

Holy Spirit Series Part 9: The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.”

1 Corinthians 12:1

Paul’s heart for the Corinthians in *1 Corinthians 12:1* is God’s heart for you and me today. Scripture says, *“Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.”* Within the church today are defenders of multiple positions on spiritual gifts, each loyal and committed as the other. But God’s desire for you and me is that we would be informed directly from him about the incredible gifts of this loving Holy Spirit who dwells within us. God longs for us to receive all he has to give. He longs to teach us about the Holy Spirit’s work in our lives that we might live with greater purpose and affections for him and others. Let’s surrender our hearts and minds to God on spiritual gifts. And let’s seek out every last bit of what God has planned for us.

The first aspect of spiritual gifts to note is that they are indeed a gift. *1 Corinthians 12:4-11* says,

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

The Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts to each of us. He “apportions” them according to his perfect wisdom. Spiritual gifts are never birthed by man and never given for selfish purposes. The Spirit gives us gifts because he loves us and others. All that he does is in perfect love and is for “*the common good.*” Whether you’ve been given **the gift of wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment of spirits, tongues, or interpretation of tongues,** your purpose in the gift is to be the same as the Holy Spirit’s: love.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3 says, *“If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. And if I have prophetic powers, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. If I give away all I have, and if I deliver up my body to be burned, but have not love, I gain nothing”* (emphasis added). Spiritual gifts are all about love. Operating in a gift of the Spirit is always to be done in love. Paul is clear that gifts are annoying (*1 Corinthians 13:1*) and worthless (*1 Corinthians 13:2-3*) if they are not filled with love.

1 Peter 4:10-11 says, **“As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God’s varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”** Spend time in prayer discovering what gift the Holy Spirit has given you and how he would intend you to use it for the benefit of the **“common good.”** Choose to align your understanding and belief on spiritual gifts with the word of God alone. And live today operating in love with the amazing gifts God has given you, whatever they may be.

“Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.” *Romans 12:6-8*

2 Timothy 1:6-7 says, **“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands, for God gave us a spirit not of fear but of power and love and self-control.”** Keep the fire of the Holy Spirit kindled within you today by intimate relationship with him. Talk with him. Ask for his help. Stay close to him and allow him to burn passionately within you to see the lost saved, loved, and freed.

Gifts of the Spirit - What Are They?

Gifts of the Spirit are special abilities provided by the Holy Spirit to Christians for the purpose of building up the body of Christ. The list of spiritual gifts in [1 Corinthians 12:8-10](#) includes wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discerning of spirits, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues. Similar lists appear in [Ephesians 4:7-13](#) and [Romans 12:3-8](#). The gifts of the Spirit are simply God enabling believers to do what He has called us to do. *2 Peter 1:3* says, "His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness." The gifts of the Holy Spirit are part of the "everything we need" to fulfill His purposes for our lives.

Gifts of the Spirit - The Definitions

Here is a list of spiritual gifts and their basic definitions.

- The gift of wisdom seems to be the ability to make decisions and give guidance that is according to God's will.
- The gift of knowledge is the ability to have an in-depth understanding of a spiritual issue or situation.
- The gift of faith is being able to trust God and encourage others to trust God, no matter the circumstances.
- The gift of healing is the miraculous ability to use God's healing power to restore a person who is sick, injured, or suffering.
- The gift of miracles is being able to perform signs and wonders that give authenticity to God's Word and the Gospel message.
- The gift of prophecy is being able to proclaim a message from God.

- The gift of discerning spirits is the ability to determine whether or not a message, person, or event is truly from God.
- The gift of tongues is the ability to speak in a foreign language that you do not have knowledge of, in order to communicate with someone who speaks that language.
- The gift of interpreting tongues is the ability to translate the tongues speaking and communicate it back to others in your own language.
- The gift of administration is being able to keep things organized and in accordance with God's principles.
- The gift of help is always having the desire and ability to help others, to do whatever it takes to get a task accomplished.

Gifts of the Spirit - Which One(s) Do I Have?

The Holy Spirit distributes the gifts of the Spirit as He sees fit ([1 Corinthians 12:7-11](#)). God does not want us to be ignorant of how He wants us to serve Him. However, it is very easy for us to get caught up in what spiritual gift(s) we have and then only serve God in that area of ministry. That is not how it works. God calls us to obediently serve Him. He will equip us with whatever gifts of the Spirit we need to accomplish the task or tasks He has called us to. Yes, God calls some to be teachers and gives them the gift of teaching, but that does not excuse the person from serving God in other ways as well. Is it beneficial to know what spiritual gift(s) God has given you? Of course, it is. Is it wrong to focus so much on spiritual gifts that we miss other opportunities to serve God? Yes!

There is no magic formula or spiritual gift test that can tell you what gifts of the Spirit you possess. What we need to focus on is serving God. Do you see a need in your church? Do what you can to meet it. Is there a position in a ministry that is vacant? Pray as to whether God would have you fill it. If we seek God's will and obey His leading, He will always equip us with whatever gifts of the Spirit we need. Spiritual gift tests can be of some value in determining what areas God has especially gifted you. As always, though, place far more emphasis on God's Word and submitting to the Lord's leading than you do on the results of a spiritual gift test.

Gifts of the Spirit - What Are the Gifts Used For?

The Apostle Paul indicated that the gifts of the Spirit are equally valid, but not equally valuable. Their value is determined by their worth to the church. In dealing with this matter, he used the analogy of the human body. All members of the body have functions, Paul declared, but some are more important than others ([1 Corinthians 12:12-26](#)). The service of each Christian should be in proportion to the gifts which he possesses ([1 Corinthians 12-14](#)). All believers, as members of the body of Christ, must be serving together in order for the body to be fully-functional. That is why a church needs pastors, teachers, helpers, servants, administrators, those with great faith, etc. All of the gifts of the Holy Spirit working together are needed to produce the full potential of the church. Since the gifts of the Spirit are gifts of grace, their use must be controlled by the rule of love - the greatest of all the gifts of the Spirit ([1 Corinthians 13](#)).