

# Know and Use Your Spiritual Gifts: A Discovery Tool

(Adapted from a Denison Forum ministry resource)

God's supreme gift to his people is himself. He gave his Son for us, sending him to die in our place so our sins could be forgiven (John 3:16). He has made us his children by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9), giving us new life in his Spirit (Romans 8:9).

Now his Spirit lives in us (1 Corinthians 3:16), and wants to use us to lead others to follow Jesus. He has given us "spiritual gifts" as a means to this end. Spiritual gifts are to the church what organs and limbs are to the human body. When we learn about spiritual gifts, we discover the anatomy of the church, the body of Christ.

Our gifts are God's equipment, provided to help us grow in our faith. **When we identify our God-given gifts, we know better how to serve our Father. We are empowered by God's Spirit to accomplish God's will for our lives. We live and share the Christian faith with joy.**

Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:7, 11; Ephesians 4:7). No Christian has every spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:12, 27, 29-30). Our gifts differ from each other (Romans 12:3-6a). We receive our gifts according to God's will, not our own desire or experience (1 Corinthians 12:11; Ephesians 4:7-8).

## What are the "spiritual gifts"?

The New Testament includes three lists of spiritual gifts. In Romans 12:3-8 we encounter seven gifts: "prophecy," serving; teaching, encouraging, "contributing to the needs of others," leadership, and mercy.

In 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 we find nine gifts: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, "speaking in different kinds of tongues", and "the interpretation of tongues."

And in Ephesians 4:11 we discover five gifts: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers.

This gifts discovery tool includes the additional gifts of "music" and "hospitality" since many interpreters see them as spiritual gifts (see 1 Corinthians 14:26 and 1 Peter 4:9-11), and because they are very important to most churches' ministries.

Combining the various lists, this discovery tool catalogues 18 different gifts:

- administration**: organizing people and ministries effectively
- apostleship**: adapting to a different culture to share the gospel or do ministry
- discernment**: distinguishing spiritual truth from error or heresy
- evangelism**: sharing the gospel effectively and passionately
- exhortation**: encouraging others as they follow Jesus
- faith**: seeing God's plan and following it with passion
- giving**: investing with unusual sacrifice and joy in God's Kingdom

- hospitality**: using your home and/or resources to help others follow Jesus
- intercession**: praying with unusual passion and effectiveness
- knowledge**: discerning and sharing the deep truths of God’s word and will
- leadership**: motivating and inspiring others to serve Jesus fully
- mercy**: showing God’s grace to hurting people with unusual passion
- music**: sharing God’s truth and love with unusual effectiveness
- prophecy**: preaching the word of God with personal passion and effectiveness
- serving**: meeting practical needs with unusual sacrifice and joy
- shepherding**: helping others grow spiritually
- teaching**: explaining God’s word and truth with unusual effectiveness
- wisdom**: relating biblical truth to practical life with great effectiveness

Some of these ministry areas are the responsibility only of those gifted to fulfill them, while others are the responsibility of all believers. For instance, those with the gift of prophecy should preach; those with the gift of teaching should teach the Bible to others; those with the gift of apostleship should be our leaders in missions ministry.

On the other hand, God expects all of his people to discern truth from error, share their faith, encourage others, have faith in him, give sacrificially, show hospitality to others, intercede regularly, seek to know and share his word, offer mercy to hurting people, meet practical needs with joy, help others grow spiritually, and relate his truth to life.

Whether we are “gifted” in these areas or not, we are responsible to meet these needs as God directs us. Those with spiritual gifts in these areas will typically be called to lead the rest of us in these ministries, and will model them with great effectiveness. Those who possess the gift of evangelism, for example, encourage us to share our faith when they demonstrate their gift in action. Those with the gift of serving will take the initiative to help in this area, and will show the rest of us how to serve with joy.

The spiritual gifts, then, do not confine our service only to the areas where we are gifted. Rather, they point the way to ministries where we will lead and serve with our greatest passion and joy.

### **What are *my* spiritual gifts?**

The following assessment is based on the belief that our passions and opportunities indicate the spiritual gifts God has imparted to us. Our passions indicate those areas of service which correspond with our desires, abilities, and interests; we may or may not have used these passions in ministry to this point in our lives. Our opportunities show us areas where God may have opened doors of service to us, and may indicate areas of spiritual giftedness.

This assessment will help guide you in the process of identifying these gifts.

**INSTRUCTIONS:** Read each statement and then rate yourself based on your perception as to how true each statement is about yourself.

5 – Almost always true

4 – Often true

3 – Sometimes true

2 – Seldom true

1 – Almost never true

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. People often tell me that I am a good organizer of groups and committees.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Traveling and experiencing different cultures excites me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. When I hear a sermon or Bible study, I seem to be able to tell when the speaker is teaching God's word and when he or she may be off track.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. I get excited at the prospect of talking to someone about the gospel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. I look for ways to speak a positive word to people, especially when they are hurting.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. I seem to be able to trust God in hard times, even when others struggle with their faith.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I enjoy contributing financially to the needs of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. I love opening my home to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. When I hear about a need or problem, my first response is usually to pray.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. I seem to have a gift for understanding what the Bible means by what it says.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I find great joy in helping a group of people define and achieve their goals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. I especially enjoy helping underprivileged people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. I especially enjoy using my musical abilities to help people follow Jesus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. I find great joy in proclaiming the word of God in public.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. I am happiest when I work behind the scenes.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. I have a deep desire to help other people become fully devoted followers of Jesus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. I find great joy in teaching the word of God to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. When I read the Bible, I can usually tell how it relates to our problems today.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. When I am part of a disorganized group, I become frustrated and want to help.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. I seem to adapt to different languages & environments more easily than other people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. I am very concerned about helping people distinguish spiritual truth from error.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. I look for opportunities to share the gospel with people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. I enjoy sending notes and cards to encourage people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. Others seem to be inspired by my strong faith.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 25. I look for ways to invest my resources in the Kingdom of God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 26. I enjoy preparing meals and decorations to make a ministry event successful.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 27. Spending significant time in prayer is a very important part of my ministry.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 28. I especially enjoy studying the Bible and discovering its applications to life today.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 29. I become frustrated when a group does not have a clear purpose and strategy.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 30. My heart goes out to people who are suffering; I want to do all I can to help them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 31. I am drawn to ministries which enable me to use my musical gifts for God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 32. I sense that the Holy Spirit uses me when I communicate his word in public.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 33. I don't seem to get as weary in doing tedious work as others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 34. I would be willing to invest a significant amount of time in helping a small group of people grow closer to God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 35. I sense that the Holy Spirit uses me when I teach his word to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 36. I seem to have a gift for finding biblical truth that meets the practical needs of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 37. I can often see the end from the beginning, and know what steps to take to accomplish a goal.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 38. I get excited at the thought of living in a different culture for the purpose of helping people follow Jesus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 39. People often ask me to help them when they need to know the right thing to do.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 40. I am willing to take personal risks for the sake of sharing the gospel with others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 41. I have a strong desire to counsel hurting people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 42. I can consistently see the purpose of God in the circumstances of my life.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 43. I find great joy in knowing that my financial gifts help other people follow Jesus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 44. I often invite people to my home and enjoy serving them there.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 45. I find great joy in spending a significant amount of time in prayer.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 46. Other people often ask me to help them understand the Bible.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 47. When I become involved in a group, its members often ask me to lead.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 48. I enjoy serving in hospitals, shelters, nursing homes, and benevolent ministries.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 49. People tell me that my musical gifts help them worship God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 50. When I speak in public, I seem to have a gift for connecting God's word to the needs of those who listen to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 51. I find joy in helping people meet their practical needs.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 52. When I join a group, I feel responsible for helping the members grow spiritually.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 53. When I teach God's word, I seem to have a gift for connecting biblical truth to the lives of those who listen to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 54. In a group setting, others seem to look to me for counsel.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 55. People often ask me to help organize groups and accomplish goals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 56. I would be willing to make personal sacrifices for the sake of reaching people in different countries.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 57. My impressions of people's character and intentions are usually proven right.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 58. When I share my faith with people, they often seem to respond positively.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 59. People who have come to me for encouragement and comfort often tell me that I have helped them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 60. When I find myself in difficult circumstances, I welcome them as an opportunity to watch God work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 61. When I hear of a ministry opportunity, I get excited about the chance to contribute.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 62. I see my home as a significant way I can help others follow Jesus.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 63. People know of my personal commitment to prayer ministry, and often call on me to pray for them.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 64. I enjoy writing and sharing the insights I have gained from my personal Bible study.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 65. I seem to have a gift for motivating and guiding people to accomplish their goals.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 66. I am deeply concerned for those who are going through hard times.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 67. When I perform musically, I can sense that the Holy Spirit is using me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 68. When I proclaim God's word in public, people tell me that they hear God speak to them through me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 69. I feel that God wants me to help the church by meeting the practical and physical needs of others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 70. I am very concerned about the spiritual maturity of those I know.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 71. People tell me that they hear God speak through me when I teach his word.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 72. When I have a problem, I can usually find the biblical wisdom I need.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 73. I am to enjoy opportunities to use my organizational skills for God.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 74. I am drawn to opportunities to serve God in a different culture.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 75. I have learned to trust my intuition in knowing truth from falsehood.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 76. I am able to share my faith very naturally and easily.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 77. I am naturally able to find a way to comfort hurting people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 78. I am consistently confident that God's purpose will be fulfilled in my life and circumstances.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 79. I am drawn to opportunities where my financial resources can make a difference.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 80. I enjoy ministries which need help with hospitality.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 81. I am excited about spending time in prayer with other people.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 82. I am drawn to ministries which enable me to share biblical truths I have discovered.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 83. When I lead a group, people affirm the effectiveness of my work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 84. When I am involved in benevolent ministry, people affirm the effectiveness of my work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 85. I find great joy in glorifying God through my musical abilities.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 86. I am drawn to opportunities to speak God's word in public.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 87. I enjoy serving God by meeting the routine needs of the church and her people.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 88. I am drawn to groups of people whom I can help to grow spiritually.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 89. I enjoy opportunities to teach God's word to others.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 90. I am drawn to opportunities to help people solve their problems by discovering the biblical truth they need.

You can score your profile by putting your answer in the corresponding box and then totaling each category.

Administration	Apostleship	Discernment	Evangelism	Exhortation	Faith	Giving	Hospitality	Intercession
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.	9.
19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.	25.	26.	27.
37.	38.	39.	40.	41.	42.	43.	44.	45.
55.	56.	57.	58.	59.	60.	61.	62.	63.
73.	74.	75.	76.	77.	78.	79.	80.	81.
<i>Total:</i>	<i>Total:</i>	<i>Total:</i>	<i>Total:</i>	<i>Total:</i>	<i>Total:</i>	<i>Total:</i>	<i>Total:</i>	<i>Total:</i>

Knowledge	Leadership	Mercy	Music	Prophecy	Serving	Shepherding	Teaching	Wisdom
10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.	18.
28.	29.	30.	31.	32.	33.	34.	35.	36.
46.	47.	48.	49.	50.	51.	52.	53.	54.
64.	65.	66.	67.	68.	69.	70.	71.	72.
82.	83.	84.	85.	86.	87.	88.	89.	90.
<i>Total:</i>								

Locate the names of the gifts with three highest numerical values. These may very well be your spiritual gifts.

My Primary Gifts:

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