

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

S E M I N A R

VOLUME 2

BY JOHN WIMBER

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

VOLUME 2

© 1985 by Vineyard Ministries International. All rights reserved. Printed in the United States of America. No part of this book may be reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission, except in the case of brief quotations embodied in articles and reviews. For information, address Vineyard Ministries International, P.O. Box 1359, Placentia, CA 92670.

VINEYARD MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL
P.O. BOX 1359, 902 E. Yorba Linda Blvd., Placentia, California 92670

CONTENTS

PROGRAM

7

PART 1

THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10

	PAGE
PROGRAM 1: PART 1 THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-12	1
PROGRAM 2: PART 2 THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-12	4
PROGRAM 3: PART 3 THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-12	6
PROGRAM 4: PART 4 THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-12	8
PROGRAM 5: PART 5 THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-12	10
PROGRAM 6: PART 6 THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-12	12
PROGRAM 7: PART 7 THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-12	14
PROGRAM 8: PART 1 THE GRACELETS OF EPHESIANS 4:11	16
PROGRAM 9: PART 2 THE GRACELETS OF EPHESIANS 4:11	18
PROGRAM 10: PART 3 THE GRACELETS OF EPHESIANS 4:11	21
PROGRAM 11: PART 4 THE GRACELETS OF EPHESIANS 4:11	23
PROGRAM 12: PART 1 THE GRACELETS OF ROMANS 12:6-8 AND MISCELLANEOUS PASSAGES	25
PROGRAM 13: PART 2 THE GRACELETS OF ROMANS 12:6-8 AND MISCELLANEOUS PASSAGES	28

INTRODUCTION

There are two separate listings of gracelets in 1 Corinthians 12 (12:8-10; 28). It is to the first that I draw your attention in this section. There are nine gracelets listed in 12:8-10. These nine may be divided into three sets of three; although this was probably not Paul's intention, it is useful as a teaching tool.

- The Gracelets of Discernment: The Eyes of God
- The Gracelets of Power: The Hand of God
- The Gracelets of Speech: The Mouth of God

The precise nature and function of some of these gifts listed are not clear from this text alone. Experience is crucial for understanding Biblical truth, whether it be conversion, discipleship, prayer or spiritual gifts. Experience opens windows into passages previously overlooked or misunderstood. While the interpretation must ultimately be grounded in the text, practice of Biblical truths will illumine their meaning. Current manifestations of spiritual gifts, including their use and misuse, can aid our understanding of Paul's teaching. (Hummel, *Fire in the Fireplace*, p. 131). Remember, the experience of theology came before the writing of theology.

I will follow an easy outline in discussing each of these sets.

- Introduction of each set
- Definition of each gift
- General information
- Illustrations — in depth
- Illustrations — for further study
- Arena of use

The new age of the Spirit which is unveiled in the New Testament assures the availability of the gracelets to all. In the Old Testament the same gracelets were limited, and in that part of His economy were apparently not available to all. However, the quality of the gracelets as demonstrated in certain Old Testament characters is not different in essence to the quality of the gracelets as seen in the New Testament. The quantity, however, is limited because the "fullness of time" had not arrived.

I. THE GRACELETS OF DISCERNMENT: THE EYES OF GOD

The Gracelets of Discernment—Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, and Discernings of Spirits, are gifts of supernatural insight. They "see" things as God sees

them. Speech is required in order to communicate these discernments. These graces meet the Christians' need for having God's insight into their circumstances. They are not perceptions from a rational base. A person cannot think them up on his own or communicate them on his own. They are transrational (i.e., beyond our own rationale).

A. THE UTTERANCE (WORD) OF WISDOM

1. DEFINITION:
 - A Word of Wisdom is an utterance inspired by God and spoken by an individual. It reveals a part of the total wisdom of God. It is "seeing" what God sees in a situation and "saying" it. It is applying God's wisdom to a specific situation.
2. GENERAL INFORMATION:
 - The word for wisdom (*sophia*) is used by Paul seventeen times in 1 Corinthians 1-3. The only other occurrence in 1 Corinthians is here at 12:8 (*logos sophia*).
3. ILLUSTRATIONS
 - a. Old testament: Solomon — 1 Kings 3:16-28
 - 1) THE PROBLEM: There were two mothers and two children. One child died of suffocation; both mothers claimed the remaining child as their own (3:16-22).
 - 2) THE "WORD OF WISDOM": "Bring me a sword, divide the child in two and give half to one and half to the other" (3:24-25)
 - 3) THE RESULT: The real mother was willing to give up the child to save its life (3:26) and was given back her child (3:27).
 - 4) OBSERVATION: "...they perceived that the wisdom of God was in him to render justice."
 - b. New testament:
 - 1) Jesus — Matthew 22:15-22
 - a) THE PROBLEM: "Is it lawful to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" (22:18)
 - b) THE WORD OF WISDOM: "Show me... Whose likeness... Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's" (22:19-21).
 - c) THE RESULT: They marveled (22:22).
 - 2) James — Acts 15:5-27
 - a) THE PROBLEM: The circumcision of Gentiles (15:5). The Jerusalem church struggled to solve the problem (15:7-12).
 - b) THE WORD OF WISDOM: James spoke at Acts 15:13-21, "...do not trouble the Gentiles... but write... to abstain..."
 - c) THE RESULT: Agreement (15:22).
4. FURTHER ILLUSTRATIONS
 - a. Joseph — Genesis 41:14-45.
 - b. Servant of Naaman — 2 Kings 5:8-14.
 - c. Jesus — Matthew 21:23-27.
 - d. Jesus — John 7:53-8:11.
5. ARENA OF USE: Expect a Word of Wisdom...
 - a. In any situation which requires problem solving.
 - b. In counseling.
 - c. In the proclamation of the Word.

6. HOW DOES THE WORD OF WISDOM COME?

- a. You will see in a revelatory way what is being said or done from God's perspective.
 - 1) It will sometimes be a mind's eye picture.
 - 2) Sometimes it comes with a Word of Knowledge with facts which you did not know before.
- b. Sometimes an utterance of wisdom comes as a prophetic utterance and has all the characteristics of prophecy.
- c. Word of Wisdom almost always comes in the exchange which is happening at the time.

PROGRAM

2

PART 2

THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10

I. THE GRACELETS OF DISCERNMENT: THE EYES OF GOD

B. THE UTTERANCE (WORD) OF KNOWLEDGE

1. DEFINITION:

A Word of Knowledge is an utterance inspired by God and spoken by an individual. It is an insight into the things "freely given us by God" (1 Corinthians 2:12). It shares the truth of facts which the Spirit wishes declared concerning a specific occasion with a practical application of an outpouring of God's love.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

As in 1 Corinthians 1-3 where Paul deals with the problem of the worldly wisdom of the Corinthians and the wisdom of God, he now in chapter 8 turns his attention to the problem of "superior knowledge". The Corinthian church was claiming an "elite" kind of knowledge which allowed for their behavior and termed it acceptable. Paul tells them that "knowledge puffs up but love builds up" (8:1). He continues, "if anyone thinks he knows something, he knows nothing yet in the true sense of knowing." A person has beneficial knowledge when God allows him/her to "see" a small part of the all-knowing of God through the Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:12). Remember this gracelet (as well as the others) is not the possession of man to be used at his will: "it is a particular word given in a particular instance and is mine only in the act and moment of uttering it" (Dunn, *Jesus and the Spirit*, p. 221).

3. ILLUSTRATIONS

- a. TO REVEAL SIN
 - 1) Natham to David — 2 Samuel 12:1-7 (v. 7)
 - 2) Elisha to Gehazi — 2 Kings 5:20-27 (v. 26)
 - 3) Jesus to woman at well — John 4:7-25 (v. 17)
 - 4) Peter to Ananias — Acts 5:1-6 (v. 2)
- b. TO HELP FIND SOMETHING
 - 1) Samuel to Saul — 1 Samuel 9:15-20 (v. 20)
 - 2) Samuel to Saul — 1 Samuel 10:22
- c. TO WARN AND PROVIDE SAFETY
 - Elisha to the King of Israel — 2 Kings 6:8-23 (v. 9)
- d. TO REVEAL THOUGHTS
 - Jesus to the Scribes — Matthew 9:1-7 (v. 4) [The word

"knowing" should be translated "seeing" (original text). The translation "seeing" then corresponds with v. 2 and brings v. 2 and 4 together thought-wise.]

e. TO PROVIDE HEALING

- 1) Jesus and the Paralytic — Matthew 9:1-7 (v. 2)
- 2) Jesus to Roman Official — John 4:45-54 (v. 50)
- 3) Jesus and man ill 38 years — John 5:1-9 (v. 6)

4. ILLUSTRATIONS—FOR FURTHER STUDY

Take the following scriptures and locate in them a Word of Knowledge and see if they fit one of the categories above or another category. Are they all an utterance of knowledge?

- a. Isaiah to Hezekiah — 2 Kings 20:1-7
- b. Joseph — Matthew 1:18-25
- c. Elizabeth — Luke 1:39-56
- d. Jesus — John 1:47-50
- e. Ananias and Paul — Acts 9:1-18
- f. Peter — Acts 10:17-23
- g. Paul — Acts 16:6-10
- h. Paul — Acts 27:23-24

5. ARENA OF USE: EXPECT A WORD OF KNOWLEDGE

- a. In public and private settings
- b. In situations where God's insight is needed:
 - 1) To reveal sin
 - 2) To help find something
 - 3) To warn or provide safety
 - 4) To reveal thoughts
 - 5) To provide healing
 - 6) To provide instructions

6. HOW DOES WORD OF KNOWLEDGE COME?

It has been my experience that a Word of Knowledge will come in one of five ways:

- a. Pictures
- b. Inner knowing
- c. A picture of a written word
- d. Pain in the body
- e. A spontaneous utterance which comes without your volition
- f. So you "see" it, "know" it, "read" it, "feel" it, "say" it.

PROGRAM

3

PART 3

THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10

I. THE GRACELETS OF DISCERNMENT: THE EYES OF GOD

C. DISCERNINGS OF SPIRITS

1. DEFINITION

Discernings of Spirits is the supernatural capacity to judge from a spiritual insight whether the spirit operating has a source that is human, demonic, or divine. It is a supernatural perception into the spiritual realm for the purpose of determining the source of the spiritual activity.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

In the listing of graclelets in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, Discernings of Spirits is listed between prophecy and tongues. I have put it at this point only as a tool for teaching. It does work in the area of supernatural insight as do Word of Wisdom and Word of Knowledge. James Dunn, in his book *Jesus and the Spirit* (p. 233), suggests that discernings of spirits forms a pair with prophecy and should not be thought of as an independent gift, but rather a *test* for prophetic utterance and a *control* against its abuse. It certainly is this, but it appears that it may have a broader application.

There are two Scriptures where the Church is told to "test" prophetic utterances with the intent that, if the utterance warrants, it should be approved (1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1-6).

The word translated here "discernings" (noun form) appears only three times in the New Testament (Romans 14:1; 1 Corinthians 12:10; Hebrews 5:14). The meaning at Hebrews 5:14 gives us the idea of judging between good and evil. There appears to be a rational discerning which simply comes with maturity (Hebrews 5:14) and this rational discerning should be applied to prophetic utterances to test and approve them (1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 John 4:1-6).

At 1 Corinthians 14:29, the assembled believers are told to "discern" what is said. The word *here* is the same as at 12:10, but in the verb form. It is a command and should be the habit of the community's life (present imperative). The "discerning" in this case is done by more than one individual (third person plural). Using the definition then, it would mean to judge the "sayings" to determine the source. The judging is a supernatural insight into that source.

3. ILLUSTRATIONS

a. HUMAN

- 1) Samuel and David — 1 Samuel 16:6-13
- 2) Jesus and Nathaniel — John 1:43

b. DIVINE

- 1) Samuel and Eli — 1 Samuel 3:1-9 (v. 8)
- 2) Woman to Jesus — Luke 11:27
- 3) Peter of Jesus — Matthew 16:17-20

c. DEMONIC

- 1) Blind and dumb demoniac — Matthew 12:22-24
- 2) Jesus to Peter — Matthew 16:21-23
- 3) Paul — Acts 16:16-18

4. ILLUSTRATIONS—FOR FURTHER STUDY

- a. Jesus — Luke 13:10-17
- b. Peter — Acts 5:1-11
- c. Peter — Acts 8:14-24
- d. Paul — Acts 13:4-12

5. ARENA OF USE: EXPECT DISCERNINGS OF SPIRITS WHERE THERE IS:

- a. A verbal gift used (i.e., prophecy, tongues, interpretation, word of wisdom and knowledge)
- b. A disagreement between parties
- c. A conflict existing in a ministry setting
- d. Possible demonic activity
- e. In either public or private settings

6. HOW DOES DISCERNINGS OF SPIRITS COME?

a. HUMAN

- 1) A word written over the face
- 2) Seeing the transparency or opacity of the person

b. DIVINE

- 1) Seeing the anointing on a person in the natural realm (i.e. people are drawn to the person who is anointed.)
- 2) Seeing the anointing of a person in the supernatural realm (i.e. a shining or glowing light around the person who is anointed.)

c. DEMONIC

- 1) Seeing shadows or dark patches on a face (this is almost always an afflicting spirit.)
- 2) Seeing a shape superimposed over a portion of anatomy.

PROGRAM

4

PART 4

THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10

II. THE GRACELETS OF POWER: THE HAND OF GOD

Whereas the Gracelets of Discernment have to do with "insight" (i.e., seeing God's perspective), the Gracelets of Power have to do with the power of God. Faith, Gifts of Healing, and Effects or Miracles (or Works of Power) are the gracelets in which the supernatural power of God is seen. These gracelets are the acts of God, the divine energy of God which accomplishes a particular result in word or work through an individual. There is often an interrelationship between these three gracelets. From the book of Genesis forward, God can be viewed as the One who acts in power in relationship to His people.

A. FAITH

1. DEFINITION

Faith is the mysterious surge of confidence which sometimes arises within a person faced with a specific situation or need. It gives that person a transrational (otherly) certainty and assurance that God is about to act through a word or action (Dunn, *Jesus*, p. 211). It is both the irrisible knowledge of God's intervention at a certain point and the authority to effect this intervention through the power of the Holy Spirit (Gross, *an. Charisma*, p. 70).

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

There appears to be a number of kinds of faith (*pistis*) in the New Testament:

- Faith can mean a *body* of truth which we believe. It then becomes a synonym for "doctrine" (Ephesians 4:13; 1 Timothy 6:20-21; Jude 3).
- Faith can be the basic *trust* which one has in God for his/her salvation; a "saving faith" (John 3:16; Ephesians 2:8; Hebrews 11:1-4, 6).
- Faith can be the *loyalty* which is grown by the Spirit (Galatians 5:22).
- Faith can be a *mountain moving surge* which both Jesus and Paul speak about (Matthew 17:20; 21:21; 1 Corinthians 13:2).

B. GIFTS OF HEALINGS

1. DEFINITION

The Gifts of Healings is the actual event of healing itself which a sick person receives. As there are many kinds of illnesses, so there are many different healing gifts. It is that event or progression which a person receives in the emotional, spiritual, or physical areas of life.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

In the Greek "gift" and "healing" are both plural. As we said in the definition, there are many kinds of illnesses so there are many healing gracelets. There are two Greek words which are used in the New Testament often as synonyms (at least by Luke, which we will see in the illustrations later).

- therapeuo* — This word is translated by the words "heal" and "cure". We get our word "therapeutic" from it.
- iaomai* — This word is also translated "heal" and "cure". This is the word Paul uses in 1 Corinthians 12. There it is found three times (12:9, 28, 30). Paul does not use it in any other passage. However, his companion, Dr. Luke, uses it 20 out of the 38 times it is used in the New Testament. Because Paul and Luke were traveling companions and intimate friends, it is certain that they were aware of each other's writings and word meanings. We will look at how Luke uses these words in the illustrations.

C. EFFECTS OF MIRACLES

1. DEFINITION

Effects of Miracles are events in which people and things are visibly and beneficially affected in an extraordinary way by the power of God working through an individual.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

The word "effects" here is the same word as in 12:6 (the result which God produces by the gracelets). The word here translated "miracles" is *dunamis*, which means "power." The word *dunamis* suggests the capacity of someone to carry out some event and it denotes a spontaneous expression of such "power". The central proof of God's power was the raising of Jesus from the dead (1 Corinthians 6:14). Paul goes on to say in 1 Corinthians 15:43-44 that Jesus was raised in power (*dunamis*) and he was raised in a "spiritual body". Jesus was the "first-born" from the dead in a new, never-before-kind-of-body, a body infused with the life-giving Spirit of God (Ladd, *New Testament*, p. 370).

PROGRAM

5

PART 5

THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10

II. THE GRACELETS OF POWER: THE HAND OF GOD

Whereas the Gracellets of Discernment have to do with "insight" (i.e., seeing God's perspective), the Gracellets of Power have to do with the power of God. Faith, Gifts of Healing, and Effects or Miracles (or Works of Power) are the graclelets in which the supernatural power of God is seen. These graclelets are the acts of God, the divine energy of God which accomplishes a particular result in word or work through an individual. There is often an interrelationship between these three graclelets. From the book of Genesis forward, God can be viewed as the One who acts in power in relationship to His people.

3. ILLUSTRATIONS

All three of these graclelets, or at least two of the three, can be seen in each of the following illustrations from Luke's Gospel.

- a. **THE PARALYTIC:** Luke 5:17-26
 - Power — (*dunamis*) v. 17
 - Heal — (*iaomai*) v. 17
 - Faith — (*pistis*) v. 20
- b. **THE MULTITUDE:** Luke 6:17-19
 - Healed — (*iaomai*) v. 17 (v. 10 NAS)
 - Cured — (*therapeuo*) v. 18
 - Power — (*dunamis*) v. 19
 - Healed — (*iaomai*) v. 19
- c. Note how Luke uses these words interchangeably.
 - THE CENTURION'S SLAVE:** Luke 7:1-10
 - Healed — (*iaomai*) v. 7
 - Faith — (*pistis*) v. 9
 - THE WOMAN WITH A HEMORRHAGE:** Luke 8:42b-48
 - Healed — (*therapeuo*) v. 43
 - Power — (*dunamis*) v. 46
 - Healed — (*iaomai*) v. 47
 - Faith — (*pistis*) v. 48
- e. **THE SENDING OF THE TWELVE:** Luke 9:1-2
 - Power — (*dunamis*) v. 1
 - Cure — (*iaomai*) v. 1 (heal, NAS)
 - Heal — (*therapeuo*) v. 2

4. ILLUSTRATIONS OF EACH SEPARATE GIFT

- a. **FAITH**
 - 1) Elijah and the prophets of Baal (1 Kings 18:1-46)
 - 2) Peter, Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11)
- b. **GIFT OF HEALINGS**
 - 1) Elisha and Naaman (2 Kings 5:1-14)
 - 2) Thirty-eight year illness (John 5:1-9)

PROGRAM

6

PART 6

THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10

III. THE GIFTS OF SPEECH: THE MOUTH OF GOD

From the beginning, God has been a God who speaks. He spoke the world into existence (Genesis 1). He talked with His kids, Adam and Eve, in the paradise He had provided (Genesis 3). He spoke to Noah to build the ark (Genesis 7). He conversed with Abram concerning leaving his country and kinsmen (Genesis 12). He talked to Moses, to the children of Israel through prophecy (early by Eldad and Medad, Numbers 11:26-30, later through those whom He appointed prophets). On the very first page of the New Testament, (although not written first), God spoke to Joseph about Mary through an angel in a dream. God sent Jesus, the supreme spokesman, who spoke profoundly to mankind. Throughout the New Testament, we see God as a "speaking God", one who desires, not only that we communicate with Him, but one who desires to communicate with and to His children.

We do not have a quiet or a "dumb" God, but one who has provided ways for Himself to communicate with us. As I shared earlier in this section, Words of Wisdom or Knowledge and Discernings of Spirits are spoken gracelets. The first two share with us some of God's vast wisdom and knowledge for the moment and situation; the last gives us the comfort of knowing we have safety.

Now we have come to the last three gracelets in this section of 1 Corinthians. These ~~two~~ are provided by God for the purpose of communication, a further evidence of His continual desire to be intimate and close via means of speech.

A. PROPHECY

1. DEFINITION

Prophecy is declaring the heart throb of God to His Church for the purpose of edification. It is not a skill or aptitude or talent. It is the actual speaking forth of words given by the Spirit in a particular situation and ceases when the words cease (Dunn, *Jesus*, p. 229).

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

In every list of the gracelets by Paul, the only constant gracelet is "prophecy" or "prophet." I will discuss the gift of Prophet in Section 7 when I deal with the gifts of Ephesians 4.

In the Greek world in Paul's day, *prophecies* did not suggest something only spoken under inspiration. Plato had set the tone by teaching two kinds of prophecy. One was Mantic prophecy, the prophecy of inspiration. The one speaking was doing so under the constraint of the divine; they were "possessed" by a god and became the

mouthpiece of the god. The other was the prophecy of Interpretation, an acquired skill. The "prophet" had the ability to interpret signs and omens by rational discernment. This was quite clearly seen at the Oracle of Delphi (near Corinth) in which the Pythia (the oracle, who was a woman) spoke in a state of ecstasy and the prophet who was to interpret the oracle's saying used rational discernment (Dunn, *Jesus* p. 228; TDNT Vol. VI, pp. 786-788).

The Church today makes this distinction, opting for the latter kind of prophecy defined by Plato. Thus prophecy becomes "preaching"; the interpretation of the Bible for today. The whole area of dispensational theology usually hold this meaning for the word "prophecy". Paul, however, views prophecy as a word of revelation. He stands wholly within the Hebraic tradition of prophecy as inspired speech (Dunn, p. 228).

In 1 Corinthians 14, we have a solid teaching chapter on prophecy. Here is a summary:

- Prophecy consists of words which upbuild, encourage, and console (14:3, 31). It builds up because it is God's way of speaking to a situation within the body at a specific time. In the illustrations, I will suggest some examples of this.
- Prophecy builds up because it serves as a "sign for believers" (14:22). It reveals that God is present in the middle of the gathering, by drawing the attention of the hearer toward God.
- Prophecy discloses the secrets of the hearts of the unbeliever (14:22-25). It prevents a man from pretending to be something or someone that he is not (Dunn, pp. 229-233).
- Prophecy should be tested (14:29, 32). It is here that Paul tells the Corinthian community that they should discern that which is being spoken. As we noted earlier, here we have the verb form; the noun form appears at 12:10, among the list of gracelets.
- Prophecy is desirable (14:1, 39-40). It appears that it is so desirable to Paul because it does edify the whole Body listening. There are six ways to test prophecy. I only list them here. They are fully explored in my sermon series "The Gift of Prophecy."
 - 1) Test the context of the prophecy.
 - 2) Test whether the prophecy confirms what God is already doing.
 - 3) Test the prophecy by determining its benefit.
 - 4) Test the prophet.
 - 5) Test the accuracy of the prophecy.

3. ILLUSTRATIONS

- Gideon — Judges 7:3
- Saul's Messengers — 1 Samuel 19:20-21
- Saul — 1 Samuel 19:22-24 (foretold by Samuel:— 10:6-11)
- Agabus — Acts 11:27-30; 21:9-14
- Prophecies which build up:
 - 1) A word of challenge, rebuke — 1 Corinthians 1:10; 2 Corinthians 10:1-17; Philippians 4:2
 - 2) A general exhortation — Romans 12:1ff; 15:30
 - 3) A word of comfort — 1 Thessalonians 4:15-18

PROGRAM

7

PART 7

THE GRACELETS IN 1 CORINTHIANS 12:8-10

III. THE GIFTS OF SPEECH: THE MOUTH OF GOD

From the beginning, God has been a God who speaks. He spoke the world into existence (Genesis 1). He talked with His kids, Adam and Eve, in the paradise He had provided (Genesis 3). He spoke to Noah to build the ark (Genesis 7). He conversed with Abram concerning leaving his country and kinsmen (Genesis 12). He talked to Moses, to the children of Israel through prophecy (early by Eldad and Medad, Numbers 11:26-30, later through those whom He appointed prophets). On the very first page of the New Testament, (although not written first), God spoke to Joseph about Mary through an angel in a dream. God sent Jesus, the supreme spokesman, who spoke profoundly to mankind. Throughout the New Testament, we see God as a "speaking God", one who desires, not only that we communicate with Him, but one who desires to communicate with and to His children.

We do not have a quiet or a "dumb" God, but one who has provided ways for Himself to communicate with us. As I shared earlier in this section, Words of Wisdom or Knowledge and Discernings of Spirits are spoken graclelets. The first two share with us some of God's vast wisdom and knowledge for the moment and situation; the last gives us the comfort of knowing we have safety.

Now we have come to the last three graclelets in this section of 1 Corinthians. These too are provided by God for the purpose of communication, a further evidence of His continual desire to be intimate and close via means of speech.

B. KINDS OF TONGUES AND INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

1. DEFINITION

- a. **TONGUES:** Tongues is Spirit-inspired speaking in which the conscious mind plays no part. It is the speaking of a language (whether known or angelic) which is unlearned by the speaker.
 - b. **INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES:** The Interpretation of Tongues is the God-given inspiration to speak in the language of the listeners, giving them the dynamic equivalent of that which was spoken in tongues.
2. **GENERAL INFORMATION**
- a. **TONGUES:** Both Paul and Luke write about tongues. Paul in 1 Corinthians and Luke in Acts. We need to understand some basic things about these two writers.

Luke was a theologian, and is often called the "Theologian of the Holy Spirit". The Book of Acts, which is part two of Luke, is a

Theological History. It is not a history for the sake of history, but a history with a purpose.

Paul was also a theologian. He writes to a historical situation concerning tongues (1 Corinthians). Paul wrote 1 Corinthians before Luke wrote Acts and therefore has priority. It is very probable that Luke was influenced by Paul.

THERE ARE SOME SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THEM (Mel Robeck, Fuller Seminary):

- 1) Tongues originates with the Spirit (Acts 2:4; 1 Corinthians 12:8, 14:2)
- 2) The same term is used by both — *latein glossai* — for speaking in tongues (Acts 10:46; 19:1-6; 1 Corinthians 12-14)
- 3) The activity of speaking in tongues before unbelievers may lead to accusations (Acts 2:5ff; 1 Corinthians 14:23ff)
- 4) Speaking in tongues is God directed (Acts 2:11; 10:46; 1 Corinthians 14:2, 14-17)
- 5) Prophecy and tongues are different (Acts 19:6; 1 Corinthians 12)
- 6) There is both unity and diversity (Acts 2:2-4; 1 Corinthians 12:14-26)
- 7) Both Paul and Luke see the Spirit as the source of power to equip the saints for the work of the ministry (Acts 1:8; 1 Corinthians 12:14; Ephesians 4:11).

b.

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES: Tongues and interpretation of tongues are two sides of the same coin. They are so closely inter-connected that Paul does not conceive of one without the other in a public worship service (1 Corinthians 14:5, 13, 27ff). All graclelets, including these two, are treated by Paul as an act of service (1 Corinthians 12:5), and a manifestation "for the common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7). *Glossalia* as a graclelet is a service to the body of Christians for the good of that Body *only* as it is completed by its companion, *Interpretation*.

Not much is said about interpretation, but the following should be noted:

- 1) It is a gift but it is not an independent gift (1 Corinthians 12:10).
- 2) It makes intelligible the meaning of the tongue being spoken (1 Corinthians 14:5) and causes the "unlearned" to understand and be edified.
- 3) The one speaking in tongues should pray to interpret (1 Corinthians 14:13). If there is no one present to interpret and the one speaking in tongues has not interpreted, he should "keep silent and speak to himself and to God" (1 Corinthians 14:28).
- 4) This is a supernatural enabling, not a natural talent to translate.
- 5) The gifts (both) should be exercised with order (1 Corinthians 14:37-40).

*Remember: God is a speaking God and His desire is to speak through us (prophecy, tongues and interpretation of tongues) and to us so that we may be built up as the Body of Christ. Be sensitive, be open, let Him speak through you!

PROGRAM

8

PART 1

THE GRACELETS OF EPHESIANS 4:11

I. APOSTLE

A. DEFINITION

An apostle is one sent forth by God to introduce the gospel into new areas. This introduction is attended by signs and wonders which confirm the gospel. The work of an Apostle is laying the foundation for the planting of new churches. A part of the task is building up the body by nurturing the converts.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. "Apostle" means "sent out" or "ambassador". These messengers were called by Jesus and equipped with a threefold ministry (Luke 9:1-2). They were "sent out" (*aposteilan*) and had:
 - a. Power and authority to expel demons.
 - b. Power and authority to heal the sick.
 - c. Power and authority to preach the Kingdom of God.
2. Apostles have four obvious characteristics:
 - a. They are *called* by God (Galatians 1:1, 15).
 - b. They are *singled out* by the church (Acts 13:1-3).
 - c. They are *recognized* by the church (Galatians 2:7-10).
 - d. They are *confirmed* by signs (2 Corinthians 12:12).
3. There were more apostles than the twelve listed in Mark 3:13-19 and Acts 1:12-26.
 - a. Paul (Galatians 1:1)
 - b. Barnabus (Acts 14:14)
 - c. James (Galatians 1:19)
 - d. Silvanus and Timothy (1 Thessalonians 1:1. cf. 2:6)
 - e. Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25)
 - f. Andronicus and Junias (Romans 16:7) [* Note: The name Junias is a female name, see margin NAS. If so, we have here a brother-sister or husband-wife team in which both are apostles and well known ones at that (16:7). This would mean that in the early church a woman could be an apostle (Barclay, *Romans*, p. 232).]
4. In the history of the Christian Church outside of the New Testament, others have been called apostles because of work in specific areas.
 - a. Ansgar (801-865) was the Apostle of the North (Scandinavia) (Douglas, *NIDCC*, p. 46).

- b. Cyril (826-869) and his brother Methodius (815-885) were Apostles of the Southern Slavs.
 - c. Otto Von Banberg (1060-1139) was the Apostle of Pomerania (Kock, *Gifts*, p. 126)
 - d. Hans Egede (1686-1758) was the Apostle of Greenland or Eskimos (Douglas, p. 335)
 - e. Robert Morrison (1782-1839) was the Apostle to Berma (Kock, p. 126).
5. Scripture warns against *false apostles* (2 Corinthians 11:13. Revelation 2:2).

C. ILLUSTRATION: BARNABUS AS A MODEL

1. HIS PERSONAL LIFE

- a. He was selfless in his giving (Acts 4:33-37).
- b. "... he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith." (Acts 11:24).
- c. He was willing to risk his life for the "sake of... Jesus Christ." (Acts 15:26)

2. HIS PERSONAL MINISTRY

- a. He was a representative from one Body to another (Acts 11:22; 11:30; 15:22, 25; Galatians 2:8-9).
- b. He strengthened local Bodies and helped them grow (Acts 11:23; Could signs and wonders be a part? Nove v. 21; 14:22. In Galatia, note Galatians 3:5 for presence of miracles).
- c. He facilitated the ministry of others, such as Paul (Acts 11:25) and Mark (Acts 15:39).
- d. He was one of the prophets and teachers at Antioch (Acts 13:1).
- e. He was sent out by the Spirit (Acts 13:2-4) and became an apostle from Antioch (Acts 14:14).
- f. He appointed elders to function in the churches he pioneered (Acts 14:23).
- g. He was a teacher and preacher of the word (Acts 15:35).

PROGRAM

9

PART 2

THE GRACELETS OF EPHESIANS 4:11

II. PROPHETS

A. DEFINITION

A prophet is one through whom the gift of prophecy is consistently manifested. This person is used by God to communicate what God wants the community to hear concerning a specific situation. He/she is a spokesman for the Spirit.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION

Prophets are named among the normal New Testament ministries (Acts 13:1; 15:32; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11). They do not seem to appear as a rare and peculiar people. The New Testament prophets gave authoritative instruction, but the authority of the prophet did not extend beyond his inspiration to speak (Dunn, *Jesus*, p. 281).

What prophets spoke was to be judged (discerned) (1 Corinthians 14) the prophet was one who spoke to men (1 Corinthians 14:3).

C. ILLUSTRATION

[I am indebted to Mel Robeck for some of the following information which appeared in his article, "The Gift of Prophecy in Acts and Paul" Part I and II in *Studia Biblica et Theologica*, vol. 5, March 1975.] We will look at five passages in Acts.

1. Acts 2:1-21

- a. The context—The Day of Pentecost (2:1)
- b. The prophet's relationship with God in the Old Testament had now become a privilege of all. All were *potentially* prophets or prophetesses, for all possessed the Spirit.

2. Acts 11:27-30

- a. There was more than one prophet in 11:27-30; the word is plural — prophets, although an exact number is not given. The language suggests that their residence was Jerusalem (11:27); cf. Acts 15:22, 32; 21:10). Apparently, they lived in Jerusalem, but moved freely around the New Testament world proclaiming the messages God gave them. Agabus was here either acting as the spokesman (11:28) for the prophets, or he may simply have received from the Spirit what needed to be said (cf. 13:1-3). The latter seems to be in keeping with the rest of the text in Acts. Agabus stood and foretold "by the Spirit". The message originated with the Spirit (*dia tou pneumatos*, *dia* with a genitive refers to

origination) and was future in orientation. Only the general theme of his message is given (11:28). Whatever the exact text of the message, there appears to be some kind of exhortation to action (cf. v. 29). *NOTE: This prophetic utterance is directed to a specific time, place, and possibly makes a request. The text suggests that the prophecy was given to the whole congregation at Antioch, as the response came from "the disciples." The prophecy was true because it came to pass (11:28). This was a key factor in the Old Testament for determining if one was a prophet (Deuteronomy 18:20, 22; Jeremiah 28:9). Luke may be stating that the same "test" is valid even now in the New Testament Church by the use of his phrase, "...and this took place" (vs. 28).

3. Conclusions to this point

- a. Prophecy is to be the lot of the entire community since all are now indwelt by the Holy Spirit. All are potentially prophets.
- b. The prophet did not speak his own words, but those originated by the Spirit.
- c. Clusters of prophets moved from one place to another sharing God's message.
- d. A prophetic utterance can be directed to a specific time, place, and may involve a request.
- e. A key factor in determining its validity is, "Did what was spoken about occur?"

4. Acts 13:1-3

In this passage we see that prophets may also reside in a city and function in that church. We also see that prophets and teachers are on the same footing here. All the prophets in this church are known; they are named. The message which one of them gave came from God while they were worshipping and fasting (13:2). Though not precisely stated, one may assume that the message came through one of the prophets in the context of the church. The Spirit's word was a command (12:2); it was concise; it was direct and to the point; it was definite, including names. The church acted upon the direct command of God only after fasting and prayer (12:3). F.F. Bruce believes that there is indication that Christians were and are especially sensitive to the Spirit's communication during fasting and prayer (cf. 14:23).

5. Acts 15:32-35

Judas and Silas are here called "prophets" from Jerusalem (15:32). They did two things: they exhorted, which means to urge one to pursue a certain course of conduct (the same word is used by Paul at 1 Corinthians 14:3, 31); they strengthened, which means "to fix" or "to establish". The text is silent on how they did these things.

6. Acts 21:8-14

- a. In this text we discover that women prophesied (21:9 cp/w 2:18). Agabus, whom we discussed earlier, came from Jerusalem (Judea) to give a prophecy (21:10). This prophecy came in two parts:
 - 1) A prophetic or symbolic action, which was optical (21:11). This use of symbolic activity was just like that of the Old Testament prophets (1 Kings 11:29-40; Isaiah 20:2-6; Jeremiah 13:1-11; 28:10-11; Ezekiel 4:1-3). The action here of Agabus was a part of the prophecy and was just as important as what he said.

2) Prophetic speech, which was verbal (21:11). Note that the optical action was patterned after the Old Testament but the verbal formula was changed from "Thus says the Lord", to "Thus says the Holy Spirit."

b. The message was specific; Paul would be captured in Jerusalem by the Jews, who would then deliver him to the Romans. As you read on in Acts, you will find that this prophecy by Agabus was fulfilled. This prophecy was informative and pointed to what would happen; it did not request or demand action. Note that Agabus did not offer any commentary on it, but gave it without elaboration or additional information of his own. Paul was not being told to *stop* his journey to Jerusalem, but was being told again what to expect when he arrived there. The prophecy was purely informational for the church, which they finally realized after their emotions cooled down, and they responded, "the will of the Lord be done" (21:14). One might conclude that prophecy may be understood by different people in different ways, but it *may* have only *one* meaning.

7. Additional Conclusions

a. The Spirit's word in prophecy may be a command to act (Acts 13:1-3) or it may be informative (Acts 21:11-12):

b. In either case, fasting and prayer should occur before action is taken (Acts 13:3):

c. Exhortation and establishing are part of what prophets do;

d. A prophet may give both optical and verbal prophecies (Acts 21:11). Along with the other conclusions drawn and noted above, we should now have a better understanding of the function of prophet and prophecy as noted in Acts.

PROGRAM

10

PART 3

THE GRACELETS OF EPHESIANS 4:11

III. EVANGELIST

A. DEFINITION

An evangelist is one who proclaims the simple message of salvation to those who are non-believers, with the effective result that men and women become disciples of Jesus and responsible parts of the Body of Christ.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION

The word "evangelist" is found only three times in the New Testament (Acts 21:8; Ephesians 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:5). The literal meaning of the word is "a messenger of good". It comes from two Greek words, *eu*, which means "well", and *angelos*, which means the messenger. An evangelist does not speak in his own power or emphasize his evangelistic methods. He and his message are at the disposal of the Holy Spirit.

C. ILLUSTRATION: PHILIP AS A MODEL

1. Philip is the only person in the New Testament to be called an evangelist ("... the evangelist..." Acts 21:8). He was a power evangelist, as Acts 8:6 demonstrates. He proclaimed Christ (v. 6a), performed signs (vs. 6b, 7, 13), and produced results (v. 12). The major content of his message was Jesus and the Kingdom of God (Acts 8:5, 12, 35). He ministered to groups (whole city—v. 5) and individuals (v. 26). He ministered from a natural setting (vs. 4ff) and from a supernatural setting (vs. 26, 29).

2. Wherever he went, he preached "the good news" (v. 40). He did not need a pulpit, nor was he "professional". He was itinerant to begin with (Acts 8:1-40) but later settled down in Caesarea, where he owned a house (Acts 21:8ff).

3. His ministry was both to new to converts and to the church. In each case in Acts 8, Philip established his converts through to baptism (vs. 12, 38). He did not abandon them to that which was harmful (i.e., Simon the Magician). His converts were left rejoicing, not fleeced (8:8, 39). Philip was closely linked to the local church (21:7ff). From there he carried on his ministry of "equipping". Neither his family nor his converts could feel left out.

4. The events of Acts 21:7 took place before the writing of Ephesians 4:11. I think that Paul saw in the experience and life of Philip the graced of God which later became a part of his written theology (Ephesians 4:11), as well as his encouragement to Timothy to "do the work of an evangelist" (2 Timothy 4:5). In short, Paul's experience with Philip gave him the content for his theology.

PROGRAM

11

PART 4

THE GRACELETS OF EPHESIANS 4:11

IV. PASTOR-TEACHER

A. DEFINITION

A pastor-teacher is one who provides for the spiritual needs of the flock by leading, feeding, and protecting the sheep put under his or her care.

B. GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The noun *poimen* is found sixteen times in the New Testament. It is translated pastor one time (Ephesians 4:11, the only time it is used in all of Paul's writings). The other fifteen times it is translated shepherd (Matthew 9:36; 25:32; 26:31; Mark 6:34; 14:27; Luke 2:8, 15, 18, 20; John 10:2, 11, 12, 14, 16; Hebrews 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25).
2. The verb *poimaino* is found eleven times in the New Testament. It describes the action of shepherding, i.e., tending, feeding, leading (Matthew 2:6; Luke 17:7; John 21:16; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 9:7; 1 Peter 5:2; Jude 12; Revelation 2:27, 7:17, 12:5, 19:15).
3. In the Old Testament (Ezekiel 34:1-3), God displays his indignation against those who were supposed to be shepherding his people but were not. If one notes what was *not* done by these shepherds and reverses it, the nature of shepherding can be seen (34:4). The following then are things a shepherd should do:
 - a. He should strengthen the weak;
 - b. He should heal the sick;
 - c. He should bind up the crippled;
 - d. He should find the strays;
 - e. He should seek the lost; and
 - f. He should rule the sheep with gentleness, not force and harshness.
4. The functions of a pastor-teacher are further seen in 1 Peter 5:1-3. Here Peter tells the elders:
 - a. Tend (shepherd — *poimaino*) the flock;
 - b. Do so willingly and not by constraint;
 - c. Do so eagerly and not for gain;
 - d. Do so as examples and do not be domineering.
5. In 2 Timothy 4:11-16, Paul tells Timothy to let no one despise (think down upon) his youth, but to set the believers an example (which means to strike a blow and leave an impression).
 - a. SPEECH (the expression of his thought).

- b. CONDUCT (the expression of his behavior).
 - c. LOVE (the expression of "seeking one's highest good").
 - d. FAITH (the expression of his conversion based on his hearing).
 - e. PURITY (the expression of a non-contaminated lifestyle).
6. Until Paul arrives, Timothy was instructed to attend to
- a. The public reading of scripture.
 - b. Preaching (the word means to admonish or exhort one to pursue a course of conduct).
 - c. Teaching or explaining scripture.

PROGRAM

12

PART 1

THE GRACELETS OF ROMANS 12:6-8 & MISCELLANEOUS PASSAGES

I. INTRODUCTION

The graclelets of Romans 12:6-8, with the exception of prophecy, are best seen as acts of service or ways of serving. The graclelets are actions whose divine prompting is evidenced not by inspired speech or displays of power, but precisely by their character of service: that which serves the needs of fellow believers or the life of the community (Dunn, *Jesus* . . . , p. 249).

In Section 3 we taught about the language of the graclelets. I suggested that **ROLE** was the doing of the events which you see occurring in scripture by means of your natural ability to the degree that you are able (rational). **GRACLETS/ANOINTINGS** were the occasional manifestation of a gift as ordained by God (transrational). **MINISTRIES** are the increase of the occasions, use, and dimensions of the graclelets. **OFFICES** are the appointments made by God, given to and recognized by the church. God takes a person that He is using and gives her/him a function.

This in essence is the working of the Spirit in "giving gifts" as He desires. The graclelets here in Romans 12:6-8 are no exception. Everyone can and should render service, teach, exhort, give, etc. But at special times these activities will be anointed by God — graclelets. The increased occasion of one or more of them may lead to a ministry.

II. THE GRACLETS OF ROMANS 12:6-8

A. PROPHECY

This gift was explained in Section 5. Prophecy or Prophet is the only consistent member of all of Paul's lists. (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28ff; 13:1-3, 8ff.; 14:1-5, 6ff., 26-32; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:19-22).

B. SERVICE

1. DEFINITION

Service comes as a result of divine prompting and is the spiritually sensitive recognition and response to a particular need within the community.

2. ILLUSTRATION

- a. Acts 13:5 — Mark to Paul and Barnabas (Helper—NAS)
- b. Romans 16:1 — Phoebe (servant—NAS)
- c. 1 Corinthians 16:5 — Stephanus (ministry—NAS)
- d. 2 Timothy 4:11 — Mark (service—NAS)

3. ARENA OF USE — Expect the Graceler of Service where there are:
- Needs within the community to be met.
 - Church office work (i.e., typing, filing, mailing, maintenance, etc.)

C. TEACHING

1. DEFINITION

Teaching is the graclelet given by God which may either explain the truth of revelation already given (i.e., teaching the Scripture) or it may be an elaboration of an insight received concerning revelation already given (i.e., charismatic teaching).

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

- The first part of the definition is what the church has long given attention to. It was certainly a part of Paul's understanding. In Romans 16:17 it is used in the sense of a body of teaching which his readers already accepted and could use to check on beliefs and life.
- The second part of the definition is not often observed within the evangelical community. At 1 Corinthians 14:6 and 26, teaching is listed. Note the companions: revelation, knowledge, prophecy, teaching. Verse 26 lists teaching with psalm, revelation, tongues and interpretation. It appears that a charismatic "insight" is in view here in these two verses. Teaching may be thought of here as spontaneous utterances, as revelation, prophecy, psalm, tongues and interpretation certainly are. According to Dunn, the particular insights of teaching are probably to be distinguished from the particular utterances of prophecy in that prophecy would suggest a new word from God as such, whereas teaching would tend to denote more a *new insight into an old word from God*, into the traditions already accepted by the community as authoritative in some degree (i.e., O.T. writings, tradition of Jesus' sayings, the gospel they initially received — cf. 1 Corinthians 11:2, 23, 15:3; 2 Thessalonians 2:15, 3:6). Thus in Colossians 3:16 the "teaching" arises out of "the word (*logos*—log'os) of Christ dwelling in you . . ." (Dunn, *Jesus* . . . , p. 237).

3. ILLUSTRATIONS

We are all aware of the teaching which is defined by the first part of our definition. With that in mind, we will offer illustrations which follow the second definition. Such charismatic exegesis may be found in Paul's use of the Old Testament.

- Romans 11:25-32
- 1 Corinthians 9:8-18
- Galatians 3:8
- 1 Thessalonians 4:2 — This is an example of charismatic instruction. Paul is referring here to instructions given under inspiration. The translation should read "through the Lord" (NAS margin). It appears that Paul's understanding of "teaching" included both a recognition of traditional material as authoritative, and an appreciation of the need for it to be interpreted and applied charismatically to the ever-changing needs and situations of the believing communities (Dunn, *Jesus* . . . , p. 238).

4. ARENA OF USE — Expect Teaching where there is:

- An ever-changing need within the community.

- A need for the Scriptures to be explained (i.e., at home, work, church, etc.)

D. EXHORTATION

1. DEFINITION

Exhortation is the God-given graclelet which urges the community to pursue a certain course of action or conduct that has been revealed by God.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

Prophecy and exhortation are linked in 1 Corinthians 14:3. The one who prophesies speaks words of edification, exhortation, and consolation. Prophecy builds up because it is inspired speech which is speaking to the situation or need within the community at the time.

PROGRAM

13

PART 2

THE GRACELETS OF ROMANS 12:6-8 & MISCELLANEOUS PASSAGES

II. THE GRACELETS OF ROMANS

E. GIVING--AID--MERCY

1. DEFINITION

- a. **GIVING** -- Giving is the gracelet of sharing food and clothing (and other possessions) with generosity with those within the community who have not.
- b. **AID** -- Aid is the gracelet which renders care to those who are the most vulnerable within the community.
- c. **MERCY** -- Mercy is the gracelet that gives financial aid to those in need as a reflection of God's unmerited generosity which is given in Christ.

2. GENERAL INFORMATION

These three gracelets cover the whole range of what could be called the "community's well-being service." HELPS (1 Corinthians 12:28) covers the same activities.

- a. **GIVING** means "sharing or giving a share of". For Paul, the Spirit is a shared experience. Ephesians 4:28 shows us the premise of this giving ("to share" NAS = to give, Romans 12:8). **GIVING** is charismatic in that it is the sharing of what is of value to both. Paul's exhortation here is to give "with generosity" (liberality NAS = generosity).
- b. **AID** is usually translated by the word "lead" (NAS) or "gives aid" (RSV) or "leadership" (NIV). It seems best to understand the word as "he who cares for others" (i.e., widows, orphans, strangers, etc.). The word is set between two forms of aid-giving (giving, mercy) and would probably bear a similar meaning. **MERCY** could refer to general acts of mercy but Paul probably has in mind the giving of financial aid (Dunn, *Jesus* . . . p. 250). The exhortation at 12:8 is to show mercy, with cheerfulness (cheerfulness NAS = hilarity). 2 Corinthians 9:7 exhorts the giver to be cheerful (same word). The importance of relief to the poor was an important part of early Christian piety. Mercy outside of Romans 12:8 always refers to the mercy of God. We may infer, therefore, that for Paul, giving to the poor is a gracelet only in so far as it is a reflection of God's unmerited generosity to us in Christ.
- c.

3. ILLUSTRATIONS

- a. **GIVING** -- Acts 2:45; 4:34-37
 - b. **AID** -- 1 Thessalonians 5:12 -- the word translated "have charge over you" (NAS) is the same word as is here used by Paul as a gracelet. The verse should be translated ". . . who diligently labor among you and give aid in the Lord to those in need . . .".
 - c. **MERCY** -- 2 Corinthians 9:8-9 -- The giving to the Jerusalem Church.
4. **ARENA OF USE** -- Expect these gifts where there are:
- a. People who need food, clothing, and other possessions.
 - b. Vulnerable people.
 - c. Finances needed to continue God's work.

The Man Behind the Ministry

John Wimber has been a pioneer in both the Church Growth movement and the Church Renewal movement for the past several years. In 1975 he left the pastorate to become Director of Church Growth at

the Fuller Evangelistic Association. In 1978 God called John to leave the FEA and come home to pastor a small fellowship in Yorba Linda. This small church, called Vineyard Christian Fellowship, has grown to well over 4,000 active participants. VCF has also mothered a whole group of Vineyard Fellowships throughout the United States. John has spent the past several years pastoring the church, planting new Vineyards, speaking at conferences on Church Growth, the ministry of the Holy Spirit and his gifts, and lecturing at Fuller Seminary in the School of World Missions.

John's supreme desire is to bless and love the whole Body of Christ, and to see them equipped to extend the Kingdom of God.

