

## ***How do I identify my gifts, my calling?***

*Josh & Ben*

Last Thursday we covered *Spiritual Gifts*. This Thursday we are going to identify a few of our personal *natural* and *supernatural* gifts and how to identify what God calls us to do with them.

According to the *American Heritage Dictionary* a **calling** is “An inner urge; a strong impulse.”

### **Gifts Mentioned Last time**

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| Wisdom<br>Love<br>Generosity/Charity<br>Hospitality<br>Mercy | Tongues<br>Leadership<br>Administration<br>Healing<br>Powers | Teaching<br>Prophecy<br>Faith<br>Encouragement |
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### **Gifts of the Holy Spirit** (according to Catholic “Handbook of Prayers”)

“The gifts of the Holy Spirit belong in their fullness to Christ, the Son of David. They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them. They make the faithful docile in readily obeying divine inspirations.”

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| Wisdom<br>Understanding<br>Counsel | Fortitude<br>Knowledge<br>Piety | Fear of the Lord |
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### **Fruits of the Holy Spirit** (according to Catholic “Handbook of Prayers”)

“The fruits of the Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory.”

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| Charity<br>Joy<br>Peace<br>Patience | Kindness<br>Goodness<br>Generosity<br>Gentleness | Faithfulness<br>Modesty<br>Self-control<br>Chastity |
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### **The Life Long Explicit Calling**

**Abraham:** Genesis 12:1-3 – “Now the Lord had said to Abram: ‘Get out of your country, From your kindred And from your father’s house, To a land that I will show you. I will make you a great nation; I will bless you And make your name great; And you shall be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, And I will curse him who curses you; And in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.’”

**Samuel:** 1 Samuel 3:10-20 – “Then the Lord came and stood and called as at other times, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ And Samuel answered, ‘Speak, for Your servant hears.’ Then the

Lord said to Samuel: ‘Behold, I will do something in Israel at which both ears of everyone who hears will tingle...’ ... So Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beersheba knew that Samuel *had been* established as a prophet of the Lord.”

**The Seven:** Acts 6:2-7 – “Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, ‘It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Therefore, brethren, seek out from among you seven men of *good* reputation, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business; but we will give ourselves continually to prayer and to the ministry of the word.’ And the saying pleased the whole multitude. And they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, and Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch, whom they set before the apostles; and when they had prayed, they layed hands on them. And the word of God spread, and the number of disciples multiplied greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests were obedient to the faith.”

**Paul:** Acts 9:3-8,17 – “And as he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. Then he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to him, ‘Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?’ And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ And the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. *It is hard* for you to kick against the goads.’ So he, trembling and astonished, said, ‘Lord, what do You want me to do?’ And the Lord *said* to him, ‘Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’ And the men who journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no one. Then Saul arose from the ground, and when his eyes were opened he saw no one. But they led him by the hand and brought him into Damascus. ... And Ananias went his way and entered the house; and laying his hands on him he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’”

### Questions:

- 1) What do these people and their callings have in common?
- 2) Who chose each of these people to define their callings?
- 3) What types of gifts did the people have before they were called?
- 4) Take a minute to think about what you want and what you are basing your plans and planning energy on. What are your top 5 priorities or life goals over the next 5 years? How does developing/using your gifts, or responding to tasks God might think are important fit into this list? (You don’t need to share anything if you don’t want to.)

### The Short Term Explicit Calling

**Ananias:** Acts 9:10-16 – “Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, ‘Ananias.’ And he said, ‘Here I am, Lord.’ So the Lord said to him, ‘Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for *one* called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting *his* hand on him, so that he might receive

his sight.’ Then Ananias answered, ‘Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.’ But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.’”

**The Seventy:** Luke 10:1-11 – “After these things the Lord appointed seventy others also, and sent them two by two before His face into every city and place where He Himself was about to go. Then He said to them, ‘The harvest truly is great, but the laborers are few; therefore pray the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest. Go your way; behold, I send you out as lambs among wolves. Carry neither money bag, sack, nor sandals; and greet no one along the road. But whatever house you enter, first say, ‘Peace to this house.’ And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on it; if not, it will return to you. ...”

#### **Questions:**

- 1) What do these people and their callings have in common?
- 2) Who chose each of these people to define their callings?
- 3) What type of gifts did the people have before they were called?
- 4) Were any of these people called to do anything else long term or short term at the same time? Possibly simultaneous callings?

#### **The Short Term Implicit Calling**

**Rahab:** Joshua 2:1-6, 12-14 – “Now Joshua the son of Nun sent out two men from Acacia Grove to spy secretly, saying, ‘Go, view the land, especially Jericho.’ So they went, and came to the house of a harlot named Rahab, and lodged there. And it was told the king of Jericho, saying, ‘Behold, men have come here tonight from the children of Israel to search out the country.’ So the king of Jericho sent to Rahab, saying, ‘Bring out the men who have come to you, who have entered your house, for they have come to search out all the country.’ Then the woman took the two men and hid them; and she said, ‘Yes, the men came to me, but I did not know where they *were* from. And it happened as the gate was being shut, when it was dark, that the men went out. Where the men went I do not know; pursue them quickly, for you may overtake them.’ (But she had brought them up to the roof and hidden them with the stalks of flax, which she had laid in order on the roof.) ... ‘Now therefore, I beg you, swear to me by the Lord, since I have shown you kindness, that you also will show kindness to my father’s house, and give me a true token, and spare my father, my mother, my brothers, and my sisters, and all that they have, and deliver our lives from death.’ So the men answered her, ‘Our lives for yours, if none of you tell this business of ours. And it shall be, when the Lord has given us the land, that we will deal kindly and truly with you.’

**Daniel:** Daniel 1:3-13 – “Then the king instructed Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs to bring some of the children of Israel and some of the king’s descendants and some of the nobles, young men in whom *there was* no blemish, but good-looking, gifted in all wisdom, possessing knowledge and quick to understand, who *had* ability to serve in the

king's palace, and whom they might teach the language and literature of the Chaldeans. And the king appointed for them a daily provision of the king's delicacies and of the wine which he drank, and three years of training for them, so that at the end of *that time* they might serve before the king. ... But Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank; therefore he requested of the chief of the eunuchs that he might not defile himself. Now God had brought Daniel favor and good will of the chief of the eunuchs. And the chief of the eunuchs said to Daniel, 'I fear my lord the king, who has appointed your food and drink. For why should he see your faces looking worse than the young men who *are* your age? Then you would endanger my head before the king.' So Daniel said to the steward whom the chief of the eunuchs had set over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, 'Please test your servants for ten days, and let them give us vegetables to eat and water to drink. Then let our countenances be examined before you, and the countenances of the young men who eat the portion of the king's delicacies; and as you see fit, so deal with your servants.'

#### **Questions:**

- 1) What do these people and their callings have in common?
- 2) How did these people know they were called to respond to God in the way they did? What may have helped them make their decisions?
- 3) What type of gifts did the people have before they were called?
- 4) Were any of these people called to do anything else long term or short term at the same time? Possibly simultaneous callings?
- 5) Did any of these callings act as a start of some larger *calling* (or ministry)?

#### **Self-Inspection & Personal Callings**

- 1) Consider what gifts you feel you have right now. To make life easier, you can just pick them out of the lists on the first page.
- 2) Possibly many gifts that you chose can be put together and be useful in particular *callings*. Consider two types of callings *spontaneous* and *long term* callings. Make a list of things you might do on the spur of the moment, and link them with the appropriate gift(s). At the same time, make a list of those things that may need more devotion, and link them with the appropriate gift(s).
- 3) Do the *spontaneous* and *long term* callings conflict? Can multiple callings be present at once?
- 4) Consider the order of callings. Could particular callings make better sense in a sequential order rather than becoming a single life long focus?