

Finding Your Spiritual Gifts

God has given each Christian two vitally important gifts. The first is the gift of faith in Jesus Christ, his work of redemption, and thus forgiveness of sin. The second is the gift of one or more special abilities, which are to be used for the purpose of unifying the body of Christ and for the growth of God's Kingdom. These abilities are called spiritual gifts and they are received through our baptism.

Like other presents, it is impossible to fully appreciate and make use of our spiritual gifts until they have been opened. This tool will help you begin to open your spiritual gifts by guiding you through the following three activities:

Scripture References:

The Apostle Paul addresses the presence of spiritual gifts in three main sections of scripture: Romans 12, I Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4. Peter also verifies their existence in I Peter 4:10. Through these sections of scripture, we learn that all Christians have been given at least one spiritual gift. The purpose of spiritual gifts is twofold: (1) to unify Christians in their faith and (2) to produce growth within the church, both numerical and spiritual. These gifts are to be used out of love for one another, and in service to one another.

We do not choose which gifts we will receive. God bestows them upon us through the work of the Holy Spirit. Not all of the gifts identified in scripture are used in this inventory. The spectacular gifts (speaking in tongues, healing and miracles, prophecy, bold proclamation of God) and some of the non-spectacular gifts (martyrdom, celibacy) have not been included. Although these gifts exist, they are not commonly utilized in the mainstream of parish life. Since the objectives of spiritual gift deployment are to unify and produce growth through service, in today's church climate, only the service related gifts have been included.

Administration: the gift that enables a believer to formulate, direct, and carry out plans necessary to fulfill a purpose. Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:28, Acts 14:23.

Artistry: the gift that gives the believer the skill of creating artistic expressions that produce a spiritual response of strength and inspiration. Biblical References: Exodus 31:1-11, Psalm 149:3a.

Discernment: the gift that motivates a believer to seek God's will and purpose and apply that understanding to individual and congregational situations. Biblical References: John 16:6-15, Romans 9:1, I Corinthians 2:9-16.

Evangelism: the gift that moves believers to reach nonbelievers in such a way that they are baptized and become active members of the Christian community. Biblical References: Matthew 28:16-20, Ephesians 4:11-16, Acts 2:36-40.

Exhortation: the gift that moves the believer to reach out with Christian love and presence to people in personal conflict of facing a spiritual void. Biblical References: John 14:1, II Timothy 1:16-18, III John 5-8.

Faith: the gift that gives a believer the eyes to see the Spirit at work and the ability to trust the Spirit's leading without indication of where it all might lead. Biblical References: Genesis 12:1-4a, Mark 5:25-34, I Thessalonians 1:8-10.

Giving: the gift that enables a believer to recognize God's blessings and to respond to those blessings by generously and sacrificially giving of one's resources (time, talent, and treasure). Biblical References: II Corinthians 9:6-15, Luke 21:1-4.

Hospitality: the gift that causes a believer to joyfully welcome and receive guests and those in need of food and lodging. Biblical References: Romans 12:13, Romans 16:23a, Luke 10:38.

Intercession: the gift that enables a believer to pray with the certainty that prayer is heard and when requests are made, answers will come. Biblical References: Matthew 6:6-15, Luke 11:1-10, Ephesians 6:18.

Knowledge: the gift that drives a person to learn, analyze and uncover new insights with regard to the Bible and faith. Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:8; I Corinthians 14:6, Romans 12:2.

Leadership: the gift that gives a believer the confidence to step forward, give direction and provide motivation to fulfill a dream or complete a task. Biblical References: Romans 12:8, John 21:15-17, II Timothy 4:1-5.

Mercy: the gift that motivates a believer to feel deeply for those in physical, spiritual, or emotional need and then act to meet that need. Biblical References: Luke 7:12-15, Luke 10:30-37, Matthew 25:34-36.

Music--Vocal: the gift that gives a believer the capability and opportunity to present personal witness and inspiration to others through singing. Biblical References: Psalm 96:1-9, Psalm 100:1-2, Psalm 149:1-2.

Music--Instrumental: the gift that inspires a believer to express personal faith and provide inspiration and comfort through the playing of a musical instrument. Biblical References: Psalm 33:1-5, Psalm 150, I Samuel 16:14-23.

Pastoring (Shepherding): the gift that gives a believer the confidence, capability and compassion to provide spiritual leadership and direction for individuals or groups of believers. Biblical References: I Timothy 4:12-16, I Timothy 3:1-13, II Timothy 4:1-2.

Service (Helps): the gift that enables a believer to work gladly behind the scenes in order that God's work is fulfilled. Biblical References: Luke 23:50-54, Romans 16:1-16, Philippians 2:19-23.

Skilled Craft: the gift that enables a believer to create, build, maintain or repair items used within the church. Biblical References: Exodus 30:1-6, Exodus 31:3-5, Ezekiel 27:4-11.

Teaching: the gift that enables a believer to communicate a personal understanding of the Bible and faith in such a way that it becomes clear and understood by others. Biblical References: I Corinthians 12:28, Matthew 5:1-12, Acts 18:24-48.

Wisdom: the gift that allows the believer to sort through opinions, facts and thoughts in order to determine what solution would be best for the individual believer or the community of believers. Biblical References: I Corinthians 2:6-13, James 3:13-18, II Chronicles 1:7-11.

Writing: the gift that gives a believer the ability to express truth in a written form; a form that can edify, instruct and strengthen the community of believers. Biblical References: I John 2:1-6, 12-14, I Timothy 3:14-15, Jude 3.