THE KEY IN YOUR HAND…

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Those who regularly drove down Lattimore Street knew the pathetic sight of the old man all too well. His "home" was a jumble of cardboard cartons and trash stashed under the I-35 overpass. His transportation was a rusty grocery cart borrowed from a local market, with a right front wheel that wobbled as he coaxed it along the litter-strewn gutters.

During the summer, he would panhandle under the hot Texas sun for loose change from drivers stopped at the red light at Industrial Boulevard. In the winter, it was easier to root through the filthy dumpsters behind the hotel for scraps of food.

One bitter winter day, he didn't make his usual rounds. At first no one noticed. Even if they had, it was far too miserable a day to brave the sleet and cold of a "bluer norther" to go looking for a lonely old man. Two days later, someone found him. His frail body, wasted away by pneumonia, lay cold and dead in his cardboard "home", surrounded by the crumpled newspapers he had burrowed into in a futile attempt to keep warm.

When the county coroner did the autopsy, he was puzzled to find a safe-deposit box key tightly clasped in the old man's right hand. At first he supposed the old man had just found it on the street, or perhaps even stolen it.

An investigation revealed, however, that the deposit box had been issued in the old man's name many years earlier.

What the lawyers found in the box when they opened it two weeks later made a front page article in the city newspaper.

In the box they found the deed to the old man's mansion in Florida, now unoccupied for many years. There were stocks and bonds from an investment portfolio, untouched for more than a decade. They found his diploma from Harvard, a Rolex watch, stacks of crisp $100 bills, small plastic containers filled with gold coins and a diamond ring valued at several thousand dollars.

The old man who had lived in such misery and squalor was, in reality, a very wealthy man.
He possessed incredible resources, but had not made use of the resources he possessed!

<u>*That man is like a picture of much of the Church today!</u>

The Church desperately needs the power of her Lord and the energy and activity of the Holy Spirit!!

*The Fact is we've been given Supernatural Power!!
-Jn 14:12 Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

-Eph 1:19-20 Paul says the same power that resurrected Jesus from the dead is in us!

-Acts 1:8 Jesus said His followers will receive POWER from on high and we will be enabled and emboldened to take the gospel message into all the world so people will be delivered from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God!

-Most Christians have little understanding or experience in the incredible resources and supernatural power God has given us.

-Many Christians live in Spiritual Poverty instead of Supernatural Power!

-Jesus wants His followers to live in Supernatural Power instead of Spiritual Poverty!

-We go from week to week, attend a Sunday service, maybe go to a bible study…
we Go Through Spiritual Routines instead of Operate In The Power of the Spirit.

***WHAT THE CHURCH NEEDS, WHAT WE NEED IS THE TRUTH OF JESUS CHRIST SET AFLAME BY THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT!!**

That's why we're embarking on this series called UNLOCKED-Releasing What God Has Already Given You... a series on Spiritual Gifts.

Ask you to put aside what you know, what you think you know, what you don't know, etc…

Let's let the Word of God guide us as we look at the gifts through the lens of scripture, w/out adding any of our own filters to it!!

-->2 Prevailing Approaches To Gifts of the Spirit:

***Cessationist- someone who believes certain so-called supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit have ceased**.

-Late 1st AD w/death of John
-Completion of the Canon/Scripture

-1Cor 13:8-12 as proof
&
-Eph 2:19-20
Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

-Signs & Wonders Authenticated the Apostles & Prophets... they were the foundation and operated in certain special supernatural gifts but now with their

passing and with the completion of Scripture those gifts have passed away.

***Continuationist- one who believes that all the gifts of the Spirit continue to be given by God and are therefore operable for the church today. Furthermore, they should be prayed for and sought after.**

-The consistent, pervasive, and positive presence throughout the NT of spiritual Gifts. (Pentecost, Acts, Rome, Corinth, Samaria, Caesarea, Antioch, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Galatia)

-Extensive NT evidence of the miraculous gifts among non-apostles.
(70 in Lk10, Phillip, Ananias, Church members in Antioch, new converts in Ephesus, women at Caesarea [acts21], unnamed brethren of Galatians…etc,

-The explicit and oft-repeated purpose of the charismata: the edification of the body!
The church is still in need of this edification!

-1Cor 13:8-12 tells us that spiritual gifts won't pass away until the "perfect" comes. This is Jesus himself!

-->1 Corinthians is a CORRECTIVE Letter!
-Paul wrote this letter around AD 55 after hearing reports of serious issues from Chloe's household and receiving a letter of questions from the church itself.

-Paul writes to correct some major issues that were going on in the church.

1 Church Divisions
-people were splitting over various individuals like Paul or Apollos

2 Moral & Sexual Misconduct
-the church tolerated severe sexual immorality

3 Disagreements over Freedom
-they argued over whether you could eat food sacrificed to idols

4 Denial of the Resurrection
-it appears some doubted the physical resurrection of the dead

5 Disorderly Worship
-corporate gatherings had become chaotic and selfish. Particularly regarding the misuse of spiritual gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:1-11
1Cor 12:1
—>The Gifts/Spirituals (Pneumatikon) belong to the Holy Spirit

-their presence therefore does not signify great holiness, sanctification, maturity
-consider the Corinthians who he was writing to!!!
-The Gifts come from and belong to The Spirit…

-…therefore,

we are not talking about talents, abilities, etc.
Spiritual Gifts

-notice what else Paul says here...
"I do not want you to be uninformed."
Paul is marking the importance of spiritual gifts by saying he doesn't want them to be uninformed or ignorant.

"Paul believed it is vital for Christians to have the right knowledge of spiritual gifts, understanding how they are to function in the lives of each believer and more importantly, in the life of the body, the church!"

1Cor 12:2-3
*Paul reminds the Corinthians of their past and that it involved idol worship.

***Interesting the one word he chose about idols!**
MUTE!
-Because in chs 12-14 it's all about the power and working of the Holy Spirit and even how He SPEAKS through the gifts He gives to people!!

—>The greatest work of the Holy Spirit is to reveal Jesus to us as Lord!!

—>Only through the Spirit can someone say this..

-can mockingly say it…

-truth with conviction and belief comes through the Spirit…

-->In this chapter, Paul gives us a solid understanding of spiritual gifts. He doesn't focus so much on the details of each gift, but rather how and why the gifts are so important for the church.

1 Cor 12:4-6
—>The manifestations of the Holy Spirit brings UNITY and VARIETY

***Same-->Different repeated 3 times!**
***Notice the Nod to the Trinity in these verses?**
Spirit...Lord...God
-different kinds of Gifts
-different ways the Gifts are used

4 Words For Spiritual Gifts:

Charisma (Khar-is-mah)- refers to a gracious work of God or gift of God He has bestowed.
1 Corinthians 12:4- There are different kinds of ***gifts (charismata)***, but the same Spirit distributes them.

(Charismata is its plural form. Hence the word Charismatic is derived.)

[Eternal Life is a charisma:

Romans 6:23- For the wages of sin is death, but the ***gift (charisma)*** of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.]

Pneumatikon- (pnyoo-mat-ik-os)
Pertaining to the Spirit, Spiritual,
Hence, "the Spirituals"
1Corinthians 12:1- Now about the ***gifts of the Spirit (pneumatikon)***, I do not want you to be uninformed.

*when you put this word and charismata into our understanding of Spiritual Gifts it means that all the Gifts are charismatic, not just the supernatural ones.
So in one sense ALL Christians are Charismatic!!!

Diakonia (Dee-ak-on-ee-ah)- To serve, serving
1 Corinthians 12:5- There are different kinds of ***service (diakonia)***, but the same Lord.

To serve, serving, often translated "ministries".
1Peter 4:10- Each of you should use whatever gift (charisma) you have received to ***serve (diakonia)*** others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

This word points to their purpose!
Spiritual Gifts are designed to help and serve others.

SG's are not Privileges but rather Responsibilities
-the gifts are given to serve others not elevate individuals. (Corinth)

Energema (En-air-gay-mah)
Working or operations
1Corinthians 12:6- There are different kinds of ***working (energema)***, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

All spiritual gifts are energized by the power of the Holy Spirit working in and through the believer.

—>Put these words together here's what we get:
We discover that all spiritual gifts (charismata) are acts of service or ministry (diakonia), which are produced/energized (energema) in and through us by the Holy Spirit (pneumatikon)

1Cor 12:7-10
—>To Each One…the gifts are for everyone!

—>The exercise of the gifts makes the Spirit's presence evident.

-it's called a manifestation of the Spirit, not the gift.
-the result is worship of God, not admiration of the gift

—>It's for the Body, the Church, Common Good=Profit
—>The Individual Gift is for the Common Good of All
—>The Primary Purpose of the gifts is to edify others.
-Gifts are "others-oriented"

—>Primary/Direct=Edify Others, or The body
—>Secondary/Indirect= Personal Edification

—>The gifts are not primarily for Individual Enjoyment but for Corporate Employment!

—>We accept our gifts with HUMILITY then use them to promote HARMONY!

1Cor 12:11
—>The choice to distribute the gifts belongs to the Holy Spirit!!!

—>The choice is His, the glory is God's!!

—>The Holy Spirit bestows these gifts as HE WILLS not as WE WILL!!

1Cor 12:7,31; 1Cor 14:1,12,
—>Spiritual Gifts are to be sought after, prayed for, eagerly desired.

—>It's All About Jesus!!
***Gifts should either bring someone to saving faith in Jesus or strengthen a believer's faith in Jesus**