

Easter Renewal Service

THEME: **“WHEN CHRIST ASCENDED HE GAVE GIFTS TO HIS PEOPLE”**

(With Very Rev. K. A. Sekyi-Appiah)

Day 1: 16th April, 2019 (*Ephesians 4:1-8*)

Introduction

- **Gifts** are important and necessary for victorious Christian living, but **Fruit** are the Christian's required deliverables.
- Gifts are enablers and facilitate an easy walk with the Lord
- Every child of God (born again) has one gift or other.

The greatest gift which is most basic, which every child of God has is Salvation (Romans 6:23)

“O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood; to every believer the promise of God.

The vilest offender who truly believes; that moment from Jesus a pardon receives” MHB 313 vs. 2

Ephesians 4:8 is an illustration of Ps 68:18, where a victorious warrior is elevated upon his return from battle and he distributes gifts to his followers.

Indeed, in respect of Jesus Christ, the Psalmist was looking forward to the ascension of Christ after the resurrection, and subsequent distribution of the gifts of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, which is the high point of our Christian faith.

In order to contextualize the text, we need to have a proper overview of the book of Ephesians.

The great theme of this letter is ***God's eternal purpose to establish and complete his body, the church of Christ.***

The outline of the book of Ephesians is as follows:

- i. The indicatives of the Christian
- ii. The imperatives of the Christian
- iii. The security of the Christian

The Indicatives of the Believer

These highlight the position of Believers, Eph 1:3-3: 21, which is that the Believer is

- a. Chosen and sealed 1:3-23
- b. Saved by Grace, 2:1-10
- c. United in one body, 2: 11-22
- d. Equal in the Body (the Mystery), 3:1-21

The Imperatives of the Believer

These underscore the practice of Believers, 4: 1- 6:9 as follows:

- a. In relation to other Believers, 4:1-6
- b. In relation to spiritual Gifts 4:7-16
- c. In relation to the Former Life,4:17-32
- d. In relation to Evil 5:1-17
- e. In relation to the Holy Spirit 5:18-21
- f. In relation to Home Life 5:22-64
- g. In relation to slaves and Masters, 6:5-9

The Security of the Believer

This gives assurance of God's protection for Believers, 6:10-20

Day 2: 17th April, 2019 (1 Corinthians 12: 1 – 11)

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

A Gift is something given out freely i.e. we do not work for it. Indeed it is your gift that elevates you and not your vocation.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is a supernatural ability given by the Lord through the Holy Spirit to the believer.

Spiritual Gifts are detailed in four (4) main passages of the New Testament

1. 1 Corinthians 12:1-10
2. Ephesians 4 :11-12
3. 1Peter 4:10-11
4. Romans 12:3-8 (the gifts of helps)

These lists are to be regarded as representative of spiritual gifts. Indeed they are talents and abilities that the Lord gives to Believers

Who has a gift of the Holy Spirit?

Every Believer (Born Again) has been given a gift. see Romans 12:5-6, 1 Corinthians 12:7, 1 Peter 4:10, 1 Corinthians 7:7

What is the purpose?

- i. To accomplish God's purpose in the world, that all men will be saved through evangelization of the world as given in the Great Commission (Mark 16:15-18, Matt. 28:18-20).
- ii. For the edification of the Church, which is the Body of Christ 1 Cor. 14: 2, 12, 26
- iii. For the perfecting of the Church Eph 4:11-13, which comes in three (3) forms, namely;
 - Equipping the saints
 - Preparation for the work of Ministry
 - Edification of the Body of Christ (the Church)

TERMINOLOGIES

The terminologies look the same but are different. In 1 Cor. 12:4-6, we are taught that

- **Gifts** are given by the **Holy Spirit**
- **Ministries** or **Services** or **Offices** are given by the **Lord Jesus Christ**
- **Activities** or **Workings** or **Deeds** are given by **God the Father**

Activities:

They are the things that the child of God **must do** to grow to bear the fruit of the spirit (Gal 5:22-23)

These include walking in holiness, righteousness, prayer, love of God and neighbor, studying the word of God, obedience, faith etc. (Remember that God works these in **all men** 1 Cor 12:6). Note also Phil. 2:13

Ministries:

These are listed in Eph 4:11-12 and include Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists Pastors and Teachers.

The Ministries or Offices are given so that the Church will have balanced teaching of the Word to ensure healthy growth into the stature of Jesus.

The Gifts

They are generally categorized into three groups of three

1. Revelation Gifts

- Word of wisdom 1 Cor 12:8a
- Word of knowledge 1 Cor 12:8b
- Discerning of Spirit 1 Cor 12:10c

They are called Revelation Gifts because it is God who reveals things or events into the mind or spirit of the believer to speak or do one thing or the other.

2. Power Gifts

- Gift of faith 1 Cor 12:9a
- Gifts of healing 1 Cor 12:9b
- Working of miracles 1Cor 12: 10a

3. Inspirational Gifts

- Gifts of Tongues 1 Cor 12:10
- Gift of Prophecy 1 Cor 12:10
- Gift of Interpretation of Tongue 1 Cor 12:10

Day 3: 18th April, 2019 (*Ephesians 3:1-11*)

1. WORD OF WISDOM

Tells us **what to do** in a particular situation. This Gift reveals the prophetic future under the anointing of the Holy Spirit. The Gift is **normally** given to **Church Leaders** (eg. 1king 3:16-28, John 8:7, Daniel 7:10-11).

2. WORD OF KNOWLEDGE

A **thought, dream or vision** which is **revealed** by God concerning a situation. 2 king 5:: 20-27, 1 Samuel 10:20-22, Acts 5:1-11, John 4 (the Samaritan woman at the well)

3. DISCERNING OF SPIRITS

There are three (3) spirits at work in the life of the believers.

- The spirit of God, Holy Spirit
- The spirit of man, inner man
- The devil's spirit, evil spirit

The gift of Discernment is given to know, the kind of Spirit which is at work in a person or situation.

Acts 13:6-12 (Paul's encounter with Bar- Jesus); Acts 16:14-18 (Paul casts out a spirit of divination from a girl)

4. GIFT OF FAITH

This gift brings about a drastic positive change in one's attitude. While everybody waivers, the person with this Gift stands. He is not easily bent over!

- Paul was a man of faith 1Timothy 1:12
- Daniel 6:16-22 (Daniel in lion's den)
- Daniel 3:17-18 (3 Hebrew boys will not bend)
- 2Kings 6:1-7 (Axe head made to float by Elisha)
- Numbers 13:30 (Caleb and Joshua were men of faith unlike the other ten spies)

5. GIFTS OF HEALING

Why gifts? Because they are many and given to different believers to address different diseases and infirmities.

Example ulcer, cancer, bone diseases etc. This Gift is

however different from the faith being referred to in James 5:13-14

6. WORKING OF MIRACLES

This Gift is for supernatural acts by ordinary people.

- John 14:5-6 Samson kills a lion with his bare hands
- John 15:14-15 Samson tears ropes around him
- John 2: Jesus turns water into wine
- John 11 Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead etc.

7. GIFT OF TONGUES

This Gift is different from "speaking in tongues" used in devotion and individual prayer.

It is used to speak the mind or will of God to the entire congregation and is usually completed by interpretation by another or the same person who has the Gift of Interpretation of tongues.

8. INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

It is a supernatural interpretation of a message delivered to the Church in a different tongue.

9. GIFT OF PROPHECY

For edification, exhortation and comfort. The Gift is equivalent to the functioning of the Gift of Tongues and the Gift of Interpretation of Tongues in a single person.

“THIS GOD IS SO GOOD”

Gen 3: 14-21; Matt 27: 32-61

(Rev. Yaw Boamah)

Context of the season: Passion Week, we have been building up to this most important day in history- Good Friday. The events were unpleasant but the consequence was good.

When one has considered and analysed everything that happened on this day, some two thousand years ago, the obvious conclusion must be that the God who ordained these events is good, so very good!

Hence the theme: This God is so good because Good Friday happened out of His love for humanity.

Two sub-themes:

1. God's Promise in Genesis 3:15
2. God's Provision in Genesis 3:21

We shall reflect on this passage of Scripture where Good Friday is first “mentioned” in the Bible.

God's Promise

“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and her offspring; he shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel.” (Genesis 3:15 ESV)

- a. The disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden;
- b. God's righteous anger;
- c. God's curse on the serpent but judgment on Adam and Eve

But in the context of passing judgment on Adam and Eve, God also provides the prophetic solution. Here is a note of hope and redemption. It is the first announcement of the gospel – ‘the proto-evangel’. Satan will nail the feet of the Saviour but He will crush the enemy. The same cross that brought our Saviour pain is the very means by which our Saviour crushed the enemy!

“He disarmed the principalities and powers and made a public example of them, triumphing over them by the cross”. (Colossians 2:15)

Here is the mercy of God in judgment. He does not strike them dead. He does not give them what they deserve. That is the mercy of God!

God's Provision

In what form will this promise of God be fulfilled? God now shows them how:

“And the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.” (Genesis 3:21 ESV)

God took the life of an innocent animal and used the skin to cover the nakedness of the man and his wife in place of the loincloths made of fig leaves they had made for themselves.

The same picture is in Exodus 12 in the Passover- ‘when I see the blood, I will pass over you’.

This is the grace of God; God gave them what they did not deserve.

What God did is only understood when we come to a passage like Hebrews 9:22: “..., and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins.” (Hebrews 9:22b)

How then shall we live?

A. Never doubt the goodness of God

“He who did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not also with him graciously give us all things?”
(Romans 8:32)

B. Surrender to Him as your Saviour and Lord!

The Promise and the Provision are the same!

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2
Corinthians 5:21)