? I have no clue. I have done those spiritual assessments before. Spiritual gifts assessments.. I score very high in this area. I think this is my gift. You got to discern it in ministry. Ministry to one another.

Time Stamp 34:50

My friends, connecting to small groups to many of us seems to be like an option, is not. You can't have Christianity that way. The book of Acts tells us that the early church gathers together in small groups, why? I think they were ministering to each other. They were discovering their gifts. The body of Christ, the church of Jesus Christ is a living, dynamic organism. It lives, is not lecture, is not Internet TV, is

lives. You want to discover your gifts? Get connected, get serving. And as you serve people, you saw this brother has needs, you meet those needs, you do it with ease and effectiveness with excitement. You start to discover how God has shaped you.

Let me give you a caveat, kind of a disclaimer. Some people will say, Pastor, I have join small group before but lousy (in Hokkien). Everything is lousy. Don't want to go already. I could do this better you know. And I admit you could probably do this thing better. But you know why you have that attitude and therefore you never be connected to the body life is this. When you join a small group, so many of us joined a small group with the attitude I'm not there to serve but I am there to be served. I join this small group, so this SF leader must take care of me. I am the VIP of the day. I visit your small group, you know. While I come, you must show me what you are made of. You must show me that you are good then I will be persuaded to stay. You join a small group, Of course, I pray, I trust you will be served, you will be blessed, you learn and you grow. But what is missing is the attitude to join to commit to serve others.

JF Kennedy said.. "Asked not what the country can do for you but ask what you can do for the country".

Sometimes we come to the small group and keep asking what they can do for me but we forget to ask what we can do for them. And you know why you can see the areas of lacks and weaknesses and difficulties because God shaped you the way you are. There is a composition of people there with different giftings. They could not see the problem. You see it and instead of criticizing with the attitude of what they can do for me, you go in and support with the attitude of what I can do for them. You see that's the problem.. Body life is where we meet one another's needs. Compliment one another strengths and fill out one another's weaknesses, so that each community manifests & glorifies Jesus Christ. Willingness to serve. Some of you may say, but pastor, I've another question. My question is this, I have been serving and committed to small groups already and serving for 10 years and I still don't know my spiritual gift. You really serving? Yes! I'm really serving. I'm really doing my best. I'm really working hard. I've tried many things but I still don't seem to be able to have a grasp and handle of my spiritual gift. Let me try to help you this way. So many of us, we think that spiritual gifts is very simplistic, one person, one gift, one person teaching only, one person prophesied only and that's it. So we pigeonhole people into the 22 gifts that are mentioned in the Bible. It must be either one of them. But maybe the way God gives us is more than the 22 that there maybe other spiritual gifts not represented because none of the list in Romans 12, 1Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4,

1Peter 4. None of these passages are exhaustive. None of them have a complete list. Paul never quite define it..there is a kind of a overlap..flexibility, so it may not be exactly(in hokkien)..May not be of the 22. May be there are other gifts and it may be that some of us are gifted with a kind of a blending, different gifts of different combinations, of different degrees, that makes up who you are uniquely.

Let me share with you this from Dr. John MacArthur. He's been a Christian for I do not know how long. Definitely longer than your life. He is quite a senior man by now. Taught the Bible for many years, pastored for many years and this is what he says. Now listen to me, when you have done all that, that is after you have pray, surrendered yourself. You're getting yourself involve in ministry..you serve, you try to discover your gift. He said, when you have done all that, you will probably find it impossible to label your gift. Did you get that? After doing that 10 years, it is possibly impossible for you to label your gift. I've been at this a long time. If you feel discouraged, follow him and listen. I've been at this for long time, you asked me what my gift is? This I can't tell you. All I know is I do what I do. Sometimes I preach, sometimes I teach and sometimes I exhort and sometimes I try to unfold the wisdom of the Bible. And you can put that all together and my gift is called "John MacArthur". That's all I know. I know generally the different categories or areas of giftedness that God has blended together to make me what I am but I don't believe that we can oversimplify, say 43 people have the gift of teaching and 28 people have the gift of service, and so on. I don't see that at all. You have a gift and it's a blending of all the categories of giftedness into a uniqueness that makes you like nobody else like paint on a palette. If you're an artist, you realize that if you want to draw and paint nicely, you don't just use the basic colors, right? A white, yellow, black, I mean so boring if that's all the colors to use for painting. To have a really, moving, realistic painting, what you need to do is to mix the colors and whatever colors, sometimes come out is hard to define what the colors, very hard. The 'Voice' article you have is multicolored, right? All kinds of colors there and so vivid, so vibrant. But you know how we get to all these colours. I know it because we went to buy the ink cartridges together, is composed of 6 kinds of basic colors. That's all just six. Six basic categories that when it blends together to give you a whole multivaried spread of colours. Your gifting is unique. Some of us are struggling, is it prophecy? Is it teaching? Is it ministry? I say it's "Lim Kay Hong", it's "John MacArthur", it's "Jason Lim". It's "who you are". You are unique.

So my friends, what is my gift? Look at this. What do you do with ease? You say its computer games, ah may be not. What do you do with ease, serving people? and what do you do with ease? And you know what I mean, is not absolutely easy , easy as if

there is no challenge but it's really easy and is not frustrating. It is effective and is exciting. That which you find fits these 3 categories or qualifications, this is what you're good at. Focus on it. And when you discover your gift, don't stop there, please. Some people say I know my gift already and don't have to do anything else. No, the Bible actually tells us once you discover your gift, excellent. The Bible says stirs up the gift of God (2Tim1:6). What this means is this, when the embers are burning low, the flame is dying..what you use is this,a poker?..you use the 'stick' to stir it a bit, so that you introduce more oxygen into the mix and you cause the flame to arise. Paul says to Timothy, don't let your gift dies down but stir it up, flame it, let it blossom, let it grow because that's God's will for you. My friends, once you know your spiritual gift, use it. Is like muscles. When you use your muscles, it develops but when you stopped using it, it dies, and it atrophies. And spiritual gifts are the same. God's will is that you stoke up your gift. I said this because it's important for us to realize how we should serve Jesus. Some of us are doing all kinds of things that really is not effective, nor easy, nor exciting. You feel frustrated, why am I doing all this, I'm tearing my hair out but maybe your heart is not right with God and that can be true. But if your heart is right, and these things are not easy, they are frustrating for you. Because you're not serving in the area of giftedness. Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying today, after you've discern your gift like teaching. You never lift a finger to help someone else. To give or to encourage or to serve in basic things. I am not saying that. I am saying if you want to meet needs at its surfaces, you've got to have emphasis. You've got to have priority. You've got to work from your strengths and this is what it says. You got to stir up the gift that is in you. Do what you are made to do.

Time Stamp 44:57

A story is told of a group of animals that decided to meet together because they wanted to be better. They wanted to save the world. So they said we need to train. We need to train ourselves in running, swimming, climbing, flying. And everyone of us because it's easy to administrate this, every one of us will go through the same training. So the poor duck began to train on running. The duck is an excellent swimmer but because he is so good and is better than his instructor. He doesn't need to go for swimming lessons anymore but he goes for running. And when he runs, he can't run fast at all. And so the instructor says alright, no more swimming, all you need to is to come for running class. And every day he goes on running class. He runs with difficulty and is not effective and he is very frustrated. He trains so hard until his poor web feet is torn. And then you have the Rabbit and he is an excellent runner but is hopeless in swimming. But because he is so fast in running, the instructor also

says you don't have to run anymore, just learn swimming. He swims and he swims and struggle until he has this muscle twitch all the time and he can't jump, he can't run anymore. The eagle was supposed to learn how to climb but he has never ever climb before. He is a rebel. Everytime he trys to climb, he flys up. He gets scolded, he gets frustrated and the whole group of animals school trainees are a bunch of discouraged, ineffective army. The lesson is clear, isn't it? If God make you to be a duck, then go swim, please. Sometimes you need to run, all right but most of your time, spend your time swimming. If you a rabbit, don't go near the water too often, is dangerous for you, run.

If you are gifted in teaching, focus on teaching. Gifted in showing mercy, focus on showing mercy. Gifted in giving, don't aim to be a pastor. You got to know where God has gifted you. It reduces frustration. It reduces futility. There is not enough teachers? Don't worry..there are others God has placed. You go do what you are shaped to do. At the end of the day, this is stewardship. This gift was not requested by you. This gift was not deserved by you. This gift was not earned by you..it is given by God. Trust God and use those gifts God has given for His glory. By the way, when you know your gift, you know what it is that God wants you to do in 2013. You know what God wants you to do in 2014, 2015, 2030, 2050. Why? He has gifted you for your journey ahead. So instead of trying to go apart from the gifting of God, go back to how He has gifted you and serve Him in the area of strength and that is what it means to be part of the body of Christ. So Paul says in this passage, if you are good at prophecy, do it, prophesy. If you are good at ministry, then go minister and that's the emphasis and focus we need to have. Stir up the gift. Pastor what is the point this morning, very simple. I come back to this. Don't come to GLCC just to hear sermons, please. You are just shortchanging yourself. Be part of the body of Christ to connect with people and to serve one another because when you do that, your Christian life changes dramatically. You will have a sense of fulfillment like never before. Every one of us wants to be useful, alright? I've never met a person who don't want to be useful. Even if he says that, is because he's depressed and discouraged, but deep down in his heart, we all want to be useful. Even a little child like my son, wants to be useful. He says, daddy, where is the heavy bag, I want to carry. He wants to be useful and in your fulfillment, comes when you are serving Jesus in a meaningful, fruitful way. I see this beautifully if you are connected serving God's people..the needs of the church will be met. None will be left alone. No one should say, "No one cares for me". The body matures, develops in a beautiful way. I want to challenge you..I've said so many times over the past few weeks about small groups. I think that is the passage..the principles laid out in Romans 12,you can't run away from it. If you

really want to live a life of worship.. If you really want to live a life of a living sacrifice.. If you want to prove a good, acceptable and perfect will of God, it begins right here, serve one another. Don't just come for services, be connected to a community of God's people and be connected with a aim, with an attitude, the mindset to serve one another. Because it's when you do it, you discover your gifts. That you really grow that you experience the life and love of Jesus flowing through you and as you commit to such small groups and others are exercising their gifts, you experience the life and love of Jesus flowing through you. Its a beautiful thing to see Jesus in God's people.

Time Stamp 51:20

Where do I see Jesus today. I see in all of us. This week, I read a post by Pastor Paul's daughter which she put on Facebook. She gave permission on the Facebook so I can share..very simple..she shared this and let me read it from my iphone. I don't want to misrepresent also. She said this..

“Thank God for a wonderful lady in church who took our kids for the day so that Steve and I (that is her husband and herself) could rest and try to recover from the stomach flu. The body of Christ is an awesome thing.”

What she said?. She said a lady showing the love of Jesus and what she saw was not a lady alone but she saw this was a manifestation of the body of Christ. She saw Jesus in the church. You want to see Jesus in your life? You want others to see Jesus in you? You want to glorify Jesus by the living sacrifice together that we become a people of worship. It begins with serving one another. And as God's people serve one another, there's a beauty, there's an aroma, there is a radiance that shines out from us that will truly be the Gospel light that others in the world may see Jesus and likewise be drawn to Him. Why is witnessing evangelism failing in many churches? Because there is no authentic body life in the people of God. It comes with such fundamentals. It comes with realizing we are saved by grace, gifted by grace to proclaim the grace of our God. My friends, we are all built up in a spiritual house to offer up sacrifices praises to Him. It begins with your life. I think it's enough of us sitting on the sidelines. All I want in church is the sermon. All I want in church is Sunday service. Let me say this, don't be a lipoma, don't be a liposarcoma. Be a useful cell because as you do so you blossom, you grow, the church is build up, needs are met and Jesus is glorified. So, would you do that? We say, Lord guide me to be part of community life. I may want to take it, so by all means, there is a commitment, the desire, the awareness. May His word transform your mind and may it prove to bring much glory to God and joy in your life.

Let's bow for a word of prayer. This morning, it is a very simple straightforward message about spiritual gifts. I hope to help you define spiritual gift, to discover your spiritual gifts and encourage you to develop your spiritual gifts, but it all begins with a step of faith. Would I today be willing to commit myself to serve others? There are so many people in church. Who should I serve? That's the point. Serve others beginning in a small group that will encourage you. As you bow your head, as you close your eyes, think about this. Am I serious about the Word of God today? Am I thinking, I know better than God or would I heed His cry, His call to me that I am uniquely gifted and I will discover it in the body of Christ. Think about it, friends, think about it, let not your Christian life be that of a solo journey but let it be a beautiful, beautiful manifestation of the interconnectiveness, interrelatedness of the body here. Let me encourage you today, celebrate one another's giftedness. Don't compete. There is no reason for competition. We all are serving in the same body for the glory of God. Don't compare your gift with another person gift. You are accountable for your own gift. Use your gift for the glory of God and celebrate one another's giftedness. Go to someone and say, I appreciate this giftedness in you. I appreciate your ministry, God be the praise. Maybe you see needs in GLCC, you see needs in this body, instead of waiting for someone else, why don't you say, Lord let me serve. Ah, this is not what we can organize. We are entrusting the Holy Spirit to work in hearts today to each and every single individual here, that they will be serving one another.

so, Dear Lord, this morning, we are grateful for Jesus who died on the cross and paid the price for our sins. Because of Jesus, today we who have believed are forgiven. We have a relationship with You, and Lord besides all that, You have also given us wonderful enabling skills and abilities to serve You. May we not bury those talents and gifts but may we use them to further Your kingdom and to serve Your church. I pray You take Your Word and move in the hearts of Your people that we will be a church that really magnifies the name of Jesus and thereby be effective in leading generations into a life-changing relationship with Jesus Christ. Give us a servant's heart. Here's my life, take it all. May I do my part. Make me a servant like You, dear Lord. This is our prayer, we asked and pray all this in Jesus Name. God bless.