

Yielding to Word Gifts¹

Yielding to word gifts begins in everyday life. Below are seven suggestions for becoming more open to their reception and use.

1. First, desire and pray for these gifts: “Make love your aim; but be eager too, for spiritual gifts, and especially for prophesying” (1Cor. 14:1 NJB). The body of Christ as a whole, and you and your prayer meeting in particular, need to be quickened by the word gifts.
2. Second, it is most beneficial to pray with a grateful heart. To thank God ahead of time for receiving word gifts is a heart-opener. Also, giving the Lord permission to use you with the word gifts is a deep kind of self-surrender.
3. Third, ask God to unearth and remove all the obstacles within you to receiving and using word gifts. Sometimes you need to repent of failures and sins in order to respond to God’s gifts. At other times, you might need to seek healing of your self-image, to not be afraid of using the gifts God gives. Fear of rejection and failure appear to be primary stumbling blocks to using word gifts. To be free of such fear, you need to experience God’s love as a precious child, no matter how well or poorly you respond to the Lord.
4. Fourth, you need to persevere in your daily prayer life. Spiritual writers through the ages counsel a personal prayer time of at least fifteen minutes to one half hour per day. If you hope to hear God’s voice consistently, a growing part of that daily time needs to be listening prayer. It is most helpful to keep a spiritual journal of thoughts, impressions, words, messages and visions which God may give during prayer time. Most important is the answer to these questions:
 - Are you seeking Jesus Christ first?
 - Do you want the Giver or just the gifts?
 - Are you ready to obey the Lord as best you can?

¹ Taken from the Pecos BENEDICTINE – June 1992 – article “Charismatic Word Gifts”, John J. Boucher – Permission granted Jan. 30, 2012

5. Fifth, the daily reading, praying and studying of Scripture is essential to yielding to the word gifts. It seems that most often the message of a word gift is like a spotlight suddenly pointed at a single part of the teaching of Scripture and the Church. God seems to be underlining or highlighting that teaching in the “now” word, a special “warm” word that will set lives and the prayer meeting ablaze.
6. Sixth, you need to study the word gifts. See how they worked in the Bible with the prophets of the Hebrew Scriptures, and with the disciples in the New Testament. Read books and listen to tapes of the word gifts, especially from within your Catholic traditions.
7. Seventh, use the gifts God gives in everyday life as well as in prayer meetings. God doesn't want word gifts used only in charismatic prayer meetings. People around you need to hear God's word everyday.

When you don't use your gifts from the body of Christ, you are not only burying the talents God has given, you are failing to love your brothers and sisters.

Let the Word of Christ, in all its richness find a home within you. Teach each other, and advise each other, in all wisdom. With gratitude in your hearts sing psalms and hymns and inspired songs to God; and whatever you say or do, let it be in the name of the Lord Jesus, in thanksgiving to God the Father through him. (Col 3:16-17 NJB)