

# Your Ministry

gift

Lesson #1

## The Gifts of God

**Scripture: James 1:17-21**

Much is said in the Bible about “gifts” from God to man. Romans 6:23 is famous for declaring,

*“...the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”*

The Bible also speaks of certain “gifts” given to individual Christians which enable them to carry on a ministry to others. Look up Romans 12:6, I Corinthians 12:4, and II Timothy 1:6 for scriptures that speak of such gifts. Fulfillment in life depends, to a large degree, upon finding and fulfilling your own ministry. Finding out about your personal ministry to the church and to the world depends much upon understanding what the Bible says about the gifts of God. Today we will study God’s gifts, and the giving and receiving of them. In future weeks we will study the gifts of the Spirit and how they enable us to fulfill our own ministries.

*“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning.”*  
(James 1:17)

As this verse says, every good gift comes from God. This statement includes everything good in our lives because everything good we have came from God.

*“What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why doest thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”* (I Corinthians 4:7)

*“No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.”* (Psalm 84:10)

However the New Testament emphasizes 5 very special gifts from God to man. We will look at these in this lesson. James 1 goes on to say that God’s first

to man in logical order is His Word.

*“Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of his creatures.”* (James 1:18)

Then, in verses 19 through 21, we read a statement of the great Bible principle of receiving a gift. It is that before we really *possess* a gift in a practical way, we must *receive* it. The giver may give the gift, and even sacrifice a great deal to purchase it so that the receiver may have it free, but unless the receiver willingly accepts the gift, it cannot be his in any practical way.

*“Wherefore lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.”* (James 1:21)

### 1. The Gift of God’s Word (James 1:18-25).

The first great gift of God to man is His Word. This He gave to us by divine revelation and by verbal inspiration in the form of the written scriptures (See I Corinthians 2, II Timothy 3:15-17, and II Peter 1:20-21). Everything we need to know about who we are, Who God is, how we came to be, what our purpose is, and where we are headed is in the Bible. James 1 says that God’s Word can give you a saved soul (vs. 18-21) and a blessed life (vs. 22-25)! But God’s Word won’t do you any practical good unless you *receive* it as a gift. God gave the Word, but we must each individually receive it. James 1 says that we “*receive*” God’s gift of His Word by repenting of sin and bowing meekly to the Bible’s authority (Read again carefully vs. 21-25). Have you received God’s Word?

### 2. The Gift of God’s Son (I John 5:9-13)

Inside the gift of God's Word is the gift of God's Son! In the *written record* that God gave us we find "*that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life.*" (vs. 11-12). Can you see this? In the record (the gift of God's Word) is the Son, and in the Son is eternal life. To get eternal life, you must receive the Son of God (Note John 1:12). To receive the Son, you must first receive God's Word!

### 3. The Gift of Eternal Life (Romans 6:23).

As we have seen, men receive eternal life by receiving God's Son. It's another gift within a gift. Jesus Christ, the Son of God died on the cross to collect the wages for our sins. He rose from the dead so that we could be saved (See Romans 4:25). The Bible teaches that *eternal death* is a wage (an earned payment) for committing sins, and that *eternal life* is a free gift provided for us by Jesus Christ our Lord. A gift is purchased by the giver and offered free. The receiver must simply accept the gift, but he *must* accept it in order to have it. Have you received the gift of eternal life that Jesus bought for you at Calvary?

### 4. The Gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38-39, Ephesians 1:12-13).

Within the gift of eternal life is the gift of the Holy Spirit. Ephesians 1 says that the believer is automatically "*seated with that holy Spirit of promise*"

*promise*" when he hears the Word and trusts in Christ. The Book of Acts, however, speaks of *receiving* the Holy Spirit (Look up Acts 2:38, 8:15, and 19:2). Although the Spirit already dwells within anybody who has received the Word, the Son, and eternal life, He is not ministering to and through the believer as He could until that person *receives* Him by accepting the reality of His presence within him and relying on Him to help him. John 14:15-26 speaks of the Spirit as our Comforter and promises that He will help us keep Christ's commandments, sense God's presence, and understand God's Word. Are you trying to live for Christ in your own power, or have you "*received*" the gift of the Spirit?

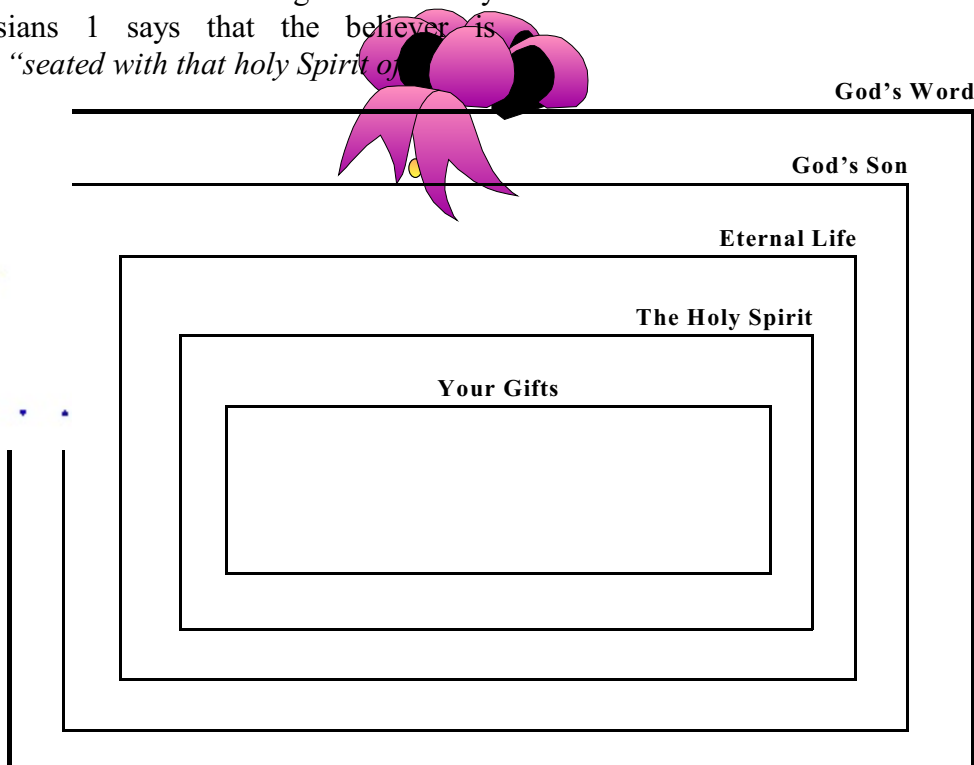
### 5. The Gifts of the Spirit (Romans 12:1-13).

When a Christian receives the ministry of the Holy Spirit by faith and submission, he can have what are called "*gifts*" of the Spirit operating in his life. By grace through faith, you can understand what gifts for ministry God has given you. But first you must receive the gift of the Word, in which you will find the gift of God's Son, in which is the gift of eternal life, in which you will receive the gift of the Spirit. We'll learn more about this next week.

God

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