



Basic Training
Becoming Absolutely Secure In Christ
Spiritual Gifts: Understanding and Identifying
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Introduction Recap:

God has given each believer a combination of opportunities and gifts that is perfectly suited to his or her situation in life. Every Christian is really a minister with a unique contribution to make to the body of Christ. The central thrust of your ministry depends on the spiritual gifts you have received. Tonight, we will look at the description of the gifts of the Spirit and begin the prayerful task of properly identifying the gifts that apply to your life.

Keep in mind: A spiritual gift is a manifestation of the Spirit and is carried out by God's GRACE ... given for the benefit of all (1 Cor. 12:7). As a supernatural endowment, its source is always the Holy Spirit, and its purpose is the building up of others to the glory of God.

The Gifts in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4

GIFT DESCRIPTIONS:

Prophecy (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28-29; 14:1-40; Eph. 4:11)--The ability to receive and proclaim a message from God. This could involve the foretelling of future events, though its primary purpose as seen in 1 Corinthians 14:3 is forthtelling: one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouragement, and consolation. This gift provides a word from God to a specific group, not the normative Word of God to all believers. Some maintain that prophecy is still operative in this sense today, while others say that the nearest current equivalent is Spirit-empowered preaching.

Service (Rom. 12:7)--The ability to identify and care for the physical needs of the body through a variety of means. The Greek word for this gift is the same as that for ministry or deacon, but the gift should not be confused with the office.

Teaching (Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28-29; Eph. 4:11)--The ability to clearly explain and effectively apply the truths of God's Word so that others will learn. This requires the capacity to accurately interpret Scripture, engage in necessary research, and organize the results in a way that is easily communicated.

Exhortation (Rom. 12:8)--The ability to motivate others to respond to the truth by providing timely words of counsel, encouragement, and consolation. When this gift is exercised, believers are challenged to stimulate their faith by putting God's truth to the test in their lives.

THE HOUSE OF HOPE MACON

Giving (Rom. 12:8)--The ability to contribute material resources with generosity and cheerfulness for the benefit of others and the glory of God. Christians with this spiritual gift need not be wealthy.

Leadership (Rom. 12:8)--The ability to discern God's purpose for a group, set and communicate appropriate goals, and motivate others to work together to fulfill them in the service of God. A person with this gift is effective at delegating tasks to followers without manipulation or coercion.

Mercy (Rom. 12:8)--The ability to deeply empathize and engage in compassionate acts on behalf of people who are suffering physical, mental, or emotional distress. Those with this gift manifest concern and kindness to people who are often overlooked.

Wisdom (1 Cor. 12:8)--The ability to apply the principles of the Word of God in a practical way to specific situations and to recommend the best course of action at the best time. The exercise of this gift skillfully distills insight and discernment into excellent advice.

Knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8)--The ability to discover, analyze, and systematize truth for the benefit of others. With this gift, one speaks with understanding and penetration. Some also associate supernatural perception with this gift.

Faith (1 Cor. 12:9)--The ability to have a vision for what God wants to be done and to confidently believe that it will be accomplished in spite of circumstances and appearances to the contrary. The gift of faith transforms vision into reality.

Healing (1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30)--The ability to serve as a human instrument through whom God supernaturally cures illnesses and restores health. The possessor of this gift is not the source of power, but a vessel who can only heal those diseases the Lord chooses to heal. Inner healing, or healing of memories is sometimes associated as another manifestation of this gift.

Miracles (1 Cor. 12:10, 28, 29)--The ability to serve as an instrument through whom God accomplishes acts that manifest supernatural power. Miracles bear witness to the presence of God and the truth of His proclaimed Word, and appear to occur most frequently in association with missionary activity.

Distinguishing of spirits (1 Cor. 12:10)--The ability to clearly discern the spirit of truth and the spirit of error (cf. 1 John 4:6). With this gift, one can distinguish reality versus counterfeits, the divine versus the demonic, true versus false teaching, and in some cases, spiritual versus carnal motives.

Interpretation of tongues (1 Cor. 12:10, 30; 14:5, 13, 26-28)--The ability to translate into the vernacular a message publicly uttered in a tongue. This gift may be combined with the gift of tongues (1 Cor. 14:13), or it can operate separately (1 Cor. 14:26-28).

Helps (1 Cor. 12:28)--The ability to enhance the effectiveness of the ministry of other members of the body. This is the only usage of this word in the New Testament, and it appears to be distinct from the gift of service. Some suggest that while the gift of service is more group-oriented, the gift of helps is more person-oriented.

Administration (1 Cor. 12:28)--This word, like helps, appears only one time in the New Testament, and it is used outside of Scripture of a helmsman who steers a ship to its destination. This suggests that the spiritual gift of administration is the ability to steer a church or Christian organization toward the fulfillment of its goals by managing its affairs and implementing necessary plans. A person may have the gift of leadership without the gift of administration.

Evangelism (Eph. 4:11)--The ability to be an unusually effective instrument in leading unbelievers to a saving knowledge of Christ. Some with this gift are most effective in personal evangelism, while others may be used by God in group evangelism or cross-cultural evangelism.

None of the lists in Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, and Ephesians 4 is complete, and it is evident that there are other spiritual gifts apart from those listed above:

- Celibacy (the ability to enjoy being single and maintain sexual self-control; 1 Cor. 7:7-9);
- Voluntary poverty (the ability to renounce material comfort and adopt a life-style of relative poverty; 1 Cor. 13:3);
- Martyrdom (the ability to display an attitude of joy while suffering or even dying for the faith; 1 Cor. 13:3);
- Hospitality (the ability to welcome and provide for those in need of food and lodging; Romans 12:13; 1 Pet. 4:9);
- Missionary (the ability to minister effectively in a second culture);
- Intercession (the ability to pray for a long period of time on a regular basis for the ministries and needs of others);

Other spiritual gifts (e.g., music, craftsmanship) are also given to members of the body of Christ for mutual edification.

Three Perquisite questions as you seek your gift:

1. Have you received Christ as my Savior? Unlike natural gifts, spiritual gifts are only bestowed on believers.
2. Are you walking in fellowship with the Lord? To be effective, spiritual gifts must be manifested in the context of the fruit of the Holy Spirit and one must be connected to the vine (John 15:5)
3. Do you really want to develop your gift(s)? There must be EFFORT!