

A
MESSAGE OF HOPE,
comfort and freedom in Jesus Christ

“Discovering Our Spiritual Gifts” by Kyle Murphy

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**Quarterly Scripture
Focus:**

Ephesians 4:11-12

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up...”

Each of us who have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior are called to be ministers. The ways in which we minister to others is unique, though, for each of us. The wonderful thing is, we are all able to carry out this ministry because God doesn’t call the equipped, He equips those whom He calls.

Acts 2:38 tells us that when we repent and are baptized in the name of Jesus we are given the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit equips us to minister to others. We are each provided with different gifts for the edification of the Body of Christ and for the glory of God.

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each

one, just as he determines.”
1 Corinthians 12:7-11

Paul elaborates on this further in v. 27-28 of the same chapter when he writes, “...God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.”

Again, in Romans 12:6-8, Paul writes of the ways in which the Holy Spirit equips us. “We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is serving, let him serve; if it is teaching, let him teach; if it is encouraging, let him encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of theirs, let him give generously; if it is leadership, let him govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.”

Finally, as our quarterly scripture verse says in Ephesians 4:11-12, “It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors

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 WEBSITE UPDATES

We have updated the Message of Hope website and added a couple of new pages. One of the pages we added features a newsletter put together by While We Wait Prison Ministry. We are honored to call the founders of While We Wait, Hunter & Amanda Tokar, friends and are excited to have their permission to share their quarterly newsletters.

We have also started featuring other newsletters that are published from inside. One of our friends at Macomb Correctional, an amazing brother in Christ, George Walker, spends a great deal of time putting together a monthly newsletter called, "The Only Way." He also publishes the monthly bulletin for the church inside (New Life Church) at Macomb Correctional.

These publications are separate from the testimonies, poems, lessons, and words of encouragement that are published through Voices of Christ. They can be found under the "Newsletters" page on the website. Please feel free to print them and share them with your friends, family, and churches!

1 Corinthians 12:27-29

"Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues."



We are very excited to announce that the Voices for Christ website is back up and running! Not only are the submissions we have received over these last several months all uploaded to the site, but Keith has completely redesigned the site.

There are additional features that were not available with the previous site such as the ability to search by name or title. Friends or family members are now able to type in the person's name in the "Search" box to pull up every work published on the Voices for Christ website.

Keith has also added a feature where people can leave comments. We are excited to hear what people have to say after reading the inspired works our brothers and sisters behind the narrow windows have submitted.

Please stop by the new site and check it out at www.behindthenarrowwindows.org and let us know what you think. And please spread the word, especially if you have a loved one or pen pal who is behind the narrow windows!



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and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up..."

So, we see that there are many gifts that have been provided by to us through the Holy Spirit in order to build up the body of Christ. It is important that we take the time to determine what our spiritual gifts are and then look for ways to put them to use. Each of us who have accepted Jesus as our Lord and Savior are called to be ministers.

Whether we minister to others by leading, preaching, teaching, giving, serving, or any of the other ways Paul spoke about to the early church, the important thing is that we put our gifts to use! Through putting these spiritual gifts to use we not only build up the church but we bring glory to God. It is our privilege and responsibility to use what He has given us. Whatever we discover our spiritual gift to be, we need to find a way to put it to use for the edification of the church and the glory of God.



In January of this year, Message of Hope prison ministry started offering the NewLife Behavior Ministries material as correspondence courses to our friends inside.

We are grateful to welcome Shirley, Susie, Candy, & Justin to the ministry! They have graciously agreed to serve as instructors with this newest facet of our ministry. To date, we have sixteen "students" who are enrolled in the ministry. There is huge opportunity for growth but until we are able to get more instructors, we are only able to provide these courses to a limited number of our friends inside.

Please consider joining us in this ministry and becoming an instructor (the answer sheets are provided ☺). It is something that can done from the comfort of your home. It takes very little time – just a loving heart and a few stamps!



We started another 12 step workbook study in the James Group. The first week I asked the guys to briefly discuss why they were in the class and what they hoped to get out of it. It was heartbreaking and uplifting to hear the many different responses. Some had battled or were currently battling addictions to alcohol or drugs. Others, such as myself, are looking to apply the 12 steps and the Word of God to areas of our lives that do not line up to the example Jesus Christ left for us.

The most common response was that they wanted to learn how to change their priorities and focus. A couple of the guys are new Christians but most of the others have been walking with God for quite some time now. They want to continue to improve and grow in their walk with God. To stay tuned in, to stay fed, to stay strengthened. They realize the importance of leaning on one another for comfort and support. Please pray for our brothers inside and for Roger, Ralph and myself as we continue through this study.

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or electronically by email?

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Contact Us...

Please feel free to contact Kyle Murphy via email at murphy_k@live.com or visit the website at www.messageofhopeprisonministry.org if you are interested in finding out more about Message of Hope prison ministry or how you can get involved.



Thank you!!

A special thank you to Roseville Church of Christ for their loving support which allows us to continue to share a message of hope with our friends inside. We would also like to thank Macomb Christian Church (especially Jann and Carol) for their help with getting the word out about this ministry and their assistance in printing brochures and newsletters! Thank you also to Brian (one of our deacons at MCC) who has been a great blessing to us at Message of Hope.