

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Holy Spirit displays God's power through each of us as a means of helping the entire church.

~1 Corinthians 12:7

Many of us have heard of spiritual gifts, but we are not quite sure we understand them. A spiritual gift is a special ability, given by the Holy Spirit to every believer at their conversion, to be used to minister to others and therefore build up the Body of Christ. Although spiritual gifts are given when the Holy Spirit enters new believers, their use and purpose need to be understood and developed as we grow spiritually. A spiritual gift is much like a muscle; the more you use it, the stronger it becomes.

A Few Truths about Spiritual Gifts

1. Only *believers* have spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 2:14
2. You can't *earn or work for* a spiritual gift. Ephesians 4:7
3. The *Holy Spirit* decides what gifts I get. 1 Corinthians 12:11
4. I am to *develop* the gifts God gives me. Romans 11:29
5. It's a sin to *waste* the gifts God gave me. 1 Corinthians 4:1-2 and Mt 25:14-30
6. Using my gifts *honors* God and *expands* me. John 15:8

Unwrapping My Gifts

God desires you to know the spiritual gift(s) He has chosen for you. "Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened." (Matt. 7:7,8)

Learning more about His gift(s) to us, and the many ways we can use those gifts within the church is a life-long process.

The Bible does not lock us into tight restrictions as to the number of spiritual gifts or even their definitions. The four major lists of gifts are found in Romans 12:3-8, I Corinthians 12:1-11, 27-31, Ephesians 4:11-12, and I Peter 4:9-11. There are other passages that mention or illustrate gifts not included in these lists. One person can have many gifts.

This list can serve as a helpful guideline, giving us ideas about the kinds of gifts God gives. The key is to find the areas in which the Holy Spirit seems to supernaturally empower your service to others.

Instructions: As you read through this list, prayerfully consider if the biblical definition for each of the gifts describes you. Remember, you can have more than one gift, but everyone has at least one.

Example: Cindy has the gift of service and expresses this gift in the Children's Ministry. She helps secure the textbooks, prepares the handouts, and helps with registration. Cindy is willing to serve in any way possible to take the load off the teacher so she can focus on using her speaking gift more effectively. The gift of service edifies the gifts of others, freeing them from temporal tasks to focus on their spiritual gifts. People with the gift of service often like to work behind the scenes.

A SHORT LIST OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS (From I Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, Romans 12)

Adapted from p. 5-7 of the <i>S.H.A.P.E. Discovery Tool</i> from Saddleback Church California	I'm pretty sure I have this gift	I may have this gift	I don't think I have this gift
ADMINISTRATION I Corinthians 12 (This is sometimes called “Organization”) • The ability to recognize the gifts of others and recruit them to a ministry. The ability to organize and manage people, resources, and time for effective ministry.			
APOSTLE I Corinthians 12 • The ability to start new churches/ventures and oversee their development.			
DISCERNMENT I Corinthians 12 • The ability to distinguish between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error. The ability to detect inconsistencies in another's life and confront in love.			
ENCOURAGEMENT Romans 12 (This is sometimes called “Exhortation”) • The ability to motivate God's people to apply and act on biblical principles, especially when they are discouraged or wavering in their faith. The ability to bring out the best in others and challenge them to develop their potential.			
EVANGELISM Ephesians 4 • The ability to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ to unbelievers in a positive, non-threatening way. The ability to sense opportunities to share Christ and lead people to respond with faith.			
FAITH I Corinthians 12 • The ability to trust God for what cannot be seen and to act on God's promise, regardless of what the circumstances indicate. The willingness to risk failure in pursuit of a God-given vision, expecting God to handle the obstacles.			
GIVING Romans 12 • The ability to generously contribute material resources and/or money beyond the 10% tithe so that the Body may grow and be strengthened. The ability to manage money so it may be given to support the ministry of others.			
HEALING I Corinthians 12 • The ability to pray, in faith, specifically for people who need physical, emotional, or spiritual healing and see God answer. The ability to sense when God is prompting you to pray this kind of prayer.			
HOSPITALITY 1 Peter 4:9-10 • The ability to make others, especially strangers, feel warmly welcomed, accepted, and comfortable in the church family. The ability to coordinate factors that promote fellowship.			

A SHORT LIST OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS (From I Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, Romans 12), Continued	I'm pretty sure I have this gift	I may have this gift	I don't think I have this gift
LEADERSHIP Romans 12 • The ability to clarify and communicate the purpose and direction (“vision”) of a ministry in a way that attracts others to get involved. The ability to motivate others, by example, to work together in accomplishing a ministry goal.			
MERCY Romans 12 • The ability to manifest practical, compassionate, cheerful love toward suffering members of the Body of Christ.			
MIRACLES I Corinthians 12 • The ability to pray, in faith, specifically for God’s supernatural intervention into an impossible situation and see God answer. The ability to sense when God is prompting you to pray this kind of prayer.			
PASTORING Ephesians 4 (This is sometimes called “Shepherding”) • The ability to care for the spiritual needs of a group of believers and equip them for ministry. The ability to nurture a small group in spiritual growth and assume responsibility for their welfare.			
PRAYING WITH MY SPIRIT I Corinthians 12 This is also called Tongues or Interpretation • The ability to pray in a language understood only by God or one who is given the gift of interpretation at that time.			
PREACHING Romans 12 (This is sometimes called “Prophecy”) • The ability to publicly communicate God’s Word in an inspired way that convinces unbelievers and both challenges and comforts believers. The ability to persuasively declare God’s will.			
SERVICE Romans 12 • The ability to recognize unmet needs in the church family, and take the initiative to provide practical assistance quickly, cheerfully, and without a need for recognition.			
TEACHING Ephesians 4 • The ability to educate God’s people by clearly explaining and applying the Bible in a way that causes them to learn. The ability to equip and train other believers for ministry.			
WISDOM 1 Corinthians 12 • The ability to understand God’s perspective on life situations and share those insights in a simple, understandable way. The ability to explain what to do and how to do it.			