

**WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT
SPIRITUAL GIFTS**
A Condensed Overview

Introduction:

1. Is there any hope for this world?
The "spiritual house" is the most important "building project". I Peter 2:4-5
The church (the Body of Christ) is the most important "bride" preparing for her upcoming wedding. John 3:29; Rev 21:2, etc.

How will it ever be "built up" and "held together"? Ephesians 4:16
We are supposed to be preparing for a wedding and that's supposed to be "fun".
SPIRITUAL GIFTS are a "pre-wedding" gift to the "bride" from the groom.

BIBILCAL FOUNDATION - FOUR PRIMARY TEXTS

1. Romans 12:3-8
2. I Corinthians 12:4-31
3. Ephesians 4:7-16
4. 1 Peter 4:7-11

"Now about spiritual gifts, I do not want you to be ignorant" 1 Corinthians 12:1

The Bible teaches gift - based ministry.

The Bible teaches team ministry. Mt.18:19-20; 21:1; Mk 14:13; Luke 10:1; Col 1:1; 4:7,9,11-12, 14.

The Church is Pictured Three Ways in the New Testament:

1. As a FAMILY.

God is our Father: Matt 5:16,45,48; 6:1f,9,14,15

We are His children: John 1:12; 1 John 3:1,2; 5:2, etc.

We are brothers and sisters in this "forever family".

Acts 12:17; Rom 1:13; 7:1; 8:12, 29, etc.

2. As a TEMPLE. Eph 2:19-22; 1 Co 3:10-17; 1 Peter 2:5

3. As a BODY. Eph 2:16; 3:6; 4:4,12,16; 5:30 Col.1:18,24; 2:19; 3:15;

Rom 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:3f, esp.12-31

Every Christian has been called into ministry.

Every Christian has been given special gifts.

Every Christian is responsible to discover and use his/her spiritual gifts:

Rom 12:6; 1 Peter 4:10

Reasons Why We Haven't Discovered Our Gifts:

1. We simply have no knowledge about spiritual gifts.
2. We are not involved in any kind of ministry so that we haven't discovered what we do best and what motivates us.
3. We have unresolved personal or spiritual conflicts.
4. We minimize what we are good at / magnify or imitate what others do.
5. We fail to analyze what motivates us or what we do best.
6. We confuse ministry with a gift (the gift of 'singing').

χαρις – grace, active - that which one grants to another
χαρισματα–divine ability given by God, a concrete form of grace
χαρισμα – a gift, a favor bestowed, not invisible vibes that attract
δωρεα – gift, bounty given without payment, gratis
πνευματικων – spirituals, pertaining to the soul vs the natural realm

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.

FOUR VALUES OF KNOWING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. **NEEDS in the Body of Christ will be met. – Eph 4:16**
2. **Our SGs are a valuable "signpost" directing us into God's will.**
3. **Knowing our SG is valuable in setting priorities in our lives.**
4. **Knowing our God-given gifts will help us develop self confidence.**

THE PURPOSE OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

A. TO BRING GLORY TO GOD

"so that in all things God may be glorified" 1 Peter 4:11

B. NOT FOR MY BENEFIT, BUT FOR OTHERS.

Each one of you, as a good manager of God's different gifts, must use for the good of others, the spiritual gift he has received from God 1 Peter 4:10 (GN)

The Holy Spirit displays God's power through each of us as a means of helping the entire church. A 1 Corinthians 12:7 (LB)

C. TO PRODUCE MATURITY AND STABILITY IN OUR CHURCH FAMILY.

It was He who gave gifts to men...to build up the Body of Christ so we shall all come together to that oneness in our faith...and become mature...Then we shall no longer be children, carried by the waves and blown about by every shifting wind. Eph.4:11,13-14

D. TO HOLD THE BODY OF CHRIST TOGETHER.

"from whom the whole Body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part" Eph 4:16

*"God has so composed the Body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked, that there should be **no division** in the Body, but that the members should have the same care for one another" 1 Cor 12:24-25*

10 Truths About Spiritual Gifts

1. Only Christians have spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 2:14
2. Every Christian has at least one gift. 1 Corinthians 7:7; 12:7; Rom 12:3; Eph 4:7; 1 Pet 4:10
3. No one receives all the gifts. 1 Corinthians 12:27-30
4. No single gift is given to all believers. 1 Corinthians. 12:29-30

5. You can't earn a spiritual gift. Ephesians. 4:7
6. The Lord Jesus Christ decides what gifts I get. 1 Cor. 12:11
7. The gifts I'm given are permanent. Rom. 11:29
8. I am to develop the gifts God gives me. 1 Tim. 4:14
9. It's a sin to waste the gifts God gave me. 1 Cor. 4:1-2 and Mt. 25:14-30
10. Using my gifts glorify God and matures me. Jn 15:8

CAUTIONS ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS

1. Don't confuse gifts with natural talents.
2. Don't confuse gifts with the Fruit of the Spirit. Gal 5:22-23
 - "Fruit" shows my Maturity.
 - "Gifts" show my Ministry.
3. Don't confuse gifts with Christian roles.
4. Be aware of the self projection tendency. (Expecting others to serve the way you do and have similar results.)
5. Don't feel my gift makes me superior to others. 1 Cor. 12:21
6. Realize that using my gifts without love is worthless!

"I may be able to speak the languages of men and even of angels...I may have the gift of inspired preaching...I may have all knowledge ...and all the faith to move mountains - but if I have not love, I am nothing...it does no good." 1 Cor. 13:1-3 (GN)
7. Recognize that I have both a *Primary* and a *Secondary* ministry in my church:
 - My PRIMARY MINISTRY commitment should be in the area where I am gifted.
 - My SECONDARY MINISTRY includes serving in any other area of the Body when and where I am able. Titus 3:14
8. If we don't have a spiritual gift in a specific area we still have responsibilities in "family".

HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR GIFT MIX

Just relax. Don't be so focused on discovering and naming your special gift mix as you to **S.T.A.R.T. serving** in the areas of your abilities, interests, passions and simply helping to do what needs to be done.

S TUDY the lists of gifts.

T RY different ministries. Experiment with different areas of service. It takes time and experience to discover your gifts. Bloom where you are planted. Stop waiting to be asked. Stop looking backwards to some previous time or place.

A NALYZE your interests and abilities honestly. Ask the question, "What do I enjoy doing? If I could do anything I wanted for God and money was not an issue, what would I do?"

R ESPONSE (*Respect what others say*)

Ask others what gifts they see in you. Seek advice from other Christians.

T AKE T RAINING and T ESTS 1 Tim 4:15

Read What You Do Best by Bugbee.

HOW TO DISCOVER YOUR MINISTRY

Romans 12:1-8

- Step 1: Dedicate my **body**. (vs.1)
- Step 2: Do not **conform** to the patterns of this world. **Eliminate** competing distractions. (vs.2)
- Step 3: **Evaluate** my strengths accurately. (vs.3) Don't deny your abilities.
- Step 4: **Cooperate** with other believers. (vs.4-5) See also 1 Corinthians 12:13, 21-22, 24b
- Step 5: **Activate** my gifts. (vs.6-8). Use them or lose them!

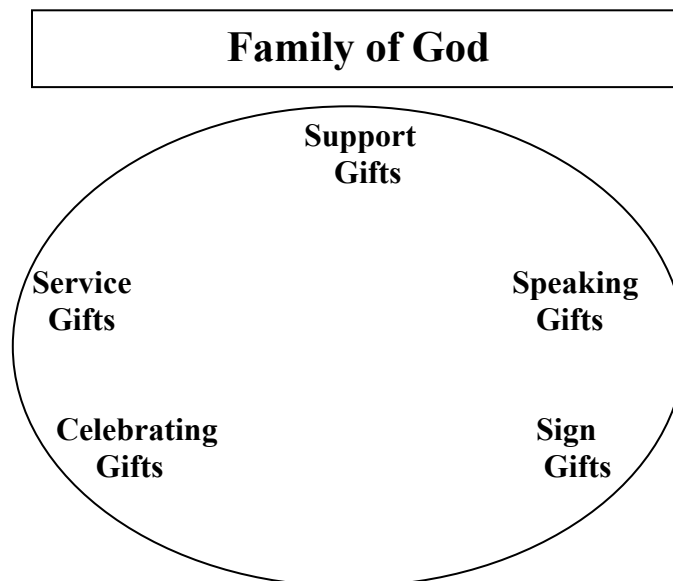
Three Ways to Use Your Gifts

1. Through Spontaneous Situations - PROMPTINGS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.
2. Through Short-term Projects - PERIODIC OPPORTUNITIESS TO MEET SPECIAL NEEDS. The service continues until the task is done. Serving in projects helps us discover our gifts, encourages servanthood and stretches and broadens our usefulness.
3. Through an Ongoing Ministry - STRUCTURED / ONGOING. Serving in the organizational sphere leads to meaningful relationships and requires accountability and both vertical and horizontal alignment of our beliefs, vision, values and goals with that of the organization.

IT'S EASIER TO DISCOVER YOUR GIFT THROUGH MINISTRY THAN TO DISCOVER YOUR MINISTRY THROUGH YOUR GIFT UNWRAPPING MY GIFTS

The Bible does not lock us into tight restrictions as to the number of spiritual gifts. There are major lists of gifts and they all vary. There are other passages that mention or illustrate God-given abilities. This seems to imply that the lists given are not exhaustive. And as we study individuals in the Bible and their gifts what seems to be indicated is that each of us has our own unique "gift mix" or "cluster of gifts".

What follows is a list of some of the gifts and their descriptions. As you read through the list check off your initial impression concerning yourself. Remember, you can have more than one gift.



GIFTS THAT SUPPORT

GETTING IT STARTED AND KEEPING IT GOING

The support gifts are in the plural indicating there is more than one individual with these gifts in the local fellowship of believers. There should be a team of people working together under the leadership of Jesus Christ through His Spirit to equip and support the ministry of the Body.

1. APOSTLE -**αποστολους** Eph 4:11, Rom 15:19-20, 2 Co 12:12

Literally - “sending out” an ambassador, delegate or messenger

Restricted sense: Jesus’ sent ones. All the above + Ac 1:21,22; 2:43; 5:12; Eph 2:20 Those who were with Jesus from the beginning. Personal call from Christ, witnesses of His resurrection. They laid the foundation, spoke with great authority and “authenticating signs” accompanied their ministry.

Broader sense: Sent ones by the church sent out to start new churches. Good at starting new works. Acts 13:

2. PREACHING (Prophecy) **προφητας** 1 Cor. 12:28

Ex 4:14-16; 7:1; Acts 11:27-28; 13:1; 15:32; Eph 2:20; 4:11

Restricted sense: The God-given capacity to receive and speak forth truth which had been given by direct revelation from God (1 Cor 14:25,29). As a result they were able to understand mysteries. (1 Cor 13:2). Both OT and NT prophets involved foretelling (predicting future events) and forthtelling (exhorting for the present).

Broader Sense: 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.

3. EVANGELISM -**ευαγγελιστας** Acts 8:26-40; 21:8; Eph 4:11

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 your faith and lead people to Christ.

4. Pastors and Teachers - **ποιμενας** and **διδασκαλους**

1 Pe 5:2-4; Eph 4:11; Acts 20:17; Tit 1:5,7; Eze 34; Ps 23; Is 40:11
John 10:11,14; Hebrews 13:20

Does not seem to be two separate gifts but one gift with two dimensions. The ability to care for the spiritual needs of a group of believers and to equip them for ministry. The ability to nurture a small group in spiritual growth and assume responsibility for their welfare. Those with this gift also have some dimension of the teaching gift. Either the “shepherding” or “teaching” dimension will likely be stronger than the other. (For more information see section about “teaching”)

GIFTS THAT COMMUNICATE - SPEAKING GIFTS

5. TEACHING - **διδασκαλος**

1 Tim 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11 Eph. 4:12-13

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.

6. WORD OF KNOWLEDGE - **λογος ψνωεωσ**

Scripture: 1 Cor 12:8; 1:5; 8:1; 13:2

Definition: The God-given ability to understand truth that is unknown by natural means. The ability to understand the truth, organize it and explain it to others. The divine enablement to accumulate and analyze information effectively.

7. WORD OF WISDOM - λογος σοφιασ

1 Cor 12:8; 2:6-12; Eph 1:17; Rom 11:33-36; Col 2:1-3; 3:16; 1 Kgs 3:3-12, 16-28

The gift of receiving and presenting the wisdom of God. Seeing how revealed truth applies to life, to present-day situations. The gift arises out of being drenched in God's Word and in principles from the Word. but it can be used without the person speaking even knowing that God has used him/her to open blind eyes. It is only mentioned directly in 1 Cor 12:8. If it is from God it is always consistent with God's will and Word.

8. EXHORTATION/ENCOURAGEMENT

παρακλησει / παρακαλων

Scripture: Romans 12:1,8; 1 Thess 2:11-12; Acts 14:22

Definition: The special God-given ability to come alongside to give assistance, aid and words of comfort. To appeal to, urge, exhort. The ability to come up alongside someone and give consolation, encouragement, counsel in such a way that others feel helped, refreshed and healed.

9. DISCERNMENT

1 John 4:1 Acts 16:16-22 The ability to distinguish between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

GIFTS THAT SERVE - LENDING A HAND

10. HELPS / SERVICE

διακονια - to serve; *αντιληυσεισ* - aid, assist;

Scripture: Romans 12:7 / 1 Corinthians 12:28

Definition: The capacity to serve joyfully and faithfully behind the scenes in practical ways that releases others to use their gifts more effectively and to do so in such a way that others are strengthened and encouraged.

Examples: Ac 6:1-7; 9:36; Lk 8:2-3 w/ Mk 15:40-41; 1 Co 16:15; Romans 16:1-2

Responsibility of Every Christian:

Acts 11:29 "Each gave assistance as he could"

Gal 5:13 "through love, serve one another"

Eph 4:12 "for the equipping of the saints for the work of service"

11. LEADERSHIP προιστημι

Scripture: Ro 12:8, 1 Thess 5:12; 1 Tim 3:4,5,12; 5:17; Tit 3:8,14;

Definition: The God-given ability to stand in front and lead others, to take charge, to give direction and instruction, to lead, direct and organize others so that the job gets done. "Think 'leadership', not 'management'. Form follows function and managers follow leaders. Leaders are opportunity minded. Managers are problem minded. Leaders lead by vision. Leaders' greatest ministry to managers is to tell them to lift up their eyes and see the horizon. Managers' greatest ministry to leaders is to look down and see where they are going in the present." Hull

Examples: Acts 2:14; 15:7-11; Heb 13:17; Ex 2:11-14

Responsibility of Every Christian

1 Tim 3:4-5 “He must be one who manages his own household well, keeping his children under control with all dignity (but if a man does not know how to manage his own household, how will he take care of the church of God?)”

Judges 6:11f Gideon called on to lead when very uncomfortable doing so.

12. ADMINISTRATION - κυβερνησεις “management”

Scripture: 1 Co 12:28 Acts 27:11; Rev 18:17 “shipmaster”; Proverbs 1:5; 24:6; Gen 39:1-4; Genesis 40:4; 41:33-40; Exodus 18:13-23; Acts 6:1-6

Definition: The God-given ability to organize and superintend; a helmsperson to their congregation or group who is a true director

of its order and life; one who has the ability to sort out the details and bring order to the host

Examples: Acts 17:11; Rev 18:17; Prov 1:5; 24:6; Gen 39:1-4; 40:4; 41:33-40; Ex 18:13-23; Acts 6:1-6

13. CRAFTSMANSHIP / ARTS, CRAFTS, DECORATIONS

Scripture: Ex 31:3-11

Definition: The God-given ability to work with one’s hands with skill and/or artistry for the **spiritual** benefit of others.

14. SHOWING MERCY - ο ελεων Rom 12:8; Mt 9:13; Luke 1:78

ιλαροτησ – hilarity, cheerfulness

The ability to manifest practical, compassionate, cheerful love toward suffering (physical, mental, emotional) members of the Body of Christ. The ability to feel compassion for people whom the majority ignores. The one who shows mercy with cheerfulness.

15. FAITH - πιστισ I Corinthians 12:9; 13:2

Beyond saving faith, beyond common faith for living the Christian life lies the spiritual gift of faith. The God-given ability to believe God for the impossible. It is the ability to envision what God wants done and to believe God will do it though it looks impossible. Those with this gift see beyond immediate circumstance; they live with a God-centered mentality. They are visionary and see beyond the church’s last 7 words “We’ve never done it that way before!”

16. GIVING - μεταδομι Romans 12:6-8; 2 Corinthians. 8:1-7

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 earn and manage money so it may be given to support the ministry of others.

17. HOSPITALITY - φιλοζενου 1 Pet 4:8-9; Rom 12:13

Lover of strangers. The God-given ability to care for newcomers

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.

GIFTS THAT CELEBRATE GOD’S PRESENCE

(Worship or prayer-related gifts)

18. INTERCESSION Col. 1:9-12

The ability to pray for the needs of others in the church family over extended periods of time on a regular basis. The ability to persist in prayer and not be discouraged until the answer arrives.

19. MUSIC Psalm 150

The ability to celebrate God's presence through music, either vocal or instrumental, and to lead the church family in worship.

GIFTS THAT AUTHENTICATE - SIGN GIFTS

These gifts in the New Testament tend to be associated with the Apostles and the Apostolic period of time. But no passage rules out the presence of these gifts at any time in history.

Major Passages: John 20: 30-31; 2 Cor 12:12; Rom 15:18-19; Heb 2:3-4; Eph 2:19-20

20. HEALINGS James 5:14-16; Ex 15:26; Mt 9:35; Ac 3:6-8; 5:15, 16; 9:32-41; 14:8-10; 19:11, 12; 18:8,9

The ability to pray in faith specifically for people who need physical, emotional, or spiritual healing and see God answer. This gift supernaturally healed completely but it did not heal every illness, did not always depend on the person's faith and does not account for all healing.

21. MIRACLES Mark 11:23-24, 1 Corinthians 12:10-28

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.

22. TONGUES / INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

Is 28:9-14; Acts 2, 8, 10, and 1 Corinthians. 12; 14:13-15

The supernatural ability to speak in a language known by others but which the speaker has never learned. Given to authenticate God's message and messengers.

A SPECIAL WORD ABOUT THE GIFT OF TONGUES AND INTERPRETATION

(Why we do not allow this gift in our services)

This gift caused such a problem in the Corinthian church, Paul had to write an entire chapter (1 Cor. 14) of guidelines.

1. We are to focus on building up others, not ourselves.

Unless you speak intelligible words...you will just be speaking into the air...try to excel in the gifts that build up the church. 1 Corinthians. 14:9 &12

2. It confuses unbelievers in the service.

If some unbelievers come in, will they not say you are out of your mind? 1 Corinthians 14:23

3. Ideally, it is not meant to be used in the worship service.

In the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. Brothers, stop thinking like children! 1 Corinthians 14:19-20

The gift of speaking God's message should be under the speaker's control, because God does not want us to be in disorder, but in harmony and peace. 1 Corinthians 14:32-33