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AN INTRODUCTION TO THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Definition: A spiritual gift is a special ability, given by the Holy Spirit to every believer at their conversion, to be used in ministry to others, to build up the Body of Christ.

Four components to this definition:

- #1
- #2
- #3
- #4

Two Greek words (and their cognates):

- I. Charis..... Grace
 Charisma..... Gift
 Charismata..... Gifts
- II. Pneumatikos..... Spiritual
 Pneumatika..... Spirituals/Spiritual gifts

Five primary places in the NT where spiritual gifts are listed:

Rms. 12:6-8
I Cor. 12 :8-10
I Cor. 12 :28-30
Eph. 4 :11
I Pt. 4 :11

Because the biblical writers were **not** as concerned with theological categories as we are today, it is somewhat artificial to classify the gifts of the Holy Spirit into various groups, especially when such divisions cannot be sorted neatly. Nevertheless, the following categories may be useful in helping us to understand and experience spiritual gifts more fully:

Public Gifts of Speech to Communicate God's Word

Apostle/Church Planting	Prophecy/Preaching
Evangelism and Missions	Speaking
Exhortation	Teaching
Pastor/Shepherd	

Private Gifts of Speech to Communicate God's Word

Speaking in tongues
Interpretation of tongues

Gifts of Perception

Faith
Discernment/Distinguishing of spirits
Word of wisdom
Word of knowledge

Gifts of Might

Miracles
Gifts of healings

Other Gifts

Administration	Leading/Ruling
Celibacy or Marriage	Mercy
Craftsmanship	Prayer/Intercession
Giving	Service/Helps/Ministry
Hospitality	

When a Christian begins to function in certain spiritual gifts regularly and with effectiveness, there may develop in that person's life a vocational calling or ministry within the Body of Christ. In **Ephesians 4:11**, Paul delineates these ministries. They are referred to as:

The 4-fold
OR...The 5-fold...Ministry of the Church:

Apostle
Prophet
Evangelist
Pastor/Teacher
Teacher

Then, in the immediately following verses, the Apostle Paul tells us **WHY** God has given us these ministries:

For a purpose	Ephesians 4:12
Until what occurs?	Ephesians 4:13
What will be the result?	Ephesians 4:14-16

Furthermore, God has a sovereign will in the distribution of His gifts:

Rms. 12:6a
I Cor. 12:11
Heb. 2:4

AN OVERVIEW OF THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

#1 Administration/Organization—The ability to organize and manage people, resources, and time for effective ministry. Those with this gift are always interested in discovering more efficient ways to do things, and they usually know how to delegate.

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#2 Apostle/Church Planter—The ability to start new churches (Cf. Rms. 15:20; Gal. 2:7-9) and oversee their development. Those with this gift are usually willing to take risks and try new things.

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#3-4 Celibacy...Marriage—Although marriage has always been God's will for the overwhelming majority, the Scripture also makes it clear that celibacy is a gift from God. As such, its merits are to be honored and recognized (Mt. 19:3-12; I Cor. 7:1-7).

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I do not have this gift

#5 Craftsmen (Music, Arts & Crafts)—The ability to build, maintain, or beautify the place of worship for God's glory (See Ex. 31:1-11). It can also be the ability to express worship through music, either vocal or instrumental (See Psalm 150), as well as through a variety of other art forms (creative and worshipful dance and drama).

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#6 Discernment—The ability to distinguish right from wrong, truth from error, and to be able to discern whether the source of an experience is Satan, self, or God's Spirit. This gift protects the Body from getting off on extreme tangents. One must be rooted maturely in the Word of God to develop this gift.

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#7 Evangelism—The ability to communicate the Good News of Jesus Christ to unbelievers in a positive, non-threatening way. Those who have this gift have a knack of turning routine conversations toward spiritual matters, and then leading people to respond to the claims of Jesus Christ. They are also usually very sensitive to how unchurched people feel. (See the example of Philip in Acts 8:4ff.)

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#8 Exhortation—This gift may encompass both rebuke and encouragement. It is the ability to motivate God's people to apply and act on biblical principles, especially when they are discouraged or wavering in their faith. Those who have this gift are often willing to offer practical suggestions, are action-orientated, and usually make great counselors because they have the ability to bring out the best in others and challenge them to develop their potential.

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#9 Faith—The ability to trust God for what cannot be seen, and to act on God's promise, regardless of what the circumstances indicate (Cf. Rms. 4:18-21). Those who have this gift are often willing to risk failure in pursuit of a God-given vision, expecting God to handle the obstacles.

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#10 Giving—The ability to earn and manage money in order to generously contribute material resources and/or money beyond the 10% tithe, so that the Body of Christ may be strengthened. These people love to give; it's just automatic with them (II Cor. 8:1-7)! Typically, others like to be around them, because giving people are pleasant and joyful. In fact, generous people are rarely mentally ill!

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#11 Healing—The ability to sense when God is prompting you to pray in faith specifically for people who need physical, emotional, and/or spiritual healing (James 5:14-16).

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

Helps—See **Service** [#21]

#12 Hospitality—The ability to make others, especially strangers, feel warmly welcomed, accepted, and comfortable (I Peter 4:9-10) in the church family. People immediately feel relaxed around a person with this gift. They are great conversationalists and make outstanding greeters.

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

Interpretation of Tongues—See **Tongues** [#24-25]

#13 Knowledge—The Bible emphasizes making decisions based on knowledge/accurate information (Ie. Proverbs). On occasion, this knowledge may be knowing without reasoning (Mark 2:8), but usually it relates to the ability to discover, collect, analyze, and organize information that is vital to individual believers or the entire church family. Those with this gift are the researchers who can comprehend a large amount of information and provide it when needed for effective decision-making.

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#14 Leadership—The ability to clarify and communicate the purpose and direction of a ministry in a way that attracts and mobilizes others to get involved (Hebrews 13:7, 17).

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#15 Mercy—The ability to detect hurt, and empathize with those who are suffering, by providing compassionate, cheerful support to those experiencing crisis or pain (Ie. The Good Samaritan, Lk. 10:30-37). Everyone who functions in a pastoral care ministry needs to operate heavily with this gift.

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#16 Miracles—The ability to sense when God is prompting you to pray in faith specifically for His supernatural intervention in a situation that seems humanly impossible (Mark 11:23-24).

- ☐ I'm pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don't think I have this one

#17 Missions—The ability to adapt to a different culture in order to reach unbelievers as well as to equip believers from that culture. This gift is very similar to that of an evangelist, the primary difference being that missions involves **cross-cultural evangelism**. Those who have this gift have a strong desire to see “The Great Commission” fulfilled, and often have a special interest for a certain people group. (See Acts 13:2-3; 14:21-28; Rms. 15:20; Eph. 3:1-13.)

- ☐ I’m pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don’t think I have this one

Music—See **Craftsmen** [#5]

#18 Pastoring/Shepherding—The ability to care for the spiritual needs of a group of believers by assuming responsibility for their welfare in equipping them for ministry (Acts 20:28-31; I Peter 5:1-4).

- ☐ I’m pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don’t think I have this one

#19 Prayer/Intercession—The ability to pray persistently for the needs of others, over extended periods of time, and on a regular basis, until the answer arrives (Col. 1:9-12).

- ☐ I’m pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don’t think I have this one

#20 Prophecy/Preaching—The ability to publicly communicate God’s Word in an inspired way that convinces unbelievers, and both challenges and comforts believers. I Cor. 14:3 says that prophecy does three things:

Edification.....It builds up
 Exhortation.....It fires up
 Consolation.....It holds up

As one is caused by God to speak His truth, a prophet/preacher is willing to stand alone, if necessary, for what is right.

- ☐ I’m pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don’t think I have this one

Ruling (Rms. 12:8, KJV)—See **Leadership** [#14]

#21 Service/Helps—The ability to recognize unmet needs in the church family, and take the initiative to provide practical assistance quickly, cheerfully, and without a need for recognition. Those with this gift are usually very efficient, practical, unselfish, have a high energy level, and like to assist people who are in more visible roles.

- ☐ I’m pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don’t think I have this one

#22 Speaking (Godly speaking, presumably public)—The ability to speak “the utterances of God” (I Peter 4:11) effectively, without apology or stammer, presumably in the public, work-a-day world.

- ☐ I’m pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don’t think I have this one

Speaking in Tongues—See Tongues [# 24-25]

#23 Teaching—The ability to educate God’s people by clearly explaining and applying the Bible in a way that causes them to learn. It is also the ability to train and equip other believers for ministry. A person with this gift is often very systematic and thinks in organized ways.

- ☐ I’m pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don’t think I have this one

#24-25 Tongues (Speaking in & Interpretation of)—The ability to pray in a language understood only by God or the one who is given the gift of interpretation at that time (I Cor. 14:13-15).

- ☐ I’m pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don’t think I have this one

#26 Wisdom—The ability to understand God’s perspective on life situations and share those insights in a simple, understandable way. Those with this gift (Cf. I Cor. 2:6-16), quite often, will have a strong desire to memorize Scripture and, thus, have the ability to explain what to do and how to do it from a Godly perspective. They are usually very patient, gentle, and understanding of others. For this reason, they function well as mediators.

- ☐ I’m pretty sure I have this gift
- ☐ I may have this gift
- ☐ I don’t think I have this one

TURNING SPECTATORS INTO PLAYERS

TEN TRUTHS ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS:

1. Only true believers have spiritual gifts. I Cor. 2:14
2. Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift. I Pt. 4:10
3. No one receives all of the gifts. I Cor. 12:27-30
4. No single gift is given to everyone. I Cor. 12:29-30
5. You can't earn a spiritual gift. Eph. 4:7
6. The Holy Spirit decides what gifts you get. I Cor. 12:11
7. The gifts you are given are permanent. Rms. 11:29
8. You are to develop the gifts God has given you. I Tim. 4:14
9. It is a sin to waste the gifts God gave you. I Cor. 4:1-2
10. Using your spiritual gifts glorifies God
and causes you to grow. John 15:8

SIX CAUTIONS ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS:

1. Don't confuse spiritual gifts with a vocational skill or natural talent.
2. Don't confuse spiritual gifts with the "fruit of the Spirit."
3. Be aware of the "gift projection" tendency.
4. Don't feel that your gift makes you superior to others.
5. Realize that using your gifts without love is worthless.
6. Recognize that God wants you to operate in a primary and secondary ministry.

UNWRAPPING OUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Five issues to help you discover and exercise your motivational gift(s) for ministry to the world and in the church:

#1 What do you do well?

#2 What are your personal desires/leanings/tendencies?

#3 What do other **mature** Christians affirm and recognize in you?

#4 Be willing to experiment (unless something extremely serious is at stake) because many times a wrong decision is better than no decision!

#5 What do you believe that God has revealed to you in your own personal prayer life?

Why is this topic so important?

Because God wants His Church to operate like a “Body.”

I Corinthians 12:8-10 **1st** listing of spiritual gifts in this chapter

:11 The distribution of these gifts is according to the will of the Holy Spirit

:12-27 A full discussion of The Body of Christ—**2 points**:

- Diversity is **not** division
- Unity is **not** necessarily conformity

:28-31 **2nd** listing of spiritual gifts in this chapter

Closing illustration—Lessons:

- **Don’t** refuse what others abuse!
- Spiritual gifts are **not** toys...They are tools!
- Always focus on The Giver of the gifts...
...**Not** upon the gifts themselves!