

The First Motivational Gift – Prophecy, or Perception

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 12:6 – Amplified Bible, “*Having gifts (faculties, talents, qualities) that differ according to the grace given us, let us use them [He whose gift is] **prophecy**, [let him prophesy] according to the proportion of his faith;*”

The first Motivational Gift the Apostle Paul mentions is “*prophecy*” – as it is listed in the King James Version of the Bible. However, the Greek word that is used to designate this Motivational Gift is “*propheteia*.” It is same Greek word is also used in the list in *both* the “*Ministry Gifts*” [Ephesians 4:11], **and** the “*Manifestation Gifts*” [1 Corinthians 12:10] – to avoid confusion and in an attempt to clarify the meaning of what is inferred to here in the Motivational Gift – and – since this Greek word is also translated “*to perceive*,” I will use this thought in referring to this first Motivational Gift.

Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance defines this Greek word, “*propheteia*” as follows: “*the inspired speaking forth – making known – affirming God’s thoughts*” The perceiver is one who is especially sensitive to perceiving the will of God and then, depending upon the Lord’s direction, proclaiming it. This proclamation is **not** “*prediction*,” but rather, it is an inspired delivery of a warning or exhortation.

The perceiver has an intuitive sense that enables him, or her, to discern the inner motives, the secrets, of people’s hearts. His/her gift is one that enables him/her to view people in the light of God’s Word and, rather than promote suspicion, is one that repairs – builds up – improves – helps – strengthens – and – encourages others.

Old Testament prophets proclaimed truth, exposed and predicted judgment concerning the sins of God’s people. Today the motivation of a prophet would be to use Scripture to reveal the unrighteous motives and actions of others.

Becoming a spokesman for the early Church, Peter seems to be motivated by this gift of perception – Acts 2:14; 3:12; 4:8 and 11:4.

The guidelines for the gift of perception, given in Romans 12:9, are:

1. To love without hypocrisy
2. To abhor evil
3. To cling to the good

CHARACTERISTICS OF A PERCEIVER

1. HE HAS A NEED TO EXPRESS HIMSELF

Those beings used in the motivational Gift of perception are motivated to express their thoughts and ideas verbally, especially when matters of right and wrong are involved.

2. HE HAS AN ALERTNESS TO DISHONESTY

Perceivers have an amazing ability to sense when someone, or something, is not what it appears to be. They react harshly to any form of deception or dishonesty. (Acts 5:3-10 is a good example)

Perceivers grieve deeply over the sins of others. They will inwardly, and even outwardly, weep when they see someone involved in serious sin because they know that sin carries within itself the seeds of destruction.

Perceivers have an intuitive perception of individuals and groups without having to use any kind of outward analysis. They view people, or situations, as either *in* the will of God or *out* of the will of God – there are no grays or indefinite areas – everything tends to be either black or white. They see everything as right or wrong, appropriate or inappropriate, true or false, because they cannot see how there can be anything in between. They are extreme in their feelings, words and actions.

3. HE HAS A DESIRE FOR JUSTICE

Perceivers tend to cut off those who sin so that justice will be done and others will be warned (As illustrated in Matthew 18:21). They have strong opinions and convictions about everything and tend not to always present their opinions gently.

4. HE HAS AN OPENNESS ABOUT HIS OWN FAULTS

Perceivers are open about their own failure (As Peter in Luke 5:8). They are eager to see their own blind spot and to help others see theirs too. They not only tend to be *introspective*, but they also have strict personal standards.

5. HE HAS A WHOLEHEARTED INVOLVEMENT

When a perceiver is committed to a course, he is wholeheartedly involved in it. Within the context of his commitment, he is quick to respond to situations and opportunities (As Peter in Matthew 14:28). Perceivers recognize the importance of obedience and have a desire to be obedient to God at all costs.

6. HE HAS A LOYALTY TO TRUTH VERSES PEOPLE

Perceivers are loyal to truth even if it means cutting off relationships (as Jesus taught in John 6:67-69).

Perceivers view the bible as the basis for truth, beliefs, action and authority. They love to study the Bible and find that God often speaks to them through specific Scriptures, they believe is the only dependable basis for truth. Depending on the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Scriptures to them, they boldly operate on spiritual principles that they are able to extract from God's Word and apply to daily life. They desire, above all else, to see God's plan worked out in all situations.

Perceivers usually have only a few close friendships because (1) Time for friendships is limited since their call to a ministry of prayer requires a significant time commitment – (2) Broad friendships require a degree of tolerance for people with differing standards and beliefs and perceivers have very difficult time to compromise – (3) God's gifting draws perceivers to enjoy being “*alone with Him.*”

7. HE HAS A WILLINGNESS TO SUFFER FOR THE RIGHT

Perceivers are eager to suffer when it comes to standing for the truth or doing what is right (Acts 5:29-42 is a good illustration of this). Perceivers believe that the acceptance of difficulties will produce positive personal brokenness.

8. HE HAS A PERSUASIVENESS IN DEFINING TRUTH

Perceivers have a special ability to be articulate in defining what is right and what is wrong (Acts 2:23 illustrates this). Perceivers encourage repentance that produces good fruit. (Note John the Baptist in Matthew 3:8).

DANGERS THAT PERCEIVERS SHOULD BE ALERT TO

1. MAKING QUICK IMPRESSIONS PEOPLE

Those being used in the Motivational Gift of perception tend to make quick judgments on what they see and hear. They also tend to express their views before others speak (See Matthew 14:28; 15:15; 16:16 and 22; 17:4; 19:2; John 6:68; 13:6).

2. EXPOSING WITHOUT RESTORING

A perceiver's primary concern for stopping the spread of evil tends to cause him to expose a sinner rather than to restore him – despite the fact that he believe exposure of sin is the way to restoration (See Galatians 6:1).

Because the perceiver is frank, outspoken and doesn't mince words, he gets into trouble.

3. JUMPING TO WRONG CONCLUSIONS

Because perceivers, tend to draw conclusions from a few known facts, and tend to look for evidence to confirm their hasty conclusions, the "M.O." [method of operation] that results is their taking the words, and actions, of the accused out of context in order to prove their points.

Perceivers convinced that their views are right – and most often then not they are – can be intolerant of opinions, and views, that differ from their own.

4. REACTING HARSHLY

When a perceiver sees sin, he tends to denounce it so strongly that his denouncement destroys, rather than restores. The perceiver tends to expect immediate repentance regardless of whether his rebuke was given in love or was even fully accurate. The perceiver tends to be judgmental and blunt.

Because of the perceiver's goal consciousness, his desire to get himself, and others, to that place where one is perfectly following the will of God, he tends to forget to praise partial progress.

5. BEING UNFORGIVING

It is seems difficult for a perceiver to make a separation between the sin and the sinner, therefore, he tends to reject them both with equal vigor. As a result, those

who hear his harshness are apt to interpret his denunciations as tirades of anger. In studying the characteristic of a perceiver – note Peter’s epistles provides a *balance* of truth and love of one who has the tendency of a perceiver.

6. CONDEMNING THEMSELVES

Because the harsh judgments that perceivers have for other they also have for themselves, they tend to be extremely self-critical and feel worthless when they fail (Note, Peter feelings of guilt that Jesus corrected in Mark 16:7).

Perceivers, because they have an inner drive to do what is right and are readily aware of their own shortcomings, may struggle with self-image problems.

7. BEING IMPETUOUS

A perceiver, because of his tendency to make quick decisions, can be very impulsive and can vacillate between extremes (See John 13:6-10).

8. CUTTING OFF PEOPLE WHO FAIL

Because whenever perceivers see, or hear, something that is wrong, they feel responsible to speak out against it, therefore, it often does not occur to them to ask, “*Whose responsibility is this? Do I have all the facts? Is it **my** responsibility to take action at this time?*”

9. LACKING TACTFULNESS IN REBUKE

Perceivers tend to be painfully direct when correcting others, no matter who they are, and their bluntness can cause the perceiver embarrassment (Again, see Peter in Mark 8:31-32).

Perceivers can be *pushy* in trying to get others to mature spiritually.

10. DWELLING ON THE NEGATIVE

Perceivers tend to define everything as being either right or wrong and, once they label a person or activity, that judgment not only tends to be fixed in their minds, but they also, very often, feel compelled to persuade others to agree with the, and their judgments.

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

John the Baptist – in Matthew 21:32; Luke 3:2-20 and 7:18-29

Anna – in Luke 2:36-38

Mary – in Matthew, chapters 1 and 2; Mark 6:3; Luke 1:26-56; John 2:1-5 and Acts 1:14

Ananias – in Acts 9:10-17 and 22:12-16

Hosea – in Hosea, chapters 1 through 14

Jeremiah – in Jeremiah, chapters 1 through 52

Isaiah – in Isaiah, chapters 1 through 66

Jonah – in Jonah, chapters 1 through 4

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

1. Sees actions as either right or wrong
2. Reacts strongly to people who are not what they appear to be
3. Can usually detect when something is not what it appears to be
4. Can quickly discern a person's character
5. Feels a responsibility to correct those who do wrong
6. Separates himself from those who refuse to repent of evil
7. Explains what is wrong with an item before he sells it
8. Lets people know how he feels about important issues
9. Enjoys people who are completely honest with him
10. Is quick to judge himself when he fails
11. Does right even if it means suffering alone for it

How would someone with the Motivational Gift of Prophet-Perceiver 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 Prophecy-Perceiver would probably react by saying something like . . .

"That's what happens when you're not careful!"

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

"What is God trying to say to you through this illness? Is there some sin you haven't confessed yet?"

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

You should never have a glass of water there. That was foolish to do. Get your drink before you go into the pulpit. Don't do it again because it is disturbing to the service.

Motivation of the Prophet-Perceiver is to correct the problem

Remember the Motivational Gift is the characteristic one is born with. It is the impulse; inducement or inspiration the person with this motivation is inspired with. It could be said that it is the provocation, persuasion or encouragement this individual has an inclination, or disposition for. The motivation is the stimulation, mobilization, drive or incentive that spurs, urges, or prods him to respond a certain manner. Motivation is what impels, prompts or excites an individual.

Everyone is born into this world with certain “*Motivational Gifts*” (Romans 12: 3). However, whenever anyone accept Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, he must learn to bring *this* motivation – or *these* motivations – under control of the Holy Spirit to be used in the Lord’s work.

We must not have the usual mind-set that these Motivational Gifts are for special leaders, but that “everyone” has one or more Motivational Gift. The Prophet-Perceiver may be one who ministers to a crowd of people – a local congregation – a home Bible study group – however, he may just minister to one, two or a small group of a few people within his circle of influence.

UNDERSTANDING THE PROPHET-PERCEIVER

The person with a Prophet-Perceiver motivation may be someone who is one-on-one with friends and acquaintances, or he may be ministering to a large crowd from a pulpit. He perhaps may sound harsh, curt, or even, rude at times – with a “*ship up or ship out*” attitude. There are no gray areas in living principles with him – everything is either black or white. He may even seem to criticize, or appear to be “*telling someone off*,” however, it is only because he has insight into problems and is concerned deeply by a desire to share answers and exhortations with another – or others.

A lady was speaking very critical to her pastor on one occasion – and said that God gave her the gift of “*telling the preacher off*.” That, of course, is **not** what the prophet-perceiver motivation is! The pastor said to himself, “*I wanted to rebuke her*,” but the Lord told me not to say anything. He said, “*That was no fun because I felt like telling her a thing or two!*” But I smiled, as she left, and said, “*Thank you for coming*” – and muttered to myself, under my breath, “*...and for going!*”

She, of course, did not have a prophet-perceiver motivation. She did not have a broken spirit that a prophet-perceiver would have. She was completely unscriptural with no validity, whatsoever from God’s Word for her actions. A true prophet-perceiver relies heavy on God’s Word.

A Prophet-Perceiver loves to see people repent. They make good altar workers, or if one is preaching, he ministers well in an altar call. He would give frank, direct – hit home – relate to people – invitations.

A Prophet-Perceiver can sound condemning at times, but he is only identifying with others, seeing their wrongs and exposing them. When told that they are too harsh, their answer would probably be, “*I don’t mean to be, I just feel strongly about the situation.*”

He desires to have his own needs meet as well – for others to be direct with him and is generally not upset when they are.

The Prophet-Perceiver can be a very gentle person in his uncompromising views.

THE PROBLEMS OF THE PROPHET-PERCEIVER

There are certain problems with every Motivational Gifts with the Prophet-Perceiver he may appear to others to be too harsh and blunt in his approach to problems. It is very easy for him to be so interested in bringing about God’s plan and purpose that he forgets about “*people*.” He may be tempted to not allow time for spiritual growth – time between one’s knowledge of righteousness and a period for developing progress – but demand immediate action **NOW!**

He may not be number one on everyone’s popularity list due to the fact that, his inclination to “*tell things like they are*” – and “coming on heavy” in correcting what he interpret as problems – makes others hesitant to get too close to him.

BIBLICAL – PROPHET-PERCEIVERS

It would appear that those of the Bible who seemed were quick to demonstrate the truth they were attempting to get across – especially those who were full-time Prophets of God.

Ezekiel, for instance, cooked a meal out of human dung – then ate it in the sight of those he was speaking a message too (Ezekiel 4:12); he took a tile and sketched the city of Jerusalem upon it, then began to portray a city being besieged by war – piling a high pile of dirt around it, then using battering-rams, pushing the dirt down on the tile that represented Jerusalem – all in an effort to teach a truth.

Jeremiah, in Jeremiah 13:1-10, took his unwashed girdle and, after wearing it for a period of time, buried it in rocks until it was rotted and soiled – then, after “*many days*” he dug it up to show the people - all just to prove a point – what God was saying would happen to the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

John the Baptist dressed in rough, wild-looking “*camel hair*” with a leather girdle and ate “*funny things*” – like locust and wild honey (Luke 3:3-20). He didn’t do it to draw attention to himself, but to draw attention to the message of God for the people. He was aware of his own unworthiness. He said, “*I’m not worthy even to unloose Christ’s sandals.*” He validated what he said by God’s Word – Luke 3:4.

John said, “*You brood of snakes! You are trying to escape hell without truly turning to God! That is why you want to be baptized!*⁸ *First go and prove by the way you live that you really have repented. And don’t think you are safe because you are descendants of Abraham. That isn’t enough. God can produce children of Abraham from these desert stones! The ax of his judgment is poised over you, ready to sever your roots and cut you down. Yes, every tree that does not produce good fruit will be chopped down and thrown into the fire*”

(Luke 3:8-9 – Living Bible).

John the Baptist was certainly direct in calling for repentance. He spoke harshly to King Herod as well – he believed that black was black and white was white (Luke 3:19-20).

John the Baptist, as a Prophet-Perceiver, was very protective of God’s purpose in this world. He even questioned whether Jesus was the true Messiah, or not and asked, “*Are You the One we are looking for, or should we look for another?*” (Matthew 11:2-3). He was extremely careful about God’s program on earth. Jesus answered, in essence, “*Can’t you see that I am doing the Scriptural things the Messiah was prophesied to do?*” (Matthew 11:4-6). John’s attitude was, “*Okay! It is Scriptural – I just had to be sure!*” He checked out his beliefs with the Word.

These men were quick to use visual aids to get their message across

These men, of course, were full-time men used mightily of God in their particular field, however, it just may be that God wants to use you, in your small circle of influence in the motivational gift of Prophet-Perceiver.

God has entrusted each of us with talents (motivations) to carry out the work He has for us to do. We are not just numbers in a giant computer, but rather, we are individuals in the plan of God to do a work for Him. We need insight into the operation of the Body of Christ so we can carry out our ministry – and also, to understand others and their ministry!

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 #2 – SERVING

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #3 – TEACHING

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #4 – EXHORTATION

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #5 – GIVING

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #6 – ADMINISTRATING (ORGANIZING)

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT #7 – COMPASSION