

## SIMPLE DEFINITIONS FOR COMPLEX SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Key Texts to be contemplated:  
Romans 12:3-8 / 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 /  
Ephesians 4:7-16 / 1 Peter 4:7-11



## SPEAKING GIFTS: (Not arranged in specific order of priority)

**Prophecy:** Ability to proclaim a message from God's Word with clarity, conviction and timely urgency...motivational effect. May be done by speaking, by singing, and by writing. It is often recognized in a time of crisis during which a Biblical understanding of the events/circumstances is needed. Calls for spiritual repentance.

**Teaching:** Ability to explain to others the truth of God's Word. Results in better understanding which enables application and spiritual growth in the hearer. May be done by speaking, by singing, and by writing. Those with this gift find a keen interest in personally studying the Word and can't seem to restrain themselves from sharing their insights with others.

**Exhortation:** Ability to come alongside another to say and/or do what is needed to comfort, to counsel, to correct, to encourage,

to motivate. It is primarily relational in method. Those possessing this ministry typically “smell like the sheep”. The one with this gift is a most welcome visitor in a time of discouragement or despair.

**Knowledge:** Ability to plum the rich mine of Scripture, rightly interpret, organize and inform others. It is primarily content oriented. Again, a love for deep thinking, research, wrestling with the truths of the Word marks this individual.

**Wisdom:** Ability to make proper applications of knowledge in skillful ways which lead to practical application. It is primarily applicational/practical in orientation. “Ah... that makes sense!” is the common response when this gift is appropriated.

**Discernment:** Ability to distinguish between a work of God and a counterfeit work inspired by the Adversary. The insight to recognize the difference between truth and error in what is declared or what is done. It is protection oriented as it serves to shelter the church and its members from untruth/heresy.

**Tongues:** Supernatural ability to declare

the message of God’s glory in languages not previously learned by the speaker yet understandable by the hearer. The removal of linguistic barriers for the expansion of the gospel.

**Interpretation:** Supernatural ability to hear messages of God in various dialects and restate them accurately into the common language of the majority present resulting in the edification/building-up of those who would otherwise not have received the message intelligibly.



## **SERVING GIFTS:**

**(Not arranged in specific order of priority)**

**Service:** Ability to see needs and take action to personally meet those observed needs. It may be expressed in personal ways as well as in support roles. It often functions behind the scenes in support-type roles. Its symbol is the towel Jesus wore.

**Helps:** Ability to meet practical needs in ways that assist other people and/or the Church. It is lending a hand in practical assistance. Primarily task-oriented.

**Mercy:** Ability to enter into the misery of others in a way that demonstrates compassion and provides helpful encouragement. Primary orientation is relational/personal. Its care is extended without any sense of “merit” on the part of the one needing and receiving the mercy.

**Faith:** Ability to believe God for what to others seems impossible, to look at difficulties with Godly vision and confidence in the greater provision of God. It brings inspiration and encouragement to those who can't see beyond the trial.

**Giving:** Ability to joyfully distribute whatever resources God has entrusted to their stewardship and appropriate them for greater Kingdom service. It is generous in orientation and material in application.

**Administration:** Ability to organize, to manage, to coordinate the work of God for greatest efficiency and accomplishment.

It seems to it the job gets done. It is task oriented. Facilitates the work of the Lord being accomplished in an orderly fashion. (Anyone with this gift has a standing invitation to make some sense out of my office!)

**Leadership:** Ability to inspire others to join in the pursuit of God's work, bringing direction, encouragement, and motivation to the tasks. Best implemented with a servant heart.

**Healing:** Supernatural ability to intervene as an instrument of God's in bringing about the cure to any disease/illness and results in restoration to health with great glory flowing to God. It is accomplished independent of the level or lack of faith in the afflicted.

**Miracles:** Supernatural ability to bring about what is contrary to all that would be considered “natural” with the result that God is more greatly exalted and glorified.



## GIFTS CHRIST GIVES TO EQUIP HIS CHURCH FOR EFFECTIVE WORKS OF MINISTRY:

**Apostles:** Frontline type of ministries which bring the gospel to formerly unreached places and peoples. Result of the gospel proclaimed and embraced is the establishment of communities of faith, i.e., Churches. Courage and dedication will typify this gifting.

**Prophets:** Formerly those through whom God would send authoritative messages to His people, most typically calls to repentance but also at times predictions of Divine activity to come. With the completion of the written Word, it is now the gift of explaining and expounding that Word in calls to repentance and in shedding Biblical light upon present works of God. Boldness and strong conviction with courage will typify this gifting.

**Evangelists:** Special gifting to be powerful in the declaring of the gospel with unusual responses of believing. This ministry is

primarily focused outward into the world of lost souls. In the fellowship of the saints, it is a training focused ministry which calls others to come along and learn in the act of doing. Passion and compassion will typify this gifting.

**Pastors/Teachers:** Shepherding the Church and the members of the Church with the overseeing care of one who answers directly to the Good/Chief Shepherd. Focuses their ministry on Leading and Feeding by rightly applying the truths of God's Word. These individuals also put their lives on the line in order to protect the Flock from both inside division and outside dangers. Gentleness and genuine care with a passion to rightly deliver the truths of the Word will typify this gifting.

*"As each has received a gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God"—1 Peter 4:10*

## CALL TO ACTION

You are you and only you have been specially “re-created” by God’s grace to fulfill a unique role in the work of His Body, the Church! Only you have been vested with those Spiritual Gifts God has designed to use in your special moment to build up His Church. When you turned from your sin and by faith trusted Jesus Christ’s sufficient saving work, He placed His Holy Spirit into you and placed you into His Body for a very special purpose. A great source of joy in your Christian life is the discovery of your personal “fit” into the work that God is doing and exercising/practicing/doing your ministry there for His greater glory. So let me encourage you to begin your journey of discovery and joy by putting your special gift into practice.

1. Give it a try. Say “yes” when opportunities to serve are presented. Be available and enthusiastic and trust God to give you the ability.

2. Recognize when your heart finds delight and a sense of “fulfillment” in service by dedicating yourself more fully to serving in that role.

3. Honestly listen to counsel and the observations of other members of the Body. God will affirm your fit when you find it. He will do it by giving you spiritual fruit, a special sense of satisfaction, and energetic eagerness. He will also guide you by the gracious observations of others.

Go For It! Say “yes” to the next opportunity that comes your way. Take notes and record your experience and observations. Then keep doing it till you find YOUR unique fit for serving the Lord by serving His Church. And do it all for His glory!

*“Since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly.”--Romans 12:6*