



What are spiritual gifts and what is their purpose?

There are different kinds of gifts but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. (1 Cor. 12:4-5)

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. (1 Pet. 4:10)

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. (Romans 12:4-6a)

Although opinions differ on the actual number of spiritual gifts, God's Word clearly indicates a variety of gifts.

These gifts are essential for spreading the gospel, leading the church, building up believers, and serving others as an example of God's love.

Sometimes spiritual gifts are referred to as "gifts of the Holy Spirit." Whichever term you're using, it's vital to understand that we're talking about gifts that are only within people who believe in Jesus, because His Holy Spirit is within them.

Spiritual gifts are not just special skills that some followers of Jesus just have in the way people in general have natural abilities. No one should become proud for possessing spiritual gifts, because they are simply God expressing Himself through people as they depend on Him.

This is why, shortly before Jesus promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His closest friends, the disciples, He gave them an instruction that also serves as a warning:

"I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in Me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing." (John 15:5, NIV)

Apart from Him, you can do nothing. This needs to be the foundation on which you seek to discover and develop the spiritual gifts God gives you.

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.

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

Teaching involves explaining God's word and truth with unusual effectiveness.

A person who has the gift of teaching is one who has the ability to instruct, explain, or expose Biblical truth in such a way as to cause believers to understand the Biblical truth.

The Gift that enables a believer to communicate a personal understanding of the Bible and faith in such a way that it becomes clear and understood by others.

How to apply: Adult Bible Class Teacher, Sunday School Teacher, Teen Bible Class Teacher, Vacation Bible School Teacher, Conference/Seminar Leader

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.

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

Leadership involves motivating and inspiring others to serve Jesus fully

A person operating with a leadership gift demonstrates the capacity to exercise influence over a group so as to lead it toward a goal or purpose with a particular emphasis on the capacity to make decisions and keep the group operating together.

The Gift that gives a believer the confidence to step forward, give direction and provide motivation to fulfill a dream or complete a task

Leadership: Catechetical Leader, Committee Chairperson (all types), Fellowship Activity Coordinator, Vacation Bible School Coordinator, Parish Council President, Speaker-Special Events

Intercession

The gift of intercession is the divine strength or ability to stand in the gap in prayer for someone, something, or someplace, believing for profound results.

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

Intercession involves praying with unusual passion and effectiveness

Those with this gift often feel compelled to pray for specific requests when they are made known. Gifted intercessors have a much greater occurrence of specific answers to prayer than most Christians. Intercessors often have an acute understanding that prayer is genuinely a conversation with God, and when left alone, find themselves engaged in prayer. Many intercessors experience times when God moves them to pray for situations when they are not entirely sure what they are praying for. To those who get to know intercessors well, prayer becomes contagious. Those with this gift should help others learn how to pray more effectively.

The Gift that enables a believer to pray with the certainty that prayer is heard and when requests are made, answers will come.

Intercession: Prayer Chain, Prayer Partner, Prayer Families/Prayer Circles

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.

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

Hospitality involves using your home and/or resources to help others follow Jesus

The gifts of hospitalities in the Biblical concept often use the terms "guest," "stranger," and "sojourner." It is useful to limit the meaning of "hospitality" to those outside one's normal circle of friends, as is implied in the literal meaning of the Greek word meaning "love of strangers."

Hospitality involves the Gift that causes a believer to joyfully welcome and receive guests and those in need of food and lodging

Hospitality: Greeter/Usher, New Parishioner Sponsor, In-Home Bible Study Host, Visitor Welcome/Information Center, Banquet Server, Fellowship Hour Host/Server

Helps/Service

The gift of serving is the divine strength or ability to do small or great tasks in working for the overall good of the body of Christ.

Acts 6:1-7; Romans 12:7; Galatians 6:10; 1 Timothy 1:16-18; Titus 3:14

Serving involves meeting practical needs with unusual sacrifice and joy

The gifts of helping refers to the capacity to unselfishly meet the needs of others through very practical means.

A person with the gift of service is often patient and others-centered. They see needs and finds joy in meeting them. They show love through action more than words and they attach value to even menial tasks.

The Gift that enables a believer to work gladly behind the scenes in order that God's work is fulfilled.

Service (Helps): Computer Programmer/Data Entry, Newsletter Collation, P.A./Sound System Technician, Tape Recording Worship Services, Child Care, Building/Grounds Upkeep, Kitchen Cleaning Team, Providing Transportation

Generosity/Giving

The gift of giving is the divine strength or ability to produce wealth and to give by tithes and offerings for the purpose of advancing the Kingdom of God on earth.

Mark 12:41-44; Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7, 9:2-7 65

Giving involves investing with unusual sacrifice and joy in God's Kingdom

The gift of giving refers to the capacity to give liberally to meet the needs of others and yet to do so with a purity of motive which senses that the giving is a simple sharing of what God has given to you.

The Gift that enables a believer to recognize God's blessings and to respond to those blessings by generously and sacrificially giving of one's resources (time, talent, and treasure)

Giving: Capital Campaign Steering Team, Stewardship Team, Volunteer Coordination, Giving Personal Testimony

Evangelism

The gift of evangelism is the divine strength or ability to help non-Christians take the necessary steps to becoming a born-again Christian.

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

Evangelism involves sharing the gospel effectively and passionately

The gift of evangelism in general refers to the capacity to challenge people through various communicative methods (persuasion) to receive the Gospel of salvation in Christ so as to see them respond by taking initial steps in Christian discipleship.

The Gift that moves believers to reach nonbelievers in such a way that they are baptized and become active members of the Christian community.

Evangelism: New Parishioner Visitation, Evangelization Commission, Advertising and Marketing, Community Visitation

Encouragement/Exhortation

The gift of exhortation is the divine strength or ability to strengthen, comfort or urge others to action through the written or spoken word and Biblical truth.

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

Exhortation involves encouraging others as they follow Jesus

The gift of exhortation is the capacity to urge people to action in terms of applying Biblical truths, or to encourage people generally with Biblical truths, or to comfort people through the application of Biblical truth to their needs.

Exhortation: the Gift that moves the believer to reach out with Christian love and presence to people in personal conflict facing a spiritual void.

Exhortation: Mutual Ministry Team, Hospital/Home/Institution Visitation, Telecare Ministry, Peer Counseling, Small Group Leader

Artistic

The Gift that gives the believer the skill of creating artistic expressions that produce a spiritual response of strength and inspiration.

Artistry: Banner Making, Drama Club/Clown Ministry/Puppetry, Film/Photography Work, Crafts/Handicrafts, Decorating Team, Set/Props Design Team

Craftsmanship

The gift of craftsmanship is the divine strength or ability to plan, build, and work with your hands in construction environments to accomplish multiple ministry applications.

Exodus 30:22, 31:3-11; 2 Chronicles 34:9-13; Acts 18:2-3

A person who is enabled to creatively design and/or construct items to be used for ministry.

The Gift that enables a believer to create, build, maintain or repair items used within the church.

Skilled Crafts: Building Maintenance/Upkeep, Electrical/Masonry/Plumbing/Roofing, Mechanical Repair/Maintenance, Audio/Visual Operator and Repair, Computer Maintenance, Web-Page Developer

Counseling

With the gift of counsel/right judgment, we know the difference between right and wrong, and we choose to do what is right. A person with right judgment avoids sin and lives out the values taught by Jesus. The gift of truth that allows the person to respond prudently, and happily to believe our Christ the Lord.

The Gift of Counsel helps us to live the moral law as a relationship with God. The Holy Spirit speaks to us in the depths of our hearts about how to embrace goodness.

The Gift of Counsel inspires us to see God's moral law as a beautiful expression of His love and an invitation to participate in His goodness, rather than seeing it as a burden.

Administration

The gift of administration is the divine strength or ability to organize multiple tasks and groups of people to accomplish these tasks.

Luke 14:28-30; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 12:28

Administration involves organizing people and ministries effectively

The gifts of administration involves a capacity to manage details of service functions so as to support and free other leaders to prioritize their efforts

The Gift that enables a believer to formulate, direct, and carry out plans necessary to fulfill a purpose

Administration: Parish Council, Finance Council, Catechetical Leader, Vacation Bible School Coordinator, Business Manager

With which Gifts have you been truly blessed? Discovering the answer to that question requires the following:

Prayer:

Seek the Holy Spirit's guidance while evaluating your Gifts.

Study:

Become familiar with the scripture references, definitions, and how each Gift functions within the Body of Christ. This will provide you with a solid foundation from which to further evaluate your Gifts.

Self-Examination:

Explore your feelings about each of the Spiritual Gifts in your cluster. Examples of how each Gift may be utilized in the church are provided below. As you read these examples, ask yourself how you feel about the types of ministry activity identified for the Gifts in your cluster. You may expect to feel fulfilled through the use of your Gifts.

Track Your Results:

As you use your Spiritual Gifts, pay close attention to the results produced through your efforts. You can expect to experience positive results from the use of your Gifts.

Listen For Affirmation:

As you use your Spiritual Gifts, listen for affirmation from other Christians. They will recognize and confirm your Spiritual Gifts, through genuine expressions of approval and thankfulness for a job well done!

Putting Your Gifts To Use:

All Christians are to work together, supporting one another. However, our Gifts make us better prepared and equipped to perform in some areas of ministry over others. A person who is working within a ministry area in which he or she is Gifted for, will be more effective in that ministry than one for which he or she is not Gifted.