

Discovering Your Spiritual Gifts

(Identifying Your Primary Gift and Role in the Body of Christ)

“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.” (I Peter 4:10)

BIBLICAL
BASIS

One of the most important discoveries you will make as a Christian leader is the discovery of the “gifts” that God has placed inside of you as a believer. These gifts, or spiritual abilities, are given to every believer. They are to be discovered, developed and distributed for the purpose of serving others. May this lesson be an encouragement to you, as you discover your most fruitful role in the Body of Christ. Our focus will be the primary (or motivational) gifts listed in Romans 12.

A Foundation for Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:3-8)

EXAMINE
THE WORD

The foundational truth of this passage is that God has placed a primary gift inside of every believer. This gift will play an important role in how you approach your leadership position. Before we examine the details of the passage, let's establish a foundation for spiritual gifts:

1. The New Testament lists a wide _____ of spiritual gifts.
(I Corinthians 12:4-11, Ephesians 4:11-16, I Peter 4:10-11, Romans 12:3-8)
2. Each Christian has a _____, where they should focus their time.
(Romans 12:6-8)
3. The Holy Spirit wants to supernaturally reveal _____ through these gifts.
(John 16:13-15)
4. Like muscles in our body, gifts can be present but _____.
(I Corinthians 12:12-16)
5. Every one of these gifts is important and has a _____. Each works like a position on a team or a muscle in the body. (I Corinthians 12:18-25)
6. God's primary _____ for them is to advance His Kingdom.
(Ephesians 4:11-13)

Motivational Gifts

In Romans 12:3-8, we read about these primary gifts:

1. The gift of Prophecy
(Declaring God's truth concerning present and future direction)
2. The gift of Service
(Ministering to others by meeting whatever needs they have)

3. The gift of Teaching
(Equipping the Body of Christ to know and obey God)
4. The gift of Exhortation
(Sharing words of encouragement; challenging others to act)
5. The gift of Giving
(Generously sharing resources so that God's work can advance)
6. The gift of Leadership
(Providing vision, direction and empowerment to others)
7. The gift of Mercy
(Demonstrating God's grace to those who struggle or suffer)

While most leaders have a cluster of spiritual gifts, we believe each leader has one primary gift that brings the most value to the Body of Christ. The cluster of gifts could be called a gift-set. The primary gift becomes the center of the wheel around which the other gifts revolve.

For instance, one leader might have the gift of teaching. In addition, he might also possess the gift of administration and the gift of helps. (I Corinthians 12:28) Those gifts may serve to influence the way this leader does his teaching, but the teaching will likely be the primary gift in his life. This means, regardless of the ministry position he may possess in the future, somewhere in his work will be the act of teaching. The key is to find your primary gift.

KEY POINTS

Don't Be Confused...

It is easy to become confused about spiritual gifts. There are counterfeits that appear to be gifts, but they are not. Don't confuse spiritual gifts with...

1. _____

Most of us possess natural talents as well as spiritual gifts. We receive natural talents at our first birth, our natural birth. We receive spiritual gifts at our second birth, our spiritual birth. Atheists have natural talents, but they do not possess spiritual gifts. Both are abilities that are God-given, but the sole purpose for spiritual gifts is not to make money or entertain people, but to advance God's rule and reign on earth.

2. _____

There is a difference between the fruit of the Spirit and the gifts of the Spirit. God determines what gifts we possess. We determine what fruit we will bear, based on our obedience and faithfulness. We will be judged by the fruit we bore, not the volume of our gifts. Gifts are temporal, but fruit is forever. Don't compare or judge others' gifts; that is up to God. We should be focusing on bearing fruit and glorifying our Father in heaven.

3. _____

Although every believer has a primary gift, we are all called to fulfill the roles of evangelism, prayer and giving. Some Christians may do more evangelism than others because they are gifted in that area, but all of us are called to be witnesses. We

cannot say: "I cannot do that, it is not my gift." We all must give of our money and pray for others, even if we don't have the gifts of giving or intercession.

4. _____

Be careful. The enemy is at work, and he will counterfeit these gifts. That's how we know they are important. A criminal only counterfeits money because he knows it is important! Beware of what Jesus spoke of in Matthew 7:22-23. He said that many will come to Him on the judgment day boasting about the ministry they did, but they are counterfeits. He will say: "I never knew you." All of our gifts should operate out of a loving relationship with Jesus Christ.

Have You Discovered Your Gift?

You will not discover or develop your gift if...

- there remains an unresolved difference between you and God.
- you never step out and do something in obedience to God.
- you are attempting to imitate someone else's gift.
- you are constantly living in the flesh.

Are You a Thief? (I Peter 4:7-11)

We must take the risk of using our gifts in ministry. If we don't, we fail to obey God. In this passage, we are commanded to employ our gifts to serve people. If we fail to step out and do so, there are three results...

- a. You rob _____ of being in God's will. (v. 10)
- b. You rob the _____ of the benefit of that gift. (v. 10)
- c. You rob _____ of the glory He deserves. (v. 11)

Steps to Discover and Develop Your Gifts...

1. _____ the possibilities.

Get familiar with what the Scripture teaches on spiritual gifts and recognize that your gift may be the way God will allow you to impact your world in the most profound way.

Ask yourself, "Do I understand the New Testament gifts and opportunities available?"

2. _____ as much as possible.

Allow the church to be a laboratory where you and others can experiment with your gifts as you serve people. Make it a safe place for people to try out ministry opportunities.

Ask yourself, "Am I doing something to discover my calling and gifts?"

CHECK YOUR
HEART

3. _____ **how you feel.**

When you try some new ministry, are you fulfilled doing it? Do you sense that it fits your abilities and skills? Does it satisfy you down in your soul?

Ask yourself, "Am I fulfilled in what I am doing?"

4. _____ **your effectiveness.**

As you reflect on what you did, using your gifts, how did you do? Were you good at it? Did you see any fruit borne? Did you get results and see God's Kingdom move forward?

Ask yourself, "Am I good at the ministry I am doing? Are there results?"

5. _____ **confirmation from the Body of Christ.**

As you serve, do other Christians confirm that you are gifted in that area? What do the mature members of the Body of Christ say as they watch you serve? Listen for the response of others.

Ask yourself, "Do the Christians around me recognize this strength in me?"

Conclusion...

Remember-God would never place a gift inside of you and then tell you to let it sit dormant. If He gives you any resources (time, talents, money), He expects you to use them (Matthew 25:14-30). If you are serving now in some ministry but do not sense fulfillment, or do not see fruit, or don't hear any confirmation from others that your ministry fits you well...stay alert. You may have yet to find the place where your gifts lie. When you find your gifts, you will see fruit for God's Kingdom, and inside your heart you will sense, "This is what I was built to do!"

ACTION PLAN

ASSESSMENT: *Based on this lesson, what do you believe is your primary spiritual gift?*

How and where do you believe you can best use it?

APPLICATION: *Use the Spiritual Gifts Discovery Tool on the next few pages of this notebook. Which are your top three gifts? Next, follow the five steps above and experiment with those gifts. What do you discover when you follow the five steps?*