

---

# SPIRITUAL GIFTS

---



All spiritual gifts are given for the uplifting and building up of the body of Christ. They enable us to serve. They are never for our glory or to make us look or feel good.

The spiritual gifts listed below are found in three passages: Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; 28-30, and Ephesians 4:11.

## The Gift of Apostle

The Apostles were given authority by Jesus to do many different things to establish the Kingdom of God on earth. Signs and miracles accompany them. (John 14:26, 2 Peter 3:15-16, 2 Corinthians 12:12).

Apostles have a heart for God and see Him as the central place all things flow from. Revealing God to man is the main goal. The mission for those with the gift of apostleship today is often to pioneer new things, ministries and churches, to go into places where the Gospel is not preached, reach across cultures and sectors of society to establish the Kingdom of God in challenging environments. They raise up and develop leaders, call out and lead leaders, pastors and shepherds, and much more. They often have many different gifts that allow them to fulfill their ministry. These are leaders of leaders and ministers of ministers. They are influencers. They are typically entrepreneurial and are able to take risks and perform difficult tasks. They are marked by a repeating message of the power and presence of God. See also Ephesians 4:11, 1 Corinthians 12:28, Acts 1:21-22, 1 Corinthians 9:1.

## The Gift of Administration

The Greek word for the spiritual gift of administration is *kubernesis*. This is a unique term that refers to a shipmaster or captain. The literal meaning is "to steer," or "to rule or govern." It carries

the idea of someone who guides and directs a group of people toward a goal or destination. We see variations of this word in verses like Acts 27:11, and Revelation 18:17.

With this gift the Holy Spirit enables certain Christians to organize, direct, and implement plans & systems to enable, release and maintain others and various ministries. This gift is closely related to the gift of leadership, but is more goal or task oriented and is also more concerned with details, structure and organization. See also I Corinthians 12:28, Titus 1:4-5.

### The Gift of Discernment

The spiritual gift of discernment is also known as the gift of “discernment of spirits” or “distinguishing between spirits.” This is considered by many leaders as the greatest need in the body of Christ. This gift like prophecy must be rooted in love and flavored by love.

The Greek word for the gift of discernment is diakrisis. This word describes being able to distinguish, discern, judge or appraise between what is spirit, what spirit it is of and what is soul.

Those with this gift discern spiritual atmospheres, and hear the intent of a person, statement, situation, or environment. In the New Testament it describes the ability to distinguish between spirits as in 1 Corinthians 12:10, and to discern good and evil as in Hebrews 5:14. The Holy Spirit gives the gift of discernment to enable Christians to clearly recognize and distinguish between the influence of God, Satan, the world, and the flesh in a given situation.

It is absolutely vital that when a person ministers out of the gift of discernment, they are looking to the Holy Spirit on how to love & redeem a person or situation, NOT to just expose or shame them. See also I Corinthians 12:10, Acts 5:3-6; 16:16-18; 1 John 4:1.

### The Gift of Evangelism

All Christians are called to evangelize and reach out to the lost with the Gospel (Matthew 28:18-20), but some are given an extra measure of faith and effectiveness in this area.

The spiritual gift of evangelism is found in Ephesians 4:11-12 where Paul says that Jesus “gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.” The Greek word for evangelists is euaggelistes which means “one who brings good news.” This word is only found two other places in the New Testament: Acts 21:8 and 2 Timothy 4:5.

Evangelists are given the unique ability by the Holy Spirit to clearly and effectively communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to others. They are burdened in their hearts for the lost and will go out of their way to share the good news with them.



Evangelists are able to overcome the normal fear of rejection and engage non-believers in meaningful conversations about Jesus. Their gift allows them to communicate with all types of people and therefore they receive a greater response to the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. They continually seek out relationships with those who don't know Jesus and are open to the leading of the Holy Spirit to approach different people. They love giving free treasure away for Jesus (2 Corinthians 4:7), and it brings them great joy knowing that the "feet that bring good news" are beautiful to those who believe (Isaiah 52:7). See Ephesians 4:11, Acts 8:5-12, 26-40, 21:8, Matthew 28:18-20.

### The Gift of Exhortation/Encouragement

The spiritual gift of exhortation is often called the "gift of encouragement." The Greek word for this gift is *parakaleo*. It means to come alongside, exhort, to encourage and to strengthen. The primary means of exhortation is to remind the hearer of the powerful and amazing work of Jesus and who they are in Christ! We see Paul commanding Titus to use this gift in Titus 1:9 and throughout chapter 2, particularly Titus 2:11-15. He also charges Timothy in 2 Timothy 4:2.



The Spirit of God gives this gift to people to strengthen and encourage those who are wavering in their faith. Those with the gift of exhortation can uplift and motivate others as well as challenge and rebuke them in order to foster spiritual growth and action. The goal of the encourager is to see everyone continually building up the body of Christ and glorifying God. See also Romans 12:8, Acts 11:23-24; 14:21-22; 15:32.

### The Gift of Faith

The word for faith in the New Testament is *pistis*. It carries the notion of confidence, certainty, trust, and assurance in the object of faith. The gift of faith is rooted in one's saving faith in Christ and the trust that comes through a close relationship with the Savior. Those with this gift have a trust and confidence in God that allows them to live boldly for Him and manifest that faith in mighty ways. The gift of faith is wonderful at overcoming fear.

In the Bible the gift of faith is often accompanied by great works of faith. In Acts 3:1-10 we see this gift in action when Peter sees a lame man at the Beautiful Gate and calls on him to stand up and walk in the Name of Jesus. Jesus said even a small amount of this faith could move mountains (Matthew 17:20; 21:21). Paul echoed this truth in 1 Corinthians 13:2.

The Holy Spirit distributes this gift to some to encourage and build up in confidence in God. Those with the gift of faith trust that God is sovereign and He is good. They take Him at His Word and put the full weight of their lives in His hands. They expect God to move and are not surprised when He answers a prayer or performs a miracle. See also 1 Corinthians 12:9, Hebrews 11:1-40.

## The Gift of Giving

The Greek word for the spiritual gift of giving is *metadidomi*. It simply means “to impart” or “to give.” However, this word is accompanied in Romans 12:8 by another descriptive word: *haplotes*. This word tells us much more about the kind of giving that is associated with this gift. The word *Haplotes* means “sincerely, generously and without pretense or hypocrisy.”

The Holy Spirit imparts this gift modeling the generosity & Heart of God, to meet the various needs of the body of Christ and its ministries, missionaries, or of people who do not have the means to provide fully for themselves. The goal is to encourage and provide, giving all credit to God’s love and provision. Those with this gift love to share with others the overflow of blessings God has given them. They are typically very hospitable and will seek out ways and opportunities to help others, often without others knowing where this has originated from. They are also excellent stewards and will often adjust their lifestyles in order to give more to the spread of the Gospel and the care of the needy. They are grateful when someone shares a need with them, and are always joyful when they can meet that need. See Romans 12:8, 13, 2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:6-15; Acts 4:32-37, Galatians 4:15, Philipians 4:10-18.

## The Gift of Healing

The spiritual gift of healing found in 1 Corinthians 12:9 is actually plural in the Greek, literally translated “gifts of healings.” This spiritual gift is closely related to the gifts of faith and miracles. All spiritual gifts are to be exercised in faith, but gifts of healings involve a special measure of it, because you have to be able to deal with instant as well as delayed or limited results.

This gift is given at various times and places to reveal who God is, and His power and heart to the sick and tormented. The spiritual gift of healing is an intimate one as it reveals the heart and compassion of God. Jesus is the Great Healer and Physician and during His ministry on earth He healed countless people and cast out demons (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16; 9:35, Mark 1:34). Healings reveal that God is near to His people and He cares about them & their sufferings. Healings are meant to draw people to God through His Son Jesus Christ. God wants those healed to respond in faith with thanksgiving and love, as the leper did in Luke 17:15-19, and as the demon-possessed man did in Mark 5:18-20. By God’s grace, physical healing should lead to spiritual healing (faith in Jesus) and eternal life with Him in heaven.

Those who have this gift have great faith and trust that God can and will heal and are not deterred and keep praying until God’s power is revealed. This gift leads people to a revelation of Jesus, the best model of this gift. They yearn for the day that there will be no more pain and suffering, and sin will no longer wreak havoc on the people of God. See 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30, James 5:13-16.

## The Gift of Interpretation

The spiritual gift of interpretation of tongues is found alongside the gift of speaking in tongues in 1 Corinthians 12:10. The Greek word for interpretation is *hermeneia* and simply means to interpret, explain, or expound some message that is not able to be understood in a natural way. Thus, this spiritual gift is the supernatural ability to understand and explain words uttered in an unknown language.

This is a revelatory gift, meaning that God “reveals” the meaning of the words or message being spoken and allows the interpreter to share it. When this happens, three things happen: people are edified, God is glorified and God is revealed. The spiritual gift of interpretation is given by the Holy Spirit to certain individuals to reveal messages spoken in an unknown tongue to God for the building up of the church. Like the gift of prophecy, tongues that are interpreted have the effect of encouraging and revealing God more deeply and effectively. See also 1 Corinthians 12:10, 30; 14:1-28.

## The Gift of Knowledge

The spiritual gift of knowledge is also known as the “word of knowledge” or “utterance of knowledge.” The Scriptural emphasis in 1 Corinthians 12:8 is on the ability to speak or have knowledge for others in a given situation that was revealed supernaturally. This gift is related to the gift of wisdom which is alluded to by Paul in 1 Corinthians 1:18-31.

The Holy Spirit gives this spiritual gift to some believers to bring revelation and understanding and to inform of where the Presence of God is moving and what is on His heart. The gift of knowledge allows a believer to move supernaturally in releasing healing and direction to people. See also 1 Corinthians 12:8; Romans 15:14; 2 Corinthians 2:14.

## The Gift of Leadership



The spiritual gift of leadership is closely related to the gift of administration and, interestingly, the spiritual gift of pastor/shepherd. The Greek word for the spiritual gift of leadership is *proistemi*. This word means to lead, to assist, to protect and to care for others. The spiritual gift of leadership is found in Romans 12:8 sandwiched between the gifts of giving and mercy. Its placement there implies that it is a gift associated with caring for others. This is what connects it to the gift of pastor/shepherd, and what differentiates it from

the gift of administration. It is more people oriented than task, program oriented in its application. This is not to say those with the gift of administration do not care for people, of course they do, but those with the spiritual gift of leadership focus on people and relationships more directly.

The word *proistemi* is connected to caring for people in other passages as well. In 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13 Paul says to “respect those who labor among you and are over (*proistemi*) you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work.” The labor and work of those who were leading the believers in Thessalonica was that of tirelessly caring for their souls. Paul also connects leadership to caring for others when he asks, “If someone does not know how to manage (*proistemi*) his own household, how will he care for God’s church?” 1 Timothy 3:5

The Holy Spirit gives the spiritual gift of leadership to some to care for God's people and lead them into deeper relationship with Christ and each other. They base their success on how well they help others succeed and grow in their spiritual walk with Jesus. They are able to accomplish many different tasks and objectives as they lead, but they will always lead relationally and with a deep concern for the well-being of others. They are "visionary" and less concerned with 'mundane' details than those with the spiritual gift of administration. Many are entrepreneurial and willing to take risks to see the kingdom of God advanced through the church. See also Romans 12:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; 1 Timothy 3:4-5, 12; 5:17.

### The Gift of Mercy

All Christians are called to be merciful because God has been merciful to us (Matthew 18:33; Ephesians 2:4-6). The Greek word for the spiritual gift of mercy is *eleeo*. It means to be patient and compassionate toward those who are suffering or afflicted. The concern for the physical as well as spiritual need of those who are hurting is covered by the gift of mercy. Those with this gift have great empathy for others in their trials and sufferings. They are able to come alongside people over extended periods of time and see them through their healing process. They are truly and literally the hands and feet of God to the afflicted.

The Holy Spirit gives the spiritual gift of mercy to some in the church to love and assist those who are suffering, and walk with them until The Lord allows their burden to be lifted. The gift of mercy is founded in God's mercy towards us as sinners and is consistently expressed with genuine love. Those with this gift are able to "weep with those who weep" (Romans 12:15) and "bear one another's burdens" (Galatians 6:2). They are sensitive to the feelings and circumstances of others and can quickly discern when someone is not doing well. They are typically good listeners and feel the need to simply "be there" for others. See Romans 12:8, Matthew 5:7; Luke 10:30-37; James 3:17; Jude 22-23.

### The Gift of Miracles

The spiritual gift of miracles is described in Scripture much like the gift of healing. It is found in 1 Corinthians 12:10 and the Greek phrase *energēmata dynamēon* literally translates "workings of powers."

We know that Jesus performed many miracles in His earthly ministry, even more than those recorded in Scripture (John 20:30-31, Acts 2:22). The Apostles regularly performed miracles of all kinds including casting out demons, healings, raising people from the dead, speaking in other tongues and much more (Acts 2:43; 3:1-10; 5:1-16; 9:36-43; 13:4-12; 19:11-12). Other believers performed miracles as well, including Stephen (Acts 6:8) and Phillip (Acts 8:4-8).



Miracles were given by God to reveal the presence and glory of God among His people and to create a sense of awe and wonder and Godly fear. Though there were those who resisted God, the common result of miracles being performed was people coming to faith in Jesus and glorifying

God, as well as greater faith and boldness within the church. Miracles show the reality & other of the spiritual realm. (Acts 4:29-31; 9:35, 42).

Those with the spiritual gift of miracles often have a heightened sensitivity to the presence and power of God through His Holy Spirit & they desire to partner with Him. They have a special measure of faith and desire for God to reveal Himself and draw many to faith in His Son Jesus Christ. They should take care not to draw attention to themselves, but are constantly pointing others to Jesus. Those with this gift understand that God is Sovereign and He can work when and how He desires, but they make sure they are available and listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. This gift is often accompanied by prayer and strong petition by these individuals for God to reveal His glory to people. See also 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28-29; Acts 1:8; Galatians 3:5.

### The Gift of Pastor/Shepherd

The spiritual gift of pastor or pastor/shepherd is one that carries many different responsibilities. This gift is closely related to the spiritual gifts of leadership and teaching. The Greek word for pastor is poimen and simply means shepherd or overseer.

In the Biblical context, shepherds had several different responsibilities to their sheep and ultimately, to the owner of the sheep. They kept a lookout for predators and protected the sheep from attackers. They cared for wounded and sick sheep, nursing them back to health. They rescued them if they became lost or trapped.

They spent enormous amounts of time with them guiding them to places of nourishment and rest. The result was a trust and relationship that kept the sheep following the shepherd. The sheep were attuned to the shepherd's voice.

Pastors are called shepherds because they're calling and gifting are much like those who care for sheep. They are called and gifted to care for the spiritual well-being of a local body of God's people. Pastors are first and foremost servants. They are servants of God and servants of His bride, the church. They are given a mixture of abilities by God that allows them to serve the needs of an entire community.

The goal of the pastor is to reveal the glory of God in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit to a people who need God's grace for life.

The ability to teach the Scriptures is also one of the many requirements of being an overseer (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:6-9). By teaching the Scriptures to the church, the pastor feeds the "sheep" of God.

The pastor loves the Gospel of Jesus Christ and puts it at the center of his life and ministry. Pastors do not seek fame or recognition for themselves, but they are placed in a position of authority by the Holy Spirit.



The role of a pastor is one of humility and service as he is reminded daily of his overwhelming need of God's grace for the task at hand. See also Ephesians 4:11; Jeremiah 3:15; Acts 20:28; John 10:11-18.

## The Gift of Prophecy

The spiritual gift of prophecy is an extraordinary, unique and precious gift. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 14:1 to "Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy." This gift is available to everybody and everyone to pursue! It is a blessing and should not be quenched or despised (1 Thessalonians 5:20).

This gift involves the senses and there are many different expressions of prophecy. ie. Prophet Samuel was a Seer, he saw visions, dreams and the spiritual realm. This gift more than others, can wrestle with fear. This is why constant encounters with the love of God are vital for those who pursue this gift.



Those who have the gift of prophecy differ from the Old Testament Prophets who spoke the authoritative Word of God directly. The Greek word for the gift of prophecy is propheteia which is the ability to receive a divinely inspired message and deliver it to others.

These messages can take the form of exhortation, correction, love, prediction of future events, comfort, inspiration, or other revelations given to equip and edify the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 14:3-4, 24-25).

This gift is for the benefit of both believers and unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:22-25). Those with this gift are sensitive to both the prompting of the Holy Spirit. A Deep love for God and people, along with hunger for the Scriptures marks them. See also Romans 12:6, 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:1-5, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 4:10-11.

## The Gift of Service

The spiritual gift of service, or ministering, covers a wide range of activities. There are two Greek words for this gift. The first one, found in Romans 12:7, is diakonia. The basic meaning of this word is "to wait tables," but it is most often translated in the Bible as "ministry." It refers to any act of service done in genuine love for the edification of the community.

The word antilepsis is translated "helping" and is found in 1 Corinthians 12:28. It has a similar meaning: to help or aid in love within the community.

The Holy Spirit endows some believers with this gift to fulfill the Great Commission. The goal is to energize the believers and is an act of worship. The result is the continued edification and the added ability to see beyond its own needs and reach out into the community.



We see people with this gift in passages like Acts 6:1-7, 1 Corinthians 16:15-16, and many others. Those with the gift of service are committed to the spread of the Gospel. They serve in ways that benefit others with different gifts and ministries that are more public. They have a heart devoted to Jesus and a desire to follow His command and example in Matthew 20:25-28 (cf. Mark 10:42-45). Those with this gift do not seek recognition or a position in the “spotlight,” they just love to help out and get it done. They are content with serving in the background knowing that their contribution will be seen in heaven, and will display the love of Christ to the world, and bring glory to God. See also Romans 12:7, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 28, Acts 20:35; 2 Timothy 4:11; Revelation 2:19.

## The Gift of Teaching

The spiritual gift of teaching is one that carries a heavy responsibility in the church. In fact, James 3:1 warns, “Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness.” Like every believer, teachers are to be stewards of every word that comes out of their mouths. But the greater responsibility to which they are called is to be stewards of the Word of God to His people. Teachers have been entrusted with the task of effectively communicating what the Bible says, what it means, and how we as followers of Jesus Christ are to apply it to our lives here and now.

The Greek word for those with the spiritual gift of teaching is didaskalos. From the root of this word we get our English word, “didactic.” To teach with morals in mind. The word didasko means to teach, instruct, instill doctrine, explain, and expound.

Those with the spiritual gift of teaching love to study the Word of God for extended periods of time. They consume the Scriptures as food for their hearts, souls and minds with the expressed purpose of knowing Him and then making Him known to others. They want to know God. They take great joy and satisfaction in seeing others learn and apply the truth of God’s Word to their lives. They love to see how the Gospel is woven throughout the Scriptures and how it glorifies and magnifies Jesus Christ in the hearts and lives of those who love Him by grace.

The Holy Spirit gives certain people the spiritual gift of teaching so that they would help the church fulfill her ministry as “a pillar and buttress of the truth” (1 Timothy 3:15). Without this gift, the church would quickly fall into error and sin. Teachers are there to make sure that doesn’t happen. They hate when Scripture is abused and used out of context or with ill intent. They love the truth and speak the truth in love. They will never hide or withhold it.

On the contrary, they desire to follow in the footsteps of Jesus who taught in the synagogues and in the Temple as well as anywhere the people were gathered.

They are called to demonstrate God’s love while revealing His truth. The effect of their ministry is the upholding of God’s Word and the growth and maturity of His Bride until



the day of His return. See also Ephesians 4:11; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 12:7; James 3:1

## The Gift of Tongues

The spiritual gift of tongues is more accurately called the gift of languages. The Greek word for tongues is glossa, or glossolalia, which literally means “tongue.”

Speaking in tongues is the utterance of prayer or of a message glorifying God, typically spoken to God (1 Corinthians 14:2), in a language that is unknown to the one speaking it.

The Holy Spirit gives believers the spiritual gift of tongues to glorify God and, with the help of an interpreter, to edify others. This gift is dealt with extensively in the Scriptures and its use should not be discouraged. It allows the speaker to flow with the Holy Spirit and release His words into atmospheres. It is very powerful in spiritual warfare. See also 1 Corinthians 12:10, 30, 14:4, 39, Acts 2:4, Acts 19:6.

## The Gift of Wisdom

The spiritual gift of wisdom, like the gift of knowledge, is also referred to as the “word of wisdom” or “utterance of wisdom.” In the context of 1 Corinthians 12:8, it means to speak to the life of an individual or to a specific situation with great understanding and a righteous perspective.

Several Scriptures reveal the true beauty and fruit of wisdom. Psalm 111:10 says: “The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!” Wisdom begins with the fear of the LORD. It begins with knowing who God is and who we are in Him.

James 3:17 says “the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere.”

Those with the gift of wisdom have a deep understanding of the holiness of God. Wisdom doesn't end with knowledge, but is expressed in transformed hearts and lives. They can often see through the confusion of a situation and can give direction that would help an individual or group obtain a God-glorifying, God directed goal. The spiritual gift of wisdom guides through uncertain or difficult times. See also 1 Corinthians 1:17-31, 2:1-16, 12:8; Colossians 1:9-10, 2:1-3; James 3:13-18

