

Unwrapping Spiritual Gifts

Message 02 of the series: "Gifted"

A. The Holy Spirit helps us carry out our mission.

"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..." John 14:16-18 (ISV)

"But 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 1:8 (NLT)

B. The Holy Spirit gives every Christian at least one spiritual gift so we can help each other.

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

"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... Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church: first are apostles, second are prophets, third are teachers, then those who do miracles, those who have the gift of healing, those who can help others, those who have the gift of leadership, those who speak in unknown languages." 1 Corinthians 12:7-10, 28 (NLT)

Note: It is important to understand and identify what spiritual gifts we have been given. (See Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11-13, 1 Peter 4:11)

- Wisdom = the ability to understand God's perspective and give good counsel or advice.
- Knowledge = the ability to know things that cannot be known by ordinary means.
- Prophecy = the ability to clearly communicate and persuasively declare God's will regarding a situation, issue, person, group, or the future.
- Discernment = the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit.
- Healing = the ability to pray in faith for people who need physical, emotional, or spiritual healing.
- Faith = the ability to trust God to accomplish His purposes regardless of circumstances.
- Miracles = the ability to do things that cannot be accomplished by ordinary means.
- Tongues = the ability to speak in unknown languages.
- Interpretation of Tongues = the ability to interpret what a person speaking in tongues is saying.
- Serving/Helping = The ability to support others by meeting practical needs and assisting them without the need for recognition.
- Encouraging = the ability to build others up by giving them support, confidence, or hope.
- Giving = the ability to accumulate and generously distribute money and resources to God's work and God's people with wisdom and cheerfulness.
- Hospitality = the ability to make others feel welcome, comfortable, accepted, and loved.
- Mercy = the ability to feel genuine empathy and compassion for those who are hurting/suffering.
- Leadership/Administration = governing; the ability to organize and manage people, resources, and time to accomplish the vision that God has for a particular church or ministry.
- Apostleship = missions; the desire and ability to start new ministries/churches in new places and oversee their development.
- Pastoring = shepherding; the ability to care for the well-being of a group of believers, to help them mature spiritually and equip them for ministry.
- Evangelism = the ability to communicate the Good News about Jesus to unbelievers with boldness and effectiveness.
- Teaching/Speaking = the ability to communicate God's Word effectively to others in such a way that they are encouraged to obey and grow.

C. Four important observations about spiritual gifts:

1. Spiritual gifts are given to build up the Church, not ourselves.

“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.” 1 Peter 4:10 (NLT)

2. No one has all of the spiritual gifts.

“Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not!” 1 Corinthians 12:29-30 (NLT)

3. The Holy Spirit determines which gifts we each get so we won't forget that we need each other.

“It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have. The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ... If the foot says, ‘I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,’ that does not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear says, ‘I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,’ would that make it any less a part of the body? If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it... All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.” 1 Corinthians 12:11-12, 15-18, 27 (NLT)

4. The best way to discover our spiritual gifts is to get involved in a ministry that we feel is important/necessary.

“For God is working in you, giving you the desire and the power to do what pleases him.”

Philippians 2:13 (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, Romans 12:6-8, Ephesians 4:11-13, and 1 Peter 4:9-11, and then discuss the following questions:

1. What spiritual gift(s) do you think God has given you? How did you discover what gift you have?
2. Why doesn't the Holy Spirit give each of us all of the gifts?
3. Discuss the definitions of the spiritual gifts listed in this week's message outline. Then discuss which gifts you have seen in the lives of the members of your group.
4. Which spiritual gift would you like to have most? Why?
5. Which spiritual gift intimidates/confuses you most?
6. Which spiritual gifts are most prevalent/lacking in our church?
7. Discuss the following quotations:

"Sadly, many Christians settle for two-thirds of God...The Holy Spirit is some kind of vague force or impersonal power that they hear about but do not know intimately." --Lloyd John Ogilvie

"The Spirit is the first power we practically experience, but the last power we come to understand."
Oswald Chambers