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Enabling Gifts!

2nd in a series of 6

Good morning! What a treat to worship and sing songs about faith. Did you catch those words we sang a little earlier this morning?

Slide#1

Your grace abounds in deepest waters
Your sov'reign hand will be my guide
Where feet may fail
And fear surrounds me
You've never failed and you won't start now

Tomorrow evening, right here at 7 PM... we will have an opportunity to hear stories of faith. There will be an update on our Transitional Housing Ministry and we will be introducing our new Elder intern and hear a little of his story. We are also going to show you a great video clip on developing a culture of 'giving' by the CEO of Toms Shoes and of course get an update on last year finances and our 2015 budget. So we invite all of you to come on out.

Slide #2 Hebrews 12:28-29 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe, for our 'God is a consuming fire.'

What in the world does that mean! Right now at TL we are on a fire kick!

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Slide #3 Fire is hot, fire consumes, fire spreads, fire is contagious, fire is intriguing and fire purifies. Fire is essential for survival.

Paul said to Timothy...

Slide #4 2 Timothy 1:6-7 For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.

Slide #5 So, for the coming weeks we are going to invite the Holy Spirit of God to ignite the fire of our Spiritual Gifts through a series of messages entitled, 'Fan the Flame'.

Why would we spend all this time talking about Spiritual Gifts? Because Spiritual Gifts are a part of a bigger story... the story of discovering our purpose.

Slide #6 Ephesians 2:10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

All of us here today are a product of God's creativity and he has made us just the way we are... so we can do what he has specifically planned for us to do. How can we figure this out?

When I came home from college in 1979 to become a youth pastor, I met a girl named Carol who was 16

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years old and on the track team at Solanco. She started coming to Church and hanging out with our High School kids and one day she said... let's go for a run. And I thought why not, I had played soccer in college and figured I was in decent shape. In fact I was fairly confident I could keep up with any sophomore girl whether she was on the track team or not... was I ever in for a surprise!

We were running along and she's talking and laughing and telling stories and after the 2nd mile I'm gasping for air. And of course I'm too proud to admit that I'm about done in... so I'm trying to act like this is no big deal... but actually... I was dying. And when we finally got back home I made a decision. I decided... that would never happen again... and I would never be that far out of shape again... and I made a choice to start running... and I did... and so for the last 36 years I have been running on a regular basis. In fact I ran this past Friday morning when it was 9 degrees with a zero degree wind chill.

We need to get in SHAPE! Here is a little review.

Slide #7 SHAPE

S stands for what?

H stands for what?

A stands for what?

P stands for what?

E stands for what?

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We want to see all of us get into SHAPE! So for the next five weeks we are going to bring some fire into the auditorium to encourage us to fan into flame these Spiritual Gifts of the Holy Spirit, so that the first step of SHAPE can take place!

Interview with Mike: This morning I would like to introduce you to Mike Donnell. Mike is married to Sherry and they have two adult children and 4 grandchildren with #5 on the way! And if you want to get Mike talking, just ask him about his grandchildren. Mike is a mechanic by trade and he and Sherry are the owners of the Car Clinic located along the Strasburg Road. Everyone who knows Mike knows that not only does he love to hunt, fish and go boating... but he also loves fires as well! Years ago TL had its' own little camping association and Mike was always in the thick of it... building a bigger and better campfire... and they were known as the 'the Mike Fire'.

So, Mike give us a lesson this morning on 'Fire Building 101'. What does it take to build a good fire and what does it look like. (Explain and light the fire)

1. What are some ways to make a fire hotter? (dry wood, ventilation, fans, leaf blower etc.)
2. What are some of the steps you take to make sure a fire is safe?

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3. What was the most awesome food you ever ate cooked over an open fire?
4. What do you like best about a good fire?
5. Did you ever have a fire burn out of control?
6. I remember during our camping days, you would throw some kind of combination of pipe and hose into the fire that created a special effect. Explain what you did and tell us what would happen. Any idea why?

I understand that we have some actual pipe and hose footage of this kind of fire. Let's roll it and tell us what we are seeing and if you listen closely you can even hear it.

Slide #8 Fire Video Clip with audio.

That was an amazing fire! Thanks, Mike for giving us a glimpse into fire building and for thanks for the demonstration without burning our auditorium down. Let's stand together as we sing Soul on Fire!

Worship Band - Soul On Fire

Slide #9 God, I'm running for Your heart,
I'm running for Your heart
Till I am a soul on fire
Lord, I'm longing for Your ways
I'm waiting for the day When I am a soul on fire,
Till I am a soul on fire (repeat)

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Slide #10 Lord, restore the joy I had
I have wandered bring me back
In this darkness, lead me through
Until all I see is You, yeah

Slide #11 God, I'm running for Your heart,
I'm running for Your heart
Till I am a soul on fire
Lord, I'm longing for Your ways
I'm waiting for the day
When I am a soul on fire,
Till I am a soul on fire

Slide #12 Lord, let me burn for You again
Let me return to You again
And Lord, let me burn for You again
And let me return to You again

Slide #13 God, I'm running for Your heart,
I'm running for Your heart
Till I am a soul on fire
Lord, I'm longing for Your ways
I'm waiting for the day
When I am a soul on fire,

Slide #14 God, I'm running for Your heart,
I'm running for Your heart
Till I am a soul on fire
Till I am a soul on fire
Till I am a soul on fire

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Let's remain standing for the reading of God's Word. Please pay close attention to the Gifts highlighted in red.

Slide #15 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 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** by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,

Slide #16 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.

Let's pray: Be seated

Over the coming weeks we are going to be looking at a total of 19 different Spiritual Gifts and this morning we are going to be focusing in on what are called the 'Enabling Gifts'. Every Christian has the ability to develop the Enabling Gifts. The Enabling Gifts are something we possess within... instead of something we perform. They provide a foundation for action. They don't describe what we do but rather what we are... they enable the other gifts to be practiced more effectively. For example:

Slide #17 Romans 12:6-7

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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.

So the Gift of faith enables the gift of prophecy to be more effective. Let's go to our notes and I encourage you to fill them out and hang onto them over the coming weeks so you can have an overview of the Spiritual Gifts.

Slide #18

1. Faith - The gift of Faith is the Spirit given capacity and desire to discern with extraordinary confidence the will, purpose and future of God's work.

The person with the gift of faith has the ability to see the light at the end of the tunnel. They are the people that enter into the conversation convinced that God has a plan... even when no one else can see it.

We have this story in the book of Acts about the Apostle Paul who was on a ship in the midst of nor'easter. And as the storm raged there was no sign of sun or stars for many days and the sailors were terrified and threw the cargo and tackle overboard trying to lighten up the ship. Paul had warned them to not even leave the harbor... but they had ignored him.

As I read to you this account... listen as Paul exercises this gift of faith.

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Slide #19 Acts 27:21-26 After the men had gone a long time without food, Paul stood up before them and said: "Men, you should have taken my advice not to sail from Crete; then you would have spared yourselves this damage and loss.

Slide #20 But now I urge you to keep up your courage, because not one of you will be lost; only the ship will be destroyed. Last night an angel of the God whose I am and whom I serve stood beside me and said, 'Do not be afraid, Paul. You must stand trial before Caesar;

Slide #21 and God has graciously given you the lives of all who sail with you.' So keep up your courage, men, for I have faith in God that it will happen just as he told me. Nevertheless, we must run aground on some island."

Did you notice his confidence in the will, purpose and future of God's work? Did you notice his ability to see the light at the end of the tunnel even though others were clueless about the divine possibilities at hand?

Slide #22 George Muller writes
The possessor of the gift of faith will limit his asking to only those things that God wants. His desire will correspond with God's desire. Faith is firm conviction that God wishes to do something remarkable. Faith thinks big, it thinks the kind of big that God wants.

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See we get all confused about faith because we go for what we want instead of being convinced of what God wants and then we get disappointed with the results.

Slide #23 Larry Gilbert writes...

When God and you both know you are going to stick to a decision regardless of what happens, then (and only then) can you operate on the faith you have, instead of the faith you wish you had.

Slide #24 Earlier this morning we sang...

Spirit lead me where my trust is without borders
Let me walk upon the waters
Wherever you would call me
Take me deeper than my feet could ever wander
And my faith will be made stronger
In the presence of my Savior

Let's go to our notes.

Slide #25

2. Discernment (distinguishing between spirits) -

The Gift of Discernment is the Spirit given capacity and desire to know with assurance whether certain behaviors professed to be of God are in reality divine, human or satanic.

The person with this gift is able to distinguish between what is real and what is false. They are the first ones to see through false advertising and trendy gimmicks. We can pick these people out because they aren't

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suckers... no one can pull something over on them... because they know the difference between what is bad, good, better and best.

One of the ways they discover what is false is by making sure they know what is real, so the person with discernment focuses on learning what truth looks like instead of investigating every arena of falsehood.

In 2 Kings 6 we have an interesting story about an OT prophet named Elisha who exercised both Faith and Discernment.

The King of Aram was at war with Israel and every time he met in his war cabinet room to plan surprise attacks on Israel... the Israelite army would show up, on site, ready for action. This happened so many times that he was eventually convinced that he had a traitor in his camp. When he started to accuse his men of betraying him, one of his officers spoke up and said... none of us are traitors... but the Israelites have a prophet named Elisha who knows the very words you speak in your bedroom.

So the King of Aram found out where Elisha was staying and sent out an army of horses and chariots in full force, at night, to surround the city and bring him in.

When Elisha and his servant woke up the next morning, they saw that the city was surrounded by a

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vast army. His servant freaked out and said... what are we going to do?

And Elisha calmly said, don't be afraid, those who are with us... are more than those who are with them. And his servant is doing the math... you and me Elisha... that's 2... and there are hundreds... maybe thousands out there surrounding the city.

Slide #26 2 Kings 6:17 And Elisha prayed, "O Lord, open his eyes so he may see." Then the Lord opened the servant's eyes, and he looked and saw the hills full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha.

Elisha had the gift of discernment, he was able to distinguish between what was false... we should be petrified because we are drastically outnumbered and what was real... God is with us, who can be against us, we really aren't outnumbered, so there is no reason to fear.

Elisha had the assurance to judge between the divine, he saw the angel forces... the human, we are outnumbered... and the satanic, paralyzed by fear.

The aim of the gift of discernment is to always protect the integrity of the Church and to keep the Church from moving out of the plan and will of God.

So God has placed individuals with this gift among us so they can help the Church sift through confusing doctrines, teachings, theologies, philosophies and grandiose schemes. Let's go to our notes.

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Slide #27

3. Knowledge - The gift of Knowledge is the Spirit given capacity and desire to discover, accumulate, analyze and clarify information and ideas that are important to the growth and well-being of the Church.

The person with this gift is always on a quest to learn and they have this knack to sort through and process information in a way that would make most of our heads spin... and then act on it. They naturally have a thirst for Knowledge!

We have this incredible story in the book of Acts that clearly demonstrates the gift of knowledge.

There was a man named Ananias who was married to a woman named Sapphira who sold a piece of property and they decided to give most of the money to the Church, but not quite all of it. So Ananias took the gift to Peter and acted like he was giving over the entire sale price. And here was Peter's response:

Slide #28 Acts 5:3-4 Then Peter said, "Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God."

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It's not that he had to give the entire sale to the Church... the problem was that he lied about it... and Peter knew it!

When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. Three hours later his wife came to Peter not knowing what had just happened, of course this is before Face Book, and Peter quizzed her about the price she had received and the amount of the gift they were giving... and she lied as well. So Peter said, the same people who carried out your husband are going to carry you out as well... and she also died on the spot... and the story ends with these words...

'and great fear seized the whole Church and all who heard about these events.'

See Peter had the spiritual gift of knowledge... he had the capacity and desire to discover, accumulate, analyze and clarify information... that's what he did. The gift of knowledge isn't related to intelligence, but rather it's the supernatural ability to grasp the truth about a situation that cannot be known by natural means. Let's go to our notes.

Slide #29

4. Wisdom - The gift of Wisdom is the Spirit given capacity and desire to know the mind of the Holy Spirit in such a way as to receive insight into how knowledge may be applied to specific needs arising in the Church.

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The person with the spiritual gift of wisdom has the capacity to apply spiritual principals to contemporary problems. They are able to look at a specific issue or problem and then figure out what to do about it. We all know people like that... they can just figure it out!

We have this famous story in the OT that clearly depicts wisdom. When King David's son Solomon took the throne, God appeared to him in a dream and said, ask me for whatever you want, and I'll give it to you. So Solomon asked for wisdom... and he soon had the opportunity to use it.

There were two prostitutes in Israel who lived together and they each gave birth to a son, three days apart. During the night the one woman rolled over on top of her baby and suffocated him. She got up from her sleep, realized what she had done and in the middle of the night she swapped out her dead baby for her roommate's live baby. In the morning her roommate looked at her baby and she realized that not only was he dead... but he wasn't hers... and she wanted her live baby back. So they got in a fight and ended up in Solomon's court.

Since there was no DNA testing available... Solomon had to figure out another way to get to the truth.

Slide #30 1 Kings 3:24-25 Then the king said, "Bring me a sword." So they brought a sword for the king. He then gave an order: "Cut the living child in two and give half to one and half to the other."

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The real mother was filled with compassion for her son and said, give the baby to her. The other woman said, its better that neither of us have him... so cut him up!

And the king went... bingo... now we know who the real mother is!

The gift of Wisdom is the Spirit given capacity and desire to know the mind of the Holy Spirit in such a way as to receive insight into how knowledge may be applied to specific needs arising in the Church.

Individuals with the spiritual gift of wisdom are the kind of people that others seek out. They are the opinion setters, they set the pace in the Church and in the community because they have the capacity and desire to know the mind of the Holy Spirit.

Folks, I believe the Enabling Gifts are for all of us to develop... some gifts more than other... but yet all of them to a certain degree. And I'm wondering... are you making some connections? Do you see any fit, with any of these gifts, for you or for others?

I want you to get filled by the fire of the Holy Spirit, to be locked into him, so that you can know your purpose and know who you are, so you can do the work that God has planned in advance for you to do.

I know I can't make it happen for you... but it's my desire and I'm going to preach and pray accordingly. Let's open our eyes and our heart to him.

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Slide # 31 Prayer & Reflection: (Audio Clip) marlin

Benediction:

When hope is lost and failure seems close at hand,
Faith will well up among us, to bring us through.

When the days are confused and stressed,
His Spirit enlightens,

so that knowledge and wisdom flow.

Though darkness and smoke
at times obscure our sight

Those with discerning eyes will find the way.

So it is... that the Spirit works among us.

So we are blessed,

So TL... let's yield and bless His Church.