

Spiritual Gifts Assessment Tool

It would be foolish to become a salesman if you'd rather work with computers. In the same way we pursue vocational employment based on aptitudes and abilities, we should pursue spiritual service based on the way God has wired us with the gifts of the Spirit. While theologians and teachers sometimes differ on how to precisely classify and name them, they are often broken into **service** gifts, **speaking** gifts, and **signifying** gifts. Here are the spiritual gifts mentioned in Scripture.

Service Gifts

Service gifts are the ligaments and muscle tissue that hold the church of Jesus Christ together. Service gifts are often low-profile, behind-the-scene gifts. People who serve are eager for God to receive the credit for whatever good comes. "If anyone **serves** he should do it with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 4:11). The following examples (along with the speaking and signifying lists) are adapted from the work of Carl Smith, Kenneth O. Gangel, and Leslie B. Flynn.

- _____ **Mercy:** special ability to show sympathy to the suffering saints through things like meals to the sick, hospital visits, phone calls, writing to inmates, etc.
- _____ **Service:** special ability to joyfully serve behind the scenes, such as setup, ushering, or assisting leaders.
- _____ **Hospitality:** special desire to offer housing, food, and lodging, such as hosting missionaries, Bible studies, inviting singles to dinner, etc.
- _____ **Giving:** special desire and ability to give above and beyond a tithe. This may be generosity toward youth missions, paying for a wheelchair ramp, nonprofit ministry support, buying the pastor a suit, etc.
- _____ **Administration:** special ability to orchestrate program details, such as heading committee work, volunteering in the church office, conference/seminar supervision, etc.
- _____ **Leadership:** special ability to preside or govern wisely, such as on the Board of Christian ministries, as an elder or deacon, as a committee chairman, running the children's ministry, fundraising, etc.
- _____ **Faith:** special vision for new projects and the perseverance to see them through, such as a building program, new ministries, etc.
- _____ **Discernment:** special ability to detect error. This person might meet with teachers who may be teaching incorrectly, counsel others, write letters to the editor, etc.

Speaking Gifts

People who have been given speaking gifts are able to help equip others to have a personal ministry of service. "It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Ephesians 4:11-12). "If anyone **speaks**, he should do it as one speaking the very words of God" (1 Peter 4:11).

- _____ **Knowledge:** spiritual ability to search and acquire scriptural truth, to then be used in academic pursuits, writing, teaching, etc.
- _____ **Wisdom:** special insight into applications of knowledge, applied in counseling, teaching, group-discussion, accountability groups, and friendship.
- _____ **Preaching:** special ability to rightly proclaim and expound God's truth, like preachers and lay-preachers.
- _____ **Teaching:** special ability to explain Scripture in an edifying way, such as with Sunday school teachers, Bible study leaders, home group leaders, children, and youth programs.
- _____ **Evangelism:** special ability to clearly present the gospel to non-believers, through opportunities like Sunday night visitations, work events, outreach events, etc.
- _____ **Apostleship:** special ability to begin new works, as missionaries, church planters, etc.
- _____ **Shepherding:** unique ability to care for a flock of believers over the long haul—pastors, elders, children's ministry leaders, etc.
- _____ **Encouragement:** special skill to inspire, encourage, and comfort. This might be through friendship, counseling, writing letters, etc.

Signifying Gifts

The signifying gifts (or “signs”) authenticated the gospel.

_____ **Tongues:** spiritual ability to speak in a language foreign to the speaker.

_____ **Interpretation of Tongues:** spiritual ability to interpret the message of one speaking in tongues.

_____ **Miracles:** spiritual ability to actuate the supernatural intervention of God against the laws of nature.

_____ **Healing:** spiritual agency of God in curing illness and disease and restoring health supernaturally.

Steps to Determine Your Spiritual Gifts

Becoming aware of your own spiritual gifts will 1) help you understand how and where you fit into the body of Christ, 2) help you set priorities for service, and 3) give you direction for developing a personal ministry. Spiritual gifts are a blessing. Therefore, the exercise of your gifts will necessarily bring enjoyment, fulfillment, and produce fruit. If your service doesn't, you probably are not serving in the right area.

1. Study and Reflection. Study these four passages of scripture: Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, Ephesians 4:11-13, and 1 Peter 4:9-11. You may want to study the context by examining the verses before and after these specific references. **Then in a separate journal, write down your answers to these questions:**

- What are your natural abilities?
- What are your motivated interests?
- What is your previous successful ministry involvement, if applicable?
- Where have you received positive feedback from other Christians?
- What is the burden, or calling, you sense?

2. Narrow Your Focus. Now that you have studied those four passages and answered the reflection questions, it's time to narrow the list to the specific gifts that you *think* you may possess. To do so, write a letter on the blank line to the left of each gift listed above, using the following legend:

- **Y:** Yes, I think I possess this spiritual gift.
- **M:** Maybe. I may possess this spiritual gift.
- **N:** No. I do not possess this spiritual gift.
- **D:** Don't know. I don't know if I possess this spiritual gift.

3. Rank Your Answers. Now that you have sifted through the list of gifts, you should have one or more “Y” and “M” notations in the blanks. **Write down each of the gifts with a Y or M in your journal.** Next, rank those in order of priority based on what you know at this time. Put a “1” next to the gift with which you most identify, a “2” by your second choice, and so on.

4. Feedback. An excellent way to help determine your spiritual gifts is to ask your Christian friends for help. Ask a few friends to share what they think your dominant gifts are from the list above. Compare the results to your own assessment. Should you add any spiritual gifts to your exploratory list?

5. Exploration. Now it is time to explore the possibilities! Pursue training as needed. Experiment with different ministries. Which one energizes you? Which ones are drudgery? In what areas are you being affirmed by other people? Discovering your spiritual gifts will inevitably open up a whole new realm of joy in the Lord.

To know Him is to love Him, and to love Him is to serve Him. The happiest people in the world are those who know their spiritual gifts and are using them for the glory of God! If our ministry can support you in any way, please let us know. – The Man in the Mirror Team

