

The Gifts of Teaching & Encouragement

Date: 7 Mar 2021

Series: GIFTED

Week: 4

Text: Romans 12:6-8

Place on P10 to write notes for today's message.

P11 – fill in words for the mid-week video.

So far covered gifts of prophecy, mercy & service.

⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is ... teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement ...
Romans 12:6-8

Out of interest – who of you have these in your Top 3? And if not – where do they appear on your list of 7?

No matter where they are – we are trying to understand them and strengthen them!

1. What are these gifts?

Teaching:

Defn: Gathering and communicating information to others for their good.

This can be done in many different ways of course. People with this gift often ask lots of questions and are eager to validate things that they hear to distinguish truth from untruth.

The word the i3 uses for this gift is ENQUIRING and people that have this gift high up on the list often have very enquiring minds and love to learn. It's not necessarily that they want to know everything about everything, but in their areas of interest they are driven to understand complex concepts and break them down into easy-to-understand chunks for others.

For many people who have this gift, once they become Christ-followers, their interest to understand the Bible and explain it to others becomes a major driving force.

This gift is at its best when it can help others have a 'lightbulb' moment – when their explanations or insights about something help someone else to 'get it'!

NB to note that this gift does not need to be expressed from a stage or in front of a group – it is potent one on one as well!

Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. James 3:1 (NIV)

In some ways this gift applies to all of us, because even a 6 year old can teach a younger sibling how to tie their shoes!

I am so grateful to others who have kindly and humbly shared knowledge, ideas and wisdom with me over my life. In many ways they have helped shaped person that I am today!

My wife – who loves reading books and listening to podcasts about many things like physical & emotional health and then will distill the essential points to me - often when we are going for a walk together.

Encouragement:

Defn: Building others up. Giving courage to others, particularly in tough times.

They give courage to the intimidated and hope to the disheartened. In a world where there is so much emphasis on the bad news and so many things are indeed broken, this gift is worth more than gold!

Many people seem to have a default tendency towards negativity, cynicism and seeing the proverbial hole instead of the doughnut.

By contrast the gift of encouragement comes through people who are looking to lift others up, build them up and fire them up!

Running onto the rugby field – opposition players bigger than us – some guys, who, looking back either had the gift of encouragement (or blindness) – “come on guys, we can do this. The bigger they are, the further they have to fall.”

In an unhealthy state, encouragers can diminish the real trials and struggles of others. But if this gift operates the way that it is meant to, it will come alongside others gently and kindly, and look for small and big ways to help those people become all that God designed them to be.

Story of Patrice Masson –

2. Jesus is the Supreme Teacher & Encourager!

Greatest **Teacher** who ever walked the face of this earth:

1. Interacted with many kinds of people – rich and poor, young and old, men and women, diverse cultures. We would do well to do the same!
2. Jesus used many different methods to get His message across

In particular – parables. Story picture to illustrate 1 point (usually borrowed from day to day things that people were familiar with)

³⁴ *Jesus spoke all these things to the crowd in parables; he did not say anything to them without using a parable. Matt 13:34*

Ross T – illustration of the cell phone to connect to God.

Encourager:

Disciples got easily afraid and anxious – pretty much like we are!

²⁵ Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. ²⁶ When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. “It’s a ghost,” they said, and cried out in fear.

²⁷ *But Jesus immediately said to them: “Take courage! It is I. Don’t be afraid.”*

Peter wants to walk on the water (begins to sink):

³¹ *Immediately Jesus reached out his hand and caught him.*
Matthew 14:25-31

Jesus speaks and Jesus holds.

Our primary source of courage should be from Jesus Himself.
And then we can be His channel of courage to others.

3. These gifts are powerful – go ahead and change the world!

If we are all looking for ways to connect Bible truths and God’s love with people’s situations – we will be changing the world! (gift of teaching)

And if we are looking for God’s courage to fill us and flow through us to others – we will be changing the world.

Focus particularly on encouragement:

Very sad story in Numbers 13,14

³⁰ *Then Caleb silenced the people before Moses and said, “We should go up and take possession of the land, for we can certainly do it.”*

³¹ *But the men who had gone up with him said, “We can’t attack those people; they are stronger than we are.” ³² And they spread among the Israelites a bad report about the land they had explored.*

Numbers 13:30-31

Sometimes you can see the power of a gift best in its inverse. Power here of an “anti-encouragement” gift – encouraging people to abandon God’s purposes.

God, grapes and giants.

End result – all the people who gave the bad report were struck down by a plague and died.

The rest of the people wandered around in the desert for 40 until all the adults of that generation had died. Turned out that disobedience to God was more fatal than giants in the Promised Land!

Imagine all 12 spies had have got courage from God and encouraged the people – would have been an entirely different story!

What is the story of your life so far? And what will it look like going into the future?

Fear or courage?

