

# SPIRITUAL GIFTS

*Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed...  
— 1 Corinthians 12:1*

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## Introduction

Spiritual gifts are the concrete, tangible manifestations of divine energy in and through followers of Jesus. The gifts are God himself working in and through us—God going “public” among his people.<sup>1</sup>

Every Christian is given at least one gift to participate in the discipleship and building up of the Body (1 Cor. 12:7). It is God the Holy Spirit who determines the gift(s) you receive (v11) and each gift is necessary for the maturity of the church (v14-26). The exercise and operation of the gifts must be done in love (chp 13). If love for other Christians does not control and shape how you employ your spiritual gift, your gift is worse than worthless, it is dangerous. Spiritual gifts are a wonderful blessing from God, but compared to the transcendent value of love they are but a temporary and incomplete dimension of Christian life.

Additionally, we are continuationists, who believe that all of the gifts of the Spirit are still operating in the church including prophecy, miracles, tongues, and healings. We joyfully receive whatever gifts God gives us, we earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, seek to not despise them even though some have abused them, and humbly strive to grow in the fullness of all that God has for his church as we seek the Giver and not ultimately the gifts.

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<sup>1</sup> Sam Storms, *Practicing the Power*, pg 15

What follows is the list of the gifts in Scripture<sup>2</sup> with a brief definition and some helpful information regarding them.<sup>3</sup>

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## Prophecy

*Place in Scripture:* Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 12:28

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* Jesus is the Word of God through whom the Father speaks (John 1:1–2, 14; Heb. 1:1–3).

*Defined:* Prophecy is the human report of a divine revelation. Sometimes through words, visions, or dreams, God will give insight into someone that you wouldn't be able to know if he didn't reveal it. New Testament prophecy isn't infallible but should be "weighed" (1 Cor. 14:29). It is to be used for the "upbuilding and encouragement and consolation" (v3) of the church, and it should not be "despised" (1 Thess. 5:20), but "earnestly desired" (1 Cor. 14:1).

*General makeup:* Prophecy is a powerful gift that is much misused and abused. It should be practiced with great humility. Mature Christians with the gift of prophecy hear and see from the LORD much more than they speak.

*Illustrated Biblically:* John the Baptist (Matt. 11:7–11), Judas and Silas (Acts 15:27–35), Paul (Acts 28:30–31; 2 Tim. 4:2), Agabus (Acts 21:10–11).

*Illustrated Historically:* Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–1892) is one of the greatest preachers in the history of the church. Ironically, he was a cessationist and didn't believe that the gift of prophecy was still in operation in the Church. And yet, he had multiple occasions where he would "prophecy": "I could tell as many as a dozen similar cases in which I pointed at somebody in the hall without having the slightest knowledge of the person, or any idea that what I said was right, except that I believed I was moved by the Spirit to say it; and so striking has been my description, that the persons have gone away, and said to their friends, "Come, see a man that told me all things that ever I did; beyond a doubt, he must have been sent of God to my soul, or else he could not have described me so exactly."

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you delight in the Word of God?
2. Do you practice intercessory prayer often, so burdened for people that you pray for them?
3. Do you sometimes have people randomly come to mind and feel a desire to pray for them?
4. Do you ever see words, or visions, or have dreams?

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<sup>2</sup> Most theologians agree that the list of gifts found in places like Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12, and Romans 12 is not exhaustive nor does it limit the "gifts" that the Holy Spirit may impart to a believer.

<sup>3</sup> For further study: *Matthew 3:11; 12:28; Luke 4:1, 14; 5:17; 10:21; John 1:12-13; 3:1-15, 34; 14:12; 15:26-27; 16:7-15; Acts 2:14-21; 4:29-30; 10:38; Romans 8:9; 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:7-13; 12:28-31; 14:1-33; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; Galatians 3:1-5; Ephesians 1:13-14; 5:18.*

5. Have you ever spoken a word of encouragement to someone that resonated with them strongly?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Arrogance. Interpreting or applying the prophecy when only the “word” has been revealed.

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## **Evangelists**

*Place in Scripture:* Ephesians 4:11

*Shown in Jesus’ Ministry:* Luke 19:10

*Defined:* The gift of evangelism is the ability and desire to boldly and clearly communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to equip others to do the same. (Rom. 1:16–17; 1 Cor.15:1–4).

*General makeup:* Evangelists often care passionately about lost people and have a strong desire to see them come to faith. They feel compassion for the lost and seek to earnestly understand their questions and doubts. An evangelist often prefers being with non-Christians in the world rather than in meetings at the church.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Philip (Acts 21:8), Timothy (2 Tim. 4:5).

*Illustrated Historically:* George Whitefield lived from 1714–1770. About 80 percent of all American colonists heard him preach at least once. He would travel from town to town on horseback to preach the gospel, often more than a dozen times a week. During his lifetime, Whitefield preached at least 18,000 times. He addressed perhaps 10,000,000 hearers in person, before modern media. God also gave him the natural talent of a strong voice, he could be heard by up to 30,000 at one time without a microphone. Whitefield once said, “God forbid that I should travel with anybody a quarter of an hour without speaking of Christ to them.”

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you enjoy being with non-Christians and sharing the gospel?
2. Are you able to effectively communicate to non-Christians?
3. Does the conversion of a soul bring you profound joy?
4. Do you feel frustrated when you have not shared your faith for a long time?
5. Do you enjoy teaching others how to share their faith?
6. Do you find it easy to direct a conversation toward the topic of Jesus Christ?
7. Have you been fruitful in witnessing and seeing people become Christians?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember that you’ll want to see people not only connected to Jesus but also to the local church where they can be trained and grow. Remember to spend time with non-believers and

bring other Christians along so that you can train them.

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## Pastor-Teacher

*Place in Scripture:* Ephesians 4:11

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* 1 Peter 5:1–4

*Defined:* The gift of pastor-teacher is associated with the office of elder (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:2) and the qualifications of bishop (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1–4; Titus 1:5–9). The pastor-teacher shepherds a local flock (church) and oversees its growth by teaching the Word of God.

*General makeup:* The pastor-teacher must have a love for both studying God's Word and caring for God's people. They find great joy in the spiritual growth of others by equipping them to do ministry.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Paul (Acts 20:17–35)

*Illustrated Historically:* Puritan Richard Baxter lived from 1615 to 1691. He entered vocational ministry at the age of 23 without any formal education. He pastored in a small English town of 2,000 people. He took these "ignorant, rude and reveling people" and turned them into a worshipping church of 1000 people. He viewed teaching as his primary task and focused on the basics of the Christian faith. Each year he would personally visit the homes of each member of his congregation and did a great amount of counseling. He held a weekly pastor's forum for discussion and prayer in which he encouraged and trained numerous pastors. His gifted training of other pastors culminated in his classic book, *The Reformed Pastor*, which is one of his 200 writings.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you diligently study God's Word?
2. Do you desire to shepherd God's people?
3. Can you teach?
4. Are you qualified to be an elder?
5. Do you enjoy developing other leaders?
6. Is your family a good model for the church?
7. Do you enjoy mentoring others?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember to train others to do the work of serving, rather than doing it all yourself.

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## Tongues

*Place in Scripture:* 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:27-28, Acts 2:1-4, 10:46, 19:6, Romans 8:26

*Defined:* The gift of tongues can involve prayers directed towards God of thanksgiving or worship that derive from a person's heart but bypass their understanding, or someone who utters encoded speech of mysteries or mighty works of God towards God in a gathering of God's people, or the speaking in languages that are unknown for the purpose of sharing the Gospel.

*General makeup:* This person loves to pray, and seeks intimacy with God through the personal disciplines of bible reading, meditation, and fasting.

*Illustrated Biblically:* The apostles in Acts 2:1-4. The household of Cornelius in Caesarea spoke in tongues in Acts 10:46. Paul talking to the church in Corinth (1 Cor. 14:6)

*Illustrated Historically:* 5th century St. Patrick of Ireland (c. 387–493), in The Confession of St. Patrick, records hearing a strange language being prayed by the Holy Spirit in a dream. St. Patrick says in his book:

And another night – God knows, I do not, whether within me or beside me – most words which I heard and could not understand, except at the end of the speech it was represented thus: 'He who gave his life for you, he it is who speaks within you.' And thus I awoke, joyful. And on a second occasion I saw Him praying within me, and I was as it were, inside my own body, and I heard Him above me – that is, above my inner self. He was praying powerfully with sighs. And in the course of this I was astonished and wondering, and I pondered who it could be who was praying within me. But at the end of the prayer it was revealed to me that it was the Spirit. And so I awoke and remembered the Apostle's words: "Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we know not how to pray as we ought. But the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for utterance (Romans 8:26)." And again: "The Lord our advocate intercedes for us (Romans 8:27)."

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you love to pray?
2. Do you worship in your prayers and not just ask God for things?
3. Do you sometimes feel yourself at a lost for words in prayer in times of great joy or sorrow?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Speaking in tongues in a corporate gathering (small group, Sundays, etc.) must first involve an interpreter present.

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## Interpretation

*Place in Scripture:* 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:27-28, Acts 2:6-12

*Defined:* The gift of interpretation is the ability to make intelligible, tongues that are spoken.

*General makeup:* Often this person also has the gift of tongues, but not necessarily. Paul says that the person who speaks in a tongue in a gathering should also pray for its interpretation, especially if an interpreter is not present.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Paul talking to the church in Corinth (1 Corinthians 14:5).

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Have you ever heard someone praying/speaking in tongues and felt an understanding of it?
2. Do you have the gift of tongues?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Interpretation of tongues is not also the gift of applying the tongues. Resist the temptation to explain what it means, only say what it says.

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## Healing

*Place in Scripture:* Matthew 4:24; 15:30; Acts 5:15-16; 28:8-9, 1 Corinthians 12:9

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* Healing was a very prominent role in Jesus' ministry, as seen in Matthew 8:13, 12:15, 15:28, 17:18, Luke 9:42, 13:14, 22:51, John 5:6 5:13.

*Defined:* Gifts of Healings are the personal acts of healing for the comfort and relief of the church and its sick members.

*General makeup:* With deep compassion for the sick, a love of prayer and often associated with the gift of faith, this person seeks out those who are sick and desires to pray for them. Sometimes there are certain ailments that a person is gifted with healing while being unsuccessful with other maladies.

*Illustrated Biblically:* There are multiple examples of Jesus healing (see above), but also the apostles were given the authority to heal in Matthew 10:1, 8. We see in Acts 3:1-10 Peter heals a lame beggar. Then again in Acts 5:12-16 people are brought to Peter to be healed. Paul even raises a man from the dead in Acts 20:7-12.

*Illustrated Historically:* From Stanley Burgess' *The Holy Spirit: Ancient Christian Traditions; Eastern Christian Traditions; and Medieval Roman Catholic and Reformation Traditions*, "[In the 3rd century] Origen of Alexandria says healings, exorcisms, and validating signs and wonders continue to be experienced in the church. Just as miracles and wonders added to the credibility of 1st-century apostles, so they continue to draw unbelievers into the Christian fold."<sup>4</sup>

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you deep compassion for the sick and ailing especially those of the church?
2. When you pray do things actually happen?
3. Have you ever prayed for someone to be healed and they were?

*Dangers to be aware of:* This is a power and gift from God and not something you possess on your own. Humility is a must.

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## **Miracles**

*Place in Scripture:* 1 Corinthians 12:10; Acts 27; Acts 9:36-43; 20:7-12; Acts 16:16-24

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* Jesus turns water into wine in John 2:1-11, Jesus calms a storm in Matthew 8:23-27, Jesus feeds the 5000 in John 6:5-14, Jesus walks on water John 6:16-21, Jesus raises Lazarus from the dead John 11:1-44

*Defined:* The gift of miracles is the empowerment of personal acts of power for the Kingdom of God. They can include resurrections, exorcisms, or rescue from impending danger among other things.

*General makeup:* Often associated with the gift of faith in intense situations on extreme Kingdom battlegrounds such as international mission work or in the face of demonic activity.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Rescue in Acts 27; healing through prayer in Acts 9:36-43; raising from the dead in Acts 20:7-12; exorcism in Acts 16:16-24

*Illustrated Historically:* From Stanley Burgess' *The Holy Spirit: Ancient Christian Traditions; Eastern Christian Traditions; and Medieval Roman Catholic and Reformation Traditions*, "Augustine [of Hippo], in *The City of God*, reports contemporary divine healings and other miracles. These he links directly to the conversion of pagans."

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you have a desire for missions to unreached people groups?
2. Do you have the gift of discerning spirits?

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<sup>4</sup><http://www.christianitytoday.com/history/2009/january/signs-and-wonders-charismatic-power-of-early-christianity.html>

3. Do you have the gift of faith?
  4. Are you acutely aware of demonic activity around you?
  5. Has God worked in tangible, powerful ways in you before?
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## Teaching

*Place in Scripture:* Romans 12:7; 1 Corinthians 12:28

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* John 3:2; 13:14

*Defined:* The gift of teaching is the God-given ability to understand and communicate biblical truth in a clear and relevant manner so that there is understanding and practical application.

*General makeup:* Learning, researching, communicating, and illustrating truth are qualities that an individual will manifest when exercising the gift of teaching. These people enjoy studying and learning new information, and find great joy in sharing it with others.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Paul (1 Tim. 1:6–7, 4:16; 2 Tim. 2:24–26; 3:15–17; 4:2–3), Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:26), Apollos (Acts 18:24–28).

*Illustrated Historically:* John Calvin (1509–1564) was one of the greatest and most significant teachers in all of history. Converted around age 23, he published his now famous Institutes for the Christian Religion at the age of 26. It was the first most thorough and significant outline of what has come to be known as Calvinistic theology. At age 28, Calvin settled in Geneva and soon established schools with intense academic teaching throughout the city. Calvin's passion for teaching has made him the father of modern education in numerous countries, including America. Calvin promoted education for everyone, which was a revolutionary concept that has now become a pattern throughout the world. In America, the first 123 colleges and universities had Christian origins that were directly influenced by the teachings of John Calvin.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you enjoy intense studying and researching?
2. Do you enjoy imparting biblical truth to others?
3. Do others come to you for insight into scripture?
4. Do you love to answer questions about the Bible?
5. When you see someone confused in their understanding of the Bible do you feel a responsibility to speak to them about it?
6. Do you enjoy speaking to various sizes of groups about biblical issues you have strong convictions about?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember always to be a student who is learning from others. Remember to



teach only what the Bible says without reading your own thoughts into it.

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## Encouragement

*Place in Scripture:* Romans 12:8

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* 2 Corinthians 2:16–17

*Defined:* The gift of encouragement involves motivating, encouraging, and consoling others so they mature in their walk with Christ.

*General makeup:* Christians with this gift have unusual sensitivity for and are attracted to those who are discouraged or struggling. People tend to pursue them for counsel. These people also tend to have a high degree of patience and optimism. They may also have the talent of singular relationships and prefer working with an individual or small group.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Barnabas, whose name means “Son of Encouragement.” He encouraged Paul (Acts 9:27) and John Mark (Acts 15:39).

*Illustrated Historically:* The Great Reformer Martin Luther sought to purify the church and in doing so split the church into Catholicism and Protestantism. Involved in continual opposition and controversies, his life was in constant danger, his friends and church rejected and opposed him. As a result Luther struggled mightily with deep depression. The ill health of his final ten years further contributed to his depression. His wife, Katherine, was a gifted encourager who strengthened, supported and counseled her husband as he spearheaded the Reformation. Without her gift of encouragement it is doubtful whether Luther would have had the strength and will to continue pressing forward with his calling from God.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do people seek you out for advice and encouragement?
2. Do you enjoy walking with someone through difficulties?
3. Are you attracted to those who are hurting and needy?
4. Do you enjoy working closely with people who have personal and emotional problems?
5. Would you rather speak personally with someone about their problems rather than sending them to someone else for help?
6. Do you find it easy to express joy in the presence of those who are suffering?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember to give biblical answers and solutions. Remember not to take on more needy people than you can handle.

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## Words of Wisdom/Knowledge

*Place in Scripture:* 1 Corinthians 12:8

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* Colossians 2:2–3

*Defined:* The gifts of wisdom or knowledge are perhaps the most difficult to define as they are found in only one place in 1 Corinthians 12:8. They may align closely with the gift of prophecy and involve revelatory words from God for practical help of God's people.

*General makeup:* When they speak people recognize their insight as being from God and specifically needed in that moment.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Joshua (Deut. 34:9), Solomon (1 Kings 3:5–28), Jesus (Luke 2:40–52, 1 Cor. 1:24, 30).

*Illustrated Historically:* A.W. Tozer was born into a poor home in the hills of western Pennsylvania. Forced by his home situation to forfeit education, Tozer entered the ministry without either high school or college training. Tozer came to Christ at age fifteen, after hearing a lay preacher speaking at a street meeting at Akron, Ohio. He went on to a lifetime of faithful pastoral ministry. Thousands regularly listened to his preaching on the Moody Bible Institute radio station. He became a very gifted writer and spent a number of years editing the Alliance Witness magazine. Tozer's only education was years of diligent study with a constant prayerful pursuit of the mind of God. For example, when he desired to understand the works of Shakespeare, he read them through on his knees, asking God to help him understand their meaning. He wrote dozens of books, including *The Pursuit of God* while on his knees. With no teacher but the Holy Spirit and good books, Tozer became a theologian, a scholar, and a master craftsman in the use of the English language. His teaching was intensely practical as he taught how to integrate deep theological truths into practical daily living.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. When studying God's Word with others, do you find that you discover the meaning and its implications before others do?
2. Do you seem to understand things about God's Word that other believers with the same background and experience do not seem to know?
3. Are you able to apply deep biblical truth to practical daily living?
4. Does God give you profound insights into people and circumstances?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember to remain humble. Remember to remain in continual prayer and walk in holiness so that God can speak to you clearly.

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## Helps

*Place in Scripture:* 1 Corinthians 12:28

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* Luke 7:16

*Defined:* The gift of helps is the remarkable ability to work alongside another and help that person complete the task God has given them.

*General makeup:* These people tend to demonstrate a servant attitude, loyalty, attention to detail, and responsiveness to the initiatives of others. They function well in positions of detail and assistant leadership. People with this gift often prefer to work behind the scenes and are encouraged to see other people succeed because of their help.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Epaphroditus (Ex. 18:22; Num. 11:17; 1 Tim. 6:2; Acts 20:35; 6:1–3, 9:36)

*Illustrated Historically:* Billy Graham has preached the Gospel to more people in live audiences than anyone else in history – over 210 million people in more than 185 countries and territories – through various meetings, including Mission World and Global Mission. Hundreds of millions more have been reached through television, video, film, and webcasts. Since the early days of his ministry a faithful team of helpers with gifts varying from music to administration have tirelessly labored behind the scenes to help Billy Graham in his very fruitful evangelistic ministry. Without their help, he could have not had the impact that God has given him.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you enjoy helping others become more effective in their work?
2. Do you prefer to labor behind the scenes?
3. When someone is doing a job poorly is your first instinct to help them, or criticize?
4. Do you prefer to work in a supportive rather than leadership capacity?
5. When you hear of someone with needs do you offer your services if possible?
6. Do you feel a burden to relieve others of their tasks so they are free to do their most important work?
7. When someone asks for your help, do you have difficulty saying no?
8. Do you look for opportunities to serve others?
9. Are you humble?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember not to be afraid of criticism from others. Remember not to take on more work than you are able to accomplish. Remember to serve God first and not unquestionably comply with another person's wishes.

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## Serving

*Place in Scripture:* Romans 12:7

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* Matthew 20:28

*Defined:* The gift involves the capacity to recognize and joyfully provide assistance in meeting practical needs, thus making life a little easier for others, particularly those who cannot help themselves.

*General makeup:* These people generally like to work behind the scenes. They also tend to find joy in helping alleviate the burdens and responsibilities of others. This gift is usually accompanied with an attitude of humility and sacrifice, as well as an ability to perceive the needs of others.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Exodus 18:22; Numbers 11:17; Romans 16:1–2; Acts 20:35; 1 Timothy 6:2

*Illustrated Historically:* Souls in search of final blessing often came to the temple of a powerful Hindu goddess in Calcutta. But nearby, many discovered another source of solace: a small woman, wrinkled and bent, a willing companion to the dying. She tenderly cared for the abandoned and the sick, washing their wounds, soothing their sores, preparing them for death. "They must feel wanted, loved," Mother Teresa said. "They are Jesus for me." "People think we are social workers," she once told one of her spiritual advisers, Father Edward Le Joly. "We are not. We serve Jesus. I serve Jesus 24 hours a day." She was not some saintly relic but a willing servant of her God: "I am like a little pencil in [God's] hand. He does the thinking. He does the writing. The pencil has only to be allowed to be used." Today some 4,000 sisters of the Missionaries of Charity, clad in white saris with blue borders, pursue her rigorous path, along with 450 brothers in a separate men's order. Mother Teresa created a network of 569 missions spread across 120 nations that operate workshops for the unemployed, food centers, orphanages, leprosariums, and refuges for the insane, retarded and aged.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Are you drawn to those in need?
2. Do you prefer to labor behind the scenes?
3. Are you burdened to relieve the needs of others?
4. When someone asks for your help, do you have difficulty saying no?
5. Do you look for opportunities to serve others?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember to learn to say no when you need to. Remember to learn to receive the service of others.

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## Leadership

*Place in Scripture:* Romans 12:8

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* Matthew 4:19; 2 Corinthians 2:14

*Defined:* The spiritual gift of leadership is found in people who have a clear, significant vision from God and are able to communicate it publicly or privately in such a way that they influence others to pursue that vision.

*General makeup:* These people tend to gravitate toward the “point position” in a ministry. Others tend to have trust and confidence in their abilities. They best serve others by leading them. They tend to operate with a strong sense of destiny.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Examples abound, including Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David, Daniel, Josiah, Paul, Peter, James, etc.

*Illustrated Historically:* The ministry of The Navigators began in the 1930's through the call of God to a young Californian, Dawson Trotman. He began to teach high school students and local Sunday school classes. Then in 1933, he and his friends began to extend their work among sailors in the U.S. Navy. Many hours were spent with individual sailors in Bible study, Scripture memorization and prayer with an emphasis on each teaching another what he had learned. By the end of World War II, thousands of men on ships and bases around the world were learning the principles of spiritual multiplication. At the same time, the high school students whose lives Dawson had touched went on to reach out to others around them in Southern California. Today, nearly seventy years later, they minister not only in the military and with students on college campuses, but in the marketplace with businessmen and women, among homemakers, ethnic groups, international students, in countries around the world—wherever there are people who need Christ.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do others have confidence in your ability to lead?
2. Do you enjoy being the “final voice” or the one with the overall responsibility for the direction and success of a group or organization?
3. When a difficult situation arises, do others look to you for input and leadership?
4. Do you usually take leadership in a group where none exists?
5. Do others look at you to make the major decisions for a group or organization?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember to learn to train other leaders and delegate responsibility and ownership to them. Remember that leadership is service and requires humility.

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## Administration

*Place in Scripture:* 1 Corinthians 12:28

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* Colossians 1:17

*Defined:* The gift of administration is the God-given ability to give direction and to make decisions on behalf of others that result in efficient operation and accomplishment of goals. Often the mark of an administrator is the ability to accomplish things in a "fitting and orderly way" (1 Cor. 14:40).

*General makeup:* Administrators often have a keen eye for detail. They may also possess the natural talents of organization, observing and using details, problem solving, and reasoning.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Joseph, Jethro, Titus (Titus 1:5)

*Illustrated Historically:* William Carey was born in England in 1761 and served as a pastor before going to the mission field where he served the Lord for 41 years preaching the gospel and translating the Scriptures. Carey served at a time when there was some indifference and even hostility to missionary effort. But, his strategic plan for missions titled Enquiry clearly laid out a means by which the world could be evangelized. In this masterpiece on missions, Carey answered arguments, surveyed the history of missions from apostolic times, surveyed the entire known world as to countries, size, population and religions, and dealt with the practical application of how to reach the world for Christ

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you find it easy to make decisions?
2. When you give advice to someone, do you seem to emphasize more in the area of "how" it should be done rather than "why"?
3. Do you find yourself frequently thinking of decisions that need to be made in giving overall direction to a group or organization?
4. Are you organized and efficient?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember that you have to make decisions quickly and decisively. Remember to seek wise counsel before making major decisions.

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## Giving

*Place in Scripture:* Romans 12:8

*Shown in Jesus' Ministry:* Matthew 7:7–12; 20:28

*Defined:* The gift of giving is the ability to give eagerly, wisely, generously, and sacrificially to meet the needs of others.

*General makeup:* Regardless of the amount, people with this gift genuinely view their treasures, talents, and time as on loan from God, and not their own. They are often moved to meet the needs of others. They enjoy giving of themselves and what they have. Even if they do not possess the resources to help, they earnestly pray for those needs to be met.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Tabitha (Acts 9:36).

*Illustrated Historically:* Throughout the history of the church, people with this gift are rarely seen. They tend to operate with great humility and prefer to do their work in quiet and secret by funding and supporting God's works with their monies and other resources.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you tend to see the needs of others more than other people you know?
2. Do you enjoy giving your time, talent and treasure to others?
3. Do you see giving to a worthwhile project as an exciting honor and privilege?
4. When you give some money to someone, do you find that you did not expect any appreciation in return?
5. Do you sense a great deal of joy in giving?
6. Do you find yourself looking for opportunities to give your money in response to needs?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember to give out of pure motives with joy.

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## Showing Mercy

*Place in Scripture:* Romans 12:8

*Defined:* The gift of mercy is the capacity to feel and express unusual compassion and sympathy for those in difficult or crisis situations and to provide them with the necessary help and support to see them

through these times.

*General makeup:* They have the ability to “walk in another’s shoes” and to feel the pain and burdens they carry. They desire to make a difference in the lives of hurting people for Christ without being judgmental. They run the risk of being hurt and used. They may have a difficult time evaluating the intentions of others.

*Illustrated Biblically:* Dorcas “was always doing good and helping the poor” (Acts 9:36). The good Samaritan (Luke 10:30-37).

*Illustrated Historically:* Amy Carmichael was a missionary of the Dohnavur Fellowship with a compassionate heart for those in need. In India she witnessed many “child widows:” young girls who grew up to be temple prostitutes. In the 20th century, Amy fought this practice by weaning many girls out of this situation and into the Christian community. She elevated the status of women, showing them that Jesus loved and had compassion for them.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you enjoy visiting people who are sick or disabled?
2. Do you often think of ways to minister to those who are suffering physically?
3. Do you sense a great deal of compassion for people having personal and emotional problems?
4. Would you enjoy a regular ministry to those who are suffering physically?
5. Do you find that when visiting those who are suffering physically that it brings you joy rather than depressing you?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember to be honest with people in confronting sin. Remember to balance God’s mercy with his justice.

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## **Discerning of Spirits**

*Place in Scripture:* 1 Corinthians 12:10

*Defined:* The spiritual gift of discernment is the ability to give an immediate evaluation of what was spoken and the person who said it, as to whether it is of God or Satan.

*General makeup:* This person will have a solid understanding of God’s Word and a sensitivity to the Holy Spirit. They easily detect insincerity and wrong motives in others. They tend to be perceptive, sensitive to moral issues, and personally steadfast.

*Illustrated Biblically:* John (1 John 4:1), Paul (1 Cor. 14:29)



*Do you have this gift?*

1. Have you felt a special responsibility to protect the truth of God's Word by exposing that which is wrong?
2. Have you often made an evaluation of someone or something that was said that others did not see, but yet proved to be correct?
3. Do you sense often that what is being said is produced by the devil rather than God, and has your judgment been correct?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Base your feelings on God's Word. Remember to have the courage to speak up when you know something is wrong. Remember to judge to correct and not to condemn.

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## **Faith**

*Place in Scripture:* 1 Corinthians 12:9

*Defined:* The gift of faith is the ability to envision what needs to be done and to trust God to accomplish it even though it seems impossible to most people.

*General makeup:* Faith magnifies the mercy and power of God. By its very nature, faith leads us to look away from ourselves and any notion of self-reliance and confidently trust God for every provision. Faith is a confession of our personal inability and of God's limitless power. Those with the gift of faith trust God in difficult, even impossible situations, when others are ready to give up. These people are often visionaries who dream big dream, pray big prayers and attempt big things for the Savior.

*illustrated Biblically:* Caleb and Joshua who led Israel in conquering and possessing the Promised land. Nehemiah who got permission from a pagan king to rebuild Jerusalem. The poor widow who gave practically all she had to God (Luke 21:2-4). Stephen was a "man full of faith" (Acts 6:5). See especially Hebrews 11.

*Illustrated Historically:* George Mueller (1805-1895) said, "God delights to increase the faith of his children." Mueller was a man who lived by faith and prayer alone. Charles Dickens' *Oliver Twist* motivated Mueller to open the United Kingdom's first orphanage for orphaned boys and girls. He began without finances and throughout his life never asked anyone for financial support. His first orphanage began with 30 children. He would often pray with the children before meals, trusting God to somehow bring the meal they were to eat within a few minutes. Over his lifetime he cared for over 10,000 orphans and printed Bibles and books, supported over 130 missionaries, and opened a Bible college. He taught in over 30 countries on faith and prayer and died in poverty having never kept anything for himself over the course of his life.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you view obstacles as opportunities?
2. Do you trust God for the impossible?
3. Do you have the ability to believe God for things other believers do not?
4. Do you find other believers coming to you when they face a seemingly overwhelming trial or task?
5. Have you seen God accomplish things in your life that others said could not be done but which you believed He could do?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember not to merely look at the problems and trials in life. Remember not to worry. Remember to pray with others who have the gift of faith.

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## **Hospitality**

*Place in Scripture:* Romans 12:13

*Defined:* The spiritual gift of hospitality is the ability to entertain guests in your home with great joy and effectiveness.

*General makeup:* These people tend to have an “open home” where others are welcome to visit. This gift is often combined with the natural talent of cooking and provides a natural ministry in a loving home environment.

*Illustrated Biblically:* It is a qualification of the bishop (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8).

*Illustrated Historically:* In the turbulent social chaos of the 1960's and 70's, God raised up a loving couple to address a lost and rebellious generation with the truth of Jesus Christ. Francis Schaeffer was a widely known apologist, theologian and evangelist. What is not as widely known, though, is the impact his wife had on his ministry. As their renowned pupil Os Guinness said, “Mrs. Schaeffer is the secret of Schaeffer.” Together, they built an international ministry in the Swiss Alps called L'Abri, which means shelter. With modest beginnings, their ministry grew quickly as lost university students, eastern mystics, rebellious church kids, hippies and adherents to other faiths from around the world came to visit L'Abri. Francis would teach, debate and give answers for the faith. Edith illustrated it with a life of hospitable service. Over a hundred students would live with them at a time. Edith provided clean bedding, home cooked meals, fresh flowers, neat decor, paintings, sculptures, sketches, music, endless hot cookies and artful table settings. She even published a book titled “The Hidden Art of Homemaking” to teach others in hospitality.

*Do you have this gift?*

1. Do you enjoy having people in your home?

2. Is your home the kind that most people feel comfortable in and drop by to visit unannounced?
3. Do feel that something is really missing in your life when you cannot have guests into your home?
4. When you think of your home do you view it from the perspective of guests who will visit?
5. Do you consider your home as a place of ministry?
6. Do you like to connect people together for friendships?

*Dangers to be aware of:* Remember to maintain some closed time for your immediate family's needs. Remember to always check your motives and maintain a good attitude.