

Student Leadership Class - Leaders leverage their influence

Students often don't realize how much influence they have over others. In our world of instant feedback, constant connection, and media-driven lifestyles, it's easier than ever to build your influence, intentionally or not. In this lesson, students will be encouraged to discover God-given gifts, talents and abilities, and they'll be challenged to consider how they are using their influence—to build God's Kingdom or their own?

Make a list of influential organizations in the world. How have they impacted your life?

You are influential. Whether you know it or not, you are always influencing someone. It may be just one person or many people but make no mistake about it: someone is waiting for you to make the first move. The problem is that we have a habit of influencing the world around us for personal gain. We use our gifts, talents, and abilities to build personal kingdoms. What would it be like if, as a leader, you used those God-given gifts, talents, and abilities to influence the Kingdom?

God has given you spiritual gifts. When we are at our best, we can use those gifts, talents, and abilities to push others forward towards Jesus. The Holy Spirit uses all that God created in you to influence the Kingdom, in addition to some specific spiritual gifts.

Look for the spiritual gifts mentioned as you read

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. 2 You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. 3 Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

- Varieties of gifts from the same Holy Spirit
- Gifts are given for the "common good"
- Gifts listed
 - Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miracles, Prophecy, Discernment, Tongues

Romans 12:3–8

3 For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. 4 For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, 5 so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; 7 if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; 8 the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

- V.3 Gifts do not reveal a “higher rank”
- Many members of the same body
- Gifts listed
 - Prophecy, Service, Teaching, Exhortation, Generosity, Leadership, Mercy

Ephesians 4:11–14

11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

- Gifts listed
 - Apostles, Evangelist, Shepherds, Teachers
- Gifts are to build up and mature the body

Your gifts are meant to build God’s Kingdom. You’re influential and uniquely created, but it’s not all about you. That is the lie of sin. The world is, in fact, all about Jesus, and he is all about putting others first. It’s why Jesus tells the disciples the “first will be last, and the last first” (Matt. 30). Jesus always stresses that we are called to put others before us, to leverage our influence not to build personal kingdoms but to magnify and glorify his Kingdom. It’s hard work so we must ask God daily to help us use our gifts, talents, and abilities for Christ.

- *What spiritual gifts stood out to you? Why?*
- *What are some of your talents and abilities? Think of things that bring you joy, things you’re passionate about, or skills you may have.*
- *How can you leverage your gifts, talents, and abilities to impact the Kingdom of God in our physical and digital world?*

The Importance of Knowing Your Spiritual Gifts

- **Its biblical** - It is impossible to be committed to the teaching of scripture and ignore your spiritual own gifts.
- **They are an elementary part of discipleship** - Every Christian is given spiritual gifts, knowing and using your gifts are a necessary part of your faith journey.
- **Spiritual Gifts are a matter of stewardship (Parable of the talents)** - Just as the servants in the parable, when we are faithful with the gifts God gives us we will be blessed, when we willfully do not use our gifts we will face discipline for being disobedient.
- **They help you find your place in the local church** - Gifts are given for you to support the local church. Finding a place to use your gifts help us determine where we can and should serve.
- **Determine priorities in your life** - Though we cannot use the lack of gifts to not be obedient, our gifts inform us of places that would be the best use of our time and energy.
- **They help you discern God's will** - God will never call you to do something outside your gifting. He always provides everything we need to accomplish His will. When thinking about God's will for our lives it helps to see how that lines up with our gifting.

Spiritual Gifts is the God given capacity for every Christian to carry out their function in the Body of Christ.

Spiritual Gifts Survey