

## THE GIFT OF H E L P S - A Serving Gift

TEXT: Romans 12:7,10; I Corinthians 12:28

### EXPLANATION

#### I. WHAT WAS INVOLVED IN THIS PARTICULAR GIFT

- A. The gift of helps is the God-given ability to serve the Lord in various supporting roles.
- B. This gift usually involves doing different temporal tasks that enables others to minister in spiritual areas.
- C. This gift is not helping the poor, the sick, the needy and the like which involves the gift of showing mercy but this is offering to help in a way that frees or supports others to minister in spiritual things.
- D. Just what is involved in this gift can be seen in the example of Acts 6. Here we see seven men were chosen to take care of some widows who were being neglected but although this involved waiting on tables which they did, the greater service they provided was to free the apostles for spiritual things (Acts 6:4). Notice as a result of their service more folks were won to the Lord.

### EXERCISE

#### II. HOW THIS GIFT WAS EXERCISED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

- A. This gift was used to support those who ministered the Word of God on missionary journeys.
  - 1. This is the role that John Mark was fulfilling before he deserted Paul and the others (Acts 13:5).
  - 2. This is the role that Timotheus and Erastus were

fulfilling with the Apostle Paul (Acts 19:22).

3. Luke the physician no doubt played a big supporting role and exercised the gift of helps as he accompanied Paul on his preaching travels (Acts 20:6).
4. Tychicus (Col. 4:7) along with Priscilla and Aquilla (Rom. 16:3) also exercised this gift and served in supporting roles with Paul.
5. Some of the others who exercised this gift in this respect are mentioned in Acts 20:4,5).

B. This gift was used secondly to support those who ministered the Word of God within a local church.

1. In this respect we find there were at least 16 men and 10 women that Paul mentions in the church at Rome (Rom. 16). Phebe was no doubt an outstanding woman who exercised this gift.
2. Stephanas was apparently one in the church at Corinth who exercised this gift in this particular respect (I Cor. 16:15). Phil. 4:3 mentions others in that church.

C. This gift was exercised also in an unusual way in the N.T. that is not seen today.

1. We note there were those who ministered to Paul's needs while he was in prison but here again while the exercise of this gift met his physical needs it supported him to carry on the gospel ministry.
2. Among those who used their gift in this respect would no doubt be Epaphroditus from the church at Philippi (Phil 2:25). Others in this respect would be Fortunatus, Stephanas, and Achaicus (I Cor. 16:17).

EXTENT

III. HOW THIS GIFT OPERATES AND APPLIES TO US IN OUR DAY

- A. The gift of helps is apparently a widespread gift among the spirit gifts and for good reason since there are so many supportive things which need to be done to have a good ministry of the Word of God.
- B. Today as in N.T. times this particular gift is exercised in many supportive roles that are necessary both on the mission field as well as in the local church.
1. On the mission field there is a great need of carpenters, plumbers, electricians, maintenance men, painters, pilots, mechanics, nurses and a host of others to work in supportive roles so that others might have a ministry with the Word of God.
  2. In the local church there are a host of things which require those with the gift of helps to serve in supportive roles. Someone is needed to serve as treasurer, another for typing, another for ushering, another for sending church flowers, another at baptismal services, another to take care of communion; one for church supplies, another for working on the building; one for maintenance on a bus or van, another cleaning the building; one for picking up folks for church and this is only to mention a few and don't let me leave out nursery workers, sound men, and van drivers.
- C. It should be noted that the gift of helps is just as important as any other spiritual gifts and that we are all co-laborers together in the Lord's service. Some folks can't preach or teach a class because they don't possess those gifts but there are many supportive roles that will help enable those who minister the Word to be free to give themselves to this.
- D. It should also be noted that a pastor can't do everything and there are many things he would do well not to do because they would tie up his time that is needed in other areas. A pastor must set priorities with his time and nothing should interfere with his study time to minister the Word of God.
- E. Finally I think it is noteworthy to mention that if a church is blessed to have a good ministry it is in a large measure

dependent upon how many folks there are who will faithfully serve in supportive roles so that the pastor can meet spiritual needs.

## ERROR

### IV. HOW THIS GIFT CAN BE MISAPPLIED AND MISUSED

- A. A person with this gift can become so involved in the practical aspects of the ministry that he can become complacent about his own spiritual growth and development.
  
- B. There may be a tendency on the part of those who possess this gift to be critical of others who don't work as hard as they.
  
- C. Some may relegate this gift as inferior by feeling, "well, since I don't know what other gift I have, it must be this one." But this gift is just as important as any other gift. (Note the story of two men applying for a job at an airline)