

Spiritual Gifts



Doctrine of Spiritual Gifts

1. Definition: A spiritual gift is the special ability given by God to each believer for ministry within the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:4-7, 11-19; 1 Peter 4:10; Romans 12:6-8; Ephesians 4:11).
2. Spiritual gifts were instituted by Christ at His ascension (Ephesians 4:8, 11) and given to individual believers according to the Father's plan through the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:8-11; Romans 12:3).
3. Every believer has a spiritual gift. All believers are anatomically and functionally a part of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:16; 1 Peter 4:10-11).
4. There are different gifts. They work together harmoniously and efficiently. The idea of different gifts does not imply superiority or inferiority among believers (Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:4, 14-25).
5. Gifts are given to benefit the body of Christ, the church, which is composed of believer-priests who serve God (1 Corinthians 12:7, 17, 25; Ephesians 4:16; 1 Peter 4:10).
6. Spiritual gifts are grace gifts that are to be responsibly and faithfully managed and used as any other responsibility assigned to a person (Romans 12:3; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 1 Peter 4:10).
7. Spiritual gifts should be allowed to operate (Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 1 Peter 4:10). They determine the direction and thrust of the believer's ministry.
8. Spiritual gifts are vital in the Christian way of life, but they should be balanced with the love spectrum of 1 Corinthians 13:4-7. Gifts are to be used in love. God is able to accomplish everything He desires quite easily, but He wants believers to respond to His love and to manifest His love to others more than He wants them to do "things" apart from love (1 Corinthians 12:31-13:8).
9. There are three dimensions of the Christian way of life in relation to spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).
 - 9.1. The *gifts* refer to the specific ability. This ability is given by the Holy Spirit.
 - 9.2. *Ministries* refer to the area of service for that gift. The ministries are directed by Christ as Head of the church.
 - 9.3. The *effects* refer to the production in the ministries accomplished through the gift. The Father has planned the production.
10. The communication gifts have been given special importance (Romans 15:19; 1 Corinthians 12:28-31; 14:3-5, 19; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Ephesians 4:11-12). This is because the communication of the Word of God prepares the believer to live the Christian way of life. Believers should therefore make listening to the communication of the Word of God a priority in life.
11. Temporary spiritual gifts are those spiritual gifts given to the church in order to carry the church through its infancy. They were operational only during the transitional first century. The following are temporary spiritual gifts: differentiating spirits, faith, prophecy, tongues, word of knowledge, word of wisdom. The principle of temporary spiritual gifts is taught in 1 Corinthians 13:8-10 and Hebrews 2:3-4.
12. Permanent spiritual gifts are those gifts that are consistently given throughout the church age. There are ten permanent spiritual gifts making up four categories. The categories and the gifts are **public communication** (*pastor/teacher, evangelist, and teacher*), **operations** (*leadership, administrations, and service*), **individual** (*helping, showing mercy, and encouragement*), and **material resource** (*giving*).

13. Summary definition for each of the permanent spiritual gifts.
 - 13.1. **Pastor/Teacher:** The man gifted with the ability to authoritatively care for, lead, and communicate the Word of God for understanding and application (spiritual growth) to people making up the flock or the local church body (Acts 20:17-28; Ephesians 4:11-12; Hebrews 13:17).
 - 13.2. **Teacher:** The ability to communicate the Word of God to believers so that they may understand the content and grow spiritually (Romans 12:7).
 - 13.3. **Evangelist:** The person gifted with the ability to communicate the gospel of Christ to the unbeliever so that the unbeliever will understand and believe in Jesus Christ and then be integrated into the church (Ephesians 4:11-12).
 - 13.4. **Leadership:** The ability to lead, direct, and manage people, areas of thought, and activity for the orderly, efficient, and harmonious attainment of objectives (Romans 12:8).
 - 13.5. **Administration:** The ability to steer, to guide, to implement the accomplishment of a policy so that the best, most efficient method, route, and procedure is used to secure the objective (1 Corinthians 12:28).
 - 13.6. **Service:** This support gift is the ability to effectively carry out a task, do a job, and engage in an activity for another person or group as a part of the body of Christ. The person with the gift of service functions under authority, with loyalty to that authority, and with an objective or objectives to accomplish (Romans 12:7)
 - 13.7. **Help:** This is the ability to help, give assistance, and give aid to those within the church. Helping is often spontaneous, independent, varied, and short term (1 Corinthians 12:28).
 - 13.8. **Mercy:** This is the ability to express sympathy, kindness, and help to the person experiencing earthly, human need (Romans 12:8).
 - 13.9. **Encouragement:** The ability to use the content of the Word of God so that the Holy Spirit can bring about mental attitudes and actions which are found in the Word of God (Romans 12:8).
 - 13.10. **Giving:** This is the ability to share with other believers from your material resources over and above the normal giving of believers (Romans 12:8).
14. In order to help identify your spiritual gift, prayerfully think through the following questions. Apply the three dimensions of the Christian way of life that pertain to spiritual gifts to yourself (1 Corinthians 12:4-6).
 - 14.1. What is your desire in ministering? You should have a desire to serve in the area of your gift.
 - 14.2. What do you find yourself doing? The believer growing and living the Christian way of life will find that the gift is operating even if the particular gift is unknown to the person.
 - 14.3. In what area are you a consistent blessing? Your gift will benefit other believers and they will recognize the benefit.
15. Allow God to work through you. You have a gift and ministries and production.

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