



The Gifts of the Spirit

Discover | Develop | Deploy

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GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

DISCOVER.

When it comes to spiritual gifts you have to **discover** them.

You have at least one spiritual gift, an ability or capacity given to you when you became a Christian to be used to help others grow. You have at least one.

Do you know what yours are? Have you discovered them?

One way you discover them is by trying lots of things and see what makes a real difference.

You also discover them through prayer and experimentation.

Another way is through feedback from others, who say, "When you do this, God really uses it."

DEVELOP.

After you have discovered them, then you must **develop** them like Paul tells Timothy to fan into flame his gifts. Listen, even Usain Bolt has a training and practice plan.

And one of the ways you develop your spiritual gifts is by learning from others who have the same gifts as you but are further down the road.

DEPLOY.

Then **deploy** them – use them to build up the others.

Imagine, if we all knew our gifts, developed them, and deployed them! The church would be built up and God would be honoured.

1 Corinthians 12

12 Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. ² You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. ³ Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. ⁶ There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

What does it mean to be spiritual?

False Spirituality

False Spirituality is having spiritual experiences without the Spirit of God.

True Spirituality

It is not the outwards signs of Spiritual activity that makes someone spiritual, it is the presences of the Holy Spirit, they have been born again, and now they are able to live out the claim, Jesus is Lord!

There is one God who gives different gifts, but all them work together for the common good.

Paul uses three words to describe these spiritual gifts- Gifts, services, workings.

1. **Gifts** – the point is that the Spiritual abilities God gives us are a gift. Spiritual gifts are special abilities God gives to each Christian to be used to build up the church. They aren't for the individual who was them they are for the church as a whole.
Spiritual gifts are gifts. Now when it comes to gifts, you don't earn them, you don't deserve them, it's a gift.
And like all gifts they are given in love and to be received with thankfulness and joy.
2. **Services** – secondly Paul calls them kinds of service. The word here is word used servants serving, it's waiter, our word deacon comes from this word. And Paul is saying spiritual gifts are all about serving others. You don't have your gift for you, you have it to use it on others.
3. **Workings** - different gifts, different kinds of service, and finally different workings. The emphasis here is on power- the gifts actually make a difference, they actually do something! They work!

They all work together to build up the church

1 Corinthians 12:7 –

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

Get an idea of your gifts....

<http://enewhope.org/spiritualgifts/evaluation.php>

1 Corinthians 12

⁷ Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,^[a] and to still another the interpretation of tongues.^[b] ¹¹ All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.²⁸ And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues^[d]? Do all interpret? ³¹ Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.

Romans 12

⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; ⁷ if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; ⁸ if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Ephesians 4

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

For a free SHAPE test

<https://www.freeshapetest.com/>

SHAPEO

When you are trying to answer the question, what should I do, where and how should I serve? Spiritual gifts form part of that answer. Sometimes the acronym SHAPE is used to describe how God has made a person and where they should serve. Now because I'm Australian, I've added an 'O' on the end so it says SHAPEO. What does **SHAPEO** stand for?

- **SPIRITUAL GIFTS:** God-empowered abilities for serving him.
- **HEART OR PASSION:** what you love to do and care about most.
- **ABILITIES:** the natural talents you were born with as well as skills and training.
- **PERSONALITY STYLE:** your unique combination of personality traits.
- **EXPERIENCE:** the experiences in life that have molded you.
- **OPPORTUNITIES:** the unique circumstances and options facing you

*What part do **Spiritual Gifts** play in my SHAPE?*

Spiritual Gifts are special abilities given by God to be used to minister to others. They are a demonstration that God's Holy Spirit is working in us, enabling us to do things we could not otherwise do.

*What part does **Heart** play in our SHAPE?*

God has given each of us a unique emotional desire and motivation to make a difference in the world. Although God cares about every need, we instinctively care about some things more than others. When we serve in our area of passion, we are effective, energized, and our commitment is a joy.

*What part do our **Abilities** play in our SHAPE?*

Natural talents are given by God to every person. They are the abilities that help us function in the world. Abilities can be indicators of your giftedness but do not necessarily equate to your Spiritual Gifts. Both are God-given. Our natural talents have many applications; Spiritual Gifts are given to carry out God's purposes.

*What part does our **Personality Style** play in our SHAPE?*

Our Personality Style reflects the natural preferences we have for how we approach life. It helps you decide what kind of environment you are most comfortable serving in. Are you energized by relationships with people or achieving tasks? Are you a planner or spontaneous in how you organize life?

*What part do life **Experiences** play in our SHAPE?*

All of us have significant experiences in our lives, both good and bad, that help shape who we are today. God desires to use them all for his good. Our experiences become valuable tools for ministry as we serve others.

*What **Opportunities** lie before you?*

God uses opportunities & circumstances to guide us.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

I like to classify gifts as Spectacular and non-spectacular. I also like possessive and instance gifts.

I think the list in the bible are representative rather than total list of gifts, the 3 or 4 lists we have are different lists rather than one complete definitive list.

1. A Message of Wisdom

(1 Cor 12:8) A message of Wisdom is an insight into the mysterious workings of God in Christ. It is knowing “this is what God is doing in this situation” and what we should do. Technically a message of wisdom is an utterance gift, spoken words. If you have this gift, people will come to you for advice and say, I don’t know what do you think I should do, what is God doing? I think is what God is doing, this is who he is talking.

Whereas wisdom in general is knowing what do to in situations where the moral laws don’t apply (i.e. they are not right and wrong issues). It is knowing what to do in a particular situation. It is navigating through a minefield of possibilities.

2. A Message of Knowledge

(1 Cor 12:8) God given information for building up individuals or the church. It can be factual information that could not be known without the Spirit’s revelation such as Peter’s knowledge of Ananias and Sapphira’s sin in Acts. It could be something that God wants one believer to pass on to another, this could be encouragement, or information about a decision, or sometimes it is it confront sin. Sometimes people talk about impressions or a burden for someone, “I think God wants to me to say this to you....”

Spurgeon one day pointed to a man in the congregation mid sermon and said young man, those gloves you are wearing have not been paid for, you have stolen them from your employer. This happened often for Spurgeon.

This is one of the gifts that I have. Fairly regularly I will think of someone or see someone, and I will feel a burden for them, like God wants to say something specifically to them through me. Sometimes it fades away and then I know it is just me. But sometimes it grows and grows, and I try to distil in my mind as I pray what God would have me say to them. I imagine myself speaking to them or writing to them, some things grow and form in my mind as I begin to get a clear picture of what God wants me to say to them. Then I would call them or text them and say, I think God wants me to give you a message. I think he wants me to tell you that.... and then I would tell them what it is. I always say, if it is from God you will know because the Holy Spirit in you will resonate with it, if it is not from God and it is just me, let it melt away.

Sometimes this happens quickly, a couple of weeks ago I was walking through my kitchen when I felt God prompt me to encourage a friend of mine who is a

pastor. So I prayed on the spot and sent him an encouraging message – *“just felt led to encourage you and remind you that you are doing a great work. You are a gifted leader and teacher and a man of integrity, be encouraged.”* Now what I didn’t know is that he was sitting at the front of church before the service after a really deflating day, really questioning what God was doing and if he was cut out for this. He was in the middle of praying this with his phone in his hand and his eyes open when my message appeared on the screen! How cool is that! Often it is much more specific information, a word of knowledge.

3. Faith

(1 Cor 12:9) Since faith is a gift that not everyone has, it can’t mean saving faith in Jesus or faithfulness. People with the gift of faith find it easy to believe God. It is not gullibility or optimism, but the confidence that God will do what he has promised. Hebrews 11 tells of the ‘Hall of Faith,’ a group of people who were assured of things they could not see or prove, but they trusted in God’s character and promises and lived accordingly. The gift of faith encourages and inspires others to trust God more! It boosts morale!

4. Gifts of Healings

(1 Cor 12:9) (1 Cor 12:28) Healing is restoring people to wholeness. Although the Apostles seemed to be able to heal at will, when Paul talks about healing as gift in the church in Corinthians he uses the plural form. Meaning each act of healing is a grace gift. In 1 Cor. 12 what is described, is not some have the gift of healing or could be called healers, but rather that God gives gifts of healings. This explanation also fits with James 5, where the elders’ prayer, is a request that God in his grace might give the gift of healing to the sick person. God does heal today, and each healing is a grace gift, but there are no healers who can always heal in every situation, history has proven that.

Not possessive, but each healing is a gift. Not owned but the vessel through which God heals.

The person who gets healed gets the gift, not the person doing the healing.

5. Miraculous Powers / Miracles

(1 Cor 12:10) (1 Cor 12:28) Literally workings of power. Supernatural interventions of God which authenticate the gospel message and bring God glory. Miracles could be healings, exorcisms, raising the dead, provision of resources, miraculous change in circumstances etc. To some extent how important miracles are depends on the culture. If the culture has a lot of occult practices, then miracles show that God has greater power! That he is the Almighty. God may use other signs and wonders to authenticate his presence, but personally I think chasing after miraculous signs like gold dust is not particularly helpful.

Why don’t we see many miracles?

1. Lack of expectation – we don't expect God to do supernatural acts. So we don't see them.
2. Lack of Faith – we don't believe God can, will, or wants to intervene. We see Jesus unable to perform miraculous signs in places where there was no faith or expectation. Not that he lacked power, but they lacked faith and expectation.
3. Lack of practice and courage to seek the miraculous. Solution, keep trying, be bold.

Avoid getting hung up on miracles one way or the other. Both the scriptures (Acts and 1 Corinthians) as well as long term social studies have shown that when the miraculous signs dry up, so do the disciples. Miracles don't make immature Christians mature, the Word of God and the inner work of the Spirit do that! Chasing the miraculous will inhibit your growth. So will ignoring the miraculous, every time God intervenes in our world it is supernatural, when he prompts you to pray or convicts you of sin, that's supernatural, get used to it.

6. Prophecy

(1 Cor 12:10) (1 Cor 12:28) (Rom 12:6) (Eph 4:11) While words of wisdom and knowledge are inferences, paraphrases and imprecise messages, prophecy is the very Words of God spoken through a person into a specific time and place. Prophecy is therefore more precise than a message or wisdom or knowledge. Prophecy is a timely and specific word, usually spoken in first person, since God himself is speaking through that person (e.g. God says to Jeremiah, I will put my words in your mouth.)

- Prophecy involves both foretelling and forth telling.
- Foretelling – telling what God will do in the future (like Acts 11).
- Forth-telling – encouraging, rebuking, informing, correcting, exhorting and strengthening (like 1 Cor 14:3)
- Prophecy must be completely congruent with the Bible and weighed by the church (especially the leaders).
- Prophecy is less important now – since we have the scriptures (hence built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets)
- New Testament prophecy is non-ecstatic, meaning the prophet is not in a trance but is in control and knows what they are doing. They are compelled to speak but have control of their faculties.
- Just as there are false teachers who distort the Word of God and lead others astray, so there are false prophets who distort the Word of God and lead others astray.

7. Discernment / Distinguishing Between Spirits

(1 Cor 12:10) Divine enablement to discern what spiritual forces are at play in a particular environment. It is a bit like supernatural intuition. It's distinguishing

between the three spiritual realms – the Holy Spirit, human spirit, or evil spirits – and discerning which are in operation in a given case, person, situation, location.

It's the ability to distinguish between truth and error, between spirits, between good and evil, right and wrong.

8. Speaking in Different Kinds of Tongues

(1 Cor 12:10) (1 Cor 12:28). The Tongues in the book of Acts are different to the tongues in the Corinthians.

The Acts tongues were real human languages spoken to unbelievers to authenticate the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and the gospel. They were signs for unbelievers that pointed to Jesus and showed that the message was real. These tongues have finished, they were part of the inauguration of the age of the Spirit across the three people groups, Jews (Acts 2), half Jews, the Samaritans (Acts 8), and non-Jews, Gentiles (Acts 10). It is a misunderstanding of these three Acts passages that leads some people to think that unless you can speak in tongues you don't have the Holy Spirit. But Paul says in 1 Cor 12:30, do all speak in tongues? (No).

The tongues that are available for the church today are the Corinthian type. The Corinthian tongues are a private prayer language given to believers to help them pray and worship without the constraints of language. Corinthian tongues are not real languages and are not signs for unbelievers. Because of this, speaking in tongues loudly in public is confusing for unbelievers and unhelpful for other believers. Speaking in tongues should be done privately and quietly if done in public.

Tongues build up the church by building up the individual. I can't speak in tongues, but I do ask for that gift sometimes.

9. Interpretation of Tongues

(1 Cor 12:10) Interpretation or translation of tongues is the companion gift to tongues. I understand it as a concessional gift. Meaning if someone does speak in tongues publicly so everyone hears, this is very unhelpful and now someone needs to 'tidy things up' by making sense of what was said, otherwise it's pointless for everyone except the speaker.

10. Apostolic Gift

(1 Cor 12:28) The original apostles were eyewitnesses of the resurrection who had been with Jesus and were personally commissioned by him. Apostle means send one, specifically sent with authority!

The apostles were essential in the founding of the church and Ephesians 2:20 says the church was built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. So there are no more apostles like Peter or John or Paul.

But the gift of being sent to start new things continues. Those with an apostolic gifting are those gifted as pioneers and entrepreneurs, who have divine ability to start new gospel work, modern day church planters and missionaries are good examples of apostolic leaders. Apostolic gifts are leadership gifts.

11. Teachers

(1 Cor 12:28) (Romans 12:7). Teachers help Christians to grow up towards maturity by helping them apply and understand the Word of God. New Testament teachers include Barnabas, Paul, Apollos, Timothy, and Priscilla and Aquila. 1 Cor 12:28 places teaching third after apostles and prophets. Ephesians 4:11 places it fourth after apostles, prophets, and evangelists, and links it with pastoring, so it becomes pastor-teacher.

This order is both chronological and logical. The apostles are the pioneers who along with the prophets set the foundation for the church (Eph 2:20) especially by writing the New Testament. The evangelists then make converts by preaching the gospel. The teachers then teach the converts. Without the others preceding them, teachers would have nothing and no-one to teach.

Teachers teach large groups (Acts 11:26), small groups, and one on one (Acts 18:26). In New Testament times teachers had to learn from other teachers before they could teach. There were no textbooks or podcasts available.

While prophecy is a spontaneous gift, teaching is a static gift that requires ongoing study and learning. Teachers should invest in both learning and teaching.

Teaching is a bit like feeding people, you have to continually prepare healthy and nutritious meals and serve them up, making sure people eat their veggies, and in doing so over time, people grow and become healthier.

Teaching has a cumulative effect. The longer you're a follower of Jesus and the more sermons you listen to the less you learn, because you heard it before. The less you learn, but the more you have to apply. So if you said to me, Mark I didn't learn anything new from your sermon today, I would say, that's fine, you've been around 50 years you should know this stuff by now. However, you now have to apply what you know. You have to implement in your life all the things you know. So that's a greater burden than learning new things. Otherwise we end up as fat sheep, overfed and under exercised.

I have this gift and since I was a teenager God has used me to help people understand his Word, people often say, "I never got that before, but when I heard you explain it, it suddenly made sense for me." I invest heavily in learning, reading, and studying so that I can teach more effectively.

12. Helping

(1 Cor 12:28) Helping is literally taking the place of someone else in accomplishing practical and necessary tasks to free up, support, or meet the needs of others. It's, "here let me step in and do that for you." This is the only place the word occurs in the NT. It's not a word gift, but a practical action gift.

13. Administration

(1 Cor 12:28) Guidance, administration, able to direct. Literally the word means to pilot or steer – a divine enablement to understand what makes an organisation function, and plan and execute procedures that accomplish ministry goals. Bring efficiency and effectiveness and order to chaos. Able to organise people, tasks and events.

14. Serving

(Rom 12:7) The word here is the word used servants serving as waiters. And our word deacon comes from this word. It is a very general term, and simply means serving or ministering. It is an action gift not a word gift like prophecy or teaching. The emphasis is on heartfelt and sacrificial service of others, ministering to others and meeting their needs. Humbly doing was is needed.

15. Encouragement

(Rom 12:8) Putting courage into someone. Think injecting adrenalin from an epipen and an allergic reaction. Encouragement is strengthening and comforting others, especially those that are wavering in their faith. It's stimulating others to remember that they have been taught – reminding them of what they know is really true, though they've forgotten it. It's about helping people live out the gospel. It's the same word that's used of the Holy Spirit as the comforter and counsellor. It's a powerful gift, injecting courage.

16. Giving

(Rom 12:8) To contribute money and other resources to the Lord's work with cheerfulness and generosity.

These people are not necessarily rich but find it easier to give away resources than keep them.

They give to others without ulterior motives.

The Spirit has gifted some people to make lots of money and cheerfully give it away!

17. Leading

(Rom 12:8) The word used is *proistamenos* which means to direct, be set over, be over, preside, superintend, rule, lead, manage, or administer. In Romans 12:8 is translated lead – if it is to lead, do it diligently

It's the word used in *1 Tim 5:17 translated as direct the affairs, "17 The elders who **direct the affairs** of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching."*

It is translated as manage (1 Tim 3), lead (Romans 12:8), and as rule in other places. Certainly, this means that Pastors should have the gift of leadership. They should pray, teach, care, evangelize, equip, and also provide leadership, including organisational leadership. This is not business management thinking, but what the Bible says! Not all leaders are pastors. Not all pastors need to have strong leadership gifts, but all should have some gifting, and the most gifted leaders should be lead pastor.

Like other gifts leadership needs to be discovered, developed and deployed. Just as some people are natural teachers, so there are natural leaders. But in addition to this leadership is a gift. Some people, both male and female, have been given a special gift of leadership to build up the church. Paul says in Romans 12:8 that leaders should exercise their gift with eagerness/diligence. Leadership is one of the easier gifts to identify and develop. This is one of my strongest gifts along with teaching and evangelism.

18. Mercy

(Rom 12:8) Mercy is compassionate action to those in need. It is a special ministry to the sick, suffering, weak and distressed. This may include, visiting the sick, caring for the elderly or disabled, and providing for the poor.

Mercy must be shown cheerfully, not begrudgingly. People with this gift are especially used by God to show love, care, compassion and honour to sick, poor, lonely and suffering people. Think Mother Theresa.

19. Evangelism

Ephesians 4 mentions evangelists as a gift to the church. Although we are all to share our faith as witnesses, some people are especially gifted at helping others become Christians. They share the gospel with ease and effectiveness. They recruit people to follow Jesus. Sometimes through up front preaching and sometimes through interpersonal sharing. One of the ways you know you are an evangelist, is that no matter how many people are here in church you only think about those that aren't yet here. You see lost people.

20. Hospitality

(1 Peter 4:9-10) Hospitality doesn't mean cooking for friends and throwing parties. It literally means to love strangers. Loving strangers by providing fellowship food and shelter.

If you are wanting to develop and deploy your spiritual gift(s) there are many opportunities at Whitehill so please speak to one of the Ministry staff or contact the office (info@whitehill.org.au) or Ph 32880186.