
SPIRITUAL GIFTS DEFINITIONS

Administration

Administration (Serving Gift) - The special ability God gives to some to steer the body toward the accomplishment of God-given goals and directives by planning, organizing, and supervising others.

The divine enablement to understand what makes an organization function and the special ability to plan and execute procedures that accomplish the goals of the ministry.

People with this gift:

- develop strategies or plans to reach identified goals
- assist ministries to become more effective and efficient
- create order out of organizational chaos
- manage or coordinate a variety of responsibilities to accomplish a task
- organize people, tasks, or events.

(See also Leadership)

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31](#)

[Luke 14:28-30](#)

Apostle

Apostle (Leadership Gift) - The special ability God gives to some to exercise general leadership or oversight over a number of churches with an authority in spiritual matters, which is readily recognized. In the strict sense this gift was confined to the twelve apostles. The New Testament does, however, give this title to a number of others, e.g. [Romans 16:7](#) and [Acts 14:14](#) . It is the gift whereby the Spirit appoints certain Christians to lead, inspire, and develop the churches of God by the proclamation and the teaching of true doctrine.

The divine ability to start and oversee the development of new churches or ministry structures.

People with this gift:

- pioneer and establish new ministries or churches
- adapt to different surroundings by being culturally sensitive and aware
- desire to minister to unreached people in other communities or countries
- have responsibilities to oversee ministries or groups of churches
- demonstrate authority and vision for the mission of the church.

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31](#)

[Ephesians 4:11-16](#)

[2 Corinthians 12:12](#)

[Matthew 10:1-8](#)

[Acts 2:42-44](#)

Celibacy

Celibacy - The special ability God gives to some to voluntarily remain single without regret and with the ability to maintain control over sexual impulses so as to serve the Lord without distraction.

Celibacy is a state totally opposed to all of the biological, social, and emotional needs built into man or woman by God. Only God is able to overrule instincts and by grace control them so that a person can remain unmarried.

Being unmarried is not necessarily the same as having this gift. Those who have this gift remain single because they feel they can serve the Lord better that way.

People with this gift:

- remain single so as to be able to devote themselves completely to ministry
- have other gifts that they are able to use more effectively because they are celibate.

[1 Corinthians 7:1-9](#)

[1 Corinthians 7:32-35](#)

[Matthew 19:10-12](#)

Craftsmanship / Artist

Craftsmanship / Artist - The gift that gives the believer the skill to create artistic expressions that produce a spiritual response of strength and inspiration. Skilled Craft - the gift that enables a believer to create, build, maintain, or repair items used within the church.

The divine enablement to creatively design and/or construct items to be used for ministry or the divine enablement to communicate God's truth through a variety of art forms.

People with this gift:

- work with wood, cloth, paint, metal, glass, and other raw materials
- make things which increase the effectiveness of other's ministries
- design and build tangible items and resources for ministry use
- work with different kinds of tools and are skilled with their hands
- use the arts to communicate God's truth
- develop and use artistic skills such as drama, writing, art, music, dance, etc.
- use variety and creativity to captivate people and cause them to consider Christ's message
- challenge people's perspective of God through various forms of the arts
- demonstrate fresh ways to express the Lord's ministry and message.

[Exodus 28:3-4](#)

[Exodus 31:1-11](#)

[Exodus 35:30-35](#)

Discernment / Distinguishing Spirits

Discernment / Distinguishing of Spirits - The special ability God gives to some to know with assurance whether certain behavior or teaching is from God, Satan, human error, or human power.

The divine enablement to distinguish between truth and error, to discern the spirits, differentiating between good and evil, right and wrong.

People with this gift:

- distinguish truth from error, right from wrong, pure motives from impure
- identify deception in others with accuracy and appropriateness
- determine whether a word attributed to God is authentic
- recognize inconsistencies in a teaching, prophetic message, or interpretation
- are able to sense the presence of evil.

[1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)

[1 John 4:1-6](#)

[1 Corinthians 2:9-16](#)

[2 Chronicles 2:12](#)

[Psalms 119:125](#)

[Proverbs 3:21](#)

[1 Kings 3:9](#)

[Hebrews 5:14](#)

Encouragement

Encouragement (Speaking Gift) - The special ability God gives some to offer comfort, words of encouragement, hope, and reassurance to discouraged, weak, or troubled Christians in such a way that they are consoled.

People with this gift:

- come to the side of those who are discouraged to reassure them and give them hope
- emphasize God's promises and confidence in his will.

(See also Exhortation)

[Romans 12:6-8](#)

[Titus 1:9](#)

[Acts 11:23-24](#)

[Acts 14:21-22](#)

[1 Thessalonians 2:11-12](#)

[1 Thessalonians 5:9-11](#)

Evangelism / Evangelist

Evangelism / Evangelist - The special ability God gives to some to proclaim the Gospel of salvation effectively so that people respond to the promises of Christ through conversion to Christianity.

The divine enablement to effectively communicate the gospel to unbelievers so they respond in faith and move toward discipleship.

People with this gift:

- communicate the message of Christ with clarity and conviction
- seek out opportunities to talk to unbelievers about spiritual matters
- challenge unbelievers to faith and to become fully devoted followers of Christ
- adapt their presentation of the gospel to connect with the individual's needs
- seek opportunities to build relationships with unbelievers.

[Ephesians 4:11-16](#)

[Matthew 28:16-20](#)

[Acts 2:36-40](#)

[Acts 8:5-6](#)

[Acts 14:21](#)

[Acts 8:26-40](#)

[2 Timothy 4:5](#)

Exhortation

Exhortation (Speaking Gift) - The special ability God gives some to help strengthen weak, faltering, and fainthearted Christians in such a way that they are motivated to be all God wants them to be.

The ability to help others reach their full potential by means of encouraging, challenging, comforting, and guiding.

The divine enablement to present truth so as to strengthen or urge to action those who are discouraged or wavering in their faith.

People with this gift:

- come to the side of those who are weak in spirit to strengthen them
- challenge or confront others to trust and hope in the promises of God
- urge others to action by applying Biblical truth
- offers advise, an outline for a solution, or a program for progress
- motivates others to grow.

(see also Encouragement)

[1 Timothy 5:1-2](#)

[Hebrews 3:13](#) (King James Version)

[Hebrews 13:22](#)

[1 Thessalonians 5:14](#) (King James version)

Faith

Faith - The special conviction God gives to some to be firmly persuaded of God's power and promises to accomplish His will and purpose and to display such a confidence in Him and His Word that circumstances and obstacles do not shake that conviction.

The divine enablement to act on God's promises with confidence and unwavering belief in God's ability to fulfill his purposes.

People with this gift:

- believe the promises of God and inspire others to do the same
- act in complete confidence of God's ability to overcome obstacles
- demonstrate an attitude of trust in God's will and his promises
- advance the cause of Christ because they go forward when others will not
- ask God for what is needed and trust him for his provision.

[1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)

[Mark 5:25-34](#)

[Acts 27:21-25](#)

[Hebrews 11](#)

[Romans 4:18-21](#)

Giving

Giving (Serving Gift) - The gift that enables a believer to recognize God's blessings and to respond to those blessings by generously, sacrificially, and cheerfully giving of one's resources (time, talent, and treasure) without thought of return.

The divine enablement to contribute money and resources to the work of the Lord with cheerfulness and liberality. People with this gift do not ask, "How much money do I need to give to God?" but "How much money do I need to live on?"

People with this gift:

- manage their finances and limit their lifestyle in order to give as much of their resources as possible
- support the work of ministry with sacrificial gifts to advance the Kingdom
- meet tangible needs that enable spiritual growth to occur
- provide resources, generously and cheerfully, trusting God for His provision
- may have a special ability to make money so that they may use it to further God's work.

[Romans 12:6-8](#)

[2 Corinthians 9:6-15](#)

[2 Corinthians 8:2-5](#)

[Mark 12:41-44](#)

[Matthew 6:3-4](#)

Healing

Healing (Sign Gift) - The special ability God gives to some to serve as a human instrument through whom it pleases Him to cure illness and restore health (physically, emotionally, mentally, or spiritually) apart from the use of natural means.

The divine enablement to be God's means for restoring people to wholeness.

People with this gift:

- demonstrate the power of God
- bring restoration to the sick and diseased
- authenticate a message from God through healing
- use it as an opportunity to communicate a Biblical truth and to see God glorified
- pray, touch, or speak words that miraculously bring healing to one's body.

[1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31](#)

[Acts 3:1-10](#)

[Acts 14:8-10](#)

[James 5:14-16](#)

[Luke 9:1-2](#)

Helps / Serving

Helps / Serving (Serving Gift) - The gift that enables a believer to work gladly behind the scenes in order that God's work is fulfilled. The special ability God gives to some to serve the church in a supporting roll or to invest their talents in the life and ministry of other members of the body enabling them to increase their effectiveness.

The divine enablement to accomplish practical and necessary tasks which free-up, support, and meet the needs of others.

People with this gift:

- serve behind the scenes to support the gifts and ministries of others (without having to be asked)
- see the tangible and practical things to be done and enjoy doing them
- sense God's purpose and pleasure in meeting every day responsibilities
- attach spiritual value to practical service
- enjoy knowing that they are freeing up others to do what God has called them to do.
- would rather do a job than find someone else to do it.

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31](#)

[Romans 16:1-2](#)

[Acts 9:36](#)

[Mark 15:40-41](#)

[Galatians 6:2](#)

[Romans 12:6-8](#)

[1 Peter 4:11](#)

[Philippians 2:19-23](#)

[Luke 22:24-27](#)

[John 13:14](#)

Hospitality

Hospitality (Serving Gift) - The special ability God gives to some to provide an open home and warm welcome to those in need of food, lodging, and fellowship. It involves a readiness to invite strangers to your home (or church) for the sake of the Gospel.

The divine enablement to care for people by providing fellowship, food, and shelter.

People with this gift:

- provide an environment where people feel valued and cared for
- meet new people and help them to feel welcomed
- create a safe and comfortable setting where relationships can develop
- seek ways to connect people together into meaningful relationships
- set people at ease in unfamiliar surroundings.

[1 Peter 4:9-10](#)

[Romans 12:9-13](#)

[Acts 16:14-15](#)

[Luke 10:38](#)

[Hebrews 13:1-2](#)

Intercession / Prayer

Intercession / Prayer (Serving Gift) - The special ability God gives to some to pray for extended periods of time on a regular basis and see frequent and specific answers to their prayers to a degree much greater than that which is expected of the average Christian.

The divine enablement to consistently pray on behalf of and for others, seeing frequent and specific results.

People with this gift:

- feel compelled to earnestly pray on behalf of someone or some cause
- have a daily awareness of the spiritual battles being waged and pray
- are convinced God moves in direct response to prayer
- pray in response to the leading of the spirit, whether they understand it or not
- exercise authority and power for the protection of others and the equipping of them to serve.

[Ephesians 6:18](#)

[1 Timothy 2:1-2](#)

[1 Kings 13:6](#)

[Luke 11:1-10](#)

[Matthew 6:6-15](#)

[Mark 11:22-25](#)

[James 5:14-16](#)

[Colossians 4:12-13](#)

[1 Thessalonians 3:10](#)

Knowledge

Knowledge (Speaking Gift) - The special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to understand in an exceptional way the great truths of God's Word and to make them relevant to specific situations in the church. Also, the desire to seek out and learn as much about the Bible as possible through gathering much information and the analysis of that data.

The divine enablement to bring truth to the body through a revelation or Biblical insight.

People with this gift:

- receive truth which enables them to better serve the body
- search the scriptures for insight, understanding, and truth
- gain knowledge which at times was not attained by natural means
- have an unusual insight or understanding that serves the church
- organize information for teaching and practical use.

(See also Wisdom)

[1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)

[2 Chronicles 1:7-12](#)

[Colossians 2:2-3](#)

[2 Corinthians 11:6](#)

[Daniel 2:20-21](#)

[Proverbs 2:6](#)

[Proverbs 9:10](#)

[Psalms 119:66](#)

[Jeremiah 3:15](#)

Leadership

Leadership (Serving Gift) - The special ability God gives to some to set goals in accordance with God's purpose and to communicate these goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish these goals for the glory of God.

The divine enablement to cast vision, motivate, and direct people to harmoniously accomplish the purposes of God.

People with this gift:

- provide direction for God's people or ministry
- motivate others to perform to the best of their abilities
- present the "big picture" for others to see
- model the values of the ministry
- take responsibility and establish goals.

(See also Administration)

[Romans 12:6-8](#)

[Hebrews 13:7](#)

[Hebrews 13:17](#)

Mercy / Compassion

Mercy / Compassion (Serving Gift) - The special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to feel exceptional empathy and compassion for those who are suffering (physically, mentally, or emotionally) so as to feel genuine sympathy for their misery, speaking words of compassion, but more so caring for them with acts of love that help alleviate their distress.

The divine enablement to cheerfully and practically help those who are suffering or are in need by putting compassion into action.

People with this gift:

- focus upon alleviating the sources of pain or discomfort in suffering people
- address the needs of the lonely and forgotten
- express love, grace, and dignity to those facing hardships and crisis
- serve in difficult or unsightly circumstances and do so cheerfully
- concern themselves with individual or social issues that oppress people.

[Romans 12:6-8](#)

[Luke 7:12-15](#)

[Luke 10:30-37](#)

[Matthew 20:29-34](#)

[Matthew 25:34-40](#)

[Mark 9:41](#)

[Matthew 5:7](#)

Miracles

Miracles (Sign Gift) - The special ability God gives to some to serve as a human intermediary through whom He pleases to perform acts of supernatural power that are recognized by others to have altered the ordinary course of nature and authenticated the divine commission.

People with this gift:

- speak God's truth and may have it authenticated by an accompanying miracle
- express confidence in God's faithfulness and ability to manifest Christ's presence
- bring the ministry and message of Jesus Christ with power
- claim God to be the source of miracles and glorify the Lord
- represent Christ and through this gift, point people to a relationship with Christ.

[1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31](#)

[Mark 16:17-18](#)

[Acts 9:36-42](#)

[Acts 20:9-12](#)

[Hebrews 2:4](#)

[Romans 15:17-19](#)

[Acts 8:13](#)

[Acts 19:11-12](#)

Missionary

Missionary (Leadership Gift) - The special ability God gives to some to minister whatever other spiritual gifts they have in another culture.

Those with this gift find it easy or exciting to adjust to a different culture or community. Missionaries find great joy working with minorities, people of other countries, or those with other distinct cultural differences. Those with this gift have a stronger-than-average desire to be a part of the fulfillment of the Great Commission around the world.

People with this gift:

- have an intense spirit of unease at the thought of all the unsaved people in the world
- adapt themselves and core Biblical principles to different surroundings by being culturally sensitive and aware
- have the ability to reach out people groups of a different ethnicity, language, or cultural background
- can establish meaningful relationships with people of other nationalities or cultures
- desire to minister to unreached people in other communities or countries.

[Ephesians 3:6-8](#)

[Mark 16:15](#)

[Acts 1:8](#)

[Acts 13:2-5](#)

[Acts 22:21](#)

[Romans 10:14-15](#)

[1 Corinthians 9:19-23](#)

Music

Music - The gift that gives a believer the capability to present personal witness and inspiration to others through instrumental music, singing, or dancing.

The special gift whereby the Spirit enables certain Christians to praise God through music in such a way as to enhance the worship experience of other believers. It gives the believer the desire and capability to express personal faith and provide inspiration and comfort through the playing of a musical instrument, singing, or dancing. The spiritual aspect of the gift is revealed as the gift bearer gives witness to love and praise for the Lord, and thus glorifies God. Those listening or watching become inspired to feel the presence and majesty of God when music, song, or dance uplifts their soul in a manner that brings them closer to their Lord.

People with this gift:

- sing or play a musical instrument quite well, and enjoy it
- have special joy singing praises to God, either alone or with other people
- feel secure in the fact that their musical ability will be of benefit to other people with whom they come in contact
- can use their musical ability to help and inspire others to worship God
- see that their singing or instrument playing is a spiritual encouragement for others.

[1 Samuel 16:14-23](#)

[1 Corinthians 14:26](#)

[Psalms 33:1-3](#)

[Psalms 96:1-2](#)

[Psalms 100:1-2](#)

[Psalms 149:3](#)

[Psalms 150:1-6](#)

[Colossians 3:16](#)

[2 Chronicles 5:12-13](#)

[2 Samuel 6:14-15](#)

Pastor / Shepherd

Pastor / Shepherd - The special ability God gives to some to assume a long-term personal responsibility for leadership and the spiritual care, protection, guidance, and feeding (teaching) of a group of believers.

The divine enablement to nurture, care for, and guide people toward on-going spiritual maturity and becoming like Christ.

People with this gift:

- take responsibility to nurture the whole person in their walk with God
- provide guidance and oversight to a group of God's people
- model with their life what it means to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus
- establish trust and confidence through long-term relationships
- lead and protect those within their span of care.

[John 10:1-16](#)

[Acts 20:28](#)

[Ephesians 4:11-15](#)

[1 Timothy 3:1-7](#)

[2 Timothy 4:1-2](#)

[1 Timothy 4:11-16](#)

[1 Peter 5:1-4](#)

Poverty (voluntary)

Poverty (voluntary) - The special ability God gives to some to purposely live an impoverished lifestyle to serve and aid others with their material resources.

The special ability that God gives to some members of the body of Christ to renounce material comfort and luxury and adopt a personal lifestyle equivalent to those living at the poverty level in a given society in order to serve God more effectively.

People with this gift:

- will often choose to live among people who are considered poverty-stricken
- live at a poverty level although they have the means to live at a higher standard
- choose this lifestyle in order to minister more effectively to people through identification.

[1 Corinthians 13:1-3](#)

[2 Corinthians 8:9](#)

[Acts 2:44-45](#)

[Acts 4:32-35](#)

Prophet / Prophecy

Prophet / Prophecy (Special Gift) - The special ability God gives to some to proclaim the Word of God with clarity and to apply it fearlessly with a view to the strengthening, encouragement, and comfort of believers and the convincing of unbelievers. The special gift whereby the Spirit empowers certain Christians to interpret and apply God's revelation in a given situation.

The divine enablement to reveal truth and proclaim it in a timely and relevant manner for understanding, correction, repentance, or edification. There may be immediate or future implications.

People with this gift:

- expose sin or deception in others for the purpose of reconciliation
- speak a timely word from God causing conviction, repentance, and edification
- see truth that others often fail to see and challenge them to respond
- warn of God's immediate or future judgment if there is no repentance
- understand God's heart and mind through experiences He takes them through.

[1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)

[Romans 12:6-8](#)

[Ephesians 4:11-13](#)

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31](#)

[Deuteronomy 18:18-22](#)

[1 Corinthians 14:1-5](#)

[1 Corinthians 14:24-25](#)

[1 Corinthians 14:30-33](#)

[1 Corinthians 14:37-40](#)

Teaching / Teacher

Teaching / Teacher - The special ability God gives to some to explain the truths of the Word of God clearly and to apply them effectively so that those taught understand and learn. To instruct others in the Bible in a logical and systematic way so as to communicate pertinent information for true understanding and growth.

The divine enablement to understand, clearly explain, and apply the word of God causing greater Christ-likeness in the lives of listeners.

People with this gift:

- communicate Biblical truth that inspires greater obedience to the word
- challenge listeners simply and practically with the truths of scripture
- focus on changing lives by helping others understand the Bible better
- give attention to detail and accuracy
- prepare through extended times of study and reflection.

[Ephesians 4:11-16](#)

[Romans 12:6-8](#)

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31](#)

[Hebrews 5:12-14](#)

[Acts 18:24-28](#)

Tongues (interpreting)

Tongues (interpreting) - The special ability God gives to some translate the message of one who speaks in tongues.

If a tongue is spoken without an interpretation, the speaker is edified. If the tongue is interpreted, it is for the edification of the body.

People with this gift:

- express with an interpretation a word by the Spirit which edifies the Body
- enable the gift of tongues to build up the church by interpreting God's message for the people.

(see also Tongues (speaking))

[1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31](#)

[1 Corinthians 14:1-40](#)

Tongues (speaking)

Tongues (speaking) - The special ability God gives to some to speak prayer or praise in a language they have never learned or to communicate a message from God to His people. The special ability God gives to some to speak in a language not previously learned so unbelievers can hear God's message in their own language.

If a tongue is spoken without an interpretation, the speaker is edified. If the tongue is interpreted, it is for the edification of the body.

People with this gift:

- may receive a spontaneous message from God which is made known to His body through the gift of interpretation
- communicate a message given by God for the church (if there is someone to interpret)
- speak in a language they have never learned and do not understand
- worship the Lord with unknown words too deep for the mind to comprehend
- experience an intimacy with God which inspires them to serve and edify others
- speak in tongues as a private prayer language
- when used in a group setting, an interpretation must take place, or else the one speaking the tongue should remain silent.

[1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)

[1 Corinthians 12:28-31](#)

[1 Corinthians 14:1-40](#)

[Acts 2:1-12](#)

[Acts 10:44-46](#)

[Acts 19:1-7](#)

[Mark 16:17](#)

[Romans 8:26-27](#)

[1 Corinthians 13:1](#)

Wisdom

Wisdom (Speaking Gift) - The gift that allows the believer to sort through opinions, facts, and thoughts in order to determine what solution would be best for the individual believer or the community of believers. The ability to apply knowledge to life in such a way as to make spiritual truths quite relevant and practical in proper decision making and daily life situations.

The special ability that God gives to certain members of the body of Christ to know the mind of the Holy Spirit in such a way as to receive insight into how knowledge may best be applied to specific needs arising in the body of Christ.

People with this gift:

- focus on the unseen consequences in determining the next steps to take
- receive an understanding of what is necessary to meet the needs of the body
- provide divinely given solutions in the midst of conflict and confusion
- hear the Spirit provide direction for God's best in a given situation
- apply spiritual truth in specific and practical ways.

(See also Knowledge)

[1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)

[James 3:13-18](#)

[2 Chronicles 1:7-11](#)

[Acts 6:3-10](#)

[1 Corinthians 2:6-13](#)

[James 1:5-8](#)

[1 Kings 3:16-28](#)

Writing

Writing - the gift that gives a believer the ability to express truth in a written form; a form that can edify, instruct and strengthen the community of believers.

The special God-given ability to formulate thoughts and ideas into meaningful written forms so that the reader will find courage, guidance, knowledge, or edification through the words shared with them.

The Bible was written by people with this gift.

People with this gift:

- may write stories, sermons, devotions, histories, prayers, songs, or poetry to be used to build up the body of Christ
- may be inspired by the Holy Spirit in what they write
- may teach God's word to others through what they write
- may use writing to express other gifts
- may be better at expressing their thoughts in written form than in verbal form.

[Luke 1:1-3](#)

[1 John 2:1](#)

[1 John 2:12-14](#)

[1 Timothy 3:14-15](#)

[Jude 1:3](#)

