

## **The Fourth Motivational Gift – Exhortation**

Romans 12:5 – Amplified Bible, “*So we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ, the Messiah, and individually we are parts one of another – mutually dependent on one another.*”

Romans 12:8 “*He who exhorts, encourages [let him give himself], to his exhortation;*”

The Greek word that designates the fourth Motivational Gift, translated, “*exhortation*,” in the King James Version, is “*paraklesis*,” meaning, “*to be called to another’s side to aid*” – which denotes exhortation and encouragement.

The person with this Motivational Gift could just as well be called, “*an encourager*” because this Greek word, “*paraklesis*,” is also translated “*to encourage*.”

The motivation of an exhorter is to see Christians grow in faith and maturity so that unbelievers will be attracted to the Gospel by their lives.

The guides for this gift of exhortation, given in Romans 12:12, is:

1. To rejoice in hope
2. To be patient in tribulation
3. To be in constant readiness for prayer

Despite the fact that the exhorter makes an interesting, and palatable, teacher, his efforts are geared toward *edifying* and *encouraging* other people. One with the Motivational Gift of a teacher aims for one’s head, while the exhorter aims for one’s heart. It is not so much the *content* of Scriptural truth that the exhorter wants to impart, but rather, ***HOW*** the content of that truth can be made effective in people’s lives.

## **CHARACTERISTICS OF AN EXHORTER**

### **1. HE IS FLUENT IN COMMUNICATION**

Exhorters are the ***mouth*** of the body of Christ because they have the greatest facility of speech of any of the gifts.

### **2. HE ACCEPTS PEOPLE AS THEY ARE WITHOUT JUDGING THEM**

While someone with the Motivational Gift of a “*perceiver*” sees people as either ***IN*** the will of God or ***OUT*** of the will of God, with nothing in between, and the “*exhorter*” does not see extremes – he sees only a vast gray area where everyone fits in somewhere along the way. No one, to the exhorter, has arrived as yet, however, no one is a complete failure either because everyone is at a point in his life where a few well-chosen Biblical steps will bring him that much closer to God’s will.

### **3. HE NEEDS A “SOUNDING BOARD” FOR BOUNCHING OFF HIS IDEAS AND THOUGHTS**

The exhorter needs those who will listen, analyze, and, then, give him their opinion. An exhorter often thinks with his ***mouth*** and likes to verbalize a thought aloud so he can hear how it sounds, as if he is trying an idea on for size just to see how it fits.

#### **4. HE IS COMMITTED TO SPIRITUAL GROWTH**

The exhorter wants everyone to have a full, meaningful life. An exhorter is a builder up *of people*, rather than *things* or *systems* – or *abstract ideas*. He loves being around people, doing things with them or for them. Because he wants to help people live up to their full potential, his greatest joy is being an instrument to help another to live victoriously. The motivation of an exhorter is to see spiritual growth take place in practical living, and he is willing to become personally involved to see it achieved (See Galatians 4:19 and Colossians 1:28).

#### **5. HE IS GREATLY LOVED BECAUSE OF HIS POSITIVE ATTITUDE**

*“Accentuate the positive, eliminate the negative, latch on to the affirmative, and don’t mess the Mister In-Between,”* is something that must have been written by an exhorter because he is so positive in his thinking.

#### **6. HE PREFERS TO WITNESS BY HIS LIFE RATHER THAN BY VERBAL WITNESSING**

While an exhorter can witness verbally, he believes he must live the Christian life in order to be credible – (See James 2, verses 18, 20, 22 and 26)

#### **7. HE MAKES DECISIONS EASILY**

Decision-making comes naturally and easily to most exhorters because, for them, life is too short to be indecisive. They are an action people and they make their decisions based on what they know at the time. They figure that if more information is needed, it will come.

#### **8. HE COMPLETES WHAT IS STARTED**

Similar to the person with the motivational gift of serving, the exhorter does not like work left unfinished or projects left uncompleted. He finishes the letters he starts, works over time to complete assignments at the office, or burns the midnight oil to complete a Bible study assignment.

#### **9. HE DESIRES TO CLEAR UP PROBLEMS WITH OTHERS QUICKLY**

Because an exhorter does not like strained relationships, when he has a conflict with someone he will go immediately to him to find out what the problem is and, if necessary, he will even take the blame for the conflict in order to build the bridge to a right relationship.

#### **10. HE EXPECTS A LOT OF HIMSELF – AND OF OTHERS**

He feels that very few people, including him self, live up to their potential. He often feels that people live within their *“comfort zone”* – an area within which they can operate without being challenged. While the exhorter knows that it is *so-o-o* easy for one to stay in that comfort zone, he doesn’t believe that it is God’s perfect will for anyone to do so because he believes that God wants everyone to venture out into the unknown and to do things he didn’t think he could.

#### **11. HE IS ABLE TO SEE ROOT PROBLEMS**

Because an exhorter can discern the spiritual maturity, or immaturity, of another person, he is motivated to search out hindrances in the lives of those who are not growing spiritually and to give further encouragement to those who are  
(See 1 Corinthians 3:1).

**12. HE SEE STEPS OF ACTION**

The exhorter loves to prescribe precise steps of action to aid personal spiritual growth. He has the ability to visualize spiritual achievement for others and then to help them work out practical steps of action to achieve it. These steps are designed to remove hindrances and to develop personal disciples through whom the Holy Spirit can work (See 2 Timothy 2:22-23).

**13. HE RAISES HOPE FOR SOLUTIONS**

An exhorter desires to encourage others to develop in their personal ministries and he tends to use examples from the lives of others to help Christians see the potential of daily victory. The exhorter finds truth in experiences and then validates it with Scripture (See 2 Corinthians 9:2 and 1 Timothy 1:15).

**14. HE TURNS PROBLEMS INTO BENEFITS**

The exhorter views trials as opportunities to produce personal growth and he had learned, by experiences, that God gives special grace during trials. Based on this fact, Paul gloried in tribulation. His credentials were the persecutions that he experienced and the counseling that God gave him during his afflictions (See 2 Corinthians 1:1-7).

**15. HE DESIRES TO BE “TRANSPARENT”**

Paul told Timothy that his chief weapon was a clear conscience (1 Timothy 1:19), and because an exhorter knows that true spiritual growth will not take place where there is guilt, he desires to maintain a life above reproach in order to gain a wider hearing for the Gospel (See 1 Corinthians 9:22).

**16. HE GAINS INSIGHT THROUGH EXPERIENCE**

The exhorter prefers to apply truth rather than research it. He is motivated to learn “cause-and-effect sequences” and, through them, to discover the underlying principles of life. He studies both Scripture and experience to find these principles and his motivation is to promote spiritual growth in others and to bring diverse groups of Christians together.

**17. HE IS URGENT TO ACT ON CLEAR STEPS**

The exhorter prefers systems of information that have practical application. He tends to explain truth with logical reasoning in order to motivate people to act upon it. Paul’s writings in 1 Corinthians 15 have been studied in law schools for their logic. He “*reasoned*” with the Jews, the Greeks, King Agrippa, and others  
– (Acts 18:4 and 26:28).

**18. HE DESIRES TO SHAE FCE TO FACE**

The exhorter loves to do personal counseling and desires a visible response when speaking. Because interaction with his hearers is essential for the exhorter, he watches the expressions on people's faces, listens for their reactions, and analyzes their body language, in order to determine their response to him, because he feels the need to know that he is really communicating.

Because Paul, an exhorter, longed to see his fellow believers constantly reaffirmed – (1 Thessalonians 2:17 and 3:10 with 2 Timothy 1:4) – he used personal conferences extensively (1 Thessalonians 2:11-12).

## **DANGERS THAT EXHORTERS SHOULD BE ALERT TO**

### **1. KEEPING OTHERS WAITING FOR THEM**

An exhorter's willingness to give people whatever time is necessary to help them grow spiritually often cuts into his family time and personal responsibilities. He often assumes that his family will understand until major resentments surface (See 1 Corinthians 7:32-34).

### **2. LOOKING TO HIMSELF FOR SOLUTIONS**

As an exhorter gains experience and success in counseling, he tends to categorize problems as he hears them and arrive at conclusions before getting all the facts. By failing to listen completely to, and sensing direction from, the Holy Spirit, an exhorter can be guilty of the folly of giving the wrong direction (Proverbs 18:13). As a result, an exhorter can become overly self-confident.

### **3. BEING "CUT-AND-DRIED" IN PRESCRIBING STEPS OF ACTION**

Because the exhorter desires so much to give good advice, he may easily fall into the trap of given "*pat*" answers. He may counsel three people in a row with the same basic problem and, after prayer, prescribe the same steps of action for each. If these three people are helped, when the *fourth* person comes along with the same problem, the tendency of the exhorter is to not bother to pray about what advice to give him, but, rather, to give him the same counsel that he gave to the other previous three. However, in this case, his counsel, and advice, proves to be ineffective because it is not the advice and counsel that the Holy Spirit wanted administered.

### **4. BEING PROUD OF VISIBLE RESULTS**

When an exhorter gives steps of actions, he assumes that they will be carried out. He bases this expectation on the fact that he has "*come alongside*," and is working with, the person to achieve agreed upon goals. As spiritual growth becomes visible, it is not only easy for an exhorter to take personal credit for it, but he may also be tempted to settle for *outward* conformity rather than true *inward* change.

### **5. STARTING PROJECTS PREMATURELY**

Exhorters tend to jump into new projects without finishing existing ones. They use projects to motivate others and, then, when others get involved, they look to find a better project. While those who are working on projects that go uncompleted may

become frustrated, the exhorter, because he sees these projects as imply a means to accomplishing an even bigger project, does not experience this same frustration.

## **6. TREATING PEOPLE AS PROJECTS**

Because the exhorter is constantly on the lookout for steps of action that will bring lasting results, as he works with his family or friends, he may begin to view them as just another counseling project rather than as real people who need personal attention.

## **7. TENDING TO INTERRUPT OTHERS IN THEIR EASGENRESS TO TIVE OPINIONS OR ADVICE**

Exhorters often have *much* to say, and, while, normally, this may not be a problem, it becomes one when there is an ongoing interchange of conversation and the exhorter tends to interrupt, which can be a source of frustration for others.

## **8. BEING OUTSPOKENLY OPINIONATED**

The exhorter is always ready to tell others what he thinks – and, while he may not be not as rigidly opinionated as the one who has the Motivational Gift of a Perceiver – or the Teacher – nonetheless, he has strong opinions on the matters of life application that, coupled with a “*well-oiled jaw*,” make his opinions spill out readily.

## **9. SHARING PRIVATE ILLUSTRATIONS**

The tendency to treat family and friends as ‘projects,’ rather than as people, increases in magnitude as the exhorter, in his endeavor to communicate his message, shares private illustrations that have come out of his counseling experiences. When the exhorter uses these illustrations without permission, listeners become uneasy and those who have been counseled become resentful.

## **10. PRESENTING TRUTH OUT OF BALANCE**

Because the exhorter believes that it is the point that he is trying to make that is of prime importance, he may use Scripture out of context in order to make that point. Because the exhorter tends to avoid heavy doctrinal teaching that does not have immediate practical application, the result of this emphasis can be an *imbalance* of teaching that will eventually express itself as doctrinal error. Because of this tendency, the exhorter needs the balancing ministry of the teacher.

## **11. SETTING UNREALISTIC GOALS**

Exhorters, who tend to visualize long-range projects and goals for people, when they present these goals they often do so without reference to the amount of time that will be required to achieve them. Because those whom the exhorter motivates assume that the projects and goals will be achieved much sooner than they can be, it creates a situation that raises expectations and breeds disillusionment.

## **12. GIVING UP ON UNCOOPERATIVE PEOPLE**

An exhorter will discontinue personal counseling with someone if he sees that this person is making no effort to change because he tends to lose hope with people who do not quickly, and consistently, respo9nd to the steps of action that he gives

them for their spiritual growth. As a result, he loses the opportunity to instill valuable personal character training, and insights, into the lives of those whom he might not only be a blessing *to*, but, also, been blessed *by*.

Scriptures for those who would like to make a further study of what the Bible has to say concerning an Exhorter, would be:

Joseph – Acts 4:36

Barnabas – Acts 11:22-26

Silas – Acts 15:2-40; 16:25; 17, verses 4 and 10-15; and 1 Peter 5:12

Titus – 2 Corinthians 2:13; 7: verses 6 and 13-14 and 8:6-23;

Galatians 2:1-3; 2 Timothy 4:10 and the book of Titus

Aaron – Book of Exodus, Leviticus and Numbers

To cap this off the description of someone with the Motivational Gift of exhortation would be someone who:

1. Motivates people to become what he see they could be
2. Gives counsel in logical steps of action
3. Usually discerns a person's level of spiritual maturity
4. Enjoys working out projects to help people grow spiritually
5. Sometimes raises premature expectations of results
6. Dislikes teaching that does not give practical direction
7. Likes to see the facial responses of those whom he counsels
8. Often takes "*family time*" to counsel others
9. Soon gives up on those who do not follow his counsel
10. Finds it hard to follow through on the project he has started
11. Identifies with people where they are in order to counsel them

How would someone with the Motivational Gift of Exhortation react in certain situations?

Let's say that someone spills a plate of food on the carpet floor, a person with the Motivational Gift of Exhortation would probably react by saying something like . . .

**"Next time let's serve the food from the left side and pass it clock-wise, so everything flow in the same direction and there isn't as much movement about with the food."**

If, for instance, a person with the Motivational Gift of Exhortation were to visit a sick person, they probably would respond with something like . . .

**"How can we use what you're learning here to help others in the future?"**

Perchance a speaking accidentally spills a glass of water that was on the pulpit while he was speaking, the person with the Motivational Gift of Exhortation might retort with something like . . .

"It happens sometimes, probably will never happen again. Let me encourage you to stimulate your faith!"

## Motivation of the Exhorter is to correct the future

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### UNDERSTANDING THE EXHORTER

The person with a Exhortation motivation will be someone who is very strongly related to living – involved in:

- “*How one ought to live and please God*” – (1 Thessalonians 4:1) –
- “*How to live worthy of God*” (1 Thessalonians 2:11) –
- “*How to Progress in love*” (1 Thessalonians 4:10) –
- “*How to Live So Others Will Respect You*” (1 Thessalonians 4:11-12) –
- “*How To Face Trials*” (Acts 14:22) –
- “*Understanding chastening*” (Hebrews 12:5).

#### ***Tribulation and Faith.***

The person with the “*Teaching Motivational gift*” will teach on faith, and urge the one going through tribulation to just believe in God through it all, while the person with the “*Exhortation Motivational Gift*” will exhort, and encourage, the person going through the tribulation, to see the good and what can result through trials and tribulations.

The body of Christ certainly needs both – God help us to be lead by both Motivational Gifts within the church.

The “*Teacher Motivational Gift*” will be more apt to had out tracts to fully explain the plan of salvation – or helpful literature of some kind – while the “*Exhorter Motivational Gift*” is more apt to attempt to witness orally to at every opportunity he gets.

The exhorter is trilled when he can take hold of someone who follows his “*outlined steps*” of instruction – and is successful in obtaining some conquest. He is deeply concerned that people are helped.

He is involved in counseling a great deal and the kind of person who is constantly looking for experiences he can use in counseling – both from life and from Scripture.

He wants to “*see*” results, and a tendency not to have faith “*without evidence.*” He needs to have balance in his approach to problems.

### THE PROBLEMS OF THE EXHORTER

He, generally, would be a person who needs to be accepted and, can be easily hurt if he is not.

The individual with the Motivational Gift of “*Exhortation*” may have a tendency to be too simplistic – to simple in the solutions he advices – like, for instance, giving three easy steps to success – “*Just do these steps 1,2 and 3, and it will work,*” type of an answer.

It is possible that the exhorter is so caught up in “*living*” the witness of Jesus Christ that he isn’t as rooted in the deep doctrines of the Bible as he ought to be. – or so obsessed with his steps of advice he has given that he doesn’t show enough real concern for the *person*.

### **BIBLICAL – EXHORTER**

Barnabas is a good example of an exhorter. When Paul was converted and spent three years in Arabia learning from God, upon his return, because he had been a murderer of Christians previously, the Apostles would not accept him – however, it was Barnabas who brought him back and encouraged and spiritually stimulated him.

At Antioch they needed someone with a Jewish background, yet educated by Gentiles – to be accepted by them – it was Barnabas who encouraged Saul (his name was later changed to “*Paul*”) to grow and mature to be the man God would use for this work.

Paul was Saul’s Gentile name. Barnabas encouraged him to take his first Gentile missionary journey.

It was Barnabas who accepted, encouraged and helped John Mark when none of the rest of the Apostles seem to want to do it.

Paul, of course, wrote most of the New Testament – John Mark wrote the Gospel of Mark – Barnabas never wrote a book of the New Testament.

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Listed below are the titles of the seven Motivational Gifts listed in Romans 12:6-8. You can choose any one – or more of them – and click on it to download and study.

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #1 – PROPHECY, PERCEPTION

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #2 – SERVING

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #3 – TEACHING

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #4 – EXHORTATION

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #5 – GIVING

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #6 – ADMINISTRATING (ORGANIZING)

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #7 – COMPASSION