

LWML Texas District

October 2022

Bible Study

Good Gifts

What is the best gift you have ever received? _____ Was it on a holiday, or special occasion, or just because type of gift? _____ What is the strangest or least desirable gift you've ever received? _____

It is funny how we remember specific gifts from people and the situation in which we receive them. A family once did a grab bag gifting at Christmas. There were many random objects put into the bag and the bag was passed around the extended family. Each person reached in one by one, excited for the genuine surprise they were going to receive. The items ranged from stuffed animals to women's underwear to belts to lunch kit supplies. It was a bizarre set of items placed together. Thankfully, God does not give gifts willy-nilly like that brown paper sack full of random things. As Christians we are given many good gifts.

In God's Word, He says that He allows the sun and rain to fall on both the just and unjust (Matthew 5:45). He provides for all of His creation, but not all of His human creation are His sons and daughters. Romans 8:17 calls followers a specific word, what is that word? _____

Is there any benefit associated with that word? When you consider who our Heaven Father is, we see He is the giver of good gifts. Read Luke 11:5-13. What do these verses say about what God gives us?

In our baptism there are gifts bestowed upon us by our Heavenly Father through the gift of the Holy Spirit. Not only do we receive the gift of forgiveness through the sacrament of baptism, but we also receive spiritual gifts. There are several passages which speak of these spiritual gifts: Romans 12:3-8; 1 Peter 4:10-11; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11-16.

Which of these gifts have you been given?

In Ephesians 4:14, we read, *so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.* How might spiritual gifts help us not be "tossed about by the waves"?

We are many parts to one body (1 Corinthians 12:12-26). Not everyone can be the mouth, not everyone can be the big toe, and not everyone can be the eyes. Yet, when we work together through the power of God, we are one body. Verse 26 stands out speaking of suffering. If one member suffers, all suffer together. Have you ever had an injury where it caused pain to radiate into another seemingly unaffected part of the body? Many years ago, I had my ACL reconstructed after a sports injury. Here it is a decade and a half later and I still deal with muscles

overcompensating for the injury. The Church can be similar. When a piece of the body is hurting, the rest of the body feels it too. When a missing piece of the puzzle is not there, other parts must do that for which they were not designed. Imagine how incredible it would be if every believer used their gifts to share the Gospel!

1 Corinthians 12:27-31 points out what some gifts are and after what we should seek. What should we be seeking as Christians (verse 31)?

Which gifts are the higher gifts? In 1 Corinthians 13, Paul goes on to write one of the most popular chapters in the book, “the love chapter.” Throughout the Bible there is a tremendous emphasis on several things: love, hospitality, and justice. Could gifts that show these be the greater or higher gifts Paul is talking about in 1 Corinthians 12:31?

Take a look at 1 Corinthians 14:12. Striving to build up the church was a priority in the early church just as it is today. A blessing to the modern church is how gifts can be shared through the use of technology, transportation, electronic banking, and world-wide networking. Look at how mites have impacted the world we live in today! Each convention there are mission grants which are voted on to be supported by the LWML members’ mites. Even in biblical times the churches supported one another with gifts. Paul urges the Christians in 2 Corinthians 9 to support the saints of Jerusalem and commends the saints in Macedonia in chapter 8 for giving generously.

What is written in 2 Corinthians 8:7 also speaks to gifts as well as generosity. In what ways does Paul encourage the recipients of his letter to excel? How can we excel in these same areas?

As recipients of God’s gifts, both spiritual and physical, we are called to be generous. Read 2 Corinthians 9:7-13. What does it tell us about giving? _____

It tells us how God loves a cheerful giver, grace will abound, we will abound in every good work, and He will increase the harvest, and it will produce thanksgiving. We are to care for other saints, those in times of trouble, loss, discouragement, loneliness, and hardship. When we follow God’s commands to love one another many are blessed by this, not only the beneficiary but also the giver!

What are your spiritual gifts? Have they changed over time? When have you been able to use these gifts to glorify God? How might you be able to use your gifts in your current season of life?

I have enjoyed seeing individuals showing their love for different generations within the church loving their church family as true family members, a daughter whose mother has passed, or a grandparent who lives far from their grandchildren. God has blessed each of us uniquely for the sake of His kingdom. One verse which stands out when we discuss spiritual gifts is: *We have different gifts according to the grace given to us, let us use them* (Romans 12:6).

Romans 12:9-21 may give you some ideas of how to use your gifts to serve others. May the LORD empower you through His Spirit to love generously using the great gifts He bestowed upon you to increase the faith of others through what He calls you to do.

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