

Assignment Title: Reading Report – Spiritual Gifts: Expectation Without Agenda

Spiritual Gifts: Expectation Without Agenda

Name: Henry Williams
Campus Location: ATS/NY City

Course Title: Personal, Professional, and Theological Foundations For Ministry
Course Number: SF505
Semester & Year: Spring 2023
Professor: Dr. Ronald Walborn
Date Submitted: 2/14/2023

The Christian and Missionary Alliance (CMA) seem to follow the word and power church design presented in Doug Banister's *Word and Power Churches*. Spiritual gifts are abilities given by the Holy Spirit to all believers for the purpose of building up the church and furthering the gospel. These gifts can take various forms, such as teaching, prophecy, discernment, hospitality, and many others. No gift is above another in importance. Every believer has unique gifts that they are called to use for the benefit of building up God's kingdom. There is a need for believers to discern their gifts and use them in a way that is consistent with the teachings of the Bible. It's important to note that spiritual gifts are not the only sign of the Holy Spirit working in a person's life.

I find that the CMA statement on Spiritual gifts seems to match the same beliefs that my church also teaches. This was the same with Banister's book and it's made me realize how sheltered my view of the larger Christian community is. Having grown up in the church that I'm currently working for, and having spent relatively little time in other churches has limited my scope of Christian culture. I realized, while reading this article, that I have an internalized belief that spiritual gifts in general are for other people. "The Scriptures do not indicate that the list of spiritual gifts is exhaustive."¹ I don't really know what my spiritual gifts are, but I know that in my belief that they weren't for me, I never tried to discover if I had any, I merely know which ones I don't have. "When we walk in obedience, we must trust that the Holy Spirit will respond with the revelation of His gifts in our lives."² I took this as a gentle rebuke.

As this statement matches with my Christian upbringing, I there were no parts of the text that I took issue with. While it was different from my internalized narrative on how spiritual gifts are for others, I recognize that my belief was in error here. "This does not mean, however, that

¹ "Perspectives: Spiritual Gifts," *The Alliance*, 2023, <https://cmalliance.org/who-we-are/our-faith-and-mission/perspectives/>, (Accessed February 13,2023), How do spiritual gifts work?.

² Ibid, How can I discover my spiritual gift(s)?.

gifts should be used to exalt the individual or to feed an immature desire for attention.”³ is probably the statement that I agreed with the most in my current place in life, having had that desire to receive gifts to make myself look good in the past. I do, however, recognize that in my focus on avoiding this pitfall I had started to not want any spiritual gifts. I never received the spiritual gifts I prayed for, and I think that led me to that erroneous belief; that spiritual gifts are only for others.

In terms of how this statement has impacted my theology, I have some work to do figuring out what my own giftings are. I’m still glad to have caught this errant way of thinking now, as opposed to having to deal with it later (when potentially it’s more firmly ingrained in me). I have hope that as I discover more about what gifts God has given me, that He’ll help me to be utilized in an even more fruitful way as I serve. There was one other portion of the statement that I wanted to spend more time dissecting in my personal life. “It has been said that Christians are not primarily natural beings having temporary spiritual experiences. Rather, we are spiritual beings having a temporary natural experience.”⁴ It feels like I’ve been living my life up to this point as a natural being seeking spiritual experience, and it’s still a concept that, compared to my personal experience is still very foreign, but I want to be able to change my perspective to one that matches this statement.

With integrity, I have read this book (circle one):

³ “Perspectives: Spiritual Gifts,” *The Alliance*, 2023, <https://cmalliance.org/who-we-are/our-faith-and-mission/perspectives/>, (Accessed February 13,2023), How do spiritual gifts work?.

⁴ Ibid, How can I discover my spiritual gift(s)?.

Thoroughly and Entirely__100__%

Quickly but Completely_____%

Thoroughly but NOT Entirely_____%

Quickly and NOT Completely_____%

Not at all

Signed: _____

Bibliography

“Perspectives: Spiritual Gifts,” *The Alliance*, 2023,
<https://cmalliance.org/who-we-are/our-faith-and-mission/perspectives/>, (Accessed February
13,2023).