

Know and Use Your Gifts for God's Glory

An analysis tool to help you:

- ✚ Know your gifts & abilities
- ✚ Follow your heart & passions
- ✚ Get involved in Kingdom work

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Who has Spiritual gifts?

William Borden was heir to the Borden dairy fortune, but he abandoned immeasurable wealth to serve God as a foreign missionary. Tragically, he contracted meningitis before reaching his destination and died. Among his possessions was found this scribbled note, summarizing his life's passion: *No reserve, no retreat, no regrets*. His story and motto captured the heart of a generation, and galvanized thousands for mission service.

How can our faith be as bold and joyous as his? How can we serve Jesus with such passion today? "Spiritual gifts" are a crucial, often neglected part of the answer.

God's supreme gift to his people is himself. He gave his Son for us, sending him to die in our place so our sins could be forgiven (John 3:16). He has made us his children by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8-9), giving us new life in his Spirit (Romans 8:9).

Now his Spirit lives in us (1 Corinthians 3:16), and wants to use us to lead others to follow Jesus. He has given us "spiritual gifts" as a means to this end. Spiritual gifts are to the church what organs and limbs are to the human body. When we learn about spiritual gifts, we discover the anatomy of the church, the body of Christ.

Our gifts are God's equipment, provided to help us grow in our faith. When we identify our God-given gifts and abilities, we know better how to serve our Father. We are empowered by God's Spirit for accomplish God's will for our lives. We live and share the Christian faith with joy. And at the end of our work on earth we can say, *No reserve, no retreat, no regrets*.

Every believer has at least one spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:7, 11; Ephesians 4:7), given at his or her salvation. No believer has every spiritual gift (1 Corinthians 12:12, 27, 29-30). Our gifts differ from each other (Romans 12:3-6a). We receive our gifts according to God's will, not our own desire or experience (1 Corinthians 12:11; Ephesians 4:7-8).

What are the "spiritual gifts"?

The New Testament includes three lists of spiritual gifts. In Romans 12:3-8 we encounter seven gifts: "prophecy," serving; teaching, encouraging, "contributing to the needs of others," leadership, and mercy

In 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 we find nine gifts: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, "speaking in different kinds of tongues", and "the interpretation of tongues".

And in Ephesians 4:11 we discover five gifts: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (some interpreters see pastors and teachers as two separate gifts, though the Greek syntax seems to indicate that they are one function).

This gifts discovery tool does not include the so-called "sign" gifts (healing, miracles, tongues, interpretation of tongues) even though we believe they are valid today, because most churches do not offer ministries which use them. We include the additional gifts of "music" and "hospitality" since many interpreters see them as spiritual gifts (see 1 Corinthians 14:26 and 1 Peter 4:9-11), and because they are very important to most churches' ministries.

Combining the various lists, this discovery tool catalogues 18 different gifts:

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- administration: organizing people and ministries effectively
- apostleship: adapting to a different culture to share the gospel or do ministry
- discernment: distinguishing spiritual truth from error or heresy
- evangelism: sharing the gospel effectively and passionately
- exhortation: encouraging others as they follow Jesus
- faith: seeing God's plan and following it with passion
- giving: investing with unusual sacrifice and joy in God's Kingdom
- hospitality: using your home and/or resources to help others follow Jesus
- intercession: praying with unusual passion and effectiveness

- knowledge: discerning and sharing the deep truths of God's word and will
- leadership: motivating and inspiring others to serve Jesus fully
- mercy: showing God's grace to hurting people with unusual passion
- music: sharing God's truth and love with unusual effectiveness
- prophecy: preaching the word of God with personal passion and effectiveness
- serving: meeting practical needs with unusual sacrifice and joy
- shepherding: helping others grow spiritually
- teaching: explaining God's word and truth with unusual effectiveness
- wisdom: relating biblical truth to practical life with great effectiveness

Some of these ministry areas are the responsibility only of those gifted to fulfill them, while others are the responsibility of all believers. For instance, those with the gift of prophecy should preach; those with the gift of teaching should teach the Bible to others; those with the gift of apostleship should be our leaders in missions' ministry.

On the other hand, God expects all of his people to discern truth from error, share their faith, encourage others, have faith in him, give sacrificially, show hospitality to others, intercede regularly, seek to know and share his word, offer mercy to hurting people, meet practical needs with joy, help others grow spiritually, and relate his truth to life.

Whether we are "gifted" in these areas or not, we are responsible to meet these needs as God directs us. Those with spiritual gifts in these areas will typically be called to lead the rest of us in these ministries, and will model them with great effectiveness. Those I have known who possess the gift of evangelism, for example, encourage me to share my faith when they demonstrate their gift in action. Those with the gift of serving will take the initiative to help in this area, and will show the rest of us how to serve with joy.

The spiritual gifts, then, do not confine our service only to the areas where we are gifted. Rather, they point the way to ministries where we will lead and serve with our greatest passion and joy.

What are my spiritual gifts?

The following assessment is based on the belief that our passions and opportunities indicate the spiritual gifts God has imparted to us. Our passions indicate those areas of service which correspond with our desires, abilities, and interests; we may or may not have used these passions in ministry to this point in our lives. Our opportunities show us areas where God may have opened doors of service to us, and may indicate areas of spiritual giftedness.

This assessment will help guide you in the process of identifying these gifts

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INSTRUCTIONS:

Read each statement and then rate yourself based on your perception as to how true each statement is about yourself.

5 – Almost always true 4 - Often true 3 - Sometimes true 2 – Seldom true 1 – Almost never true

- _____ 1. People often tell me that I am a good organizer of groups and committees.
- _____ 2. Traveling and experiencing different cultures excites me.
- _____ 3. When I hear a sermon or Bible study, I seem to be able to tell when the speaker is teaching God's word and when he or she may be off track.
- _____ 4. I get excited at the prospect of talking to someone about the gospel.
- _____ 5. I look for ways to speak a positive word to people, especially when they are lonely or hurting.
- _____ 6. I seem to be able to trust God in hard times, even when others struggle with their faith.
- _____ 7. I enjoy contributing financially to the needs of others.
- _____ 8. I love opening my home to others.
- _____ 9. When I hear about a need or problem, my first response is usually to pray.
- _____ 10. I seem to have a gift for understanding what the Bible means by what it says.
- _____ 11. I find great joy in helping a group of people define and achieve their goals.
- _____ 12. I especially enjoy helping underprivileged people.
- _____ 13. I especially enjoy using my musical abilities to help people follow Jesus.
- _____ 14. I find great joy in proclaiming the word of God in public.

- _____ 15. I am happiest when I work behind the scenes.
- _____ 16. I have a deep desire to help other people become fully devoted followers of Jesus
- _____ 17. I find great joy in teaching the word of God to others.
- _____ 18. When I read the Bible, I can usually tell how it relates to our problems today.
- _____ 19. When I am part of a disorganized group, I become frustrated and want to help.
- _____ 20. I seem to adapt to different languages and environments more easily than other people.
- _____ 21. I am very concerned about helping people distinguish spiritual truth from error.
- _____ 22. I look for opportunities to share the gospel with people.
- _____ 23. I enjoy sending notes and cards to encourage people.
- _____ 24. Others seem to be inspired by my strong faith.
- _____ 25. I look for ways to invest my resources in the Kingdom of God.
- _____ 26. I enjoy preparing meals and decorations to make a ministry event successful.
- _____ 27. Spending significant time in prayer is a very important part of my ministry.
- _____ 28. I especially enjoy studying the Bible and discovering its applications to life today.
- _____ 29. I become frustrated when a group does not have a clear purpose and strategy.
- _____ 30. My heart goes out to people who are suffering, and I want to do all I can to help them.
- _____ 31. I am drawn to ministries which enable me to use my musical gifts for God.
- _____ 32. I sense that the Holy Spirit uses me when I communicate his word in public.
- _____ 33. I don't seem to get as weary in doing tedious work as others.
- _____ 34. I would be willing to invest a significant amount of time in helping a small group of people grow closer to God.
- _____ 35. I sense that the Holy Spirit uses me when I teach his word to others.
- _____ 36. I seem to have a gift for finding biblical truth which meets the practical needs of others.
- _____ 37. I can often see the end from the beginning, and know what steps to take to accomplish a goal.
- _____ 38. I get excited at the thought of living in a different culture for the purpose of helping people follow Jesus.
- _____ 39. People often ask me to help them when they need to know the right thing to do.
- _____ 40. I am willing to take personal risks for the sake of sharing the gospel with others.
- _____ 41. I have a strong desire to counsel hurting people.
- _____ 42. I can consistently see the purpose of God in the circumstances of my life.
- _____ 43. I find great joy in knowing that my financial gifts will help other people follow Jesus.
- _____ 44. I often invite people to my home and enjoy serving them there.
- _____ 45. I find great joy in spending a significant amount of time in prayer.
- _____ 46. Other people often ask me to help them understand the Bible.
- _____ 47. When I become involved in a group, its members often ask me to lead.
- _____ 48. I enjoy serving in hospitals, shelters, nursing homes, and benevolent ministries.
- _____ 49. People tell me that my musical gifts help them worship God.
- _____ 50. When I speak in public, I seem to have a gift for connecting God's word to the needs of those who listen to me.
- _____ 51. I find joy in helping people meet their practical needs.
- _____ 52. When I join a group, I feel responsible for helping the other members grow spiritually.
- _____ 53. When I teach God's word, I seem to have a gift for connecting biblical truth to the lives of those who listen to me.
- _____ 54. In a group setting, others seem to look to me for counsel.
- _____ 55. People often ask me to help organize groups and accomplish goals.
- _____ 56. I would be willing to make personal sacrifices for the sake of reaching people in different countries.

- _____ 57. My impressions of people's character and intentions are usually proven right.
- _____ 58. When I share my faith with people, they often seem to respond positively.
- _____ 59. People who have come to me for encouragement and comfort often tell me that I have helped them.
- _____ 60. When I find myself in difficult circumstances, I welcome them as an opportunity to watch God work.
- _____ 61. When I hear about a ministry opportunity, I get excited about the chance to contribute.
- _____ 62. I see my home as a significant way I can help others follow Jesus.
- _____ 63. People know of my personal commitment to prayer ministry, and often call on me to pray for them.
- _____ 64. I enjoy writing and sharing the insights I have gained from my personal Bible study.
- _____ 65. I seem to have a gift for motivating and guiding groups of people to accomplish their goals.
- _____ 66. I am deeply concerned for those who are going through hard times.
- _____ 67. When I perform musically, I can sense that the Holy Spirit is using me.
- _____ 68. When I proclaim God's word in public, people tell me that they hear God speak to them through me.
- _____ 69. I feel that God wants me to help the church by meeting the practical and physical needs of others.
- _____ 70. I am very concerned about the spiritual maturity of those I know.
- _____ 71. People tell me that they hear God speak through me when I teach his word.
- _____ 72. When I have a problem, I can usually find the biblical wisdom I need.
- _____ 73. I am enjoy to opportunities to use my organizational skills for God.
- _____ 74. I am drawn to opportunities to serve God in a different culture.
- _____ 75. I have learned to trust my intuition in knowing truth from falsehood.
- _____ 76. I am able to share my faith very naturally and easily.
- _____ 77. I am naturally able to find a way to comfort hurting people.
- _____ 78. I am consistently confident that God's purpose will be fulfilled in my life and circumstances.
- _____ 79. I am drawn to opportunities where my financial resources can make a difference.
- _____ 80. I enjoy ministries which need help with hospitality.
- _____ 81. I am excited about spending time in prayer with other people.
- _____ 82. I am drawn to ministries which enable me to share biblical truths I have discovered.
- _____ 83. When I lead a group, people affirm the effectiveness of my work.
- _____ 84. When I am involved in benevolent ministry, people affirm the effectiveness of my work.
- _____ 85. I find great joy in glorifying God through my musical abilities.
- _____ 86. I am drawn to opportunities to speak God's word in public.
- _____ 87. I enjoy serving God by meeting the routine needs of the church and her people.
- _____ 88. I am drawn to groups of people whom I can help to grow spiritually.
- _____ 89. I enjoy opportunities to teach God's word to others.
- _____ 90. I am drawn to opportunities to help people solve their problems by discovering the biblical truth they need.