

How to Discover your Spiritual Gifts—Part 2

Last time we looked at what spiritual gifts are and then defined the specific gifts.

A spiritual gift is an ability, a talent, or a skill that is given to a person for the first time ever by the Holy Spirit so that the person might be a vital, useful, and necessary member of the Body of Christ. This means that only Christians can have these spiritual gifts.

We saw that spiritual gifts are:

- 1) Only given to Christians since only Christians have the Holy Spirit
- 2) Given freely from God through His Holy Spirit
- 3) Something that every Christian has at least one of from the moment that they got saved
- 4) Many people can have more than one
- 5) Cannot be lost
- 6) It is different from natural talents
- 7) It is different from the fruit of the Spirit
- 8) Makes every Christian necessary to the body of Christ
- 9) Enables every Christian to be a blessing to others
- 10) Means that every Christian can bring glory to God

We also looked at the four passages in Scripture that lists spiritual gifts.

Romans 12:6-8

- 1) Prophesying
- 2) Serving
- 3) Teaching
- 4) Exhortation
- 5) Giving
- 6) Leadership
- 7) Mercy

1 Corinthians 12

- 8) Word of wisdom
- 9) Word of knowledge
- 10) Faith
- 11) Healing
- 12) Effecting of miracles
- 13) Distinguishing of spirits
- 14) Tongues
- 15) Interpretation of tongues
- 16) Apostles

- 17) Helps
- 18) Administration

Ephesians 4:11

- 19) Evangelism
- 20) Pastor

1 Peter 3:9-11

- 21) Hospitality

For a total of 21 gifts.

The question may come up, “If someone exhibits a characteristic of one of these gifts occasionally does that mean that he or she has that gift?”

Not necessarily. God wants all of us to evangelize. So just because we share the Gospel with someone and they get saved that doesn't necessarily mean that we have the gift of evangelism. We may run a ministry and do it well but that doesn't mean that we necessarily have the gift of leadership or administration.

Many of these gifts we will exhibit some characteristics of sometimes in our lives. God wants us to serve, He wants us to be hospitable, He wants us to exhort, He wants us to give.

So based on the characteristics that we talked about last time in conjunction with the questionnaire that we will do today, you will, hopefully, discover your spiritual gift with confidence.

So how might some of these gifts fit together to further God's will in the world?

- Someone in the congregation who has the gift of faith sees clearly God's plan to establish a sister church in another, perhaps distant, place.
- One with the gift of administration puts together a plan involving finances, people, building materials, schedules, and so forth to accomplish this vision.
- One with the gift of exhortation is able to encourage people to pray about and then volunteer to help with this project.
- One with the gift of leadership is able gather these volunteers and assign them to tasks so that they are the most efficient.
- Those with the gift of serving will gather the necessary materials before leaving and doing a lot of the menial and necessary tasks once everyone is there.
- Once there, someone with the gift of pastoring will take over shepherding the new church.
- Someone with the gift of distinguishing of spirits will be able to keep away those who want to come in and do harm to the new church.
- Someone with the gift of miracles or healing can demonstrate great signs to prove to the locals that this is indeed a work of the true God.
- One with the gift of teaching may lead Bible studies to grow those newcomers in the church.

And so on. EVERY gift would ultimately have a very important and critical function in starting and growing this church.

As you can see, it takes a lot of different talents to build a church. Imagine if everyone who was involved had only the gift of pastoring or the gift of administration or the gift of faith. The work would never get done. Also, imagine if the person who had the gift of teaching decided to bag it. Someone else who would be less skilled would have to take over. The church needs EVERYONE. And EVERYONE has something very crucial to add. And if you bag it, then there WILL be a gap, there will be a place in the church that is not as efficient as it should be.

➤ Pass out the questionnaire.

Explain the questionnaire.

Don't answer the questions with the answer that you know you SHOULD give. No one else is going to see your sheet. Just be honest.

If you aren't sure about a question such as "I love to lead people in accomplishing group goals" because you've never that and don't know if you would like it, then either answer this as to how you think you would enjoy doing this or put down either "Never" or "Rarely."

Each gift has five questions associated with it so don't sweat any one question; it probably won't make that huge of a difference.

Do the questionnaire.

➤ Pass out the scoring sheet.

Score the questionnaire.

These results aren't absolute.

Remember that your gift will only be something that you acquired after you became a Christian. So you may have scored the highest on mercy but if you were always merciful, even before becoming a Christian, then that is more likely to be a natural ability or character quality that God gave to you rather than a spiritual gift. You can probably cross that one off as being a gift although it still may be something that God would like you to continue using.

What you discover your gift to be should make sense because it is something that God has given you a desire for and it should be something that you are good at.

Now that you may know what your spiritual gift or gifts are, what does this NOT mean?

Not having a particular gift is not an excuse to not do something. For example, if you don't have the gift of giving and you see someone in need you can't say, "I don't have the gift of giving so God doesn't expect me to respond to that need." Or, "I don't have the gift of evangelism so God will understand why I never share the Gospel."

Just because you have a spiritual gift in an area that does not mean that you are always right. The person with the gift of a Word of Knowledge will not always understand a Biblical doctrine correctly and must still be humble to correction. For example, if you have the gift of Distinguishing of Spirits you shouldn't smugly say, "That guy on TV is a fake. I just know it because God has given me that gift." Maybe you are right and he is a fake but you should always use your gift humbly.

Your gift was given to you so that you can serve others and glorify God. It was not given to you so that you may feel superior to others in general or even in the area that your gift is in. Remember the passage in 1 Corinthians 12 where it said, "the eye cannot say to the foot, 'I have no need of you.'"

What DOES it mean?

It means that you can now more confidently concentrate on this area of ministry.

1) It means that you should expect greater things from God in this area.

- If you have the gift of healing then prayer for healing greater illnesses.
- If you have the gift of knowledge then study your Bible longer and with more depth.
- If you have the gift of serving then look for more opportunities to serve.
- If you have the gift of exhortation then possibly think about counseling more.

2) Get involved in a ministry that utilizes your gift.

- If you have the gift of evangelism then signup to help at the outreaches.
- If you have the gift of helps then talk to some of the leaders at your church to see how you can free them up.
- If you have the gift of distinguishing of spirits then get involved in a cult ministry.

3) If you don't think that there are any ministries utilizing your gift then think about starting your own ministry.

- If you have the gift of giving then possibly start a ministry on providing for the needs of the hungry or destitute.
- If you have the gift of teaching then start up a Bible study at your job or starting a home group in your church.

- If you have the gift of mercy then think about a ministry helping the oppressed in other countries or starting a hospital or nursing home ministry.
- 4) Buy books related to your gift and study how to deepen your gift.
 - For leadership: Spiritual Leadership by J. Oswald Sanders
 - For evangelism: Winning Ways: the adventure of sharing Christ by Leroy Eims
 - For word of knowledge: How to study the Bible for all it's worth by Gordon Fee
 - 5) Seek out people who have your gift and talk to them. Maybe several of you can get together once a month and discuss how to serve others and glorify God with you gift.
 - 6) Make a list of what you can practically do in order to use your gift and then do those things.
 - 7) Do a Bible study on your gift.
 - Look up any references to your gift.
 - Study the word in the Greek.
 - Study the lives of anyone in the Bible who had that gift.
 - 8) Get biographies about Christians who seem to display your gift.
 - Maybe read about Hudson Taylor for apostleship
 - Billy Graham or D.L Moody for evangelism
 - C.S. Lewis for word of wisdom
 - Mother Theresa for mercy
 - George Muller for faith or miracles

When I discovered around ten-years ago what my gifts were, it gave me a greater focus and direction in how I should be ministering in the church.

Ask for a show of hands for each gift.

- 1) Prophecy
- 2) Serving
- 3) Teaching
- 4) Exhortation
- 5) Giving
- 6) Leadership
- 7) Mercy
- 8) Word of wisdom
- 9) Word of knowledge
- 10) Faith
- 11) Healing
- 12) Effecting of miracles
- 13) Distinguishing of spirits

- 14) Tongues
- 15) Interpretation of tongues
- 16) Apostles
- 17) Helps
- 18) Administration
- 19) Evangelism
- 20) Pastor
- 21) Hospitality

God has given you these gifts

- Use them
- Focus on them
- Expand them
- Challenge yourself with them
- Find your place in the body of Christ with them
- Serve others with them
- Glorify God with them

Discussion Questions

Read part A) to begin the discussion time. If there is time left then ask each of the questions under B) one at a time.

A) Open this time up to anyone who would like to discuss their spiritual gift. Each person may discuss the following questions.

- What is your gift or gifts?
- Is this the first time that you feel that you know it?
- How will this affect your ministry or direction?
- Now that you know your gift, does it make sense to you that this is your gift?

B) Some general group questions:

Do you feel that it would be good to talk to other people who share the same gift as you? Why would this be beneficial?

Why is it important for you know what your spiritual gift is?

Why is it important that your gift should feel “natural” to you: I.e., why should you feel comfortable with what your gift is?