

What are Spiritual Gifts?

Message 01 of the series: "Gifted"

1. Jesus gave his disciples a mission that was impossible for them to accomplish on their own.

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Matthew 28:19-20 (NLT)

2. Jesus asked God the Father to send the Holy Spirit to help his disciples.

"I will ask the Father to give you another Helper, to be with you always. He is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor recognizes him. But you recognize him, because he lives with you and will be in you. I'm not going to forsake you like orphans. I will come back to you.

John 14:16-18 (ISV)

"...Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit... you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:4-8 (NLT)

"On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability. At that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem." Acts 2:1-5 (NLT)

3. One of the ways the Holy Spirit helps us is by giving us spiritual gifts.

Spiritual Gifts = special abilities the Holy Spirit gives believers to build up the Church

a. We are not supposed to be ignorant about spiritual gifts.

"Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I don't want you to be ignorant. You know that when you were unbelievers, you were enticed and led astray to worship idols that couldn't even speak."

1 Corinthians 12:1-2 (ISV)

Note: The Bible is our guide in all matters of faith and practice including spiritual gifts.

"All Scripture is inspired by God and is useful to teach us what is true and to make us realize what is wrong in our lives. It corrects us when we are wrong and teaches us to do what is right. God uses it to prepare and equip his people to do every good work." 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (NLT)

b. There are many different spiritual gifts and many different ways we can use spiritual gifts to serve God.

"There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us." 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 (NLT)

c. Every Christian is given at least one spiritual gift so we can help each other.

"A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said." 1 Corinthians 12:7-10 (NLT)

Note: Spiritual gifts are given to benefit others, not ourselves.

"In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly." Romans 12:6-8 (NLT)

d. The Holy Spirit knows what gifts we need better than we do.

“It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.” 1 Corinthians 12:11 (NLT)

“So we keep on praying for you, asking our God to enable you to live a life worthy of his call. May he give you the power to accomplish all the good things your faith prompts you to do.”

2 Thessalonians 1:11 (NLT)

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Connect Group Questions:

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, and then discuss the following questions:

1. What is the first thought that comes into your mind when someone mentions spiritual gifts?
2. Why do you think there is so much confusion about spiritual gifts? Why are Christians often reluctant to speak about them?
3. Discuss the following definition: “Spiritual gifts are special abilities the Holy Spirit gives believers to build up the Church.”
4. What spiritual gift has the Holy Spirit given you to help build up our church? How do you know? How are you using it?
5. Read Romans 12:6-8. Why do spiritual gifts help us help others? What’s wrong with trying to use them to help ourselves?
6. Read 2 Thessalonians 1:11, and then spend some time praying for each member of your group asking God to enable them to live a life worthy of his call. Also ask Him to give them the power and gifting to accomplish all the good things He prompts them to do.
7. Discuss the following quotations:

“In the New Testament, we don’t find our gift through self-examination and introspection and then find ways to express it. Instead, we love one another, serve one another, help one another, and in so doing we see how God has equipped us to do so.” Russell D. Moore

“Some people have a warped idea of living the Christian life. Seeing talented, successful Christians, they attempt to imitate them. For them, the grass on the other side of the fence is always greener. But when they discover that their own gifts are different or their contributions are more modest (or even invisible), they collapse in discouragement and overlook genuine opportunities that are open to them. They have forgotten that they are here to serve Christ, not themselves.” Billy Graham

“There is nothing stereotyped about God’s dealings with His children. Therefore, we must not by our prejudices and preconceptions make watertight compartments for the working out His Spirit, either in our own lives or in the lives of others. We must leave God free to work as He wills and to leave what evidence He pleases of the work He does.” Watchman Nee