

Spiritual Gifts

Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:10)

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work. Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

(1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

Every Christian has been given a special gift (or gifts) by the Holy Spirit for the specific purpose to **serve** others. And every gift is **just as important** as every other gift. How do we know? Because the Bible always discusses spiritual gifts in the context of how God is building His church.

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. (1 Corinthians 12:12-20)

Notes:

Learning More about Spiritual Gifts

There are several key passages discussing spiritual gifts. Paul was the one who spoke most frequently about them, but Peter actually gave us the overall approach to them:

⁷The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. ⁸Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. ⁹Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. ¹⁰Each of you should **use whatever gift** you have received **to serve others**, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. ¹¹If anyone **speaks**, they should do so as one who speaks **the very words of God**. If anyone **serves**, they should do so with **the strength God provides**, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 4:7-11)

Paul gives us several passages listing spiritual gifts. Nowhere does he claim to be giving an exhaustive or systematic list! Spiritual gifts are, well, **spiritual**. They defy our human impulses of categorization, explanation, and definition. They are expressions of God's grace in its **various** forms!

Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it. And God has placed these in the church: first **apostles**, second **prophets**, third **teachers**, next **miracles**, then **gifts of healing, helping, managing**, various kinds of **languages**. (1 Corinthians 12:27-28)

¹Therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, I urge you to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God; this is your spiritual worship. . . ⁴Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, ⁵in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another. ⁶According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts: If **prophecy**, use it according to the standard of one's faith; ⁷if **service**, in service; if **teaching**, in teaching; ⁸if **exhorting**, in exhortation; **giving**, with generosity; **leading**, with diligence; **showing mercy**, with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:1-8)

⁴Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. ⁵There are different ministries, but the same Lord. ⁶And there are different activities, but the same God activates each gift in each person. ⁷A demonstration of the Spirit is given to each person to produce what is beneficial: ⁸to one is given a **message of wisdom** through the Spirit, to another, a **message of knowledge** by the same Spirit, ⁹to another, **faith** by the same Spirit, to another, **gifts of healing** by the one Spirit, ¹⁰to another, the **performing of miracles**, to another, **prophecy**, to another, **distinguishing between spirits**, to another, different kinds of **languages**, to another, **interpretation of languages**. ¹¹But one and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each person as He wills. (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)

And He personally gave some to be **apostles**, some **prophets**, some **evangelists**, some **pastors and teachers**, for the training of the saints in the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, growing into a mature man with a stature measured by Christ's fullness. (Ephesians 4:11-13)

From these passages, we get our list of 19 gifts, most of which are found in your assessment.

<i>Eph 4:4-13</i>	<i>1 Cor 12:27-31</i>	<i>1 Cor 12:4-12</i>	<i>Rom 12:3-8</i>	
Apostles*	Apostles*			1
Prophets*	Prophets*	Prophecy	Prophecy	2
Pastor/Teachers*	Teachers*		Teaching	3/4
Evangelists*				5
		Word of Wisdom		6
		Word of Knowledge		7
			Encouraging	8
	Helps		Service	9
	Managing		Leadership	10/11
		Faith		12
			Giving	13
			Showing Mercy	14
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Gifts Related to the Offices (indicated by *)

Apostle (**Missions**) Prophet (**Prophecy**) Pastor (**Shepherding**)
 Teacher (**Teaching**) Evangelist (**Evangelism**)

Gifts Related to Speaking (the word of God)

Word of Wisdom **Word of Knowledge** **Word of Encouragement**

Gifts Related to Serving (training and building up the body of Christ)

Helps / Service **Managing (or Administration)** **Leadership**
Faith **Giving** **Showing Mercy**

Gifts Now Classified as "Miraculous"

Miracles **Healing** **Discerning the Spirits** **Tongues/Interpretations**

Please note: (1) **Hospitality** is not on any of those lists. It is an intersection of gifts that you will learn more about below. (2) The “miraculous” gifts were not included in your assessment because you generally don’t need to be told whether or not you possess them. One exception is discerning the spirits, which can be hard to identify. (3) The gift of **Missions** is generally associated with the office of *Apostle*. (4) Likewise, the gift of **Shepherding** is generally associated with that of *Pastor*. (5) As a point of semantics, many assessments use the word **Administration** to refer to the gift of managing or governing in 1 Cor. 12:28.

For the sake of time, we will group the gifts by virtue of their use. You will hear a brief verbal overview but also have access to written information you can use for further reflection.

Note that there is a running danger to *every* gift below (thus not listed in each section):

- Believing that one’s particular gift is **more important** than any other;
- Becoming **proud** of one’s particular gift.

Gifts of Worship and Public Gatherings of the Church

According to 1 Corinthians 14, Paul indicates that a number of spiritual gifts are intended to be used when the church gathers. (As a point of reference, when you read 1 Corinthians 12-14 together, you see that these gifts were being **misused** in public worship!) These gift are not limited to being used during a church gathering, nor does Paul indicate that they are the only gifts used during a church gathering! But they are all closely related. They are:

Prophecy

The ability to receive and present God’s message so that it challenges and motivates others to a deeper commitment to Christ. It deals with “speaking forth the truth” for evangelism and spiritual growth, including confronting sin in and out of the church.

Discerning the Spirits

The ability to know which actions and words are actually of God. It enables one to tell the difference between divine, human, and satanic powers.

Teaching

The special ability and motivation to study God’s Word and to express truths of Scripture in a simple and clear way, so that they are relevant to the health and ministry of the church, so others will learn, and so that theology and doctrine are pure.

Word of Wisdom

The ability to gain insight into practical applications of God’s truth for specific situations.

Word of Knowledge

The ability to uncover, understand, explain, and communicate information that relates to the life, growth, and health of the church.

Word of Encouragement

The special ability to comfort and encourage others by showing them how to apply God's truth to their lives. It seems to include counseling and motivating.

Tongues and Interpretations

The ability to speak in an unknown language for the purpose of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ; the ability to interpret that language for the edification of the church.

Prophecy (Eph 4:7, 11; Deut 18:18)

The ability to receive and present God's message so that it challenges and motivates others to a deeper commitment to Christ. It deals with "speaking forth the truth" for evangelism and spiritual growth, including confronting sin in and out of the church. (1 Samuel 9:9; Jeremiah 1:9; Acts 13:1; Romans 12:6, 9; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28-29; 13:2; 14:1-6, 24-25, 36-38; Galatians 1:11-12; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Thessalonians 5:21; 1 Timothy 1:18; 3:7; 4:14; 1 Peter 2:1-3; 4:11)

Gifts of Worship

From the Greek *propheteia* (Rom 12, 1 Cor 12, Eph 4): a discourse from divine inspiration; declaring the purposes of God.

Someone with the Gift of Prophecy:

- Feels an inward drive to proclaim God's message, even if it means standing alone.
- Has a Christian lifestyle consistent with the message proclaimed (practice what you preach).
- Is willing to use God's word to speak out against evil, shame, injustice, and hypocrisy.
- Is deeply concerned with the reputation of the church and all other facets of God's work.
- Speaks God's message, based on Scripture, to address issues such as hunger, world conflict, poverty, and politics.
- Has an insight into God's will and purpose. Old Testament prophets were called "seers."
- Does NOT speak on his or her own authority or opinion but the truth of God.
- Is willing to suffer personal loss to bring others into a deeper relationship with God.
- Has an inward sadness over the sins of those with whom he or she talks.

Dangers:

- Being harsh without love and concern.
- Constantly emphasizing one aspect of evil over others.
- Overlooking one's own sin while seeing evil in others.
- Mistaking their debate skills with spiritual prophecy.
- Emphasis on decisions to the neglect of spiritual growth.
- May not be a good listener because of a strong desire to speak.

Discerning Spirits (1 Cor 12:7-10; 1 John 4:1)

The ability to know which actions and words are actually of God. It enables one to tell the difference between divine, human, and satanic powers. (1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 John 4:1-5)

Gifts of Worship

From the Greek *diakrisis pneuma* (1 Cor 12): discerning, distinguishing, judging spirits (compare “critic”)

Someone with the Gift of Spiritual Discernment:

- Has a deep conviction that all authentic power comes from God.
- Realizes that evil forces do exert power on people and influence them.
- Experiences an inner restlessness when individuals claim divine authority.
- Is able to discern when motives, ideas, and actions are Spirit-directed as opposed to human or even demonic.

Dangers:

- Mistaking discernment for jealousy or personal spite.
- Simply being curious about satanic powers is NOT exercising this gift.
- Being distrustful of anyone who claims to speak God’s truth.
- Establishing oneself as the final authority in spiritual matters.

Teaching (Rom 12:6-7; Acts 18:26)

The special ability and motivation to study God’s Word and to express truths of Scripture in a simple and clear way, so that they are relevant to the health and ministry of the church, so others will learn, and so that theology and doctrine are pure. (Mark 6:2; Luke 1:1-4; John 7:46; Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:28-30; Ephesians 4:11)

Gifts of Worship

From the Greek *didasko* (Rom 12, 1 Cor 12): to teach (compare “didactic”)

Someone with the Gift of Teaching:

- Emphasizes the accuracy and purity of Word, doctrine, and interpretation.
- Tends to test or evaluate the knowledge of those who teach them.
- Enjoys research and study to validate the truth and to prepare to teach.
- Is very systematic, organized, and objective in his or her presentation and biblical truths (would never take a verse out of context to get results or make a point).
- Primarily uses illustrations from the Bible.
- Communicates more than just factual information, but actually teaches spiritual truth.

Dangers:

- Concentrating on content to the neglect of application (even in his or her own life).
- Thinking this gift is more important than any other.
- Being inattentive to the needs and responses of students.
- Appearing to lack warmth and compassion in presentation.

Word of Wisdom (1 Cor 12:7-8; James 3:17)

The ability to gain insight into practical applications of God's truth for specific situations. (1 Kings 3:9, 16-28 (Solomon); Mark 6:2 (Jesus); 1 Corinthians 12:8)

Someone with the Gift of Wisdom:

- Offers solutions that profit others and the church.
- Is sought for advice in practical matters and regularly gives good advice.
- Has the ability to clarify issues for groups and individuals, even in a tense environment.
- Groups carefully consider their opinions.
- Has the ability to judge between the good and bad.
- Understands human nature so as to offer very effective counsel.
- Has the ability to communicate this knowledge to others ("word of").

Gifts of Worship

From the Greek *logos sophia* (1 Cor 12): a word of wisdom, particularly with respect to discovering a mysterious meaning, or skill and discretion in imparting such knowledge

Dangers:

- Assuming one's viewpoint is always a wise plan.
- Suggesting solutions that are impractical or ineffective.
- Contributing to tension and strife over issues.
- Refusing to consider others' opinions, points of view, or experiences.
- Believing they are always right.

Word of Knowledge (1 Cor 12:7-8; Dan 2:21)

The ability to uncover, understand, explain, and communicate information that relates to the life, growth, and health of the church. (1 Corinthians 12:8)

Someone with the Gift of Knowledge:

- Effectively gathers information for the purpose of making decisions.
- Has a special ability and desire to study and understand God's word.
- Relates God's truth to specific situations.
- Retains access to this knowledge in astounding ways.
- Can determine how one spiritual truth is related to another.
- Is able to point out specific truths that relate directly to the church's well-being.
- Has the ability to communicate this knowledge to others ("word of").

Gifts of Worship

From the Greek *logos gnosis* (1 Cor 12): a word of knowledge, a general knowledge or intelligence, especially of lawful living

Dangers:

- Gaining knowledge without the desire to share it with others.
- Falling into a "Bible trivia" mentality.
- Taking a biblical principle out of its context or treating it as independent data.
- Overemphasizing one thing out of Scripture.

Encouraging (Rom 12:6, 8; Acts 11:23-24)

The special ability to comfort and encourage others by showing them how to apply God's truth to their lives. It seems to include counseling and motivating. (John 14:16; Romans 12:8; 1 Thessalonians 2:11; 4:18; 5:14; Hebrews 10:24-25; Acts 4:36 (Barnabas' name means "son of encouragement"))

Gifts of Worship

From the Greek *parakaleo* (Rom 12): literally to call near; to comfort, implore, exhort, entreat, console, encourage (the Spirit is the "paraclete").

Someone with the Gift of Encouragement:

- Stirs up others to love and good works. It is the gift of "stirring speech."
- Attaches himself to a person in need and speaks to that person in a helpful way.
- Gives comfort and healing words of counsel to others.
- Brings a clear and meaningful understanding of another person's life into focus.
- Does not dwell on others' weaknesses and shortcomings but lifts and strengthens people (particularly the fearful and the weak) to become their best selves in Christ.
- Often warns those who are acting against their faith of the consequences of their sin.

Dangers:

- Overextending one's self with people not truly interested in spiritual growth.
- Becoming discouraged or overwhelmed by those needing encouragement.
- Confusing practical advice with spiritual "stirring speech."
- Using encouragement as a substitute for personal evangelism.
- Raising people's expectations to unreasonable levels.

Tongues and Interpretations (Acts 2;

1 Corinthians 14) The ability to speak in an unknown language for the purpose of sharing the good news of Jesus Christ as well as to interpret that language for the edification of the church.

Gifts of Worship

From the Greek *hermeneia glossa* (1 Cor 12) literally an interpretation of a tongue, by implication a language (compare "glossary,"

This gift has become controversial in modern times

because certain Christian groups now teach that speaking in tongues is (a) a necessary sign of salvation or (b) a sign of the second blessing / filling of the Holy Spirit. Paul clearly denies this notion. Furthermore, some groups practice tongues as an unintelligible speech (not a known language) and an ecstatic utterance (uncontrollable). Paul specifically rejects these ideas, as well. Tongues fulfilled two purposes in the New Testament: supernaturally overcoming linguistic barriers (Pentecost), and warning the church of impending judgment (1 Cor 14). Should the gift of tongues still be active today (a subject beyond the scope of SHAPE), Paul makes it very clear that there are very strict rules as to its use and purpose. Should someone believe that he or she possesses the gift of speaking in tongues, a validation would its exercise in strict keeping with the biblical guidelines.

Gifts of Service and Building Up the Church

God is the one who builds His church; however, God expects everyone in the church to be about the work of building it together, and He has given various gifts to that purpose. (Every Christian is supposed to serve, even the “leaders.”) Gifts of service are not always recognized by others because (a) they are usually done in the background and (b) they are not all that “spectacular.” Folks with these gifts quietly go about helping, doing little things here and there, and seeming to be in the right place at the right time. They get on the ball in times of crisis, quickly taking in the situation and doing what is needed without complaint. These gifts are closely related to one another. They are:

Helps / Service

The motivation or desire to express God’s love by recognizing practical needs of people and meeting those needs personally.

Faith

The special ability to affirm God’s power to work in the world today and to be a part of His work through prayer and the Spirit’s power.

Mercy

The ability to identify with, have compassion on, and comfort those who experience sorrow, distress, and crisis, whether physical, mental, spiritual, or emotional. This gift goes beyond natural sympathy and pity to an actual conduit of God’s love and ability to bear another’s burden.

Giving

The ability and desire to contribute material resources to others and the Lord’s work with liberality and cheerfulness, without sacrificing provision for one’s own family and responsibilities.

Healing

The God-given ability and motivation to help others regain physical, mental, or spiritual health through direct action of God.

Leadership

The special motivation and ability to set goals and coordinate ministries within the church in order to accomplish those goals. It is the power to supervise, guard, and apply God’s truth to His people in order to motivate them in doing Kingdom work

Administration

The special ability to direct and coordinate God’s people in accomplishing their Kingdom work as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Shepherding

The desire and ability to build up, equip, and guide Christians in spiritual growth and ministry.

Helps/Service (1 Cor 12:28; Gal 6:2)

The motivation or desire to express God's love by recognizing practical needs of people and meeting those needs personally. (Acts 9:36; Romans 12:7; 15:25, 31; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 16:15; 2 Cor. 8:4)

Someone with the Gift of Service/Helping:

- Has an unusual ability to detect people's personal needs.
- Actually helps rather than just thinks or talks about helping (even without being asked).
- Continues to desire to help even when the one helped responds ungratefully.
- Is able to overlook their own personal discomfort or meet other people's needs.
- Does not care about public recognition but works well behind the scenes.
- Bristles against red tape and bureaucracy.

Dangers:

- Trouble saying "no" leads to overextension or neglecting own family's needs.
- Preferring short-term projects to long-term strategies.
- Becoming bitter when deeds are consistently not recognized or appreciated.
- Assuming that others involved in a ministry project also have the gift of service.
- Allowing the creation of co-dependent relationships with those being served.
- An inability to accept others helping them.

Gifts of Service

From the Greek *diakonia* (Rom 12): attendance to, ministry to, relief or service, especially to help meet a need. Also *antilepsis* (1 Cor 12): to aid, help; with respect to relief

Faith (1 Cor 12:7, 9; Rom 4:20-21)

The special ability to affirm God's power to work in the world today and to be a part of His work through prayer and the Spirit's power. (Matthew 17:14-20; Mark 11: 22-24; 1 Corinthians 12:9, 11; 13:2; Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 11:1-6, 8-19 (Abraham), 23-30 (Moses))

Someone with the Gift of Faith:

- Believes and trusts that God can and will intervene in human history.
- Sees God's hand and glory in even the most impossible situations.
- Is willing to yield to God's will in the midst of enormous difficulties and hindrances.
- Responds to the leading of the Holy Spirit even when the purpose is not readily apparent.
- Has an unwavering faith that gives strength and confidence to those around him or her.

Gifts of Service

From the Greek *pistis* (1 Cor 12): moral conviction of any truth, especially of the Word of God, particularly the character of God, reliance on Christ for salvation, and constancy of profession of such faith

Dangers:

- Mistaking faith for poor judgment in failing to plan ahead (or for stubbornness).
- Trusting that situations will change may be a refusal to face reality.
- Mistaking faith for arrogance in assuming one understands the Spirit's leading.

Showing Mercy (Rom 12:6, 8; Matt 5:7)

The ability to identify with, have compassion on, and comfort those who experience sorrow, distress, and crisis, whether physical, mental, spiritual, or emotional. This gift goes beyond natural sympathy to an actual conduit of God's love deep within and ability to bear another's burden. (Matthew 5:7; 11:28; 12:7; 15:22; 17:15; Luke 6:36; 10:30-37; Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 9:7)

Gifts of Service

From the Greek *eleeo* (Rom 12): to be compassionate by divine grace, to help someone who is afflicted

Someone with the Gift of Mercy:

- Has the capacity to reveal God's continuing power to give peace to those in distress.
- Cheerfully expresses mercy in actions, not just words.
- Responds graciously to others' misery even when their actions brought it about.
- Finds strength in weakness and is unafraid to be "weak."
- Has the supernatural ability to detect, discern and be sensitive to people's feelings.
- Is attracted to and understands people in distress and desires to help them.

Dangers:

- Mistaking personal emotions for spiritual mercy ("bleeding heart").
- Failing to be firm when necessary or resenting others not seeming to act with mercy.
- Mercy being misinterpreted by person of the opposite sex.
- Interrupting what God may be doing in the other person's life.

Giving (Rom 12:6, 8; 2 Cor 8:2)

The ability and desire to contribute material resources to others and the Lord's work with liberality and cheerfulness and without sacrificing one's own family responsibilities.

(Matthew 6:1-4; Luke 3:11; Acts 4:34-35; Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 9:7; 8:2-5; 3 John)

Gifts of Service

From the Greek *metadidomi* (Rom 12): to give, share

Someone with the Gift of Giving:

- Manages resources such that sacrificial giving is habitual (is not necessarily wealthy!).
- Makes wise purchases and investments - a strong sense of stewardship.
- Has the desire to give to effective projects and ministries (without needing recognition).
- Gives sacrificial gifts of the highest quality (but not irresponsibly).
- Uses his or her own giving to motivate others to give.
- Has an unusual alertness to valid needs which they fear others might overlook.

Dangers:

- Being attracted to the praise or influence brought about by giving.
- Judging others' spirituality by how much they have or give.
- Overemphasizing material needs over spiritual needs.
- Having difficulty accepting gifts from others.

Gifts of Healing (John 9:1-3; 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28)

The God-given ability and motivation to help others regain physical, mental, or spiritual health through direct action of God.

Gifts of Service

From the Greek *charismata iama* (1 Cor 12): literally gifts of healing, remedy, or medicine

Just as with tongues, this gift has become controversial in modern times due to the work of so-called “faith healers” who gain notoriety or money from their efforts, all the while claiming authority over the Holy Spirit. In the Bible, miraculous healings took place to bring glory to God and encouragement to the group of believers affected. Nowhere does the Bible restrict this gift to supernatural means, however (contrary to those who reject medicine), but it seems to indicate that this gift can include a spiritual insight to a physical malady and the natural means available to cure it. Due to the prevalence of modern medicine, this aspect of the gift is not often developed. It is also very important to recognize the use of this gift in mental and spiritual healing.

Leadership (Rom 12:6, 8; Matt 20:28)

The special motivation and ability to set goals and coordinate ministries within the church in order to accomplish those goals. It is the power to supervise, guard, and apply God’s truth to His people in order to motivate them in doing Kingdom work.

(Titus 3:8, 14; Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10; 5:12; 1 Timothy 3:4, 5, 12; 5:17)

Gifts of Service

From the Greek *proistemi* (Rom 12): to preside over, maintain, superintend, protect, care for, direct; the emphasis is on protective leadership

Someone with the Gift of Leadership:

- Sees God’s will (big picture) and can help people become a part of accomplishing it.
- Has an uncanny ability to accomplish projects in tune with God’s purposes.
- Is inclined to fill a void of leadership when necessary.
- Is able to preside (stand out in front) over a group and moderate them effectively.
- Delegates authority well and knows what should not be delegated.
- Is willing to endure reaction from workers in order to accomplish the ultimate task.
- Recognizes potential and skills in others and motivates them to action.
- Assumes responsibility to protect and provide for those involved in a project.
- Does the right thing at the right time without creating confusion or resentment.

Dangers:

- Neglecting ministry and care for the people working on projects.
- Behaving more like a boss/CEO than a servant-leader.
- Forgetting the purpose of a project or the people involved.
- Mistaking delegation for laziness or work-avoidance.
- Failing to communicate the reasons for certain decisions or actions.
- Being unreasonable with the capabilities or schedules of church members.

Administration (1 Cor 12:28; Luke 14:28)

The Greek words used for “leadership” and “administration” overlap in a number of ways - particularly in the responsibilities of oversight. The difference seems to be an emphasis on “protective superintending” with respect to leadership and “directing” with respect to administration. From that, we will define the gift of administration as the special ability to direct and coordinate God’s people in accomplishing their Kingdom work as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Gifts of Service

From the Greek *kubernao* (1 Cor 12): to pilot, direct, govern
(compare “Gubernatorial”)

Someone with the Gift of Administration:

- Has a desire to organize that for which he or she is responsible.
- Is aware of resources available to complete a task and stewards them very well.
- Enjoys seeing all the pieces come together and others blessed by the finished product.
- Able to set, communicate, and organize a group to accomplish Kingdom goals.

Dangers:

- Assuming an accomplished task is effective ministry.
- Failing to appreciate the real-life challenges of church members serving in ministry.
- Being trapped in administrative processes and removed from people.

Shepherding (Eph 4:7, 11; 1 Pet 5:1-2)

The desire and ability to build up, equip, and guide Christians in spiritual growth and ministry. (Acts 18:24-26; 1 Corinthians 16:1; Galatians 1:6-12; Ephesians 4:11)

Gifts of Service

From the Greek *poimen* (Eph 4): literally a shepherd; figuratively an overseer, director

Someone with the Gift of Shepherding:

- Has an ability and desire to lead, teach, guide discussion, and counsel.
- Desires to help others and to help bear their burdens.
- Is concerned about the welfare and doctrinal purity of other Christians.
- Has a sense of divine leadership to shepherd God’s people.
- Helps other Christians grow spiritually, develop their gifts, and join in ministry.
- Note: one does not have to be a “pastor” to have and use this gift!

Dangers:

- Losing sight of the self-giving nature of a shepherd (expecting to be served by the sheep).
- Dominating people rather than developing or leading them.
- Using people to reach one’s own goals rather than putting their needs first.
- Acting the public role of a leader without really teaching and helping people.
- Doing all the work oneself instead of equipping Christians to minister.
- Using the gift of shepherding or office of pastor to gain material abundance.

Gifts of Witnessing

On the one hand, we are commanded to take the gospel to the ends of the earth. On the other hand, we cannot force people to receive our gospel. God has given certain gifts to supernaturally help our efforts of evangelism and church planting. They are:

Evangelism

The ability and deep desire to sympathize with lost people and present Christ effectively so they will accept salvation through Christ.

Missions / Apostleship

The ability to share God's message of reconciliation; to start new Bible-study groups or churches; and to cross cultural, language, or racial barriers to present the gospel.

Miracles

The special ability to serve as a human intermediary through whom God works to bring about events that cannot be explained by natural law.

Hospitality

A "composite" spiritual gift specially used to care for and share God's mercy and grace with those outside the church and in need.

Evangelism (Eph 4:7, 11; Acts 8:6)

The ability and deep desire to sympathize with lost people and present Christ effectively so they will accept salvation through Christ. (Acts 8:5-13, 26-40; 21:8; Ephesians 4:11)

Gifts of Witnessing

From the Greek *euangelistes* (Eph 4): a preacher of the gospel, bringer of good tidings, herald of salvation

Someone with the Gift of Evangelism:

- Is characterized by a deep desire and continuing boldness to present the gospel to all.
- Is very aware of God's unique love for every person and desire that they are all saved.
- Understands the truths of the gospel and is able to present these truths clearly to others.
- Believes that lost people will be separated from God eternally in hell.
- Can help lost persons, having been convicted by the Spirit, accept Jesus and His salvation.
- Has the desire and ability to help others become effective witnesses.

Dangers:

- Neglecting ongoing discipleship due to the vast numbers of witnessing opportunities.
- Failing to follow-up that someone's decision is genuine for the same reason.
- Majoring on the number of decisions at the expense of checking the genuineness of those decisions.

Missions/Apostleship (Eph 4:7; 2 Cor 12:12)

The ability to share God's message of reconciliation; to start new Bible-study groups or churches; and to cross barriers of culture, language, or ethnicity to present the gospel. (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 13:1-3; 14:4, 14 (Barnabas); Romans 16:7 (Andronicus and Junia); 1 Corinthians 12:28-29; Ephesians 4:11)

Gifts of Witnessing

From the Greek *apostolos* (1 Cor 12, Eph 4): a delegate or messenger, particularly on orders; a naval term

Someone with the Gift of Missions:

- Desires to take the gospel message where it has never been heard or understood before.
- Enjoys beginning new groups for Bible study and prayer or planting a new church.
- Feels a special concern for the growth and maturity of new churches.
- Desires to move on to a new area after a local church or mission has been established.
- Has faith to overcome enormous obstacles, oppositions, and persecution.

Dangers:

- Acting on one's desires rather than on the leading of the Holy Spirit.
- Neglecting existing and established churches or ministries.
- Having no long-term or deep relationships due to so much transitioning.
- Being incapable of longevity or stability in one place of ministry for the same reason.
- Lacking follow-through in the face of opportunities to do something new.

Miracles (Romans 15:17-20; 1 Corinthians 12: 10, 28)

The special ability to serve as a human intermediary through whom God works to bring about events that cannot be explained by natural law. In the New Testament, God used miracles to support the work and message of the apostles when they were spreading the gospel and planting churches in unfamiliar and unfriendly territory.

Gifts of Witnessing

From the Greek *dunamis* (1 Cor 12): force, miraculous power, mighty work (compare "dynamite")

For reasons akin to those surrounding tongues and healing, the gift of miracles has become very controversial (and not only because so many people reject the idea of a miracle). Contrary to the claims of so-called "miracle workers," someone with this gift would understand that God alone decides when miracles are to occur and makes certain to give all of the glory to God when a miracle is given as an answer to prayer. The idea that a person could produce a miracle runs contrary to everything the New Testament teaches, though people have been known to sensationalize an explainable event just for that reason.

God seems to use miracles on the mission field as a means of validating a missionary and his or her message. That is not to say that miracles do not take place in a Christian setting, but their purpose would be to promote the gospel (remember, healings are a unique type of miracle).

Hospitality (1 Pet 4:9-10)

You noticed that hospitality was not in any of Paul's "lists" of spiritual gifts, yet it might be the lynchpin of all of them. Time for a short Bible study:

Gifts of Witnessing

From the Greek *philoxenos* (1 Pet 4): literally stranger-loving (adj.)

The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. (1 Peter 4:9-10)

English translations lose Peter's emphasis. The commands are to "be alert" and "be of sober mind" in these last days. The means to do so are by loving each other deeply and using whatever gifts you have received (those are both participles). "Hospitality" is the *adjective* that describes the whole scenario, and the word focuses on *strangers*. In other words, in these last days, Christians are not to love only other Christians but all people - even strangers.

The gift of hospitality, then, is either a characteristic expected of every Christian to prevent the church from focusing inward, an aspect of every spiritual gift designed to prevent their use from focusing inward, or a unique "composite" spiritual gift specially used to care for and share God's mercy and grace with those outside the church and in need. Likely, it is all three. It is a lynchpin gift because it constantly refocuses all gifts on the purpose of bringing God glory in the world and keeping the church aware of its mission to make disciples of all peoples.

Someone with the Gift of Hospitality:

- Is as likely to have mercy on a non-Christian as a Christian.
- Is sensitive to discrimination in the way the church directs its efforts of ministry.
- Is comfortable opening his or her home to anyone in need, friend or not (ready or not).
- Has a knack for making a wide range of people feel comfortable or at home.
- Pays attention to the needs and feelings of everyone, whether church members or not.

Some people with the gift of hospitality might not realize that their gift is a hugely important evangelistic and missional tool: it connects the message of the church with actions that impact the lives of people (sometimes called lifestyle or friendship evangelism). As a result, the gift of hospitality works very well with the gift of evangelism.

Dangers:

- Making one's self or family unnecessarily vulnerable to predators.
- Forgetting that not everyone "has never met a stranger."
- Knowing the difference between "southern hospitality" and ministry (Mary vs. Martha).
- Hoping that hospitality is sufficient evangelism without a verbal witness.