Last time:

* Why so many of us are “uninformed” about sg:
	+ Some great failures in charismatic ch
	+ Some of the failures in more conservative ch too
* Saw how these gifts enriched the lives of the believers in Cor - confirmed msg of gospel.
* Saw: Interesting: church – complete mess:
	+ Lots of these gifts in use –> tells us: /sign of maturity – **3:1** infants in Christ. **14:20** stop thinking like children…in your thinking be adults
		- IOW: grow up!
	+ Our advice might be: stop! P: **14:39-40** be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.
		- IOW: /stop. Do it right!

This time: what actually mean by SG?

**v4** There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. **v5** There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. **v6** There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

* 3 different descriptions[[1]](#endnote-1) – of same thing – looking at jewel from different angles:
* **Gifts:** “charisma” – gift -> charismatic: gifted
	+ Phrase P uses often. Often: salvation[[2]](#endnote-2). **Romans 6:23** The wages of sin is death but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
		- Reminds us: whatever these things are: /deserved – /earned – gift.
		- /show off about. /Show off about your gifting any more than you show off b/c God has saved you by grace.
	+ Next section all about this – come back next time.
* **Service:** “diakonia” –> deacon – servant
	+ Reminds us: /self-serving – others-serving.
	+ **1Peter 4:10-11** Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.
		- Purpose: to serve other ppl.
		- Faithful steward of God’s grace. Think: The Lord’s gracious blessing to his ppl – comes through the gifts he gives to his ch. Makes them inc impt.
		- Recognise: some gifts – questions – fine. Generally: gifts vital: ordinary means of grace alongside preaching, Lord’s supper, baptism[[3]](#endnote-3).
	+ If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God.
		- Peter sums up all gifts into 2 categories: speaking:
		- If you have a speaking gift: take it seriously – great resp – speak on behalf of Living God! All kinds of speaking gifts: /just preaching!
	+ If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.
		- If you have a serving gift: hard – do it anyway – God will give you the strength if you are willing to do it.
* **Working**: energema [pr: en-air-gay-ma] – energy - power[[4]](#endnote-4)
	+ Reminds us: from God - /from us.
		- /Natural abilities – preferences – predispositions. /from me -> from Him – external to me – given to me -> so I can bless-serve others.
		- Emphasis is always: from him.
	+ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, v9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, … mentions a few more … All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.
* See Trinity here: Spirit – Lord - God. Trinity. God at work in His church. Outward signs of God’s presence in his people.
* **v7** Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.
	+ manifestation of the Spirit
		- an outward sign of the work of the Sp. Most of Sp’s work is internal: conviction of sin, joy, peace, assurance[[5]](#endnote-5).
		- This is the outward stuff: things you can see.
	+ For the common good – good of the whole church - /individual.
		- Exception to that: tongues[[6]](#endnote-6) – come back to it

Look at some of them:

* **12:8-11**
* Put up a few others – see /just here.
	+ **Rom 12:6-8**
		- Prophesying – Serving – Teaching - encouragement – giving – leading - mercy
	+ **12:28-30**
		- Repeats some – adds: Helping - Guidance[[7]](#endnote-7)
	+ **13:1-3[[8]](#endnote-8)**
		- Repeats SiT, prophecy, message of knowledge, faith
* **Ephesians 4:11-13[[9]](#endnote-9)**
* Notice: Huge variety - some fairly “ordinary” – uncontroversial – some a bit more “scary”. As you read v4-5-6 – “different kinds” – huge variety of ways Sp works in ppl to build up his ch. /convinced this is meant to be a final list – examples.

Defn of Spiritual gifts: Spirit-empowered abilities God gives to believers to serve His Church and honour Jesus.

These 9 – consider first 5 – others later in series.

* **Message (“Word” = Gk: Logos) of wisdom (v8)**
	+ /mentioned anywhere else in scripture – no explanation here – careful.
	+ Look back to ch 1-3 which is all about wisdom: in Cor – obsessed with fancy words – and great wisdom.
		- Paul: you loved human wisdom – here’s God’s wisdom: gospel - applying gospel to a particular situation[[10]](#endnote-10). So maybe a “word of wisdom” is a God-given ability to apply the gospel into someone’s life.
		- Sometimes: chatting to s/o – troubles - Bible verse appears in head – perfect. Well you learned the B – how’s that a spiritual gift? Sp brings it to mind at the right time?
* **Message (“Word”) of knowledge**[[11]](#endnote-11)  **(v9)**
	+ Careful. Prob supernatural knowledge – insight about a person – situation.
	+ **John 4** – Jesus told the woman at the well all the secret sins of her life. …five husbands and the man you now have is not your husband.
	+ “Jesus knew what they were thinking”: lots of times[[12]](#endnote-12). Work of Sp.
	+ Philip – **Acts 8** – told to go to a particular place. Does it. Sees a govt official from Ethiopia reading OT. Sp tells him to stay near that chariot. He does – ends up explaining gospel – saved & baptised! GoK?
		- I’ve had times when preparing: really sure that a particular phrase will be meaningful to someone.
		- Famous story of Charles Spurgeon – Baptist pastor – Victorian era – preaching one Sunday – broke off sermon – “Young man, the gloves you have in your pocket are not paid for[[13]](#endnote-13).” Stole. Came to him afterwards – begging him /tell employer – converted.
* **Faith (v9)**
	+ Diff kinds of faith:
		- **Saving faith**: every believer – trust that J death on the cross was for your sin – he died in my place – what I deserve.
		- **Continuing faith**: exercise daily – look confidently to God to do all he has promised in his word. FoS. Heb 11. All believers have that faith too – diff degrees.
		- **Gift faith**: only mentioned here – ch13 briefly. Maybe that kind of temporary faith many of us experience from time to time. Surge of confidence as you’re praying – yes, God will do this[[14]](#endnote-14). /always feel like that. Occasional blessing.
* **Gifts of healing (v9) lit: gifts of healings**
	+ Ppl struggle with this one! 1 reason: if you’ve got it – why not hang round hospitals. Moral duty!
		- Based on a wrong idea: permanent gift of healing – use whenever you like.
	+ /See that in B
		- Paul /heal at will. Paul healed many ppl – but /Epaphroditus[[15]](#endnote-15) or Timothy[[16]](#endnote-16) – or Trophimus[[17]](#endnote-17) - or himself[[18]](#endnote-18).
		- Paul’s gift of healing was temporary - /turn it on-off. Spirit-empowered – Spirit is Sovereign. Wind blows where it pleases[[19]](#endnote-19).
		- In fact: suggest: all these gifts are temporary. Some others – offices – permanent – Apostle-Prophet-Evangelist-Pastor-Teacher. Others: temporary, for time & situation.
	+ Supporting that: plural – get idea that /just one gift – many gifts – maybe the gift is for one particular type of healing – or one healing at a time.
	+ So maybe this is a lot more common than we tend to think. Plenty of ppl get healed of one thing or another. Maybe gifts of healings /that unusual.
		- Maybe if we prayed – laid hands on s/o – almost always what J did and in the early church[[20]](#endnote-20) - more?
* **Miraculous powers (v10)**
	+ Sounds like flying – laser-eyes! Suspect it’s actually a bit closer to our experience than we might think!
	+ Same phrase[[21]](#endnote-21) in **Galatians 3:5** miracle-working.
		- Surely we all believe God occasionally works miracles don’t we? In that passage – very clear it’s God who works the miracle, not some “miracle worker”. Wrong idea about these gifts.
		- All about him, /us. Sometime Sp energises an individual to do something amazing.
	+ Maybe heard it said: miracles in B: Clustered around Moses & Aaron. Elijah & Elisha. Jesus & Apostles.[[22]](#endnote-22). Snippets of history – 100yrs or less each time.
		- Tempted to think: well, God doesn’t do that anymore. Special people – special time in history.
	+ But listen to what James says: **James 5:16-17** …pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective. Elijah was a human being, even as we are. He prayed earnestly that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for three and a half years.
		- IOW: /think he was special man at a special time – just an ordinary guy – with fears – faults – failures and weaknesses. So, says James: /anyone tell you Elijah was in a special class on his own – he wasn’t – just like you. So pray like he did!
* Leave last 4 for now – dealt with a lot more later in 1Cor.

**Who?**

* Trad: only apostles have these gifts – died out w apostles. Extend a bit wider: some ppl who were closely associated w apostles[[23]](#endnote-23).
	+ V simple and convenient, but simply not true.
	+ **Romans 12:3** I say to every one of you…we have different gifts – and then lists them. Not speaking to apostles – or elders – or pastors – or deacons. Each one!
	+ **Acts 2** I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will [what?] prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants…
		- No boundaries of male-female-young-old-social status.
	+ **Acts 6:8** Stephen, a man full of God’s grace and power, performed great wonders and signs among the people. /Apostle: deacon
	+ **Acts 8** Miraculous signs and miracles –[[24]](#endnote-24) – who? Philip (deacon) - Sp directly speaks to him. /Apostle: deacon.
	+ **Acts 9:10** In Damascus there was a disciple named Ananias. Lord calls to him in a vision – tells him to go to a certain house and ask for a guy called Saul – when you arrive he will be praying – go and put hands on him – restore his sight. Point: “disciple” – ordinary follower of Jesus.
	+ **Acts 13:1** Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul.
	+ Could go on[[25]](#endnote-25)…
* **1Cor 12**
	+ **v7** Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.
	+ **v11** All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

/Held back by false ideas about what these gifts are.

“Eagerly desire the gifts of the Spirit.”

1. Or 4 if you include “pneumatikos” (spiritual things) in 12:1. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Ephesians 2:8; Romans 5:15-16; [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. This is perhaps a little controversial: the Reformed view that the Word, Baptism and Communion (and maybe also prayer) are the means by which God edifies his church is very limited in scope. By rightly emphasising the Word and it’s individual impact on the believer, the Reformed view can be portrayed as rather individualistic. In fact the Westminster Confession does recognise the blessing of these gifts (chapter 26 on the Communion of Saints) but to my mind, they should be included as part of the ordinary means of grace, since that is what 1Peter 4 says! [↑](#endnote-ref-3)
4. The NIV translates the word in various ways: “power” eg. Ephesians 3:20; “work” eg. Galatians 5:6; “energy” eg. Colossians 1:29. [↑](#endnote-ref-4)
5. Romans 15:15; 1Thessalonians 1:5; Romans 8:16 [↑](#endnote-ref-5)
6. 14:4 Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves – which is why Paul regards it as the least of the gifts. (14:12,19) [↑](#endnote-ref-6)
7. This was translated as “administration” in the older NIV, and in some other translations. It carries the idea of steering a boat (similar word in Acts 27:11, Revelation 18:17). So it could be translated as “administration” in the sense that someone with administrative skills steers an organisation. But “guidance” is probably a clearer translation, even if it minimises the corporate nature of that steering. [↑](#endnote-ref-7)
8. Arguably 14:6 adds “word of instruction” and 14:26 adds “revelation” and even appropriate hymn-choosing! 1Peter 1:10-11 arguably sums up all the gifts into two categories: “serving” and “speaking”. [↑](#endnote-ref-8)
9. Some might argue these are not gifts, but offices. But they are referred to in the same breath as gifts in 1Cor 12:28-30. I think it’s better to see them as permanent giftings and ALL the others as temporary.
Why does God give Apostles – prophets – evangelists – pastors – teachers. To equip his people for works of service. Why gives these gifts? So that the body of Christ may be built up. To what end? So we… reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God AND become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. In other words: So we become united together in faith in Jesus & knowledge about Jesus & become like Jesus. [↑](#endnote-ref-9)
10. Sam Storms maybe unhelpfully lumps the message of wisdom and knowledge together. I’m separating them out here which allows me to use his Ch1-3 are all about wisdom and knowledge – and Paul’s critique of their obsession with it. The phrase “word of wisdom” occurs 4 times (1:17, 2:1, 2:4, 2:13) – in each case Paul contrasts human wisdom with revelation from God about the person of Jesus. There must be a link to the spiritual gifts Paul is now speaking about. Sam Storms sees this and offers the cautious possibility that what third-wave Charismatics think of as a “word of knowledge/wisdom” might not be correct. He suggests maybe what Paul had in mind was an extraordinary inspired and insightful understanding of scripture. I think the bottom line is we don’t know for sure but I’m not sure it actually matters too much either way. The experience of either would be attested in the New Testament in other places. [↑](#endnote-ref-10)
11. We could look forward to 13:2,9,12 – all mention knowledge – and how it’s time-limited alongside prophecy and tongues. It would appear to be in the same category. Or possibly, we could look back to ch8 which is all about knowledge – it was something else they were obsessed by – led to pride. It’s hard to see how a Spirit-empowered word of knowledge would fit into that though. Any ideas??? [↑](#endnote-ref-11)
12. Matthew 9:1-8, 12:22-37; Mark 2:2-6; Luke 5:21-22, 6:8, 9:47; John 1:48-50. [↑](#endnote-ref-12)
13. <https://archive.spurgeon.org/misc/bio13.php> [↑](#endnote-ref-13)
14. Could James 5:15 be an example of it? [↑](#endnote-ref-14)
15. Philippians 2:25-30 [↑](#endnote-ref-15)
16. 1Timothy 5:23 [↑](#endnote-ref-16)
17. 2Timothy 4:20 [↑](#endnote-ref-17)
18. Galatians 4:13 [↑](#endnote-ref-18)
19. John 3:8 [↑](#endnote-ref-19)
20. Matthew 8:15; 9:18-25, 27-31; 14:36; 17:7; 19:13-45; Mark 1:40-42; 5:21-24; 6:1-6,56; 7:31-35; 8:22-25; 9:27; 16:18; Luke 13:10-13; 22:51; 24:50. Also note the practice of the early church in Acts 3:7; 5:12,6:6; 8:17-19; 9:10-17, 41; 11:30; 13:1-3; 14:3; 19:11: 28:7-8. This emphasis is also found in 1Timothy 4:14; 5:22; 2Timothy 1:6 (cf. Numbers 7:15-23; Deuteronomy 34:9). [↑](#endnote-ref-20)
21. Different tense. [↑](#endnote-ref-21)
22. “Most biblical miracles happened in three relatively brief periods of Bible history: in the days of Moses and Joshua, during the ministries of Elijah and Elisha, and in the time of Christ and the apostles. None of those periods lasted much more than a hundred years. Each of them saw a proliferation of miracles unheard of in other eras. . . . Aside from those three intervals, the only supernatural events recorded in Scripture were isolated incidents” Charismatic Chaos, John MacArthur, p112 [↑](#endnote-ref-22)
23. The fact that there is always that rather vague caveat “and those who were closely associated with the apostles” has always sat uncomfortably with me. Are the gifts limited to the apostles or not? Surely to say it’s the apostles (and some of the people they hung around with) is just a dubious way of admitting that it’s not just the apostles! [↑](#endnote-ref-23)
24. Acts 8:6,13,29 [↑](#endnote-ref-24)
25. 70 of Jesus’ followers cast out demons (Luke 10:9,19-20); many other non-apostles displayed various spiritual gifts: Acts 19:6; Galatians 3:5; Romans 12:6-8; 1Thessalonians 5:19-20; 1Timothy 4:14; 1John 4:2-3; Galatians 3:5 etc. [↑](#endnote-ref-25)