



Spiritual Gifts



Spiritual gifts are supernatural manifestations of the Holy Spirit in believers, and every believer has at least one spiritual gift. The gifts are used to bring God glory, and to build up others in the church, for the benefit of all corporately. The apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 1:4; 7 (NLT), *“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all... A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.”*

Do you know what your spiritual gift(s) are? Are you using them?

Primarily the spiritual gifts are listed in three passages of scripture, (Romans 12:6-8, 1Corinthians 12:8-10; 28-30, and Ephesians 4:11), although others are mentioned elsewhere.

The following are the Spiritual Gifts in scripture, with descriptions:

The Gift of Administration

The spiritual gift of administration is the divine strength or ability to organize multiple tasks and groups of people to accomplish these tasks. With this gift, the Holy Spirit enables certain Christians to organize, direct, and implement plans to lead others in various ministries. This gift is more goal or task oriented and is more concerned with details and organization.

Acts 6:1-7; I Corinthians 12:28; Titus 1:4-5

The Gift of Apostleship

The spiritual gift of apostleship is sometimes confused with the office of apostle. The office of apostle was held by a limited number of men chosen by Jesus, including the twelve disciples (Mark 3:13-19) and Paul (Romans 1:1). The requirements for the office of apostle included being a faithful eyewitness of Jesus’ ministry and His resurrection (Acts 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 9:1), and being called by Jesus himself (Galatians 1:1). No one holds the office of apostle today, but the gift of apostleship continues in a different sense. Jesus gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers at His ascension (Ephesians 4:7-12), and these represent a distinct category of apostles. They do not have the authority to write scripture as the original Apostles did. They also have a different purpose in the sense of establishing the church – the foundation has already been set. The gift of apostleship is the divine strength or ability to pioneer new churches and ministries through planting, overseeing, and training. This gift is given often in places where the Gospel is not preached.

Acts 15:22-35; 1 Corinthians 9:1; 12:28; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Galatians 2:7-10; Ephesians 4:11-14

The Gift of Craftsmanship

The gift of craftsmanship and artistry is the divine strength or ability to plan, build, work with your hands, and use creative skills in environments to accomplish multiple ministry applications. This gift provides the believer with the skill of creating artistic expressions that produce a spiritual response of strength and inspiration. Although not specifically listed as a gift in the New Testament, clearly God has gifted individuals with remarkable craftsmanship and artistic skills since the Old testament times.

Exodus 30:22, 31:3-11; 2 Chronicles 34:9-13

The Gift of Discernment

The spiritual gift of discernment is the divine ability to spiritually identify falsehood. The word “discernment” actually describes being able to distinguish, discern, judge or appraise a person, statement, situation, or environment. The church needs those with this gift to warn believers in times of danger or keep them from being led astray by false teachings and philosophies.

Acts 5:1-11, 16:16-18; I Corinthians 12:10, Acts 5:3-6; 16:16-18; 1 John 4:1.

The Gift of Evangelism

All Christians are called to evangelize and reach out to the lost with the gospel (Matthew 28:18-20), but some are given an extra measure of faith, ability and effectiveness in this area. The spiritual gift of evangelism is the divine strength and ability to help non-Christians take the necessary steps to becoming a born-again Christian. Those with this gift are burdened in their hearts for the lost and will go out of their way to share the truth with them.

Acts 8:5-6, 8:26-40, 14:21, 21:8; Ephesians 4:11-14

The Gift of Exhortation

The spiritual gift of exhortation is often called the “gift of encouragement.” The gift of exhortation is the divine ability to strengthen, comfort or urge others to action through the written or spoken word and Biblical truth. Those with the gift of exhortation can uplift and motivate others as well as challenge and rebuke them in order to foster spiritual growth and action.

Acts 14:22; Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 4:13; Hebrews 10:24-25

The Gift of Faith

The spiritual gift of faith is not to be confused with saving faith. All Christians have been given saving faith (Ephesians 2:8-9), but not all receive this special gift of faith. The gift of faith is the divine ability to believe in God for unseen supernatural results in every arena of life – especially in difficult situations. Those with this gift have a trust and confidence in God that allows them to live boldly for Him and manifest that faith in mighty ways.

Acts 11:22-24; Romans 4:18-21; 1 Corinthians 12:9; Hebrews 11

The Gift of Giving

The spiritual gift of giving is the divine strength or ability to give to others – including tithes and offerings for the purpose of advancing the kingdom of God on earth. The Greek word for “giving” is often accompanied by another descriptive word: “haplotes”. This word means “sincerely, generously and without pretense or hypocrisy.” The Holy Spirit imparts this gift to some in the church to meet the various needs of the church and its ministries, missionaries, or of people who do not have the means to provide fully for themselves. People who have received this gift are typically very hospitable and seek out ways and opportunities to help others.

Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7; 9:2-7

The Gift of Healing

The spiritual gift of healing is the divine ability to act as intermediary - in faith, prayer, and by laying-on of hands for the healing of physical, mental, and spiritual sickness. This gift is interesting in that there is no guarantee that a person will always be able to heal anyone he or she desires. It is subject to the sovereign will of God, as all spiritual gifts are. The apostle Paul was not able to heal himself and was told that God’s grace was sufficient to carry him through his infirmity without removing it from him (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). This gift is given at various times and places to reveal the God of heaven to the sick and tormented. If healing is not granted, then we can conclude that God has greater plans for letting the person go through the illness or infirmity. Those who have this gift are compassionate toward the sick and pray over them regularly.

Acts 3:1-10; 9:32-35; 28:7-10; 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28; James 5:13-16.

The Gift of Helps

The spiritual gift of helps, service or ministering is the divine strength or ability to work in a supportive role for the accomplishment of tasks in Christian ministry often with the ability to often see the need before others do. The basic meaning of this word “helps” or “service” is to “wait tables,” but it is most often translated in the Bible as “ministry.” It refers to any act of service done in genuine love for the edification of the community. The Holy Spirit endows some believers with this gift to fill the many gaps of ministry and meet the needs of the church. Those with this gift do not seek recognition or a position in the “spotlight,” they just love to help out. They are content with serving in the background knowing that their contribution will bless the church, display the love of Christ to the world, and bring glory to God.

Acts 9:36; Romans 12:7; 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 2 Timothy 4:11

The Gift of Hospitality

The gift of hospitality is the divine strength or ability to create warm, welcoming environments for others in places such as your home, office, or church. Those who have received this gift often host people for a meal, or invite a group of people over for fellowship. They are quick to introduce themselves to you, and take time to get to know you a little better. They are willing to extend open arms and open doors, just about any time. This gift is listed in 1 Peter 4:9–10 (NIV): *“Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.”*

Acts 16:14-15; Romans 12:13, 16:23; Hebrews 13:1-2; 1 Peter 4:9

The Gift of Intercessory Prayer

We are all commanded by God to pray but some Christians actually have a gift of Intercessory prayer. The gift of intercessory prayer is the divine strength or ability to stand in the gap in prayer for someone, something, or someplace, believing God for profound results. This person is quick to turn to prayer, and can pray for an extended periods. This person is seldom at a loss for words when they pray. Often they pray with scripture and use words that fluidly flow through their mind. They are happy to pray for others and consider it an honor when they do.

Hebrews 7:25; Colossians 1:9-12, 4:12-13; James 5:14-16

The Gift of Interpretation of Tongues

The spiritual gift of interpretation of tongues is found alongside the gift of speaking in tongues in 1 Corinthians 12:10. The gift of tongues in church must be accompanied by interpretation and should be used appropriately. The spiritual gift of interpretation is given by the Holy Spirit to certain individuals to reveal the words spoken by those with gift of tongues (words directed to God for the continuity of worship, within the church). Therefore, this spiritual gift is the supernatural ability to understand and explain messages uttered in an unknown language. Like the gift of prophecy, tongues that are interpreted have the effect of encouraging and blessing the church to love and serve God more deeply and effectively.

1 Corinthians 12:10, 30; 14:1-28.

The Gift of Knowledge

The spiritual gift of knowledge is the divine ability to bring truth to a situation by supernatural revelation - often accompanied by God's word (the Bible). The scriptural emphasis on the ability to speak this knowledge to others in a given situation (1 Corinthians 12:8). This gift is closely related to the gift of wisdom which is alluded to by Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31. The gift of knowledge allows a believer to relate the Scriptures, and particularly the gospel of Jesus Christ, to all aspects of life in this world.

Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:8; Romans 15:14; 2 Corinthians 2:14; Colossians 2:2-3.

The Gift of Leadership

The gift of leadership is the divine strength or ability to influence people at their level while directing and focusing them on the big picture, vision, or idea. The spiritual gift of leadership is closely related to the gift of administration and, interestingly, the spiritual gift of pastor/shepherd. The spiritual gift of leadership is found in Romans 12:8 sandwiched between the gifts of giving and of mercy. It is placed there intentionally to show that it is a gift associated with caring for others. This is what connects it to the gift of pastor/shepherd, and what differentiates it from the gift of administration. It is more people oriented than task oriented in its application. The Holy Spirit gives the spiritual gift of leadership to some in the church to care for God's people and lead them into deeper relationship with Christ and each other.

Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 3:1-13, 5:17; Hebrews 13:17

The Gift of Mercy

All Christians are called to be merciful because God has been merciful to us (Matthew 18:33; Ephesians 2:4-6). The gift of mercy is the divine strength or ability to feel empathy and to care for those who are hurting in any way. They are sensitive to the feelings and circumstances of others and can quickly discern when someone is not doing well. They are typically good listeners and feel the need to simply “be there” for others.

Romans 12:8; 1 Thess. 5:14; James 3:17; Jude 22-23.

The Gift of Miracles

Miracles were given by God to the church to reveal the presence and glory of God among His people and to create a sense of awe and wonder and Godly fear. The gift of miracles is the divine strength or ability to alter the natural outcomes of life in a supernatural way through prayer, faith, and divine direction. The spiritual gift of miracles is literally translated “*workings of powers.*” The double plural likely means that these gifts were diverse and not permanently available at the will of the gifted believer, but instead were bestowed at various times and circumstances. Thus, the gifts are subject to the divine will of God and His purposes and are not decided by the one who performs the miraculous works. Those with the spiritual gift of miracles often have a heightened sensitivity to the presence and power of God through His Holy Spirit. They have a special measure of faith and desire for God to reveal Himself and draw many to faith. Further, they take care not to draw attention to themselves or have a following of people, but are constantly pointing others to Jesus.

Acts 9:36-42, 19:11-12, 20:7-12; Romans 15:18-19; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28-29; Galatians 3:5.

The Gift of Pastor/Shepherd

The gift of pastor/shepherd is the divine strength or ability to care for the personal needs of others by nurturing and mending life issues, feeding them with Word of God, and protecting them via God’s truth. The Greek word for pastor is “poimen” and simply means shepherd or overseer. In the biblical context, shepherds had several different responsibilities to their sheep and ultimately, to the owner of the sheep. Pastors are called shepherds because their calling and gifting are much like those who care for sheep. They are called and gifted to humbly minister to a local body of God’s people; teaching, guiding, protecting, and leading them in the mission that God has for His church.

John 10:11-18; Acts 20:28; Ephesians 4:11-14; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3

The Gift of Prophecy

The gift of prophecy is an extraordinary and unique gift. The Apostle Paul said in 1 Corinthians 14:1 to “Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy.” Further he indicated that this gift is a blessing to the church and should not be quenched or despised (1 Thessalonians 5:20). Those who have this gift differ from Old Testament Prophets who spoke the authoritative Word of God directly. Primarily in the New Testament, this gift is the divine ability to communicate God’s truth and heart in a way that calls people to a right relationship with God. It is the ability to receive a divinely inspired message and deliver it to others within the church.

Acts 2:37-40, Romans 12:6, 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:1-5, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:10-11.

The Gift of Teaching

The gift of teaching is the divine strength or ability to study and learn from the Scriptures primarily to bring understanding and depth to other Christians. This gift carries a heavy responsibility in the church, whereas James 3:1 warns, *“Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.”* Teachers have been entrusted with the task of effectively communicating what the Bible says, what it means, and how we as followers of Jesus Christ are to apply it to our lives here and now. Those with the spiritual gift of teaching love to study the Word of God for extended periods of time. They also take great joy and satisfaction in seeing others learn and apply the truth of God’s Word to their lives.

Acts 18:24-28, 20:20-21; Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-14; James 3:1

The Gift of Tongues

The gift of tongues is the divine ability to pray in a foreign human language, or a heavenly language to encourage your own spirit and commune with God. According to Acts 2, Tongues can be human languages such as those heard on the day of Pentecost, and are sign for unbelievers (1Corinthians 14:22). However, tongues may often be a heavenly language no one understands (1 Corinthians 14:2), and as the apostle says, *“tongues of angels and men”* (1 Corinthians 13:2).

Tongues are not prophetic words, but words spoken to God directly (1 Corinthians 14:2). This gift is the only spiritual gift for the edification of the believer himself or herself, or if in public setting for the edification of others, with an interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:4). Tongues are not ‘out of control speech’, but is a language spoken controllably by the one speaking and in order (1 Corinthians 14:33; 39-40). No tongues should be spoken in a public gathering without interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:28).

Not every believer receives this gift, and it is not a sign of salvation. (1 Corinthians 12:30).

Acts 2:1-13; 19:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 30; 14:1-14, 22-28

The Gift of Wisdom

The gift of wisdom is the divine ability to understand and bring clarity to situations and circumstances, often through applying the truths of Scripture in a practical way. It is the ability to hear a situation and be able to speak to that situation with great understanding. According to James 1:5, any believer may ask for wisdom, and God promises to give wisdom. The Holy Spirit gives some the spiritual gift of wisdom to invoke a response of holiness and worship lived out in the world and amongst God’s people.

Acts 6:3, 10; 1 Corinthians 2:6-13; 12:8; Colossians 1:9-10, 2:1-3; James 3:13-18

Be Equipped



PRACTICAL QUESTION:

How am I going to know I am truly exercising my Spiritual Gifts (operating in my spiritual zone)?

There are three forms of validation that help us know that we are serving in conformity with our spiritual gifting:

1. UNEXPLAINABLE OUTCOMES

Acts 4:13, "...unschooled ordinary men..."

The more I serve in conformity with my Spiritual gifting, the more unexplainable the outcome of my contribution (exceeding the expected, Ephesians 3:20).

2. UNSPEAKABLE JOY

John 15:11, "My joy may be in you and your joy may be complete"

The more I serve in conformity with my Spiritual gifting, the greater the joy I experience in it and from it (literally the Lord's joy flooding my heart and mind).

3. UNDENIABLE AFFIRMATIONS

Galatians 2:9, "... when they recognized the grace given to me..."

The more I serve in conformity with my Spiritual gifting, the more God's people recognize it, affirm it and encourage me in it (it is actually the Spirit's affirmation given through the Body of Christ).

We must be expectant with our spiritual gifts! The Apostle Paul said to Timothy: *"Don't neglect the gift in you..." (1 Timothy 4:4)*. The apostle Peter said: *"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God." (1 Peter 4:10)*.

We should desire to grow in our spiritual gifts, and in confidence of God's grace, expecting Him to do great things in and through us!



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