

What are the seven motivational gifts?
Motivational Gifts in a Nutshell
quick facts about seven spiritual gifts

In his letter to the Roman Christians, the Apostle Paul challenges them to use their [spiritual gifts](#): *“For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

*“Having then **gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us**, whether **prophecy**, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; or **ministry**, let us wait on our ministering: or he that **teacheth**, on teaching; or he that **exhorteth** on exhortation: he that **giveth**, let him do it with simplicity; he that **ruleth**, with diligence; he that **showeth mercy**, with cheerfulness” (Romans 12:4–8).*

The gifts mentioned here are **seven motivational spiritual gifts**. Each Christian receives one at the time of salvation, and it is the tool through which God works in him or her to see needs and to do something to meet them. These gifts equip believers to take a vital role in the Church.

Below are details about each of the seven motivational gifts, including Biblical examples of those who had the gifts, exhortations from Romans 12 about properly exercising the gifts, and the [life principles](#) that best complement the strengths and weaknesses of the gifts.

Prophecy

A person with the [motivational gift of prophecy](#) applies the Word of God to a situation so that **sin is exposed and relationships are restored**. He or she has a strong sense of right and wrong and speaks out against compromise and evil.

- **Biblical Example** The Apostle Peter played a significant role in the establishment of the early Church. Through his preaching, ministry, and writing, Peter encouraged men and women to believe in Christ, repent, and live according to the truth of God’s Word. *“Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord” (Acts 3:19).*
- **Guidelines in Romans 12** The exhortation of Romans 12:9 particularly relates to the gift of prophecy: *“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good” (ESV).*
- **Life Principle to Apply** It is especially important for a prophet to apply the principle of responsibility and [maintain a clear conscience](#). This discipline equips the prophet to speak the truth boldly with love.

Serving

A person with the [motivational gift of serving](#) is **driven to demonstrate love by meeting practical needs**. The server is available to see a project through to the end and enjoys doing physical work.

- **Biblical Example** Timothy had a great desire to serve the Church of God, and he ministered to the Apostle Paul in many ways. Paul said: *"I trust in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy shortly unto you . . . I have no man likeminded, who will naturally care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are Jesus Christ's. But ye know the proof of him, that, as a son with the father, he hath served with me in the gospel"* (Philippians 2:19–22).
- **Guidelines in Romans 12** The exhortation of Romans 12:10 particularly relates to the gift of serving: *"Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor"*(ESV).
- **Life Principle to Apply** A server needs to diligently apply the [principle of authority](#). As he honors the directions and wishes of authority figures, the server is better equipped to maintain proper priorities in time management and is often protected from individuals who might take advantage of his eagerness to help meet physical needs.

Teaching

A person with the [motivational gift of teaching](#) is **passionate about discovering and validating truth**. A teacher is particularly concerned with the accuracy of information, especially church doctrine, and is often gifted with research abilities.

- **Biblical Example** Luke's work in writing Scriptural accounts was driven by a desire to verify and preserve the truth about both Jesus' life and the formation of the Church so that the faith of believers would be strengthened. *"It seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed"* (Luke 1:3–4).
- **Guidelines in Romans 12** The exhortation of Romans 12:11 particularly relates to the gift of serving: *"Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord"*(ESV).
- **Life Principle to Apply** A teacher should faithfully apply the [principle of success](#) and invest time in meditation on Scripture. The discipline of meditation helps the teacher stay focused on the truth of God's Word instead of on the strength of his own mind.

Exhorting

A person with the [motivational gift of exhortation](#) **wants to see believers grow to spiritual maturity**. An exhorter is an encourager at heart and is often involved in the ministries of counseling, teaching, and discipling.

- **Biblical Example** The epistles of the Apostle Paul demonstrate his love for the Church and his concern that believers all over the world grow to spiritual maturity. Paul addressed the questions and concerns of the early believers and challenged them to be faithful in their walks with God. “. . . *Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus: whereunto I also labor, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily*” (Colossians 1:27–29).
- **Guidelines in Romans 12** The exhortation of Romans 12:12 particularly relates to the gift of exhortation: “*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer*”(ESV).
- **Life Principle to Apply** It is essential for an exhorter to understand the [principle of God’s design](#) and to accept God’s design in his own life. An understanding of this principle establishes a firm foundation for understanding and accepting the sovereignty of God, which is a key to the exhorter’s ministry.

Giving

A person with the [motivational gift of giving](#) **wants to use financial resources wisely in order to give to meet the needs of others**. A giver is usually good at finding the best buy, noticing overlooked needs, and maintaining a budget.

- **Biblical Example** When Jesus called Matthew to become a disciple, Matthew immediately gave up his lucrative job, that of being a tax collector for the Romans. “*As Jesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man, named Matthew, sitting at the receipt of custom: and he saith unto him, Follow me. And he arose and followed him*” (Matthew 9:9). Givers often avoid the limelight, so it is not surprising that even in the Gospel written by Matthew we find very little personal information about him.
- **Guidelines in Romans 12** The exhortation of Romans 12:13 particularly relates to the gift of giving: “*Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality*”(ESV).
- **Life Principle to Apply** A giver must learn to wisely apply the [principle of ownership](#). When a giver understands that all things belong to God and should be used to bring glory to Him, he is ready to share his resources as God directs him to give.

Organizing

A person with the [motivational gift of organizing](#) is **able to accomplish tasks and solve problems through analysis and delegation**. An organizer often discerns the talents and abilities of others and knows how those individuals can best serve within a ministry or on a particular project.

- **Biblical Example** When the Apostle Paul and his fellow missionaries brought the Gospel to Philippi, a woman named Lydia heard them preach and responded with faith in God. As a business owner and persuasive woman of faith, Lydia used her resources to help meet Paul's needs and she welcomed the missionaries into her home. *"When she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us"* (Acts 16:15).
- **Guidelines in Romans 12** The exhortation of Romans 12:14 particularly relates to the gift of organization and the life principle of suffering: *"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them"*(ESV).
- **Life Principle to Apply** A person with the gift of organization needs to understand the [principle of suffering](#). Trusting God to use the tests and trials of life to develop his character and strengthen his faith helps an organizer respond to unexpected events with patience and wisdom and increases his sensitivity to the needs of others.

Mercy

A person with the [motivational gift of mercy](#) is **sensitive to the emotional and spiritual needs of others**. A mercy-giver is drawn to people in need and seeks to demonstrate compassion, understanding, and love to them.

- **Biblical Example** The Apostle John had the gift of mercy. The Gospel of John and the epistles I, II, and III John share a unique perspective of Jesus' ministry and include many insights into the love of God and His work in the heart of a believer. *"A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another"* (John 13:34–35).
- **Guidelines in Romans 12** The exhortation of Romans 12:15 particularly relates to the gift of mercy: *"Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep"*(ESV).
- **Life Principle to Apply** It is important for a mercy-motivated person to apply the [principle of moral freedom](#). An understanding of this principle will protect the mercy-giver from developing improper relationships or giving false impressions to those to whom they minister.

The articles on spiritual gifts have been developed from [a variety of sources](#), including the booklet, [Understanding Spiritual Gifts](#)🌍.