

Spiritual Gifts

All too often, in churches and groups within churches today, there is considerable twisting to get people involved and we find that 90% of the work is being done by a weary 10%. Why does this happen? Partially due to ignorance and partially due to avoidance of Spiritual gifts. First, we should discover what gift was given to us at our Spiritual birth, then we need to see where that gift fits into the functioning of the body.

Imagine you and some friends decide to put together a football team, but somehow your team ends up in the stadium playing a professional team. You would not fare too well and probably would be seriously hurt. This is because of your lack of equipment, training, conditioning, experience, and skills at playing the positions required.

The same holds true for the church today. People become involved in a church without the proper understanding of the equipment; little training, conditioning, or basic skills; and practically no knowledge of positions on the playing field.

It is essential to understand how we all can minister together toward our common goal. We must know how God can use us, i.e., the position we should play on the team.

Christ's strategy for reaching the World for Himself was through the Church. Read Ephesians 3:10-12 and 4:1-7. He has called each of us to contribute! Everyone is expected to contribute in a unique way.

But, how are you to contribute and in what unique way has God called you? After today, you will know what Spiritual Gift you have received and where your gift can be used in the Body of Christ. He has given you a special gift with which to serve him! Yet, there is confusion over what a spiritual gift is. Let's begin by clearing up what isn't a spiritual gift. Spiritual gifts should not be confused with **Fruits of the Spirit**, a **talent** or a **calling**. Each of which is defined next.

Definition of Fruits of the Spirit

Fruits of the Spirit can be defined as the result, product or consequence of an action. The action being: filling of the Holy Spirit. With the result, product or consequence being as told to us in Galatians 5:22, 23 -- God's Spirit makes us loving, happy, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, gentle, and self-controlled. There is no law against behaving in any of these ways.

When the Holy Spirit enters our lives, at the time we receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, He brings these attributes with Him. We must mature (by walking in the Spirit) in order to give these areas of our life to the Holy Spirit. In Philippians 4:11-12, Paul states twice "I have learned patience, faithfulness and self-control." It should be mentioned that EVERY Christian should exhibit these qualities (fruits). There are different levels depending on your spiritual maturity. If not, you are not allowing Him to work through you or the Holy Spirit is not inside you.

Definition of A Talent

A talent is often mistaken for a Spiritual gift. These abilities are independent of our accepting Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior. Yet, due to the inadequacy of the English language, they are often called gifts; however, only in the sense that your sight and hearing are also gifts. Webster defines a talent as “any natural ability or power; natural endowment.” Music, art, organizing and athletics are examples of talents which can be used by not only Christians but non-Christians as well. Biblical examples of talents are found in 1 Samuel 16:18, 23 -- David’s talent was music (skillful at playing the harp). Judges 20:16 tells us the tribe of Benjamin were expert marksmen; could split a hair with a sling. 2 Samuel 18:22, 23 -- Ahimaaz was a better runner than most. Lastly, Exodus 28:3 and 31:3 -- Describes people as skillful at making garments (sewing) for Aaron. Talents can also be used to accomplish God’s will, both inside and outside of the church or for personal gain.

Definition of A Calling

A calling is often associated with someone like a pastor or missionary who is being called to a life of servanthood, but throughout the Bible a calling is mostly associated with all of us who are followers of Christ. Any one of us who have a walk with Christ has been called to some sort of ministry and often thinks of a calling in all the wrong terms. A Biblical calling is really nothing more than a combination of a spiritual gift and a passion.

We have spent time talking about spiritual gifts; however, before you are ready to assume God is calling you to use that gift in one context or another, I would suggest you evaluate the four components of a passion. Your passion is comprised of four components:

1. personality,
2. background,
3. life situations, and
4. the maturity of your spiritual walk with Christ.

Personality

Now, let’s look at each component. The first component is your personality. Your personality very much influences your calling. Two people with the same gift of teaching may manifest the way they use their calling in different ways, depending on their personality. If one is very timid, shy, and uncomfortable in large groups, then their calling probably has more to do with teaching in the context of a small group or even one to one. Whereas a person who is very comfortable upfront and enjoys being in the public eye could very well have a calling to teach in a larger context. The unique parts of your personality may influence the way you use your gift in your calling.

Background

Background is the second component of passion. A person’s background also significantly impacts the way their gift is manifested in a calling. For instance, often people who are raised in an alcoholic home have a real passion or burden to work with alcoholics in their own lifetime or

those who were raised around alcoholics. The unique attributes of your background may influence the way you use your gift in your calling. In 2 Corinthians 1:3-5 we are told that God comforts us in situations so that we can comfort others when they go through similar situations. This passage reinforces the concept that God uses your background to prepare you to serve others through your calling.

Passion

The third component of a passion is your life situation. Often, how we sense God is calling us is limited by certain situations in our life. If one is a mother of young children, it is very unlikely she is being called to a foreign mission field if her children and husband vehemently don't feel called in the same way. The situation you find yourself in life in many ways either hinders or clarifies your calling. As our situations in life change as we grow older, often God's call upon us to serve Him in ways changes also.

Level of Spiritual Maturity

The fourth and final component of a passion is your level of spiritual maturity in your walk with Christ. As one grows in their walk with Christ your sense of God's calling on your life will change. As you grow closer and closer to Him sometimes He calls you to more significant levels of personal sacrifice in ways of serving Him.

Definition of A Spiritual Gift

A Spiritual Gift is a special ability given to us at our Spiritual birth. We know the Holy Spirit comes to live inside of us (John 3:5 and Romans 8:9) when we accept Jesus Christ as our personal Lord and Savior and we are told we are given the manifestation of the Holy Spirit. We are given a spiritual gift at the point of spiritual birth which the Holy Spirit has specifically chosen for us. Why do we receive a spiritual gift?

"But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good." – 1 Corinthians 12:7

*"Seek that gifts may abound for the edification or the building up of the Body"
– 1 Corinthians 14:12*

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

A great deal of confusion concerning spiritual gifts exists today, as it did in Paul's day. Rather than the people ignoring spiritual gifts because of this problem, Paul tells the Church at Corinth he does not want them to be ignorant on the subject (1 Corinthians 12:1). He then dedicates the next three chapters to trying to clear up their confusion.

Let's take a closer look at what the Bible says about our own spiritual gifts. They are explicitly addressed in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12-14, Ephesians 4, and 1 Peter 4. Responsible Bible

study necessitates we understand the central thrust of each of these passages before we begin to look at the specific verses.

The central thoughts of each passage are as follows, notice that each is wrapped in love:

1 Corinthians 12-14	Everyone is given a spiritual gift, which is selected by God. There is a great difference between gifts, but all are needed and all are part of one body; that is, the body of Christ. Without love, they are useless in trying to minister for Christ and, in fact, can be divisive.
Romans 12	The supreme application of all doctrinal teaching is to give our entire lives to Christ in ministry. We must honestly evaluate who we are, and then use our gifts in service to God. He gives us gifts out of His grace, and it is love that keeps the service appropriate.
Ephesians 4	All of us are called to unity, maturity and ministry. As leadership gifts are exercised to equip and prepare others to use their gifts in ministry, then the entire body will grow in maturity, be stable and become one. Again, it is God's grace that is emphasized, and love holds the body together through the process.
1 Peter 4	We should live totally for God, even in suffering; in fact, it is suffering that allows us to keep everything in perspective. The end is near; therefore, we should act like it and use our gifts to serve each other with the grace which God has given us. It starts with love and ends with praise given to Christ.

Spiritual gifts allow us to fulfill different roles in the Church. We all function in a variety of ways, like the various positions on a football team. We may do different things, but the goal is always to build up the Body of Christ—the Church.

Paul uses the analogy of a human body with its many members to enable us to understand how, though having a variety of functions, we have a unity of purpose. In 1 Corinthians 12, he repeatedly emphasizes the variety of gifts and members of the body, but he also emphasized there is one Spirit, God, Lord, and Body who we all serve. Unity with variety is Paul's understanding of gifts.

Eight Important Questions

Do you know your gifts? Are you using them?

Few of us have presents sitting around our homes still wrapped up. Most often, when we receive a gift, we are excited and anxious to open it. We will do anything we can to help us guess what is inside. What about your spiritual gifts? Have you opened them yet? Answering the following eight questions and working through the Spiritual Gifts Survey will help you begin to discover and deploy your spiritual gifts. Please read 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesians 4.

1. Who gives spiritual gifts?

Spiritual gifts come from God. They are a gift, not something we earn. First Corinthians 12:11 clearly states that it is God who has given us gifts. First Corinthians 12:11 elaborates further, stating it is His Spirit which bestows these gifts. Finally, in Ephesians 4:11, we are told that Christ, as part of the Godhead, gives these gifts also.

2. Who receives these gifts?

All believers are given at least one gift. First Corinthians 12:7, 11, 18, tells us that “to each one” is given a gift. Therefore, all Christians can count on the fact that they have been given at least one gift.

3. When are we given these gifts?

According to Romans 8:9 and Galatians 3:2-5, we receive our gift at our conversion, when the Holy Spirit enters a person’s heart. First Corinthians 12:7 states that when He comes into our lives that He brings a gift or “manifestation of the Spirit.”

4. Which gifts does God give us?

God chooses the specific gift we need to function within the Body. First Corinthians 12:11, 18, tells us that we receive the gift “just as He determined them to be.” How exciting to know that God selected the gifts to give us!

5. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

It is to build up the Body of Christ such that it can fulfill its God-given Mission.

- 1 Corinthians 12:7 – gifts are given for the “common good” of the body.
- 1 Corinthians 14:12 – they are “to build up the Church.”
- 1 Peter 4:10 – they are “to serve others.”
- 1 Peter 4:11 – “so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.”
- Ephesians 4:12 – for “works of service so that the Body of Christ may be built up.”

Ray Stedman, in his book entitled *Body Life*, writes: “We must continually remember that the work of the ministry is to the world. The Church exists as God’s instrument to reach the world” (p. 94). Spiritual gifts buildup the church to be an effective instrument.

6. What are spiritual gifts?

They are abilities which enable Christians to effectively function in serving and building up the Body of Christ. However, spiritual gifts are different from talents. A talent is a naturally developed ability which is independent of one's commitment to Christ. It may be used for any purpose. A spiritual gift, however, is given a spiritual birth and its primary objective is to build up the church. Often gifts complement our talents. God in his infinite wisdom knows which gifts will be best for our talents, background, personality and situation in life.

7. How many gifts are there?

There is no agreement on the exact number, but Paul gives us four lists in three different letters. Each list is different from the others, which may indicate that Paul was not overly concerned with a predetermined exact number. We find the following listings in Scripture:

Romans 12:6-8

- Encouragement
- Giving
- Leadership
- Mercy
- Prophecy
- Service
- Teaching

1 Corinthians 12:8-10

- Wisdom
- Knowledge
- Faith
- Healing
- Miracles
- Prophecy
- Discernment
- Tongues
- Interpretation

1 Corinthians 12:28-30

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Teachers
- Miracles
- Healings
- Helps
- Administration
- Tongues

Ephesians 4:11 (APEST)

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Evangelists
- Shepherds (Pastor)
- Teachers (Pastor)

8. How do I confirm which gifts I may have?

God gives us gifts to build up the Body of Christ. We should see the Body being built up as a result of us using our gifts. As a Christian, you too are part of the Body of Christ. Therefore, you will also be built up through your gifts' use. If you are not encouraged through your service in an area, it is probably not your gift. Through exercising your gift, you should see fruit and receive a deep satisfaction of knowing God is using your life.

It is important for you to recognize your gifts, as this step is one part of finding your true calling. The other part is recognizing and understanding your burden. Your burden is the combination of your personality, background, life situation, and walk with God. While it is easy to describe your burden, pinpointing your gifts may be more difficult. The Spiritual Gifts Survey is designed to help you begin the process of identifying your gifts.

Oftentimes we find there are several supporting gifts that are exhibited within a dominant gift. Here are a few examples to consider:

Dominant Gift	Possible Supporting Gifts
Administration	Helps/Service, Giving, Wisdom
Apostleship	Wisdom, Prophecy, Evangelism, Faith
Discernment	Wisdom, Leadership, Prophecy, Encouragement
Encouragement	Pastor, Mercy, Discernment, Wisdom
Evangelism	Discernment, Prophecy, Wisdom
Faith	Leadership, Wisdom, Knowledge
Giving	Discernment, Mercy, Administration
Healing	Mercy, Miracles, Tongues, Faith
Helps/Service	Mercy, Encouragement, Discernment, Administration
Hospitality	Helps/Service, Mercy, Encouragement
Interpretation	Tongues, Faith, Discernment, Miracles
Knowledge	Teaching, Faith, Leadership
Leadership	Faith, Wisdom, Teaching, Knowledge
Mercy	Pastor, Helps/Service, Encouragement
Miracles	Tongues, Interpretation, Faith, Discernment
Pastor	Mercy, Encouragement, Discernment
Pastor-Teacher	Pastor, Teaching, Wisdom, Encouragement, Leadership
Prophecy	Discernment, Wisdom, Knowledge
Teaching	Wisdom, Prophecy, Evangelism, Faith
Tongues	Miracles, Interpretation, Faith, Discernment
Wisdom	Teaching, Discernment, Encouragement, Leadership

List of Gifts and Brief Definitions

Spiritual Gift	Reference and Brief Definition
Administration	1 Corinthians 12:28 This gift is the ability to develop, articulate, and execute effective and specific plans in the accomplishment of the long and short range goals of the Body of Christ.
Apostleship	Ephesians 4:11 This gift is the ability and calling of God to be sent as a messenger to bring the Gospel to places where it has previously not been acculturated.
Discernment	1 Corinthians 12:10 This gift is the ability to perceive the motives of others and the sincerity within relationships concerning the Body of Christ. Or in other words, it is the ability to know if something is from God, a demonic source, or if it simply reflects human opinion.
Encouragement	Romans 12:8 This gift is the ability to counsel, model, and encourage people through your personal testimony, life, and scripture so that people are comforted and encouraged to action. If you have the gift of encouragement, you:
Evangelism	Ephesians 4:11 This gift is the ability to share the gospel of Christ publicly or privately with unbelievers in such a way that men and women respond to become disciples of Jesus Christ.
Faith	1 Corinthians 12:9 This gift is the ability to envision with clarity and confidence God's future direction and goals for the Body of Christ.
Giving	Romans 12:8 This gift is the ability to give liberally to meet the needs of others and support God's ministry with that which God has entrusted to you.

Helps/Service	1 Corinthians 12:28, Romans 12:7
	This gift is the ability to unselfishly meet the needs of other people through practical service. It may be either ministering to the person himself or doing things to enable him to be free to do other ministries.
Hospitality	1 Peter 4:9
	This gift is the ability to reach out to others and welcome them into your home and life in a loving, warm manner, while providing food and lodging, such that the guests feel “at home” in your presence.
Knowledge	1 Corinthians 12:8
	This gift is the ability to discover, analyze, accumulate, systematize, and articulate ideas that are essential for growth and edification of the Body of Christ. This especially involves the ability to concretely expound upon Old and New Testament history as well as the history of the Church.
Leadership	Romans 12:8
	This gift is the ability to set Godly goals, make decisions, and then communicate them to the Body of Christ, such that others will voluntarily follow and joyously work to accomplish these goals.
Mercy	Romans 12:8
	This gift is the ability to empathize with those in need (especially those suffering and miserable) and to manifest this empathy in such a way as to encourage those that are in need.
Pastor-Shepherd	1 Peter 5:1-4; Ephesians 4:11
	This gift is the ability to minister to an established group of people (believers) by caring for their spiritual welfare holistically on a long-term basis.
Pastor-Teacher	Ephesians 4:11
	This gift is the ability to instruct, guide, and care for a local expression of the Body of Christ, such that the members are prepared to reach out in ministry to others, both inside and outside the Body.

Prophecy	Romans 2:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28-29; Ephesians 4:11
	This gift is the ability to publicly or privately proclaim God's word such that people are convicted, consoled, encouraged, challenged or strengthened. Another angle also involves knowing and speaking God's mind intuitively rather than, as with the teacher, deductively from scripture alone. Scripture is to always check this intuition.
Teaching	Romans 12:7, 1 Corinthians 12:28
	This gift is the ability to communicate information in such a way that members of the Body of Christ understand how to apply spiritual principles to their own lives and ministries.
Wisdom	1 Corinthians 12:8
	This gift is the ability to gain insight on how knowledge may best be applied to specific needs in the Body of Christ. This involves applying Biblical truths to everyday situations. It also involves special insight into the profundity and implications of how God is working in the world, especially to further the gospel. Compare Romans 11:33-35 with 1 Corinthians 2:6-10.

Detailed Definitions

The following pages provide detailed definitions for common Spiritual gifts, along with examples and Scripture references.

Administration

1 Corinthians 12:28

This gift is the ability to develop, articulate, and execute effective and specific plans in the accomplishment of the long and short range goals of the Body of Christ.

The word for this gift is derived from “captain” or “pilot” of a ship (Acts 27:11, Revelation 18:17). It implies keeping the ship on a predetermined course, not determining the course). This gift is implementing plans and programs consistent with the purpose and goal of the Body. This gift is not necessary for leaders, but they must have someone with this gift close by to execute plans (Acts 15:40). This gift is often used to continue ministries started by others (Acts 17:15)

Biblical examples:

- Silas: Acts 15:22-35; 17:14-15
- Timothy: Acts 17:14-15, 1 Thessalonians 3:1

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- You enjoy working with intricate details to make everything work together.
- Your prayers often consist of asking for God to bring many different factors together to accomplish a given task for His kingdom.
- You enjoy long hours in the office handling business affairs, such as staff problems, phone calls, closing deals, writing or dictating.
- You have the ability to make a committee or organization run like a “finely-oiled machine.”
- You are a very organized person and use outlines or flow charts to develop a plan.
- You often work from a list.
- You are a logical thinker and able to keep several projects on target.
- You enjoy working with people to enable them to work together smoothly toward a common objective.
- You become frustrated with brainstorming sessions which never get around to implementation.
- Others see you as a very pragmatic person.
- You enjoy working on and within systems.
- You feel comfortable working with or around computers.
- You are very loyal to your goals.
- You tend to be a perfectionist and often expect the same of others.

Apostleship

Ephesians 4:11

This gift is the ability and calling of God to be sent as a messenger to bring the Gospel to places where it has previously not been acculturated.

Jesus was the ultimate apostle (Hebrews 3:1).

“Apostles” included the original 12 disciples (minus Judas). They had been with Jesus from the beginning. They had been called by Christ (Mark 3:14) and reported back to Him (Mark 6:30). They had witnessed the resurrection (Acts 1:22). They were the spiritual, structural, and doctrinal foundation of the church (Matthew 16:18,19; Acts 2:38-42, 15:1-35; Ephesians 2:20). They worked miracles as a sign of their apostleship (2 Corinthians 12:12; Acts 2:43, 5:12, 8:18). They will hold special positions in the events of the end of our world (Luke 22:29-30; Revelation 21:14).

Other Apostles:

- Paul: Romans 1:1; 1 Corinthians 1:1
- Barnabas: Acts 14:4, 14
- James (Jesus’ half-brother): Galatians 1:19; 1 Corinthians 15:7
- Silas and Timothy: 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2:6
- Andronicus and Junia: Romans 16:7
- Many others: 1 Corinthians 15:7 (above apostles mentioned in 1 Corinthians 15:5,6).
- Apostles were impersonated. (2 Corinthians 11:13; Revelations 2:2)

Probable characteristics of this gift are:

- Your prayers often include requests for people groups who have little or no exposure to the gospel.
- You have an unusual ability to survive difficult situations.
- You adjust well to adversity, almost thrive on it.
- You have a real burden for sharing the Gospel in places that it has not permeated.
- You have the ability to learn other languages easily.
- You feel at ease with others in spite of vast cultural differences with them.
- You share Christ with people in terms they can understand and relate to.
- You can live with situations which are uncertain.
- You are a jack-of-all-trades.
- You enjoy learning from people vastly different from you.
- You and your family easily adapt to other cultures.
- You lack roots which would inhibit your mobility.
- You sometimes become frustrated with others’ apparent lack of burden for lost souls all around you and the world.
- Being separated from extended family and friends does not inhibit your ministry.

Discernment

1 Corinthians 12:10

This gift is the ability to perceive the motives of others and the sincerity within relationships concerning the Body of Christ. Or in other words, it is the ability to know if something is from God, a demonic source, or if it simply reflects human opinion.

All Christians should be able to distinguish between right and wrong (Hebrews 5:14; 1 John 4:1). This gift involves insight into circumstances which ordinarily could not be known, so that motives may be ascertained (Acts 5:1-10). At times, this gift will reveal a person's sincerity in the course of a conversation (Acts 8:23). This gift is easily counterfeited by Satan (Luke 4:33, 34; Acts 16:17). Biblical examples include Matthew 9:4.

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- You are very observant to what people say.
- You tend to notice "body language" that is not consistent with what the person is saying.
- You almost have a sixth sense about what is being said or is happening which cannot always be explained.
- Your intuitions are often correct.
- You hesitate to speak to others of their motives because they may not be receptive.
- You sometimes gossip about a "feeling" you have with regard to a person rather than confront the person involved.
- You do not view yourself as a "witch hunter".
- Certain events often confirm a premonition you have had.
- You have an analytical mind.
- People see you as a very perceptive person.
- Your prayers often consist of asking God what you should do with your intuitions.

Encouragement

Romans 12:8

This gift is the ability to counsel, model, and encourage people through your personal testimony, life, and scripture so that people are comforted and encouraged to action.

If you have the gift of encouragement, you:

- Admonish people to pursue some specific course in the future (1 Thessalonians 4:1).
- Comfort someone who is experiencing some trial or difficulty, often in areas of your life where you have been through a lot and have already been helped by God.
- Are able to encourage someone for something they are going to face in the future.
- The gift of encouragement is the major way through which God works in the Body to encourage each of us to live practical Christian lives.

Biblical example: Barnabas - "Son of Encouragement:"

- Acts 4:36, 37 – Helped needy saints
- Acts 9:27 – Endorsed an unwelcome convert
- Acts 11:19-24 – Accepted alien behavior
- Acts 11:25, 26 – Enlisted a promising teacher
- Acts 13:2, 13 – Developed gifted assistant
- Acts 15:39 – Restored a youthful deserter

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- You feel free to counsel others into certain courses of action.
- You enjoy sharing a verse of scripture with someone that has changed some specific area of your life.
- You enjoy people.
- You have personally faced many different situations in your life that God has used to help you grow in specific areas.
- You are able to identify with the feelings and emotions of another.
- You accompany biblical truth with practical steps of action.
- You can see how God is using difficulties in people's lives to produce new levels of maturity.
- You find yourself emotionally drained after ministering to someone because of your ability to identify with another's difficulties.
- You have people come to you on many occasions to receive help from you with problems with which they are wrestling.
- You find people like to be around you because you have a tendency to cheer up people.
- You find yourself just spontaneously encouraging or affirming people.
- You enjoy sharing particular aspects of your life with others because you know God will use it to help them in areas of their life.

Evangelism

Ephesians 4:11

This gift is the ability to share the gospel of Christ publicly or privately with unbelievers in such a way that men and women respond to become disciples of Jesus Christ.

All Christians are called to evangelize (Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 5:42; 2 Timothy 4:5). It is an office of the New Testament church (Acts 21:8). This gift not only evangelizes but also equips others to do it as well (Ephesians 4:11). There are two aspects of this gift:

- Public:
 - Philip (Acts 8:5-13)
 - Paul (Acts 17:19-34)
- Private:
 - Philip (Acts 8:26-39)
 - Paul (Acts 16:25-33)

It provides growth for existing churches and helps establish newly-planted churches (2 Timothy 4:5; Acts 17:10-15). It normally does not include cross-cultural evangelism.

Biblical examples:

- Philip: Acts 8:5-13; 26-39
- Paul: Acts 16: 25-33; 17:19-34

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- Your prayer life reveals a burden for those who do not know Christ.
- You enjoy meeting people and make new friends easily.
- You feel comfortable with strangers and talk about many different subjects.
- You are able to articulate your faith easily and people respond positively.
- You enjoy being around people.
- You have a burden to share the gospel of Jesus Christ publicly or with individuals.
- You are able to persuade or help people reach decisions to commit their lives to Christ.
- You are not satisfied with “superficial commitments;” you want people to become full disciples of Christ.
- You have an inner unrest at the thought of people dying and going to hell.
- You have the ability to move conversations in a direction of the other person’s relationship with Christ.
- When with non-Christians, their position with Christ inevitably comes up.
- Your prayers contain the names of many people who are not Christians or those you are training to share Christ.
- People enjoy being trained by you to share their faith.
- You have the ability to motivate and train others to share their faith effectively.

Faith

1 Corinthians 12:9

This gift is the ability to envision with clarity and confidence God's future direction and goals for the Body of Christ.

Everyone should manifest faith in their daily living (Colossians 2:6; 2 Corinthians 5:7). This gift involves seeing both short and long term goals which will enable the Body of Christ to accomplish its divine purpose (Philippians 3:12-17).

The visionary nature of this gift requires a significant number of supporting gifts (helps/service, administration, giving, encouragement, etc.) to actually accomplish the envisioned goals. (2 Timothy 4:9-13, 21-22)

The few with this gift face the danger of expecting others to see with similar clarity and confidence what God wants the Body to accomplish and having little empathy when they don't (Galatians 3:1; Acts 15:38). Biblical examples include Acts 27: 13-44 -- Paul and the shipwreck. This also is one of the primary gifts needed by the leadership in large growing churches.

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- Your prayers include many future goals and projects for the work of God.
- You find yourself much more interested in the future than the past.
- You are a positive thinker and are frustrated by negative people.
- You are goal-oriented and enjoy challenges involving new horizons.
- You are not daunted by obstacles or problems.
- You are non-traditional in your approach and find significant difficulty in working within a "traditional system".
- You find yourself dreaming of what God can do in the future but lack the desire to attend to all the details to bring His plan into existence.
- You become irritated by those who lack your vision and criticize you.
- You are seen as a courageous person because of your confidence that God is with you.
- Sometimes people see you as too self-assured.
- You find others often are "infected" with your vision if they spend time with you.
- You take risks and often are willing to pursue a vision at great personal sacrifice.
- You are not afraid to stand alone for God's vision.
- You sometimes expect too much of others and can't understand why they just don't "live by faith" more.
- Trusting God comes easily for you.

Giving

Romans 12:8

This gift is the ability to give liberally to meet the needs of others and support God's ministry with that which God has entrusted to you.

This gift is not to be associated only with wealthy people (2 Corinthians 8:1-2). This gift is to be exercised with "liberality." The work means "simplicity" or "sincerity" or "purity" (Romans 12:8).

The purposes for which this gift is to be used are:

- To meet the needs of believers within your local assembly. (Ephesians 4:28; Galatians 6:10; 1 John 3:17)
- To meet the needs of believers in other assemblies. (Romans 15: 25,26)
- To meet the needs of those who labor in preaching and teaching. (1 Timothy 5:17, 18; Philippians 4:10)
- To meet the needs of non-believers.
- The use of this gift will many times be used at considerable cost to the giver. (Luke 21:1-4)
- The gift should be used in secret as much as possible. (Matthew 6:2-4)

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- You have an inner sense of unrest when you see someone in financial or material need.
- You have a reluctance to let the person helped know where the help came from.
- You sense real joy when giving to meet someone's need.
- You have the ability to make wise purchases and investments.
- You are burdened because you don't see others sacrificing financially to meet needs you see to be important.
- You want to be a part of the work or project to which you give.
- You don't need to be pressured to give.
- You avoid the spotlight that sometimes comes to those who give significant amounts of money.
- You willingly live a life of personal sacrifice so that others may have their basic needs met.
- You are sometimes taken advantage of by people in need.
- You have a tendency to think about others before you think about yourself.
- You realize that all of what you have belongs to God and that you are only a steward of what you "possess".
- When giving, you don't think about tax advantages before deciding to give to something

Healing

1 Corinthians 12:9, 28 & 30

These are presumably of various kinds since this gift is described in the plural form. These gifts result in the restoration to wholeness of a person who is physically, emotionally, or spiritually broken, so that they may serve Christ or as a witness for Him.

Jesus is the Ultimate Healer (Matthew 9:35). The word literally is plural (gifts) which may indicate several types of cures: physical, emotional, spiritual, etc. (1 Corinthians 12:9). One also realizes that all these areas are related. Healing was primarily used to bring people to Christ or to allow them to serve Christ as they had in the past (Acts 8:5-7; 9:32-43; 14:8-13; 28:7-10).

Not every sick person in the New Testament was miraculously healed:

- Paul -- 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Galatians 4:13
- Timothy -- 1 Timothy 5:23
- Trophimus -- 2 Timothy 4:20
- Epaphroditus -- Phil. 2:25-27

Characteristics:

- A person's illness is not directly related to their faith (2 Corinthians 12:7-10; Acts 14:9).
- A person's illness is not always a result of their own sin (John 9:1-3; Luke 13:1-5; 1 Corinthians 11:30).
- All physical healing is temporary; even those healed by Jesus eventually died.
- Some will heal and use Jesus' name, yet not even know Him. (Matthew 7:22,23). This gift is easily counterfeited by Satan.
- Those who were not apostles healed (Acts 8:6,7).
- Healed through various methods (Acts 5:12-16; 9:40; 14:9-10; 16:18; 20:10; 28:8).
- The epistles commanded us to pray for healing (James 5:14-16).

Healing in our contemporary context:

- As in the New Testament, it should bring people to Christ or cause them to continue their service of Him in a like manner.
- As then, it is not guaranteed until we are with Christ. (Revelations 21:4)
- Physical healing is always temporary.
- Healing will sometimes occur miraculously.
- We should follow the procedure as outlined in James 5:14-16:
- The elders should assemble (not necessarily publicly)
- Medical help should be encouraged (anoint with oil—it was used medically).
- Prayers are to be offered in faith.

Helps/Service

1 Corinthians 12:28, Romans 12:7

This gift is the ability to unselfishly meet the needs of other people through practical service. It may be either ministering to the person himself or doing things to enable him to be free to do other ministries.

This is the behind the scenes worker. These people enjoy such tasks as:

- Washing dishes
- Cooking meals
- Setting up meeting areas
- Operating sound equipment

This is one of the more important gifts and often the least practiced. Without it, all other gifts must perform functions out of their own gift mix, inhibiting their effectiveness. Therefore, the people with the gift of helps/service free others up to use their own gifts. We all should exemplify this gift as characterized by Christ. But a person who truly has this gift personifies it to the extreme and is recharged by exercising it.

Biblical examples:

- Acts 6: -- Men relieved Apostles of work
- Acts 13:5 -- John Mark helped Paul and Barnabas
- 2 Timothy 4:11
- 1 Peter 5:13
- Acts 19:22 -- Paul had two other helpers
- Romans 16:1-4 -- Priscilla and Aquilla
- Colossians 4:12, 13 -- Epaphras

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- You have an uncanny ability to see needs.
- You work by yourself or in small groups.
- You have a desire to help others.
- You do not need to receive public recognition for what you do.
- You enjoy doing “little things” that can help other people.
- You do not enjoy handling major leadership or overseeing responsibilities.
- You enjoy doing things for someone else that enables them to use their gifts more fully.
- You do not have to ask what needs to be done; you can see needs.
- You have the ability to sense the temporal needs of others.
- In the church, you have a willingness to do jobs which will allow leadership gifts to be used in a fruitful way.
- Sometimes you feel guilty or envious because you do not have one of the more “obvious” gifts that others seem to possess.

Hospitality

1 Peter 4:9

This gift is the ability to reach out to others and welcome them into your home and life in a loving, warm manner, while providing food and lodging, such that the guests feel “at home” in your presence.

This gift is not clearly delineated with other gifts and may be a specific application of the Helps/Service (1 Peter 4:9-11). All believers are to exhibit hospitality (Hebrews 13:2). Hospitality in general is a qualification for spiritual leadership (1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:8) and for widows who are supported by the church (1 Timothy 5:10). This gift is to be used to provide for itinerant ministers (missionaries, etc.) (3 John 5-8). The people with this gift need to see themselves as an extension of their guest’s ministry and, therefore, as accountable for their guest’s teachings.

Biblical examples:

- Lydia: Acts 16:15
- Accommodating Paul: Acts 21:4,7,8,16
- Gaius: Romans 16:23; 3 John 5-8
- Philemon: Philemon 2:22

Probable characteristics of this gift are:

- You often pray that God will use your home to accommodate visitors.
- You enjoy meeting new people.
- You enjoy having visitors in your home, and often, your guest registry looks like a hotel registry (i.e. you often have people staying with you).
- You enjoy preparing meals for guests.
- You are relaxed entertaining people in your home and enjoy having people over who you do not know well.
- You are quick to invite people you have just met to your residence.
- People feel very comfortable in your home and do not feel as if they are imposing. They often “kick off their shoes” and find it easy to relax.
- You are not upset if your home is not in perfect order when someone drops in.
- Many people just stop by.
- You sometimes think others may be too uptight concerning having guests visit.
- You often open your home for bible studies and social functions.
- You enjoy asking neighbors over.
- Others see you as a friendly and open person.

Knowledge

1 Corinthians 12:8

This gift is the ability to discover, analyze, accumulate, systematize, and articulate ideas that are essential for growth and edification of the Body of Christ. This especially involves the ability to concretely expound upon Old and New Testament history as well as the history of the Church.

This gift is intended to be communicated. This is why it is called the “message of knowledge” (1 Corinthians 12:8). This gift sometimes “puffs up” if kept to yourself (1 Corinthians 8:1). All believers should exemplify some knowledge (Colossians 1:9-12). Sometimes this gift requires a person to set aside human knowledge (1 Corinthians 1:19- 20; 2:14-16). Biblical examples include much of Jesus’ teachings.

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- Your prayers typically involve deep theological truths and often seek God’s aid in understanding more.
- You are able to grasp spiritual truths quickly.
- You enjoy reading the Bible and studying it in depth.
- You enjoy reading books and articles.
- You are eager to learn and have a long attention span.
- You can absorb and remember large quantities of information.
- You tend to neglect other types of Christian activities and family responsibilities because of your desire to learn and study.
- When listening to a message, you listen for deep truths which are being communicated.
- When you are involved in a discussion about spiritual issues, you find yourself with your Bible in hand.
- You are more comfortable with ideas than people.
- You like to take time by yourself to think.
- When faced with a decision, you ask yourself what Biblical principles are involved.
- You are greatly disturbed by people thinking “the end justifies the means”.
- People see you as more ideological than practical.
- You are aware of times when people say things that contradict spiritual principles.
- You continually try to reconcile different truths from scripture so you can understand how they relate.

Leadership

Romans 12:8

This gift is the ability to set Godly goals, make decisions, and then communicate them to the Body of Christ, such that others will voluntarily follow and joyously work to accomplish these goals.

This gift is to be used diligently (Romans 12:8). This gift is in part exercised by the Elders Board (1 Timothy 5:17). Those using this gift must first exemplify spiritual maturity and ministry fruit (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1). Age is not a determining factor in using this gift (1 Timothy 4:12). One should be tested before assuming such a position (1 Timothy 3:10)

Biblical examples:

- Paul: 2 Corinthians
- Timothy: 1 & 2 Timothy
- Titus: Titus

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- You are often setting an example in behavior for others.
- Your prayers consist of tasks which need accomplishing.
- Others readily follow you, and they see you confidently knowing what to do next.
- If a male, your family also responds well to your leadership.
- You are a well-disciplined person.
- You will not ask others to do what you will not do yourself.
- You are relaxed when in leadership positions.
- You delegate well.
- You do not enjoy maintaining a program or administering details.
- You tend to “take over” in a situation where there is not a designated leader.
- People look to you for leadership and direction.
- You remain calm under pressure.
- You don’t allow criticism to distract from the task at hand.
- You desire to see things move quickly to a conclusion; then you want to move on to a new challenge.
- You can organize and motivate people to accomplish a desired task.

Mercy

Romans 12:8

This gift is the ability to empathize with those in need (especially those suffering and miserable) and to manifest this empathy in such a way as to encourage those that are in need.

The gift is to be used with cheerfulness; that is, joyousness which is ready to do anything: Romans 12:8. We see this gift in Dorcas as well as Helps/Services: Acts 9:36. Mercy will be manifested in good deeds: James 2:15,16. All believers are commanded to have mercy: Matthew 9:13; Luke 10:37.

Probable characteristics (often latent):

- You find it easy to identify with the feelings of someone in pain.
- You cry easily or show emotions when you see or hear things that sadden you.
- When someone is sharing something deep with you, you find yourself crying when they do.
- Your immediate reactions when you see someone in difficulty is to want to reach out and help.
- You sometimes become bitter because of the injustices someone else suffers.
- Most people would see you as an empathetic person.
- People come to you with problems not because of some practical things you do, but because you have the ability to understand what they are going through and can console them.
- You have the ability to “cheer up” people who are going through deep personal struggles.
- Your prayer life includes the needs of the many personal struggles you know people are experiencing.
- When you are finished having someone share with you, many times you find yourself emotionally drained.
- You enjoy calling on people in the hospital or who are sick or going through some difficulty.

Miracles

1 Corinthians 12:10, 29, 39

This gift involves an event where a physical law is superseded (supernaturally) in such a way that it is perceived by the senses and draws the observers' consciences to their relationship with God. This especially involved exorcisms in the New Testament.

Jesus Christ performed more miracles than anyone else in the New Testament. He had power over:

- Disease - Matthew 9:35
- Demons - Matthew 17:14-18
- Nature - Mark 4:37-41; 6:48-51
- Matter - John 2:1-11
- Death - Luke 7:11-15; 8:49-56; John 11:1-44

Characteristics

- Miracles were used to confirm a message or messenger from God (Romans 15:17-19; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:4).
- Miracles did not occur every time they were needed (Acts 6:8 - Stephen).
- People who were not apostles performed miracles (Acts 6:8 - Stephen).
- Great people in the New Testament did not perform miracles (John 10:41, - John the Baptist: "...though he did no miracles...")
- Miracles were used evangelistically and almost always brought conviction and conversion to non-believers (Acts 5:12-16; 6:7-15; 9:40-43; 19:13-18; 28:3-6).
- Seldom were miracles done for believers' sake (Acts 9:32-43 - Dorcas; 12:6-10 - Peter 20:7-12 - Paul).

Followers were criticized for seeking miracles for their own sake (Luke 11:29; Acts 8:20-23). All physical healing miracles for everyone from the New Testament era eventually died. Satan empowers some to perform miracles. (Acts 8:9-11, 13:8-10) Not all who even used Jesus' name are authentic (Matthew 7:22,23).

Miracles in our contemporary context:

- Historically, as in the New Testament, they are most prevalent when and where Christianity spreads into pagan cultures.
- Historically, as the culture Christianizes, they diminish.
- Historically, they are always possible in our culture but are unusual.
- Eternal miracles happen not in the physical sense but in the spiritual sense and are not unusual.
- "Miraculous" answers to prayer are also not unusual.
- Miracles still cannot be commanded of God. He is sovereign.

Pastor-Shepherd

1 Peter 5:1-4; Ephesians 4:11

This gift is the ability to minister to an established group of people (believers) by caring for their spiritual welfare holistically on a long-term basis.

The word “pastor” is based on the caring for animals (sheep), and its function is not well understood today. Jesus is the Good and Ultimate Shepherd of all believers (Psalms 23:1; John 10:11, 14; 1 Peter 2:25). Jesus has gifted some as under-shepherds to care for His followers (1 Peter 5:2). This gift is concerned with serving and caring for the needs of a small group of people (1 Peter 5:2-4). This gift is concerned with protecting the believers from attacks, both from within and from the outside (Acts 20:29-31).

This is not a passive or docile gift, but must always be alert (Acts 20:29-31). This gift is often combined with other gifts (Ephesians 4:11). This is not the dominant gift of the Senior Pastor for a large growing church.

Biblical examples: Acts 20:28-35 -- Ephesians elders

Probable characteristics of this gift are:

- You are a people person and enjoy being around others.
- You tend to build deep relationships with others and do not enjoy superficial or casual friendships for very long.
- Your prayers are often comprised of requests for the deep hurts and needs of those whom you are shepherding.
- Others are attracted to you because they sense that you truly care for them.
- People see you as a warm person with a real concern for the welfare of others.
- You are frustrated with tasks that take you away from ministering to those around you for very long.
- You often see others too involved in their own goals to care for those around themselves.
- You do not feel comfortable in a tightly regimented time schedule.
- When you share with others, you often focus on the relational aspects of the Christian life.
- You feel inadequate to meet all the needs of those to whom you minister.
- You have a great burden to protect those around you from non-Biblical influences.
- You feel frustrated when relationships with others do not last long-term.
- You enjoy being able to focus on a few rather than being “spread too thin.”

Pastor-Teacher

Ephesians 4:11

This gift is the ability to instruct, guide, and care for a local expression of the Body of Christ, such that the members are prepared to reach out in ministry to others, both inside and outside the Body.

This gift is a combination of Pastoring: Shepherding and Teaching (Ephesians 4:11). The primary responsibility of this gift is preparing the members of the Body for ministry (Ephesians 4:12). Only as others use their gift is the Body built up (Ephesians 4:12,13). The offices of Apostles, Prophets, and Evangelists also include preparing others for works of ministry. The teaching should correct, rebuke, encourage, and contain careful instruction, and considerable effort and time will be spent accordingly. The gift should not neglect evangelism (2 Timothy 4:5). This position may be supported financially to facilitate preaching and teaching (1 Timothy 5:17-18).

Biblical example: 1 & 2 Timothy

Probable characteristics of this gift are:

- Your prayers are for your leadership of the flock with which you have been entrusted.
- People look to you for leadership.
- You are a disciplined person.
- You often feel internal tension between the task at hand and the people problems which impede progress.
- You are goal-oriented but people focused.
- You are successful at preparing and motivating others to become involved in using their gifts in ministry.
- You train leaders well.
- You articulate your thoughts well.
- Your desire is to please God first, people second.
- You are an example of a godly lifestyle.
- You are able to offer decisive leadership to the Body you are shepherding.
- You are frustrated when you do not see others growing into maturity or using their gifts for the building of the Body.
- You are concerned that all of the needs of the Body are met, though not necessarily by yourself.

Prophecy

Romans 2:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28-29; Ephesians 4:11

This gift is the ability to publicly or privately proclaim God's word such that people are convicted, consoled, encouraged, challenged or strengthened. Another angle also involves knowing and speaking God's mind intuitively rather than, as with the teacher, deductively from scripture alone. Scripture is to always check this intuition.

The primary function of this gift in the Old and New Testament is not to foretell the future but to tell forth the Word of God.

*"Less than two percent of Old Testament prophecy is Messianic. Less than five percent specifically describe the New Covenant Age (from New Testament on). Less than one percent concerns events yet to come."
Page 150, Fee & Stuart's How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth.*

As a result of the use of this gift, people are often strengthened and encouraged (Acts 15:32). They are able to speak accurately with regard to the future (Acts 1:27-28); although they are not always correct (Acts 21:10). What they say should be weighed by other prophets and the Word of God (1 Corinthians 14:29-32). The New Testament church had an office for this gift.

Biblical examples:

- Agabus: Acts 11:27-28; 21:10-11
- Judas and Silas: Acts 15:32

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- Your prayers are often for courage to speak out against injustices and to help others understand God's Word.
- You have a good understanding of many social and political trends of our time.
- You have an excellent grasp of God's Word; frequently quoting the Bible to others.
- You do not mind someone challenging you.
- You are able to stand alone against the tide.
- You have courage to confront issues with insights God has given you.
- Sometimes people see you as a negative person.
- You have the ability to see through surface issues to the true spiritual problem.
- People have different responses to your messages; some are convicted, others are encouraged, but few are neutral.
- Your "... words carry God's authority and have the power to build by stimulating and encouraging. Often this gift reflects special insight into the truth and calls men back to the obedience of faith." (A. W. Tozer)
- You see events which will occur if people do not act now on God's Word.

Teaching

Romans 12:7, 1 Corinthians 12:28

This gift is the ability to communicate information in such a way that members of the Body of Christ understand how to apply spiritual principles to their own lives and ministries.

There were positions in the New Testament church for some who had this gift (Acts 13:1). As a result of the use of this gift, people will not just know more, but their behavior will actually change (Acts 11:25, 26). Everyone is called to teach (Matthew 19, 20). Exercising this gift carries with it a greater accountability for the teacher (James 3:1). The goal of this gift is spiritual maturity. (Colossians 1:28-29; 2 Timothy 3:16-17).

Some may use this gift in a:

- Large group - Acts 5:42; 19:11; 20:20
- Small group - Acts 2:42; 5:42; 20:20
- One-on-one - Acts 18:26; 2 Timothy 2:2

Biblical examples:

- Apollos: Acts 18:24-28
- Paul: Acts 18:11; 20:20
- Timothy: 2 Timothy 2:2; 4:11

Probable characteristics of this gift are:

- Your prayers are often for understanding with those you are teaching.
- You have a great deal of patience for those who are learning from you.
- You have the ability to communicate scripture in an understandable way.
- You have seen others apply your teachings to their lives and grow as a result.
- You are not easily threatened by criticism when teaching.
- You enjoy spending time in study for your teaching.
- Your study is intended to help you communicate with others.
- As a lay person, you find little time for other ministries in addition to teaching.
- You may communicate through the use of various media.
- You enjoy people.
- You have a genuine concern for those you are teaching.
- You are concerned that precise words and illustrations you use communicate what you want to say.
- You are always learning and then wanting to teach it to others.
- You are able to apply truths to the lives of others.
- You sometimes feel you could communicate a point better than someone else who is teaching.
- You are a disciplined person.

Tongues & Interpretation of Tongues

1 Corinthians 12:10, 28 & 30

The gift of tongues is the ability to speak to God in an utterance not understood by the speaker (unless it is explained by one with the gift of interpretation) in such a way that it is a sign for unbelievers.

The gift of tongues is often confused with the Pentecostal experience in the Book of Acts:

There are six “filling of the Holy Spirit” occurrences in Acts:

- | | |
|-----------------|------------------|
| 1. Acts 2:1-7 | 4. Acts 9:17 |
| 2. Acts 4:31 | 5. Acts 10:44-48 |
| 3. Acts 8:14-17 | 6. Acts 19:1-7 |

Only three included tongues as a manifestation of the filling of the Holy Spirit:

1. Acts 2:1-13 (vs. 6, 8, 11) - Jerusalem - Judaism
2. Acts 10:44-48 (11:15-18) - Caesarea - Roman Gentile “In the same way”
3. Acts 19:1-7 - Ephesus - Greek/Pagan

We conclude all three examples involve speaking known languages but unknown to the speaker as a sign of God’s universal concern for mankind. He may so choose to manifest Himself today in the same way when the gospel invades a new culture. This is not the same as the gift of tongues and interpretation. In 1 Corinthians 12:14, Paul deals with the public use of the gift of tongues which was being abused at the church of Corinth.

The Bible is the basis for evaluation of gifts, not experience. (1 Corinthians 4:6)

- These gifts are a sign to unbelievers, (1 Corinthians 14:22) and tongues should never be used without interpretation. (1 Corinthians 14:28)
- There should be no more than two or three in a service (1 Corinthians 14:27) and this should be very orderly (1 Corinthians 14:33, 40).
- Each interpretation should show the tongues speaking to God. (1 Corinthians 14:2, 28)
- Everyone will not have this gift even though baptized by the Holy Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:13, 30)
- These gifts are very susceptible to abuse and projection; therefore, they are the only gifts singled out for control (1 Corinthians 14:1-40)
- These gifts cannot be shown to have conclusively passed from existence (1 Corinthians 3:8; 14:39) though they have come and gone throughout history.
- These gifts are to be used in love (1 Corinthians 14:1) and should not be used divisively.
- They often do not build the church and, therefore, the gifts which do should be sought. (1 Corinthians 14:12) It is considered one of the lesser gifts. (1 Corinthians 14:1-5; 18, 19)
- This gift should not be devalued or over-valued.

The private use of the gift of tongues is not explicitly addressed anywhere in the New Testament.

- Whenever the gift of tongues is mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12-14, it is always mentioned in the context of public worship.
- All gifts are designed to be used to build up the Body. A private use of this prayer does not build up others in the Body. All of the prior 19 gifts are to be used to serve others.
- This does not say that this private prayer language is wrong. It is just not the gift of tongues as Biblically defined.
- It is a helpful phenomenon for those who experience this in their own prayers.
- This is not unique to Christianity.
- It varies considerably according to personality type.
- One should not feel inferior for their lack of it.

Wisdom

1 Corinthians 12:8

This gift is the ability to gain insight on how knowledge may best be applied to specific needs in the Body of Christ. This involves applying Biblical truths to everyday situations. It also involves special insight into the profundity and implications of how God is working in the world, especially to further the gospel. Compare Romans 11:33-35 with 1 Corinthians 2:6-10.

This wisdom is intended to be communicated. This is why it is called the “message of wisdom” (1 Corinthians 12:8). All believers should exemplify some wisdom. (Colossians 1: 9-12) This wisdom involves revelation from God. It may be direct or unwritten revelation (1 Corinthians 2:6-16).

Use of this gift will be accompanied by: (James 3:13-18)

- Consideration
- Fullness of mercy
- Fullness of the Fruit of the Spirit
- Impartiality
- Peace-lovingness
- Purity
- Sincerity
- Submission

This gift can be used to: Answer an unbeliever’s arguments. (1 Peter 3:15), solve problems facing the Body of Christ, apply to believer’s conduct (see Paul’s epistles)

Probable characteristics of this gift:

- You find yourself praying for insight on how to apply truths to needs around you.
- You enjoy the application passages of scripture rather than the doctrinal.
- Sometimes you see solutions to problems that no one else seems to see.
- You become frustrated when people do not listen to your solution because you know it will work.
- You have little difficulty communicating your thoughts and usually others listen to you.
- You enjoy working on solutions to problems more than you do applying all the details of the solutions to the problems.
- Many times in prayer, meditation, or scripture study, solutions will come to mind.
- People come to you with their personal problems for insight. They see you as a problem solver.
- You feel uncomfortable with discussions which remain at the theoretical level for too long a period of time.
- You have an analytical mind which is always trying to figure out how and why.
- You usually get to the heart of an issue quickly.
- You find it easy to decide on a course of action which needs to be taken.
- You observe many problems which have solutions.
- When you listen to a message, you are disappointed if it does not include some specific applications.

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// signed //

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