SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Discovering What They Are and How to Use Them





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WHAT ARE THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

There are six passages in the Bible concerning spiritual gifts *(1 Cor.12:8-10, 12:28, 12:29-30; Rom.12:6-8; Eph.4:11; 1 Pet.4:11).* A compilation of these results in a three-fold classification of gifts in the Bible:

SPEAKING GIFTS *(Eph.4:11-12)*

- **Apostles** (*apostolos*) means, "*one sent with authority*." Apostles were called to lay the foundational doctrines of the church and to write Scripture *(Eph.2:19-21)*. Their office ceased with their passing.

- **Prophets** (*prophetes*) means, "*to speak forth*." God no longer mediates His Word directly through a man or a prophet, but now He speaks His Word through pastor-teachers.

- **Evangelists** (*euangelistes*) could be literally translated as *"gospellers."* Today, evangelists are modern-day missionaries in the truest sense.

- **Teaching** *(Rom.12:7; Acts 13:1; 1 Cor.12:28; 14:26)*—The grace gift of teaching *(didasko)* is the spiritual ability and capacity to do the required study in order to understand and explain the revelation of God's Word. It results in the imparting of skills and knowledge to those who believe, equipping God's people to live as disciples of Christ *(Matt.28:18-20)*.

- **Word of wisdom and knowledge** *(1 Cor.12:8)—"Wisdom"* in 1 Corinthians 12:8 may be defined as *a deep insight into God's truth*. *"Knowledge,"* on the other hand, is *the ability to take the deep things of God in some particular area of truth, requiring digging and explaining it to God's people*.

- **Discernment or the distinguishing of spirits** *(1 Cor.12:10; 14:29; 1 Thess.5:20-21; 1 John 4:1)*—This gift is simply *an ability to discern spiritual good from spiritual evil.*

SERVING GIFTS *(Rom.12:7; 1 Pet.4:10-11)*

- **Serving or helps** *(1 Cor.12:28; Rom.12:7)*—This is an ability to *assist* and *support* others in a practical and/or behind-the-scenes manner resulting in public ministries functioning effortlessly.

- **Exhortation** *(Rom.12:8)*—This is an ability to *bring encouragement to others by helping them understand the relevance of Scripture*, while simultaneously *motivating, comforting,* and *offering a hope that prompts action*.

- **Giving** *(Rom.12:8)*—This is a person with the ability to *contribute material resources to the Lord's work with generosity, frequency, cheerfulness, and without coercion to give to others*.

- **Leading or administrating** *(Rom.12:8; 1 Cor.12:28)*—This gift refers to *someone who can administrate or calmly guide ministries through dangerous and difficult challenges* and who has the ability to preside as one who leads with common sense and creativity

- **Mercy** *(Rom.12:8)*—An individual possessing this gift is one with *an inherent ability to sense another's needs and embrace them with warmth, comfort, and hope*.

- **Faith** *(1 Cor.12:9; Rom.12:6)* is given to every Christian; however, this gift is tied specifically to *the speaking gifts* embodied within the Book of Romans and refers to those who *pursue God's will with extraordinary confidence*.

SIGN GIFTS *(2 Cor.12:12; 1 Cor.12:9-10)*

- **Healing and miracles**—Sign gifts were given to affirm God's spokesmen in the Old Testament and His Son along with the apostles in the New Testament. However, they are no longer given to men today.

HOW DO I DISCOVER MY GIFT(S)?

- **Be informed**—so that you are cognizant as to which gifts are applicable today.

- **Be open**—remember your gift may be perceived differently by others than what may be perceived by you.

- **Be available**—serve in various areas and reject the notion of serving merely in a manner that is most comfortable to you.

- **Be sensitive**—carefully consider the feedback you acquire from your leaders as well as members of the body.

- **Be diligent and faithful**—oftentimes gifts may not be seen on the surface, thus diligence may be required over the long haul.

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