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a spiritual  
gifts  
inventory  
for students

healing intercession

mercy shepherding

teaching

discernment

hospitality evangelism

by andy stephenson, jim davey, and rick winford

a spiritual  
gifts  
inventory  
for students

by Andy Stephenson, Jim Davey, and Rick Winford

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# INTRODUCTION



Many believers haven't discovered their spiritual gifts, and yet the Holy Spirit has gifted each member of the body of Christ. As teenagers seek to find God's plan for their lives, they are often unclear as to what spiritual gifts they possess. This book will help them to discover their gifts, learn what they mean, and begin to use those gifts in ministry.

**Only one copy of this book is needed to teach, since it contains reproducible pages for students.** The layout is as follows:

Session 1	Understanding the Spirit's Gifts	page 2
Session 2	Discovering My Gifts	page 5
Session 3	Using My Gifts	page 8

The actual spiritual gifts inventory is found in Session 3 and could be used as a one-time lesson, but the other sessions will provide additional understanding and application of the spiritual gifts. Each session is structured to last about an hour, but feel free to adapt these materials to fit the needs of your class and the time available. **If you would like a more in-depth study for your students on the Holy Spirit and his role in their lives, check out *Feeling the Wind* in the Ultimate Adventure Remix series.**

May God bless you as we work together to raise up a new generation of Christ-centered leaders.

Committed to raising up a new generation of Christ-centered leaders,

Andy Stephenson, Jim Davey, and Rick Winford



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## Understanding the Spirit's Gifts

### Objectives

- To discover the meaning of spiritual gifts.
- To remind students that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to every believer, even students.
- To discover how important each person's gifts are to the entire church.

### Resources Needed

- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Copies of "Test Yourself" (Appendix 1), pens or pencils
- Bibles

## 1 Leading Into the Session

Invite students to share about the best gift they have ever received. This may be a Christmas or birthday gift, something for some other special occasion, or something that was a total surprise. When was it received? What were the circumstances? How was it responded to?

Next, ask, *What do you think is the greatest gift God has ever given to you? After a few answers are given, say, Salvation is the greatest gift we will ever receive. However, the Holy Spirit has also given us other special gifts as believers.*

Ask, *Have you ever heard of spiritual gifts? How would you define this term?* Here is a good definition (you may wish to write it on the board):

A spiritual gift is a significant ability given to each believer by the Holy Spirit, who in this way equips and moves members of the church to serve others in special ways for Christ and his kingdom.

Invite students to comment concerning this definition. Emphasize the following points:

- A spiritual gift is a significant ability. It's an area of service that is above and beyond normal.
- Spiritual gifts are given to each believer—not just to some people but to everyone.
- Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit. This is a promise we can count on.

- Spiritual gifts equip and move members of the church to serve others. Each gift relates to certain needs.
- Spiritual gifts are for Christ and his kingdom. They are ultimately for God’s glory and his alone.

Distribute copies of “Test Yourself” (found in Appendix 1) and give students time to complete the quick survey. After students have completed the handout, go over the correct answers as follows:

1. a, b, e (You will talk about this today.)
2. True (It’s not the name that is important, but the reason for the name.)
3. False (The Holy Spirit gives the gifts as he chooses.)
4. c (Both talents and gifts are given by God. Talents are also possessed by nonbelievers. Gifts are given to believers for a biblically defined purpose to benefit the body of Christ. Talents are more broad and general.)
5. a, c, e (Refer students to 1 Corinthians 13 and Galatians 5:22–23. The gifts without love are nothing.)
6. b (Discovery of our gifts does not exclude us from serving Christ in whatever way he chooses to lead us.)
7. d (Our gifts are designed to help other believers in the church. There is no room for valuing one gift over another or thinking about ourselves.)
8. a, b, c, d, e (It is never about our glory. Further study does not make us more gifted.)
9. a,d (Once we discover our spiritual gift or gifts, we should develop them so that they can be fully used for God’s glory.)
10. a, c, e (Busy-ness and more programs are never the goal of spiritual gifts. In fact, the opposite should be true: the programs will become more effective if everyone is using their spiritual gifts.)

Move on by saying, *We are now ready to dive into God’s Word to discover specific information about the gifts.*

## **2** Leading Through the Session

The passages that follow will help your students understand the nature and purposes of spiritual gifts. Read together each passage and discuss the accompanying questions:

### *1 Peter 4:10–11*

- **Does everyone have a gift?** Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift.
- **How are the gifts supposed to be used?** To serve others.
- **Who receives the glory when we exercise our gifts?** God does.

### *Romans 12:3–8*

- **How is the church like the human body?** Each part has a different function.
- **How are we supposed to use our gifts?** As God intended, giving our best effort.

### *1 Corinthians 12:4–11*

- **Who gives spiritual gifts to believers?** The Holy Spirit gives the gifts.
- **For whose benefit have the gifts been given?** For the good of everyone in the Body.
- **Why are special gifts given to us?** Primarily to help others, not ourselves.

### 1 Corinthians 12:27–31

- **Do we each possess the same gifts?** Each of us has been given at least one gift, but not necessarily the same one(s).

### Ephesians 4:11–13

- **How is this passage different than the previous ones?** It talks about the persons who receive the gifts instead of the gifts themselves.
- **Why are these persons given gifts?** To equip others for ministry.
- **What is the ultimate goal within the body of Christ?** To bring unity and maturity.

Now ask students to look back over Romans 12:3–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; 1 Corinthians 12:27–31; and Ephesians 4:11–13. Ask them to name the specific gifts mentioned there. Write these on the board as students name them; then work to eliminate duplicates. You may want to state after they finish, *That's a pretty good list—and there's something on it for each of you.*

## 3 Leading Beyond the Session

Ask, *How many spiritual gifts are there?* Students may say the number you just listed, but the real answer is *unknown*. Nowhere in Scripture is there an exhaustive list. The Holy Spirit is living and active and continues to move today as he did in the New Testament. It stands to reason that gifts could exist that are new for today—although it would be difficult to add anything to the list.

Emphasize and discuss the following seven basic spiritual gifts concepts (you may wish to write them on the board):

- *Concept 1:* Christ gives spiritual gifts to believers through the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 4:8, 11; 1 Corinthians 12:8–9; 1 Corinthians 12:11)
- *Concept 2:* Spiritual gifts are given to each believer. (1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Peter 4:10)
- *Concept 3:* Spiritual gifts are gifts of God's grace. (Ephesians 4:7; Romans 12:6)
- *Concept 4:* The Spirit gives many different gifts, providing for diversity of ministry in the church. (1 Corinthians 12:8–10; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Hebrews 12:6)
- *Concept 5:* Spiritual gifts are meant to be employed for the benefit of others. (1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:25; Ephesians 4:11–12)
- *Concept 6:* The gifted members of the church are parts of the body of Christ and therefore belong to one another. (1 Corinthians 12:13–14; 1 Corinthians 12:27; Romans 12:5)
- *Concept 7:* Gifts must always be used in love. Without love they are at best useless and possibly harmful. (1 Corinthians 13:1–3)

Point out that sometimes we might feel as if we can't do anything well or that we don't have any spiritual gifts. We might feel dissatisfied with our apparent gifts or talents. Say, *Our gifts are designed for the benefit of all and given especially to us by God. We should treasure them.*

Affirm the commitment and giftedness of your individual students, including the fact that God has gifted each of them spiritually. Allow time for students to pray, thanking the Holy Spirit for loving them enough to gift them in a special way.

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## Discovering My Gifts

### Objectives

- To see why it is critical for each person to discover his or her spiritual gift(s).
- To discover each student's potential gift(s).
- To study the discovered gifts for a better understanding of those gifts.
- To confirm through group interaction the gift(s) each person possesses.

### Resources Needed

- Blindfolds for each person in group, two rolled-up newspapers
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Copies of "Discovering My Gifts" (Appendix 2) and "Spiritual Gifts Descriptions" (Appendix 3), pens or pencils
- An altar

## 1 Leading Into the Session

As you gather for this session, ask your students to put on blindfolds and form a loose circle. Tell them that you will tap two students on the head and then throw two rolled-up newspapers somewhere in the middle of the group. The two persons who have been selected should each try to find one of the rolled up newspapers and try to "give" the other person a hit with the newspaper before they are hit. The person who delivers the "gift" first wins that round. Continue until everyone in the group has a chance to participate.

*Ask, How is this game similar to the discovery of spiritual gifts? We sometimes feel we are searching blindly for our gifts. We are not always willing to receive the gift from the Holy Spirit. We may feel it will somehow be painful (some of your students may experience that if they ran into each other trying to find the newspapers). Say, Today we'll discover our spiritual gifts and see them as special gifts from God.*

## 2 Leading Through the Session

*Ask, How do we actually discover our spiritual gifts? Invite students to respond. Share with them the following eight steps as a good path to discovery:*



- *Understand* the gifts.
- *Accept* that I am gifted.
- *Pray* for guidance.
- *Dedicate* myself to ministry.
- *Analyze* myself to discover my gifts.
- *Seek confirmation* from other Christians.
- *Get involved* in ministry.
- *Evaluate* the results.

Say, *We have looked at the basics about discovering our gifts; now let's find out what gifts we might have.* Distribute copies of "Discovering My Gifts" (found in Appendix 2).

Before you help students complete this questionnaire, be sure to emphasize the following:

- When completing the questionnaire, students should not try to make religious value judgments or identify what is important. They should respond in terms of their experience. They should be completely honest. They should not try to control the outcome by answering the questions in terms of what they might *want* their gifts to be.
- Some questions may seem unclear or inappropriate. Students should not worry about that. The value of the questionnaire lies in its total impact, not in individual questions.

Make sure students understand how to proceed, and then ask them to complete the questionnaire. You may wish to read the questions aloud to them one at a time; or, if this is too slow for some students, you can allow everyone to proceed at their own rate. Encourage students to seek your help if they need clarification on what a question means or how to record and total their scores.

After students are done, ask them to share with the rest of the group their top three working gifts. Hand out copies of the spiritual gifts descriptions found in Appendix 3. Allow time for students to study what their gifts mean and how they might be used.

Say, *None of us are the same, but we each have spiritual gifts to be used for building up the body of Christ.*

### **3** **Leading Beyond the Session**

Divide the class into groups of three or four and ask any of these questions, one at a time, to be discussed in the groups:

- What working gifts do you have? What waiting gifts do you have?
- Has God already used these gifts in your life? If so, how?
- What have others said to you to confirm your gifts?
- What are some further ways you think your gifts can be used?
- What have you learned about your gifts that you didn't know before?



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## 3

## Using My Gifts

### Objectives

- To identify and remove hindrances to the implementation of spiritual gifts.
- To discover how personality type can affect spiritual gift implementation.
- To help students match their gifts and personalities to potential ministries.

### Resources Needed

- Pennies (twenty for each student)
- *Introvert, Extrovert, Feeling, and Thinking* signs
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Bibles

## 1 Leading Into the Session

As your students gather, give each of them twenty pennies. Their goal is to maintain control of their pennies and actually add to their total. They will do this by requesting a penny from other students. Persons cannot refuse to give a penny away when asked. After two minutes, call time and ask your students to add up their pennies. Commend the winner and then return to each person the original count of twenty pennies.

Now, announce that you will play again. This time, however, students should attempt to give away their pennies. They can only give away one penny at a time. The person receiving a penny must accept it and cannot immediately give it back to the person who offered it. After two minutes, call time again and see who has the fewest pennies. Commend the winner of this round and then discuss the following questions:

- **Was it easier to receive the pennies or give them away?**
- **Which is a more accurate portrayal of our society? Giving or asking?**

Point out again that the Holy Spirit gives each of us unique gifts. If we want to make a difference with those gifts, we need to allow them to be used in God's service. Say, *Today we'll talk about the importance of giving our gifts away.*

## 2

## Leading Through the Session

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Ask, *What keeps us from discovering or using our spiritual gifts?* Here are some possible responses:

- Inexperience
- Disobedience
- Lack of commitment
- An unloving spirit
- Lack of prayer
- Lack of knowledge
- Personality issues

Key in on the last suggestion, personality issues. Point out that just as we each have different spiritual gifts, we each have different personalities that affect how we relate to others and how we use our gifts. Say, *Let's consider our personalities and how they can combine with our gifts to affect our ministry discovery.*

Post four signs around the room: *Introvert* and *Extrovert* on opposite walls, and *Feeling* and *Thinking* on the remaining walls opposite one another. Ask everyone to stand across the middle of the room in a line between the *Introvert* and *Extrovert* walls. As you read the following descriptions, they should move toward the wall that best describes them:

- An *extrovert* is someone who tends to be outgoing and prefers to be with people, who is good at greeting new people and communicates easily. This person is likely to be energized by the presence of people. An extreme extrovert is a little uncomfortable if left alone for too long.
- An *introvert* is someone who tends to be a little reserved and quiet around people, who enjoys being alone for concentration, likes to work on one project for an extended period of time, and dislikes interruptions. This person is likely to be tired after being with people for awhile. He or she would rather be alone, perhaps reading a book or fishing by a lake.

Students should move along a straight line, positioning themselves closer to one wall or the other based on these descriptions. Encourage them to avoid the middle position and to be as honest as they can be in their assessments.

After students have moved into position, ask them to move right or left toward the *Feeling* or *Thinking* wall based on these descriptions:

- A *feeling* person is one who feels very deeply, who tends to be aware of other people and their feelings, and who responds easily to the values of others. This person usually bases his or her decisions on feelings and is often swayed by his or her feelings. An extreme feeler moves quickly through emotional extremes. He or she uses phrases such as “My heart tells me....”
- A *thinking* person is one who thinks things out carefully, who does not show emotions readily and is not too comfortable dealing with other people's feelings and who likes analysis and putting things into logical order. This person bases his or her decisions on a logical thought process. This person is swayed by a logical approach to life. He or she uses phrases such as “The facts say....”

Point out that the Extrovert/Introvert line deals with our relationships with others, while the Feeling/Thinking line deals with our decision-making process. Explain to students that based on their positions on each of the lines, each of them is now in a certain quadrant. These quadrants can be identified as follows

### **Feeling/Extrovert = Sports Car**

This is someone who usually enjoys being out front, leading the way and expressing his or her emotions freely. This person wants to make sure everyone is having a good time. He or she is more concerned about relationships than accomplishments.

### **Thinking/Extrovert = Truck**

This is someone who usually enjoys being out front as the boss, telling others where to go and what to do. He or she is concerned about winning and getting the job done.

### **Feeling/Introvert = Mini-van**

This is someone who usually likes working behind the scenes helping others deal with their issues. This person works hard to encourage others one on one and does not draw attention to himself or herself. He or she is good at spotting a person who needs a friend.

### **Thinking/Introvert = Economy Car**

This is someone who usually works behind the scenes managing projects. He or she processes decisions and helps orchestrate the movements of others.

Encourage students to look around and see where the other members of the class are. Emphasize that these are general characteristics that are more extreme in some people than in others. Explain that there is at least one other area that will affect our personality. *Planned versus Spontaneous* is the range between persons who like to plan things out carefully and those who are more likely to go with the flow. Ask students if they are more planned or spontaneous and why they think this is the case.

*Say, It's great to know our spiritual gifts and to understand how our personalities affect our giftedness, but it's all pointless if we're not matched up to a ministry. Let's see how we can find a ministry.*

## **Leading Beyond the Session**

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Ask your students to spend time brainstorming about some potential ministries they could be involved in. List their ideas on the board. Many of their ideas will probably come from the current ministries in your church. As a leader, you may want to get a list of ministries from your church staff before this session. Push your students to consider ministries that might not be in existence currently. Some might involve the entire church, while others might be targeted in the youth area, and some might actually take place outside the church. Following are some ideas you might wish to add to your students' thoughts:

- Children's Sunday school teacher
- Drama
- Worship band
- Sign language
- Nursery worker
- Choir/worship team/singer
- Greeting ministry
- Website team



- Sound and lighting team
- Photography team
- Office work
- Evangelism team
- Usher
- Prayer ministry
- Setup team (room set up, decorations, and so forth)
- Visitation team (the sick, the hurting)
- Teaching team (preparing lessons)
- Missions team

Invite students to look at Ephesians 2:10 with you. Ask, *What does this mean?* It means that we were created by God to do the work he has already planned for us to do. God chooses to work through and with us. That's why it's important for us to discover and use our spiritual gifts. A good way to remember the process is the acrostic *GATE*:

- **Gifts**—Know what your top two or three spiritual gifts are.
- **Automobile personality**—Are you Feeling/Extrovert (Sports Car), Thinking/Extrovert (Truck), Feeling/Introvert (Mini-van), or Thinking/Introvert (Economy Car)?
- **Time**—Are you Planned (like to plan things out carefully) or Spontaneous (more likely to go with the flow)?
- **Excitement profile**—This is the things that excite you or that you already enjoy doing. Maybe you already have a blast working with computers or playing music; these would be natural things to complement your spiritual gifts.

Say, *As we discover the Holy Spirit's work in our lives, let's commit how he gifts us for the building up of God's church.*

Share with students a five-step process that they can use to discover their ministry. This process will help them to more deeply explore their gifts and how their personalities affect their use of those gifts:

1. **Pray for guidance and strength.** Students can do this by taking time each day for close connection to the Holy Spirit.
2. **Be sensitive to needs of others.** Students should look each day for ways to help others.
3. **Focus my efforts in the area of my gifts.** Students can continue to learn more about their gifts through Bible study, through interaction with others, and through the practice of those gifts.
4. **Receive confirmation from my support group.** Students should share with other members of this group their successes and their struggles in utilizing their gifts.
5. **Begin using my gifts.** Our gifts will never fully develop—and we'll never know if they are truly our gifts—until we get in motion and give them a try.

If possible, set up a time to meet individually with your students to assist them in exploring potential ministry areas. (Other adult leaders in the group could help you with this.) Be sure that students bring their completed spiritual gifts questionnaire with them to this meeting. During these one-on-one times, praise your students for their willingness to explore their gifts, review their questionnaires and answer any questions they may have about their potential spiritual gifts, and encourage them to put their gifts into practice.

Ask everyone to stand in a circle and to open their palms upwards. Allow a few moments for students to pray silently and to dedicate their lives and potential ministries to the Lord. After a few moments, close the prayer time with a simple spoken prayer.

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## 1

## Test Yourself

This is only a self-test; no one will check up on you. You cannot pass or fail, because there is no expected level of knowledge. This self-test will help you assess your understanding of spiritual gifts. It will also be a learning experience, since answers will be reviewed at the conclusion.

1. The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts so that *(circle one or more)*
  - a. Christians can minister to each other.
  - b. the church may be built up.
  - c. the church will not need committees.
  - d. all Christians can have the same basic abilities.
  - e. God can work through people to meet human needs.
  - f. Christians will not be so dependent on each other.
2. Every significant, Spirit-directed, and Spirit-powered ability possessed by a believer and used to build up the body of Christ, regardless of what name we give it, deserves to be called a spiritual gift. *True or False*
3. Christians are free to choose their spiritual gifts. *True or False*
4. Spiritual gifts differ from natural talents in that *(circle one)*
  - a. natural talents belong to unbelievers, spiritual gifts to believers.
  - b. spiritual gifts are exceptional abilities, while natural talents are ordinary abilities.
  - c. spiritual gifts are significant abilities used in ministry. Natural talents are Spirit-given abilities used in a wide variety of activities which, though valid for a Christian to be involved in, are not necessarily ministries.
  - d. all of the above.

5. Which of the following are true statements concerning the relationship of spiritual gifts and the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22–23) in the believer? (*circle as many as are true.*)
- Christians can possess all the aspects of the fruit and some of the gifts.
  - Christians should possess all of the gifts and some of the fruit aspects.
  - The fruit aspects are spiritual virtues, while the gifts are Spirit-given abilities.
  - The fruit aspects are temporary; the gifts are eternal.
  - Gifts without fruit are not worth much.
6. If Christians do not have gifts in a particular area of ministry (*circle those you think are true*),
- they are excused from service in that area.
  - they still have a responsibility to serve in that area to the best of their ability.
  - they should try harder than ever in that area.
  - they should leave the area entirely to gifted persons.
7. Christians can abuse their spiritual gifts by (*circle one*)
- projecting the gifts upon others so that others feel they should be similarly gifted.
  - prizing certain gifts because of the “glory” attached to them.
  - reserving their gifts essentially for private use.
  - all of the above.
  - none of the above.
8. It is important for Christians to recognize their spiritual gifts so that (*circle all you think are true*)
- they will thus be assisted in finding God’s will for their lives.
  - they will be helped to overcome feelings of inadequacy and inferiority.
  - they will serve God’s kingdom more effectively.
  - they will know their appropriate place in the community of Christ.
  - they can be channels of God’s grace to others.
  - they have a basis to compare themselves to other Christians.
  - they will know whether to do more study at an advanced level.
9. Once I know what my spiritual gifts are, I should (*circle all you think are true*)
- dedicate them to God for service.
  - wait until God directs me.
  - not tell anyone so I won’t appear to be proud.
  - begin to use them in ministry, if I have not already.
10. The church that becomes gift-conscious will benefit because (*circle all you think are true*)
- all or most of its members will become involved in ministry.
  - it will be able to secure good programs.
  - it will be strengthened in outreach.
  - it will be a much busier church.
  - it will experience greater unity and Christlike maturity.

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## 2

## Discovering My Gifts

### STEP 1

#### How to Complete the Gifts Analysis Questionnaire

Each statement in the following questionnaire has five response boxes following it: Very Little (0–20%), Little (20–40%), Some (40–60%), Much (60–80%), and Very Much (80–100%).

Read each statement, decide to what extent it is true of you, and check the appropriate box. Think of how things *are*, not how you might *wish* they would be. Your first impressions are usually correct.

If most of your checks are placed toward the right or toward the left, don't worry about it. This questionnaire is unique for each person who takes it.

### STEP 2

#### Gifts Analysis Questionnaire

This questionnaire will help you discover your spiritual gifts.

#### THE FOLLOWING IS TRUE OF ME:

- (1) Very Little (2) Little (3) Some (4) Much (5) Very Much
1. I am able to organize ideas, tasks, people, and time for Christian service.....
  2. I have used a particular creative ability (writing, painting, drama, thinking, problem solving, music, crafts) to benefit others in the body of Christ.....
  3. I am able to distinguish between spiritual truth and error.....
  4. I have been used to encourage people to live Christlike lives.....
  5. I like to talk about Jesus to those who don't know him.....
  6. I have had the experience of knowing God's will with certainty in a specific situation even when concrete evidence was missing .....
  7. I assume responsibility for meeting financial needs in the church and community .....

(1) Very Little  
 (2) Little  
 (3) Some  
 (4) Much  
 (5) Very Much

- 8. I have prayed with success for others to be physically, spiritually, and emotionally healed apart from natural means .....
- 9. I enjoy providing a haven for guests and do not feel put upon by unexpected visitors .....
- 10. I take the prayer requests of others seriously and continue to pray for them.....
- 11. I motivate groups toward specific biblical objectives .....
- 12. I have a knack for turning compassion into cheerful deeds of kindness.....
- 13. I have pleaded the cause of God to the people of the church and/or world .....
- 14. I enjoy doing tasks that help others minister effectively.....
- 15. I have been responsible for the spiritual growth of Christians, with good results.....
- 16. It is important to me that the content of teaching “comes alive” and is relevant to needs of persons.....
- 17. I like to plan things in which people are involved.....
- 18. I would enjoy expressing myself creatively for God through artistic expression (music, drama, poetry, crafts, art, writing) .....
- 19. I see a serious danger when false teachings and false practices creep into the church .....
- 20. I am sensitive to suffering, troubled, and discouraged people, and want to help them see God’s answers to life’s problems .....
- 21. I would like to be able to share the gospel freely and effectively with unbelieving persons .....
- 22. I find myself accepting God’s promises at face value and applying them to given situations without doubt.....
- 23. I feel moved to give when confronted with financial needs in God’s kingdom .....
- 24. I have been an instrument of God’s supernatural healing power and he was glorified.....
- 25. I am sensitive to the acts of kindness that make such a difference for guests or strangers.....
- 26. I am sensitive to the prayer needs of others and concerned to give the needed prayer support ...
- 27. I have a desire to help lead, guide, and direct people in an important church ministry .....
- 28. I would like to minister to those who have physical or mental problems .....
- 29. I have spiritual insights from the Scriptures relating to people and issues that make me want to speak out.....
- 30. I sense when others need a helping hand and am ready to give it .....
- 31. I am concerned to see the spiritual needs of believers met and am willing to be personally involved in nurturing and disciplining ministries .....
- 32. I like to help people understand things.....
- 33. I am able to make effective plans to accomplish goals .....
- 34. I have significant artistic ability (music, drama, writing, painting, sculpting, crafts, sewing, bulletin boards) that I have put to good use in God’s kingdom .....
- 35. I have detected phony or manipulative persons and teachings when others have not.....
- 36. People in the Christian community have been stirred up to love and good works by my counsel and encouragement.....



(1) Very Little  
 (2) Little  
 (3) Some  
 (4) Much  
 (5) Very Much

- 37. I have been instrumental in leading others to believe in Christ as their Savior .....
- 38. In specific cases God has given me assurance that he would do what seemed unlikely .....
- 39. I give cheerfully and liberally in support of the Lord's work.....
- 40. In the name of Jesus Christ, I have been able to bring healing to someone who was ill .....
- 41. I have a knack for making strangers feel at ease in my home and at church .....
- 42. I pray for others, recognizing that their effectiveness depends on it.....
- 43. I enjoy leading and directing others toward goals and caring for them for the sake of Christ .....
- 44. I enjoy working with people who suffer from physical, mental or emotional problems .....
- 45. I have proclaimed timely and urgent messages from God's Word .....
- 46. I like to work at little things that help build the body of Christ.....
- 47. I assume responsibility when I see a Christian being led astray .....
- 48. I am able to help persons (children, youth, or adults) gain new understandings of the faith.....
- 49. I would enjoy giving oversight to an important church ministry.....
- 50. I have the potential to be very creative in an area that could be used in building up the church...
- 51. I tend to look beneath the surface and perceive people's motives.....
- 52. I believe that people will grow to spiritual maturity through counsel and instruction from the Word...
- 53. I have a burden for friends and acquaintances who do not believe in Christ .....
- 54. I have a sense for moments when the "prayer of faith" is needed .....
- 55. I am willing to maintain a lower standard of living in order to benefit God's work with my financial support .....
- 56. I have an unusual compassion for persons who are physically sick and desire to see them healed .....
- 57. I tend to be more aware of the needs of guests than of my own needs.....
- 58. I have an inner conviction that God works in response to prayer, and I want to be used to help others through prayer .....
- 59. If I had the opportunity, I would enjoy leading, directing, and motivating others in some aspect of the Lord's work.....
- 60. The sight of misery makes me want to find a way to express God's love to hurting persons .....
- 61. Given the opportunity, I would like to be a preacher of God's Word .....
- 62. I like to do work that helps others do theirs.....
- 63. I sense in myself a shepherd's instinct when I know of Christians who need spiritual counsel .....
- 64. I quickly sense when people (children, youth, or adults) are searching for new understandings of the faith .....
- 65. I have a sense for delegating important tasks to the right people at the right time.....
- 66. I am aware that people have been blessed through my creative or artistic ability .....
- 67. I have developed an ability to discriminate between good and evil in today's world .....

(1) Very Little  
 (2) Little  
 (3) Some  
 (4) Much  
 (5) Very Much

- 68. I am glad when people who need comfort, consolation, encouragement, and counsel seek my help .....
- 69. I am able to share the gospel in a way that makes it clear and meaningful to nonbelievers .....
- 70. I am able to go on believing that God will act in a situation in spite of evidence to the contrary ...
- 71. I help people and the Lord’s work through generous and timely contributions .....
- 72. I have been used “In the name of the Lord” to cure an illness or disease.....
- 73. My home is available to those in need of hospitality .....
- 74. I am conscious of ministering to others as I pray for them .....
- 75. I have accepted leadership responsibilities and have succeeded in helping a group work toward a goal.....
- 76. Sick, helpless, shut-in persons are helped when I minister to them .....
- 77. God uses me to build up, encourage, and comfort other Christians by speaking to them of spiritual things .....
- 78. I find practical ways of helping others and gain satisfaction from doing this .....
- 79. The Lord has used me to watch over, guide, and nurture other believers toward spiritual maturity .....
- 80. I enjoy creating an environment that causes persons to want to learn and grow.....
- 81. I have a sense for how and when projects or ministries need to be better organized .....
- 82. I sense a latent creative ability (in drawing, writing, music, thinking, problem solving, art, crafts) which I would like to use for the kingdom of God.....
- 83. I am usually aware of people who pretend to be what they are not.....
- 84. I would be willing to spend some time each week in a counseling ministry .....
- 85. I am able to sense when a person doesn’t know Jesus Christ, and I hurt for him or her.....
- 86. I inwardly sense what Jesus meant when he said mountains could be moved by faith .....
- 87. I have a conviction that all I have belongs to God, and I want to be a good steward .....
- 88. I believe I have the authority from God to pray for a person to be physically healed .....
- 89. I have a genuine appreciation for each guest to whom I minister.....
- 90. I would be pleased if asked to be a prayer partner to someone involved in a ministry.....
- 91. I am usually quick to sense when a group I am a part of is “spinning its wheels” and I want to do something about it .....
- 92. I sense when people are hurting in some way .....
- 93. I think more Christians should speak out on the moral issues of the day, such as abortion, easy sex, racism, and so on .....
- 94. I wish I had more opportunity to assist others in their ministries.....
- 95. I would love to be in a position to equip saints for the work of ministry .....
- 96. I get excited about discovering new ideas I can share with others .....

## STEP 3

### Key Chart

Complete the Key Chart on your own. Begin by reading the instructions carefully. The leader will assist you with any questions.

1. Place the numerical value (1–5) for each statement of the questionnaire in the correct box in the Key Chart.
2. In Chart A, add each row of three numbers and write the total in the “Totals A” column. Do the same in the “Totals B” column for Chart B, adding to the left.
3. Circle the highest scores in the “Totals A” column. (Circle three or four, but not more than five.) Write the names of these gifts in Box A, “Working Gifts,” with the highest-scored gift first, the next highest second, and so forth. (In case of a tie, it doesn’t matter which one is listed first.)
4. Now in the “Totals B” column circle the highest scores that were *not* circled in Step 3. Write these gifts in Box B, “Waiting Gifts,” beginning with the highest.
5. Place any gifts not listed in Boxes A and B in Box C, “Not a Gift but a Role.”

CHART A			Totals A	CHART B	Totals B	CHART B		
1	33	65		Administration		17	49	81
2	34	66		Creative ability		18	50	82
3	35	67		Discernment		19	51	83
4	36	68		Encouragement		20	52	84
5	37	69		Evangelism		21	53	85
6	38	70		Faith		22	54	86
7	39	71		Giving		23	55	87
8	40	72		Healing		24	56	88
9	41	73		Hospitality		25	57	89
10	42	74		Intercession		26	58	90
11	43	75		Leadership		27	59	91
12	44	76		Mercy		28	60	92
13	45	77		Prophecy		29	61	93
14	46	78		Service		30	62	94
15	47	79		Shepherding		31	63	95
16	48	80		Teaching		32	64	96

**BOX A: Working Gifts**

Highest Scored Gifts in "Totals A"

1st \_\_\_\_\_

2nd \_\_\_\_\_

3rd \_\_\_\_\_

4th \_\_\_\_\_

5th \_\_\_\_\_

**BOX B: Waiting Gifts**

Highest Scored Gifts in "Totals B" but not in "Totals A"

1st \_\_\_\_\_

2nd \_\_\_\_\_

3rd \_\_\_\_\_

4th \_\_\_\_\_

5th \_\_\_\_\_

**BOX C: Not a Gift but a Role**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
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\_\_\_\_\_

**Notes:**

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# APPENDIX

encouragement  
creative ability  
leadership  
giving administration  
faith service  
teaching  
discernment  
hospitality evangelism  
healing intercession  
mercy shepherding

# 3

## Spiritual Gifts Descriptions

### ADMINISTRATION

The ability to organize and guide human activities in such a way that Christ's program is carried out (see 1 Corinthians 12:28).

#### Administration as a Spiritual Gift

This gift is identified in only one passage of Scripture—1 Corinthians 12:28. The Greek word used there means “one who guides or directs toward a goal.” It was used in secular language to identify the pilot responsible for bringing ships into harbor. As a spiritual gift, it has to do with guiding affairs of the church and kingdom. The person with this gift has management ability.

Administration is distinguished from leadership (Romans 12:8). The leader sets the goals, leads toward the goals, and exercises authority over and care for the group. The administrator, however, commonly accepts the goals set by others and devises and executes plans to accomplish these goals. This person has a sense for organization and can facilitate the activities in a church or kingdom enterprise. Frequently, a person with this gift also has the gift of leadership.

The person with this gift is essentially a people organizer. He or she is able to get things done through people by directing, motivating, and coordinating their activities. Nehemiah was an expert administrator. The gift of administration can be used in many different ways. A person with this gift will take an organized approach to personal devotions, family life, small group Bible study, and so on. In the life of the church or kingdom he or she will be a valuable committee member, coordinator, director, superintendent, or planner. He or she can use these same gifts as Christ's representative in his or her community.

#### Characteristics of the Spiritually Gifted Administrator

If I have developed the gift,

- I am able to organize ideas, tasks, people, and time for Christian service.
- I am able to make effective plans to accomplish goals.
- I have a sense for delegating important tasks to the right people at the right time.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I like to help plan things in which people are involved.
- I would enjoy giving direction to an important church ministry.
- I have a sense for how and when projects or ministries need to be better organized.



## CREATIVE ABILITY

---

The ability to further God's kingdom through creative skills, such as music, drama, graphic arts, writing, painting, sculpting, and so forth (see Exodus 35:31).

### **Creative Ability as a Spiritual Gift**

Some Christians have special creative abilities that they are called to use in the service of the King. Bezalel and Oholiab, for example, were given unique abilities by the Holy Spirit. "He has filled him with the Spirit of God, with skill ability and knowledge in all kinds of crafts...He has filled them with skill to do all kinds of work as craftsmen, designers, embroiderers in blue, purple and scarlet yarn and fine linen, and weavers—all of them master craftsmen and designers" (Exodus 35:31, 35). These gifts were given to build the temple and thus to forward God's cause in a particular way.

David was uniquely gifted as a musician (2 Samuel 23:1), and many others were appointed to special positions in the Old Testament because of their creative abilities (see 1 Chronicles 16:41–42, 2 Chronicles 5:12–13, and 2 Chronicles 7:6). David's great poetic ability was a skill God used to enhance temple worship in David's day and our worship now. Though this gift is not specifically named in New Testament gift lists, we are confident that God still gives special creative abilities for use in his service.

### **Characteristics of the Person with Creative Ability**

If I have developed the gift,

- I have used a particular creative ability (writing, constructing, designing, and so forth) to benefit the body of Christ.
- I have significant artistic ability (music, drama, painting, sculpting, and so forth) that I have put to good use in God's kingdom.
- I am aware that people have been blessed through my creative or artistic ability.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I would enjoy expressing myself creatively for God through artistic means (music, drama, painting, sculpting, and so forth).
- I have the potential to be very creative in an area that could be used in building up the church.
- I sense within me a latent creative ability (in writing, constructing, designing, and so forth) that I would like to use for the kingdom of God.

## DISCERNMENT

---

The ability to distinguish between truth and error, to know when a person or act is of God (see 1 Corinthians 12:10).

### **Discernment as a Spiritual Gift**

Paul included discernment in the gift list of 1 Corinthians 12:4–11, calling it "the ability to distinguish between spirits." This phrase suggests a supernatural ability to detect the presence of good and evil spirits in those who teach. The gift also functions in a less than supernatural way. The writer to the Hebrews saw discernment as the mark of a mature Christian, one who is able to distinguish good from evil (5:14). Jesus exercised this gift, sensing an inappropriate attitude in Peter when Peter opposed his going to Jerusalem to suffer. Jesus responded by saying, "Get behind me, Satan!" (Matthew 16:23). Paul warned Timothy of deceitful spirits and the doctrines (teachings) of demons. The Berean believers examined the Scriptures to discern whether Paul spoke the truth (Acts 17:10–12). We may understand discernment, then, not simply in terms of the supernatural ability to detect evil spirits present in a teacher, but more broadly as the ability to distinguish between truth and error and between persons who are true or false.

The gift of discernment is needed in the church today. Satan is still sowing seeds of error and untruth. New cults spring up. Undiscerning church members are easily swayed and misled by false teachers. God's method of guarding is, on the one hand, to give us a written Word and, on the other hand, to give the gift of discernment to certain members of the body. These members in particular are responsible for keeping false teachers and teachings from infiltrating and perverting the church.

### **Characteristics of the Person with the Gift of Discernment**

If I have developed the gift,

- I am able to distinguish between spiritual truth and error.
- I have detected phony or manipulative persons and teachings when others have not.
- I have developed an ability to discriminate between good and evil in today's world.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I see a serious danger when false teachings and false practices creep into the church.
- I tend to look beneath the surface and perceive people's motives.
- I am usually aware of people who pretend or who wear masks.

## **ENCOURAGEMENT**

---

The ability to motivate people through encouraging words to live practical Christian lives (see Romans 12:8).

### **Encouragement as a Spiritual Gift**

Encouragement is identified as a spiritual gift in Romans 12:8. The emphasis of the word is positive. It does not exclude the possibility of rebuke, but it suggests a person standing alongside another to reassure, buttress, and console—in short, to support others and help them do their best. The gift is sometimes thought of as the gift of counseling. Many New Testament persons exercised this gift. Paul possessed it: he “confirmed the souls of the disciples” and “exhorted them to continue in the faith” (Acts 14:21–22). Peter, commissioned by Jesus to “strengthen” his brothers (Luke 22:32), encouraged the elders of the churches in their work (1 Peter 5:1–2). Barnabas is the most outstanding example of this gift in the New Testament. He encouraged both Mark and the apostle Paul, and was called the Son of Encouragement (Acts 4:36). The gift can be exercised privately or publicly. It is important in one-on-one counseling ministries, and helpful for pastors or elders who deal with the weak, the wavering, and the troubled. It may also find different forms of expression in the broader, community-oriented ministries of the members of Christ's body, as well as in countless casual personal contacts.

### **Characteristics of the Person with the Gift of Encouragement**

If I have developed the gift,

- I have been used to encourage people to live Christian lives.
- People in the Christian community have been stirred up to love and good works by my counsel and encouragement.
- I am glad when people who need comfort, encouragement, and counsel seek my help.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I am sensitive to suffering, troubled, and discouraged people, and want to help them see God's answers to life's problems.
- I believe that people will grow to spiritual maturity through counsel and instruction from the Word.
- I would be willing to spend some time each week in a counseling ministry.

## EVANGELISM

---

The ability to present the gospel to unbelievers in such a clear and meaningful way that it calls for response (see Ephesians 4:11).

### **Evangelism as a Spiritual Gift**

The gift of evangelism is mentioned in Ephesians 4:11, where it is embodied in a person—the evangelist. However, there are other signs in the New Testament of the operation of this gift.

Pastor Timothy was encouraged to do the work of an evangelist (2 Timothy 4:5). Philip was called the evangelist (Acts 21:8). Other passages reflect on the efforts of the evangelist engaged in ministry (Acts 8:5-6, 12; Acts 14:21). The gift may be used in one-on-one situations (Acts 8:26-39) or exercised in larger groups (Acts 8:5-13, 40). A careful reading of Ephesians 4:11-12 also shows that the evangelist is responsible for enabling members of the body to develop ministries, including the ministry of evangelism.

### **Characteristics of the Spiritually Gifted Evangelist**

If I have developed the gift,

- I like to talk about Jesus to those who do not know him.
- I have been instrumental in leading others to believe in Christ as their Savior.
- I am able to share the gospel in a way that makes it clear and meaningful to nonbelievers.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I would like to be able to share the gospel freely and effectively with unbelieving persons.
- I have a burden for friends and acquaintances who do not believe in Christ.
- I am able to sense when a person does not know Jesus Christ, and I hurt for that person.

## FAITH

---

The ability to envision what God wants to happen and to be certain that he will do it in response to prayer, even when there is no concrete evidence (see 1 Corinthians 12:9).

### **Faith as a Spiritual Gift**

Very little is said in Scripture about the spiritual gift of faith. If it were not for its inclusion in the gift list of 1 Corinthians 12, we would likely not think of it as a gift. However, it is included; the Spirit gave it to some in the church for the sake of particular ministries. The person with this gift has a special ability to believe and trust the infinite power of God in concrete situations. Jesus was probably talking about this gift when he spoke of faith which could move mountains. The apostle Paul seems to have exercised this gift. While he was in Corinth, God gave him an assurance that, despite the strong opposition he faced there, he would not be harmed as he continued to preach the Word. God also gave him assurance that he and those with him would be spared as the ship on which he was sailing from Crete was wrecked (Acts 27:21-26). Jesus' prayer before the grave of Lazarus, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me...." (John 11:41-42), was a prayer of faith. God uses the gift of faith to bring glory to himself, to encourage the church to believe in a prayer-answering God, and to meet crises faced by individuals and by the church. Important as the gift may be, if it is not exercised in love, it is worth nothing (1 Corinthians 13:2).

## **Characteristics of the Person with the Gift of Faith**

If I have developed the gift,

- I have had the experience of knowing God's will with certainty in a specific situation, even when concrete evidence was lacking.
- In specific cases God has given me assurance that he would do what seemed unlikely.
- I am able to go on believing that God will act in a situation in spite of evidence to the contrary.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I find myself accepting God's promises at face value and applying them to given situations without doubt.
- I have a sense for moments when the "prayer of faith" is needed.
- I sense what Jesus meant when he said that nothing will be impossible—even moving mountains—for those who have the faith of a grain of mustard seed.

## **GIVING**

---

The ability to support the Lord's work materially with generous, timely, and cheerful contributions (see Romans 12:8).

### **Giving as a Spiritual Gift**

Because giving and sharing are so much a part of every Christian's responsibility, it is hard to recognize that there is a gift called giving that belongs to only some Christians. But we know this to be true since Paul lists the gift of giving (along with other well-known gifts such as teaching and exhorting) in Romans 12:5–8. The gift needn't be limited to "rich" people. The Macedonian Christians were very poor, but God gave a "liberal spirit of giving" to them. And Paul said that they gave beyond their means. In other words, the issue in the gift of giving is not simply the amount. It is more likely to be found in the attitude, the perceptiveness, and the spirit of self-sacrifice of the person possessing the gift (Luke 21:1–3).

### **Characteristics of the Spiritually Gifted Giver**

If I have developed the gift,

- I assume responsibility for meeting financial needs in church and community.
- I give cheerfully and liberally, often above what is expected.
- I help people and the Lord's work through regular and timely contributions.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I feel moved to give when confronted with financial needs in God's kingdom.
- I am willing to maintain a lower standard of living in order to benefit God's work with my financial support.
- I have a conviction that all I have belongs to God, and I want to be a good steward for the sake of his kingdom.

## **HEALING**

---

The ability to serve as God's channel in curing sickness and renewing health (physically, spiritually, emotionally) through God's direct intervention and healing power (see 1 Corinthians 12:9).

### **Healing as a Spiritual Gift**

Healing is identified as a spiritual gift in 1 Corinthians 12:9. The scripture shows quite clearly that healing was of primary significance in the ministry of Jesus. In fact, twenty-six individual cases of healings give record of this important aspect of his work. In Acts, the miracle of healing in the church is based on the reality of the resurrection of the Lord. The

church is the body of Christ and should give attention to his word: “I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to my Father” (John 14:12). The ministry of healing is not a means of propaganda in order to preach the gospel but an integral part of the message. It can be a most powerful sign, not in attracting attention to the person used of the Lord, but to turn attention to the Lord himself. An act of healing brings glory to God.

The gift of healing is not restricted to physical disease. It is a gift used to cure spiritual, emotional, and mental illness too. The gift of healing does not make the work of a doctor or nurse of little value. God does work through medicine, but sometimes seeks to bring glory to his name in a miraculous healing. The person with this gift sees healing not as an end in itself, but as a means to glorify God. In the New Testament church, there were no established methods of healing. On occasion it could be by prayer, anointing of oil, or the laying on of hands. A person with this gift will recognize that healing is accomplished “in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.” The person will have a spirit of compassion for people who are hurting physically and emotionally. Belief and faith, the presence of the Holy Spirit, obedience to God, and a word of authority are important elements of the healing ministry.

### **Characteristics of the Person with the Gift of Healing**

If I have developed the gift,

- I have faith that God can heal apart from the use of natural means.
- I pray for persons who are ill physically, spiritually, and emotionally.
- I am conscious that I have great compassion for those who are physically and emotionally sick.
- I have prayed for and/or anointed people with oil and healing has come to their physical bodies.

If I have the potential for the gift,

- I am aware that God’s will is for persons to be physically and spiritually well.
- I sense that I have reached Christ’s healing touch and he is sending me out to take his healing influence into the world.
- I believe God would like to use me as a channel of his healing.

## **HOSPITALITY**

---

The ability to welcome and graciously serve guests or strangers (see Romans 12:13).

### **Hospitality as a Spiritual Gift**

Hospitality is not expressly mentioned as a gift in Scripture. However, in 1 Peter 4:9–10 it is placed in such a way as to suggest that it is one of the gifts conferred on individuals by the Spirit for building up the body and for community ministry. The word *hospitable* literally means “lover of strangers.” The hospitable person is one who loves and is comfortable, not only when entertaining friends or relatives, but perhaps particularly when welcoming strangers. False teachers were not to receive hospitality (2 John 10–11). Diotrephes was reprimanded for failing to show hospitality (3 John 10). Gaius, however, was commended for his hospitality to strangers (3 John 5–8). Elders and widows were singled out in the New Testament as obliged to show hospitality (1 Timothy 3:2; 5:10).

### **Characteristics of the Person with the Gift of Hospitality**

If I have developed the gift,

- I enjoy providing a haven for guests and do not feel imposed upon even by unexpected visitors.
- I have a knack for making strangers feel at ease in my home and at church.
- My home is available to those in need of hospitality.



If I have potential for the gift,

- I am sensitive to the acts of kindness that make such a difference for guests or strangers.
- I tend to be more aware of the needs of guests than of my own needs.
- I have a genuine appreciation for each guest to whom I minister.

## INTERCESSION

---

The ability to pray faithfully for others and to identify specific answers to those prayers (see Colossians 1:9–10).

### Intercession as a Spiritual Gift

Intercession is not expressly identified as a spiritual gift in the New Testament. There are scriptural examples, however, of extraordinary ministries of intercession. Our Lord's example in prayer stands out above all others (see John 17:1–26, and so forth). Paul's record of interceding on behalf of the churches he established is also a truly remarkable one (Colossians 1:9–12).

### Characteristics of the Spiritually Gifted Intercessor

If I have developed the gift,

- I take prayer requests of others seriously and continue to pray for them.
- I pray for others, recognizing that their effectiveness depends on it.
- I am conscious of ministering to others as I pray for them.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I am sensitive to the prayer needs of others and concerned to give them the needed prayer support.
- I have an inner conviction that God works in response to prayer, and I want to be used to help others through prayer.
- I would be pleased if I were asked to be a prayer partner to someone involved in a ministry.

## LEADERSHIP

---

The ability to lead a group with caring concern and foresight (see Romans 12:8).

### Leadership as a Spiritual Gift

The gift of leadership is mentioned in Romans 12:8. It means to lead someone, to direct him or her, to govern, to stand before him or her, or to rule, often for the sake of this person's protection. Out of this arises the sense "to care for." In other words, caring—not rank or authority—is to be the concern of the leader. The word *leader* is used also of church leaders in 1 Thessalonians 5:12: "Respect those who labor among you and are over you in the Lord." This passage shows the attitude required of those who are led. Elders exercise this gift, according to 1 Timothy 5:17. Those chosen to lead or rule in the church must demonstrate their ability first in their own homes (1 Timothy 3:4).

The gift may be used in a small and unofficial way in the home, in a small group, or as part of a committee or task force. It may be used in an official way by a pastor, elder, or deacon in the church. It may also be used in Christian organizations, such as a Christian school, Bible society, nursing home, service agency, Christian labor association, or whatever. This gift may be used in community organizations not specifically Christian, provided that the believer exercising the gift knows what he or she is doing, why he or she is doing it, and in whose name it is being done.

## **Characteristics of the Spiritually Gifted Leader**

If I have developed the gift,

- I motivate groups toward specific biblical objectives.
- I enjoy inspiring and leading others for the sake of Christ's work.
- I have accepted leadership responsibilities and have succeeded in helping a group work toward a goal.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I tend to think futuristically about church and kingdom ministries.
- I would enjoy leading, directing, and motivating others in some aspect of the Lord's work
- I am usually quick to sense when a group I am part of is "spinning its wheels," and I want to do something about it.

## **MERCY**

---

The ability to empathize with those who are hurting and to translate that into cheerful acts of service (see Romans 12:8).

### **Mercy as a Spiritual Gift**

The gift of mercy is a God-given ability to sympathize with and minister to hurting people in an extraordinary way. The gift is a deep compassion that transcends normal human or even Christian caring. Mercy is mentioned as a gift in Romans 12:8, which also suggests that the gift be exercised with cheerfulness. The recipients of mercy are the ill, the mentally impaired, the handicapped, shut-ins, and others in troubled situations. Many such people in Jesus' day called out for mercy: the blind, the lame, the dumb, the lepers, and the sick of every sort. We read that Jesus was moved with compassion for them. The person with this gift not only feels deeply but also is moved to action. James requires that feelings of compassion be translated into deeds of mercy (James 2:15–16). Dorcas, who was raised from the dead by Peter, probably exercised this gift. She was "full of good works and acts of mercy" (Acts 9:36).

### **Characteristics of the Person with the Gift of Mercy**

If I have developed the gift,

- I have a knack for turning compassion into cheerful deeds of kindness.
- I enjoy working with people who suffer physical, mental, or emotional problems.
- Sick, helpless, and shut-in people are blessed when I minister to them.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I would like to minister to those who have physical or mental problems.
- The sight of misery makes me want to find a way to express God's love to hurting persons.
- I sense when people are hurting in some way.

## **PROPHECY**

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The ability to proclaim and apply God's truth so that believers may be edified, encouraged, and consoled, and nonbelievers convinced (see 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28).

### **Prophecy as a Spiritual Gift**

The gift of prophecy is mentioned in all of the major spiritual gifts passages. In fact, it is the only gift to find a place on each of our different lists in Scripture. Paul considers it a most valuable gift. By it people are built up, encouraged, and

consoled, and by it the church is edified (1 Corinthians 14:3–5). While all gifts are desirable, this one is especially so (1 Corinthians 14:1). The prime source of the prophetic message today is the Scriptures. The prophetic message must be guided by and derived from Scripture itself. Of course, to speak as a prophet requires the direct operation of the Spirit in one's heart and mind. There is no gift of prophecy apart from this. The authority of any spiritually gifted prophet today is secondary subject to the teaching of the Word.

Prophets of both the Old and New Testament predicted future events. Is this still a part of the prophet's function? Let it be noted that prediction of future events was never the major element of the prophet's speaking and writing. It was a part of prophecy simply because the revelation which God gave him or her to proclaim included the future. Today, however, the focus of prophecy is upon Christ, who is the Living Word of God (Revelation 19:10). Still, we must also acknowledge that the Spirit is free to give guidance as he once did through the prophet Agabus (Acts 11:28; 21:10ff). Such direct guidance, however, seems to occur infrequently and does not come with the binding authority of Scripture. It too must be tested by biblical teaching and by the wisdom of the believing community.

### **Characteristics of the Spiritually Gifted Prophet**

If I have developed the gift,

- I have pleaded the cause of God to the people of the church and/or world.
- I have proclaimed timely and urgent messages from God's Word.
- God is using me to build up, encourage, and comfort other Christians by speaking to them of spiritual things.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I have spiritual insights from the Scriptures concerning people and issues that make me want to speak out.
- Given the opportunity, I would like to be a preacher of God's Word.
- I think more Christians should speak out on the moral issues of the day such as abortion, easy sex, racism, and so on.

## **SERVICE**

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The ability to help others in their lives and ministries by aiding them in practical ways (see Romans 12:7).

### **Service as a Spiritual Gift**

The home, the church, the community—wherever one looks there are hundreds of things that need tending to. Many of these things require no special ability other than seeing the task and being willing to do it. This is a precious gift, one that is always sorely needed in the church. Sometimes when the New Testament speaks of service (*diakonia*), it relates it to preaching (Acts 6:4) or works of charity (Acts 6:1). But as a spiritual gift, service is seen most visibly in those who place themselves at the disposal of others, to give assistance in a Christian undertaking. The gift of service is elsewhere described as the gift of helps (1 Corinthians 12:28). The idea is the same: service is “to take a burden on one's self instead of leaving it on another.” The gift of service must not be regarded as unimportant just because it involves no prestigious skills such as are required for preaching or leadership. Service itself—the ability to see and assume a task, however menial or unattractive to others—is a rare and valuable gift.

### **Characteristics of the Person with the Gift of Service**

If I have developed the gift,

- I enjoy doing tasks that help others minister effectively.
- I like to work at little things that help to build the body of Christ.
- I find practical ways of helping others and gain satisfaction from doing this.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I sense when others need a helping hand and am ready to give it.
- It is my nature to like to do work that helps others do theirs.
- I wish I had more opportunity to assist others in their ministries.

## SHEPHERDING

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The ability to oversee the spiritual lives of others and care for their spiritual needs by teaching and guiding them toward maturity (see Ephesians 4:11).

### Shepherding as a Spiritual Gift

Shepherding is included as a gift because the word *pastor* is found in Ephesians 4:11 among the list of gifted persons serving the church. The Greek word for *pastor* is the common word for *shepherd*. Frequently this gift is called *pastoring*. We use the word *shepherd* here to avoid confusing the gift with the pastoral *office*. One who has this gift may be an ordained pastor. However, one may have this gift without being theologically trained and without being an ordained pastor. Women have this gift as well as men.

The person who has the gift of shepherding must feed (Acts 20:28b; 1 Peter 5:2), guide (Isaiah 40:11; John 21:16), and protect (Acts 20:28a) others. In order that he or she may feed the members of the flock, the shepherd will ordinarily be “able to teach” (1 Timothy 3:2; Ephesians 4:11). He or she must “encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it” (Titus 1:9). This person is called to equip and enable others so that they may be edified and may go on to Christlike maturity (Ephesians 4:11).

The shepherd works willingly and eagerly, and operates not with a big club of authority but by means of a good example (1 Peter 5:1–3). This gift can function in informal ways as well as in official ways. Those who do well in one-on-one discipling probably have the gift of shepherding. Counselors for youth groups in the church will find need for this gift there. Beyond the church, Christians with this gift can serve well as volunteers in guidance clinics, advisory centers, jail ministries, rescue missions, and educational agencies. Professionally, a person who has the gift of shepherding can occupy a position in counseling, chaplaincy, dean of a school, or the pastoral ministry.

### Characteristics of the Spiritually Gifted Shepherd

If I have developed the gift,

- I have been responsible for the spiritual lives of Christians with good results.
- I assume responsibility when I see a Christian being led astray.
- The Lord has used me to watch over, guide, and nurture other believers toward spiritual maturity.

If I have potential for the gift,

- I am concerned to see the spiritual needs of believers met and am willing to be personally involved in nurturing and discipling ministries.
- I sense in myself a shepherd’s instinct when I know of Christians who need spiritual counsel.
- I would love to be in a position to equip saints for the work of ministry.





# What special abilities has God given students?

The New Testament tells us that the Holy Spirit gives every Christian special abilities for service (1 Cor 12:1-11) and urges us to “earnestly desire the greater gifts” (1 Cor 12:29). What spiritual gifts has the Holy Spirit placed within your students? How could the gifts enable your students to make a difference in today’s world?

Written in simple, practical language, this small group study is designed especially for teenagers who want to identify and understand their spiritual gifts. This book contains everything a study leader needs to lead students in three lessons to a greater understanding of their spiritual gifts. This guide contains instructions for the leader and reproducible handouts for students, including a full spiritual gifts inventory.

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