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Discover Your Spiritual Gifts

Tuesday, January 18, 2011 | Written by Lenya Heitzig

One Christmas, my Grandpa Davis didn't open his presents. The family was gathered around the Christmas tree unwrapping gifts each in their turn. Aunt Ann received an extravagant bottle of perfume from her husband. Aunt Eva presented the kids with our annual underwear. But Grandpa left his pile undisturbed. At the end of the night, they were stowed away in the hall closet. I still don't know why.

Just like my grandpa, you could be one of the millions with riches stashed away. Over \$60 billion in unclaimed assets are waiting in limbo according to *The Wallstreet Journal*. Largely they are held in government trusts including: checking accounts, stocks, uncashed checks, safety deposit boxes, and utility deposits.

- Florida reports of \$500,000,000 in unclaimed assets.
- The state of California has over \$5 billion in unclaimed property.[\[1\]](#)
- Israeli Parliament reports several banks hold more than \$200,000,000 in assets belonging to holocaust victims.

Spirit's Riches

God has riches stored up especially for you. These presents can't be found in a mall, a bank vault, or on the Internet. Although they don't cost money, they are invaluable. Paul told the Ephesians God wants to make us wealthy inwardly rather than materially. Better to be rich in God than rich in gold. "He [God] would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit" (Eph. 3:16).

Notice Paul didn't say "out" of God riches, but "according to" His riches. There's a difference. If a billionaire gave you ten dollars, that's giving "out" of his estate. But if that billionaire offered one million dollars, that's "according to" his wealth. The first idea has to do with portion; the second emphasizes proportion.

Recently, Richard Branson invested \$3 billion to fight global warming, committing all profits over the next 10 years from his travel firms, Virgin Atlantic and Virgin Trains. Microsoft guru, Bill Gates, pledged \$287 million to help develop a vaccine for the HIV/Aids.

Spirit's Power

What does God have for you? Ephesians 3:16 says God grants us "might" which is better translated "power." The original Greek word is *dunamis*, which we translate as dynamite. It describes a miraculous force, abundance, or a violent power. God imparts this power through the person of the Holy Spirit.

In the New Testament three Greek prepositions refer to the Holy Spirit: 1) *En* which we know as "in"; 2) *Para* meaning "with"; and 3) *Epi* translated "upon".

- The Spirit is "with" us before salvation to convict of sin and bring to repentance. "If I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment" (John 16:7-8).
- The Spirit comes "in" us at salvation. "He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever-the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you" (John 14:16-17).
- The Spirit comes "upon" the saint through the baptism of the Spirit. "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

This coming "upon" is known as the baptism of the Holy Spirit. The first evidence of the baptism of the Spirit is POWER. What is the power for? It is for PURPOSE, empowering us to become witnesses of the gospel. The second evidence and *benefit* of the baptism is PRESENTS-His divine gifts, which equip saints to be dynamic ministers.

You may be wondering, *what is my gift?* Three Scriptural texts compile a complete list of God's gifts: Rom. 13, Eph. 4, and 1 Cor. 12. And there's at least one supernatural gift just for you! "There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit...But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all..." (1 Cor. 12:1).

Spiritual Gifts:

Below I've listed some of Gods spiritual gifts with a definition:

- Teaching is the supernatural ability to explain clearly and apply effectively the truth of God's Word. More than imparting information; it leads to transformation of a life.
- Exhortation means to comfort or counsel. In essence: encouragement. A person with this gift will come alongside another to provide strength or reassurance.
- Prophecy is the Spirit-given ability to clearly proclaim the written Word and to apply it to a specific situation with a goal to correct or edify.

- Helps is the ability to provide practical assistance in order to free others for wider ministries.
- Administration enables one to provide leadership in matters of organization.
- Evangelism is the proclamation of the Good News resulting in conversion and discipleship.

Here's a lighthearted example of how all of the gifts listed above might operate. Let's say I invited a few friends to a pool party at a local hotel. Suzy runs late. Being a servant, she decided to pick up a bag of goodies for the group. Scurrying in late, she slips and spills the contents. Here's how different gals with varying gifts might respond:

- The prophet points out a sign that says "no running in pool area." The prophet reminds us of the rules to bring us back in line.
- The exhorter comforts, "It's okay, you didn't see the sign. You'll never do that again." The exhorter encourages us to get up and go.
- The teacher explains the reason for the rule against running is because, "Water creates slippery surfaces that result in accidents." She recommends rubber sole shoes might prevent future mishaps. The teacher wants you to learn and grow.
- The helper grabs some paper towels and quietly cleans up the mess. The helper prefers working behind the scene while others take care of other business.
- The administrator decides these parties could be better organized. Instead of burdening Suzy with providing all of the refreshments, she recommends that each person bring a specific snack next time.
- The evangelist wants to recruit others to join in. She invites everyone to join her at a CPR, pool safety class, being offered the next weekend.

It's exciting to know that God designed *you* with a special gifting. No two Christians are alike. The Master Potter formed you for a divine purpose. Perhaps God created me to be a pitcher. Maybe your friend is a cup. Imagine if He's designed you to be a beautiful serving bowl, but instead you've settled to act like a dirty ashtray. Picture the transformation possible with the Spirit's touch.

Spirit's Baptism

How do you experience the baptism of the Spirit? First, you simply ask God. He alone provides every good and perfect gift. We ask because He is our heavenly Father who loves us and wants to give us good things: "For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. If a son asks for bread from any father among you, will he give him a stone? ... If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?" (Luke 11:10-13).

Second, you humble yourself by requesting prayer. The baptism is most frequently received through the laying on of hands and through prayer. Ananias laid hands on Saul of Tarsus before he became Paul, the apostle. In like manner, Peter and John ministered to the believers of Samaria. "Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the Word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, who, when they had come down, prayed for

them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit" (Acts 8:14-17).

Spirit's Evidence:

Perhaps you have already prayed for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, *but* you still don't know your gifts. Three simple indicators will help you discover them.

1. **Personal Inclination**: What has God laid on your heart? What desires are budding within? Days after I received the Holy Spirit I developed a keen insight into God's Word and the longing to impart that knowledge to others. As time went on, I was asked to teach at various studies.
2. **Public Confirmation**: Do others recognize your gift? Have spiritual leaders confirmed God's work in your life? The more I shared the more encouragement I received. This new ability was not natural but, indeed, supernatural. God was transforming women's lives right before my eyes.
3. **Providential Blessing**: Has God brought forth fruit from your gift? Do others benefit and glorify God for your contribution? If your gift is from God, He'll bless you with open doors and glorifying results.

Last January, my mother discovered several Christmas presents she'd rat holed deep within her cupboards. There was a sweater for me, lotion for my sister, and a poster for my brother. We never received them because they remained hidden and unopened on the shelf.

Do you have unopened gifts sitting in God's storehouse with your name on them? Now is the time to take them out, open them up, and begin using them. This year make sure you don't miss out on anything God has waiting for you.

[1] Scott Thrum and Pui-Wing Tam, States Scooping Up Assets

From Millions of Americans: 'Unclaimed Property' Fattens Public Coffers, *The Wall Street Journal*, February 4, 2008, <http://www.jmsadvisors.com/documents/wsjunclaimrdproarticle2-4-08.pdf>, (accessed 1/06/11).

