

Spiritual Gifts

Bible Study Course

Use Your Spiritual Gifts

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Spiritual Gifts

Bible Study Course

LEADER'S GUIDE FOR STUDY 1

Know Your Gifts & Discover Your Calling

What are gifts and how does God confer them on believers?

We may be predisposed to develop a talent like singing or leadership—talents we are born with. When we give our lives to Jesus Christ, the complexion of these talents changes, and they become spiritual gifts. They may be the defining gifts that indicate our calling. However, the Holy Spirit may give us additional gifts that come as unexpected surprises. Some spiritual gifts fit our personality, and others challenge us to grow and change.

Lesson #1

Scripture:

1 Corinthians 12:1

Based On:

Spiritual Gifts course by Alexandra Clair Stancil, Abigail Press, Inc. 2005



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PART 1

Identify the Current Issue

Note to leader: At the beginning of the class, provide each person with the Participant's Guide included at the end of this study.

Why must we know our spiritual gifts? Because that's the way we embrace God's will for our lives. Knowing how he has gifted us helps us to better concentrate our efforts in those areas of ministry that reflect God's purpose for us.

Knowing our gifts gives us a chance to celebrate God's goodness and generosity, affirming how much he values us. At the same time, we are humbled as we use our gifts to serve the body of Christ, building a healthy, collective entity. We recognize that our gifts are to help balance, restore, uphold, and minister to the body, which is focused on the Great Commission.

Discussion Questions:

- [Q] What are some natural talents you think you were born with?
- [Q] What are some things you have developed ability in since you've become a Christian? Explain.

PART 2

Discover the Eternal Principles**Teaching point one: Some gifts are a perfect fit for our personality.**

Personality is formed through a confluence of genetics, opportunity, family of origin, and life circumstances. We realize the unique quality of our spiritual gifts when we examine how multiple gifts fit together, balanced with the rich and varied dynamic of personality. This allows different applications and directions for the same gift. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4–6.

- [Q] How do the terms “gifts,” “service,” and “working” indicate that the same gift can be used in a variety of ways? Give an example.
- [Q] According to verse 7, what is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

Timothy had the gift of teaching, which fit his personality. God gave Timothy a wonderful mentor—the apostle Paul. Most likely you have been making good use of your natural gifts and talents, but now, as with Timothy, you need to choose to use your spiritual gifts.

This is important, because your gifts and abilities are not coincidental acts of nature or genetics. Read Jeremiah 1:5.

- [Q] What implications might this verse have for you?

In the same way that God appointed Jeremiah a prophet to the nations, he appointed you to love and follow him. In other words, your birth was no accident, but was divinely appointed by a sovereign God. This loving God gave you specific spiritual gifts at the time of your salvation,



just as he gave you the marvelous potential of many talents and abilities at your birth. Your Savior loves to create and loves his creation.

Consider this: you were “knit together in your mother’s womb” to impact a specific time, culture, and family. Read Psalm 139:13–14.

Paul followed Barnabas’ loving example toward him by taking Timothy under his wing and exercising the gift of helps or mentoring, which was a skill Paul developed. Paul recognized that Timothy had the gift of teaching, so he exhorted him to use that gift.

[Q] What are some things you were good at before you became a Christian that developed even more after you became a Christian?

Optional Activity: Write down all the things you can think of in response to the last question. How are each of these things suited to your personality? Discuss these as a group and find out who in the group wrote down the same things you did. How do they use their gifts differently than you do? What do personality, opportunity, and inclination have to do with the ways we use our gifts?

Teaching point two: Some gifts are a surprise.

Some spiritual gifts come to us as a divine appointment at the time of conversion. They challenge our preconceived notions of self and require us to change. They often shake up carefully devised plans for a predictable life. Sometimes they put us in opposition to loved ones and into the path of danger.

Moses is an example of someone surprised by his gifts and God’s call to exercise them. He was adopted into wealth, privilege, power, and position. All that was replaced by poverty and a nomadic life. This hardship prepared him to fulfill his calling as a leader and administrator.

Suffering can take our faith to a new level. As we persevere through hardships, we grow our faith, enhancing our ability to extend mercy through empathy and love.

[Q] What experiences of hardship and suffering have you endured that have resulted in a deeper walk with God?

- Has this resulted in a new commitment to service? Have some of your experiences planted in you a desire to reach out and do more for others? Explain.

In Exodus 3, God told Moses to deliver a message, not only to the king of Egypt, but also to his Jewish brothers and sisters. Moses was stunned at this calling, and bewildered since the task would require gifts he did not feel he possessed. Yet, these very inadequacies would powerfully display God’s grace, goodness, and supreme authority to all future generations. Read Exodus 4:10–12.

[Q] Since we know the end of the story—how God used Moses in a mighty way—what does that tell us about trusting God with the tasks he asks us to do?

Read 1 Corinthians 1:19.

[Q] Have you ever felt fear and reluctance at a task you know God has given you? This may have felt like a gentle but persistent tug on your consciousness, a painful stab or conviction, or a powerful directive confirmed by God’s Word.



Read 2 Corinthians 12:9.

[Q] When we feel inadequate for a task, how might this verse encourage us?

Jonah is another example of a stunned, surprised servant of God. Unlike Moses, Jonah ran. In Jonah we see that God's plans will be accomplished despite our failures. However, we also see that there are consequences to running from God.

God wanted Jonah to use his gifts of prophecy and evangelism to rescue the unsaved city of Nineveh from sin and destruction. This was a pagan city beyond the boundaries of Israel.

Jonah clearly heard God's call. He realized that he should preach repentance and salvation to the Ninevites, but he did not want to see an enemy of Israel spared. This powerful call from God challenged Jonah to manifest his faith outside the box of his preconceived notions and deeply rooted prejudices. Here, as with Moses, we see a loving God strive patiently with the fears and insecurities of those whom he has called.

[Q] What fears, insecurities, or prejudices might God be asking you to overcome to use your gifts for him?

Teaching point three: Some gifts we ask for as we face the challenges of life.

King Solomon asked for gifts of discernment and wisdom. He was 20 years old, his father had just died, and he was confronted with the daunting challenges and responsibilities of being the new king.

As he prayed, Solomon called himself a "little child." He felt overwhelmed—concerned about the high expectations of others and intimidated by his father's very impressive record as king of Israel. Like many young men, Solomon longed to emulate his father, and yet David had never taken the time to teach or train his son. We can understand Solomon's feelings of inadequacy when we see all of David's gifts: he was much loved by his people; he was a great spiritual leader (showing gifts of intercession and faith); he governed wisely (showing gifts of administration and leadership); he was a gifted poet, musician, and speaker (creative ability); and he was inspired by God to write many Psalms (revealing gifts of prophecy, wisdom, and knowledge).

Read Solomon's request and God's response in 1 Kings 3:7–12.

[Q] What about Solomon's request pleased God? What can we learn from that in how we ask God for things?

Leader's Note: Notice that God honored Solomon's request because he didn't ask for himself, but for gifts to glorify God and serve his people. This is the purpose of spiritual gifts; they are not for our own aggrandizement. Read 1 Peter 4:10.

[Q] How did God answer Solomon's prayer even beyond what Solomon could have imagined (1 Kings 3:13)?

[Q] What responsibility did Solomon's gift bring (v. 14)?

[Q] Read Acts 26:18. According to this verse, what should be our ultimate goal in using our gifts?



[Q] If you have ever experienced a time when you felt you were “in over your head,” as Solomon felt, and you asked God for the ability to handle it, tell us what happened.

PART 3**Apply Your Findings**

Action Point: What category do your spiritual gifts fit into? Are they perfect for your personality? Are you surprised by any of your gifts? Do you need to ask God for a gift to meet a difficult situation you are facing? Break into pairs and share your answers with your partner. Pray for each other to find ways to let God use your gifts.

This week, read and pray through Psalm 51.

Study by Alexandra Clair Stancil, with JoHannah Reardon



Spiritual Gifts

Bible Study Course

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE FOR STUDY 1

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PART 1**Identify the Current Issue**

Knowing our gifts gives us a chance to celebrate God's goodness and generosity, affirming how much he values us. At the same time, we are humbled as we use our gifts to serve the body of Christ, building a healthy, collective entity. We recognize that our gifts are to help balance, restore, uphold, and minister to the body, which is focused on the Great Commission.

PART 2**Discover the Eternal Principles**

Teaching point one: Some gifts are a perfect fit for our personality.

Teaching point two: Some gifts are a surprise.

Teaching point three: Some gifts we ask for as we face the challenges of life.

PART 3**Apply Your Findings**

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LEADER'S GUIDE FOR STUDY 2

Embrace Your Calling

Each of us is a distinct creation of God.

Spiritual gifts provide clues to God's intention for how we should live out our days as bondservants of Jesus Christ. Gifts and talents affirm the uniqueness of our calling as human instruments of his grace, and let us know that we are important in the eyes of a Savior who created us in his image and then died to rescue us from sin and death. He has named our calling holy and appointed us to be salt and light—salt as a preservative against the ravages of sin, and light in a dark world.

Lesson #2

Scripture:

1 Corinthians 7:7

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PART 1

Identify the Current Issue

Note to leader: At the beginning of the class, provide each person with the Participant's Guide included at the end of this study.

All spiritual gifts are task oriented. They are proactive and implemented for God's purposes within the body of Christ in service to others.

All believers receive three gifts at the time of salvation. These three gifts allow us to begin the process of living out our new faith in a life transformed by his grace. In the moment that we step from darkness to light and from the domain of Satan to God's domain, we receive faith, relationship, and love. As we'll see, those three things are vital in embracing who we are in Christ.

In her book, *Enemies in the Camp*, Alexandra F. Clair writes:

In that moment of time, shifted to the certainty of eternity, a heart is deluged and infused with a forgiveness and a love that is not like anything remotely similar to any earthly love we have lacked, longed for, or experienced. And we know that love. Our spirit strains with every word of sincere testimony. We know and have experienced that love so undeserved. It is a force that is supernatural, powerful, humbling, and by its very nature, a radical gift alive with eternal significance and purpose, breathing peace and grace when we least deserve it. Because we can earn nothing and deserve nothing, the power of forgiveness is a force that draws us to the foot of the cross in praise and wonder.¹

Discussion Questions:

- [Q] What is the biggest change that Christ has brought about in your life?
- [Q] What one change do you most want him to still make in you?

PART 2

Discover the Eternal Principles**Teaching point one: God gives us a measure of faith at the time of our salvation.**

Although we receive a measure of faith when we become Christians, this gift can be grown as we personally embrace God's love and seek to know him better.

- [Q] Read Hebrews 11:1 and Romans 12:3. What is faith and why do you think we are given different amounts of it?
- [Q] Read 1 John 5:4-5. Why is our faith important?

¹ *Enemies in the Camp: Recognizing Evil in Everyday Life*, p. 121.



[Q] Read Romans 12:6. How do we use our gifts in proportion to our faith? Give an example.

Faith is the fuel that transforms the reality of our salvation into a personal and missional calling that God plants within us. The choices we make do not change God's intention. His plan will be accomplished.

[Q] Read Romans 8:28. What implications might this verse have for you?

Teaching point two: God created us to have a relationship with him.

It is possible to know God intimately. Through relationship, God helps us to understand his intent for us and to share his passions and purposes. There are numerous ways we experience this relationship.

[Q] Read Psalm 16:8; 116:1–2; and Isaiah 41:13. What aspects of our relationship with God are reflected in these passages?

[Q] Read Proverbs 1:33 and Isaiah 41:10. How does God show his desire to have a relationship with us according to these verses?

[Q] Read Jeremiah 9:23–24. What does this tell us about our relationship with God?

[Q] Read Lamentations 3:32–33. What are God's intentions toward us according to this verse?

[Q] Read Isaiah 30:21. How does God lead us through our relationship with him?

Teaching point three: God showers us with his love, and in turn gives us the power to love him and others.

Love is the defining characteristic that differentiates us from the unsaved. Through God's grace, we are challenged to love despite circumstances. Love is not static. It is far more than sentiment. Love is the most potent, proactive force in the universe. Love is the motivation for faith in action. God's love, working through us, is meant to change the world.

[Q] Read 1 John 4:7–8. What does it mean that "God is love"?

Love requires us to deny ourselves. Because we have God's Spirit within us, he challenges and empowers us to love. God's demands seem impossible until we understand that he also gives us the ability to carry out those commands.

[Q] Read Matthew 5:43–44. Explain how God can help us to do something as humanly impossible as loving our enemy.

All gifts are useless without love. When we face a difficult challenge and must speak the truth, we should first examine our motives, confess our sins, and realize that we, too, are sinners. Our ability to love is a test of our faith.

[Q] Read 1 John 4:20–21. Why can we not claim to love God if we hate our brother?



Teaching point four: God calls you to use all these gifts for him.

The Sovereign God of the universe began calling you before you ever moved toward him. He created you with your gifts in mind before you were born. He created you for his purposes, to play a part in his great design for all of creation.

The amazing thing is that his calling is not related to our ability. He promises to make up for our weaknesses. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9.

Our calling and our spiritual gifts are closely linked. Despite our weaknesses, God will sustain and equip us. This is a life-long process as we grow in faith and determine to learn all we can. This calling requires commitment that is tested through obedience. God will sometimes give us a task that can be accomplished only through faith. Read Matthew 25:14–30.

[Q] Read 2 Timothy 2:13. We may fear using our gifts for fear of failing. How does this verse reassure us in that regard?

Optional Activity: Assign each person in your group one of the following verses: 2 Corinthians 12:9; 2 Corinthians 9:8; Philippians 4:6–7; Matthew 18:19–20; Isaiah 55:10–11; John 14:12–14; and Colossians 4:5–6. (If you have more than seven people in your group, break into seven groups.) Give them a few minutes to read their verse. Then ask them to read it aloud for the group and tell how they think it relates to using their spiritual gifts. If someone isn't sure how it relates, have them ask the group for their insights.

PART 3

Apply Your Findings

You should fully expect your spiritual gifts to work. Evangelists see people come to Christ. Administrators organize effectively. Teachers make things clear to their students. Understand that God wants us to use our spiritual gifts successfully.

God has given you specific gifts. It is up to you to decide how you will use them. But no matter what, those gifts must be exercised in light of faith, relationship, and love.

Action Point: What do you most need to develop: your faith in God, your relationship with God, or your love for God and others? Share your answer with the group and pray for each other in this regard.

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PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE FOR STUDY 2

Embrace Your Calling

Each of us is a distinct creation of God.

Spiritual gifts provide clues to God's intention for how we should live out our days as bondservants of Jesus Christ. Gifts and talents affirm the uniqueness of our calling as human instruments of his grace, and let us know that we are important in the eyes of a Savior who created us in his image and then died to rescue us from sin and death. He has named our calling holy and appointed us to be salt and light—salt as a preservative against the ravages of sin, and light in a dark world.

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Scripture:

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PART 1**Identify the Current Issue**

All spiritual gifts are task oriented. They are proactive and implemented for God's purposes within the body of Christ in service to others.

In addition to other spiritual gifts, all believers receive at least three things when the Holy Spirit comes to live within us. These three things allow us to begin the process of living out our new faith in a life transformed by his grace. In the moment that we step from darkness to light and from the domain of Satan to God's domain, we receive faith, relationship, and love. As we'll see, those three things are vital in embracing who we are in Christ.

PART 2**Discover the Eternal Principles**

Teaching point one: God gives us a measure of faith at the time of our salvation.

Teaching point two: God created us to have a relationship with him.

Teaching point three: God showers us with his love, and in turn gives us the power to love him and others.

Teaching point four: God calls you to use all these gifts for him.

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LEADER'S GUIDE FOR STUDY 3

Live a Transformed Life

Using our spiritual gifts is impossible without letting Christ change us.

We cannot expect God to use our spiritual gifts to benefit the body of Christ if we are not growing in our own spiritual lives. Taking steps to change and grow requires a conscious decision, followed by genuine commitment. This study looks at ways to do that.

Lesson #3

Scripture:

2 Peter 1:3–9

Based on:

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PART 1

Identify the Current Issue

Note to leader: At the beginning of the class, provide each person with the Participant's Guide included at the end of this study.

Before Christ rescued us, we were dead in our sins. When we came to Christ, he forgave us those sins, but many old habits and patterns persist. Taking steps to leave those old sinful patterns behind is a deliberate decision that takes the power of God to fulfill.

We need to take a close look at ways to root our behavior in the reality of our Christian beliefs. As we exercise various spiritual muscles, we become ever stronger. As we deny self and adopt habits of obedience, we become more like Jesus Christ. His values, character, and goodness become our modes of operation, our standards, and our hearts.

Discussion Questions:

- [Q] Name one sinful behavior that Christ has changed in you.
- [Q] Name one you would still like to see Christ transform in you.

PART 2

Discover the Eternal Principles

Read 2 Peter 1:3–9.

Teaching point one: Let the Holy Spirit train you in goodness.

We strive to demonstrate God's character in our lives. All the spiritual gifts are evidence of God's character. When our gifts are fully developed, they become manifestations of God's love. His personality, the very substance of who he is, works in and through us, by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Only because of the work of the Holy Spirit within us can we decide to follow Jesus Christ and change our behavior. God himself defines goodness for us. Read what he said to Moses in Exodus 34:5–7.

Here we have a picture of goodness. God describes himself as compassionate, gracious, slow to anger, loving, and forgiving. However, he also demands justice and displays righteous anger. In other words, all the qualities describing God are ways to be good. We are good when we show compassion, graciousness, patience, love, and forgiveness. We are also good when we display righteous anger on behalf of those who are being treated unjustly.

- [Q] Of the qualities of goodness described above, which one are you most in need of?
- [Q] Can you think of any other qualities God possesses that show us what it means to be good?
- [Q] How can we begin to let God work goodness into our lives? List practical ways.



[Q] Give an example of what it might look like to show righteous anger on behalf of someone else.

➤ What do we need to be careful of in doing this?

Optional Activity: *If we show righteous anger, we still need to demonstrate the other attributes of goodness by being loving, patient, and gracious. Role play how you might talk to the offender in the following situations:*

-Someone in your small group humiliates another person in your group by belittling their answer to a question.

-Your best friend makes fun of someone who is handicapped.

-Your sister was going 20 miles over the speed limit. She's really mad at the cop who ticketed her and starts telling everyone what a jerk he was.

Teaching point two: Learn knowledge from God's Word.

Knowledge can be acquired through the discipline of study. Spiritual knowledge, when fully developed through the power of the Holy Spirit, results in wisdom.

[Q] Read Proverbs 8:10–11. What might having this kind of attitude toward wisdom and knowledge look like in your life?

[Q] Read 2 Timothy 3:15–17. How does knowledge equip us for using our spiritual gifts?

[Q] Read Colossians 2:2–3. What should be the purpose of knowledge?

Knowledge guards against false teaching. It protects the body of Christ from evil and shields us from temptation. Although knowledge can be a spiritual gift, we are all required to be equipped for battle against evil.

Knowledge nourishes our intellect and inspires us to a deeper relationship with God. It also provides the intellectual basis by which we can test and know God's will (Romans 12:2).

Teaching point three: Let the Holy Spirit give you self-control.

Lack of self-control is a major obstacle to growing in Christ and developing your spiritual gifts. Read Proverbs 25:28 and Romans 7:21–25.

Paul lets us know that all temptation begins in the mind. This is a battle between our human inclination to sin and the Holy Spirit's desire to help us do good. Supernatural forces pay rapt attention to these inner dialogues and do their utmost to influence the outcome. Having control over our thoughts, through the power of Jesus Christ, is crucial. Read Romans 13:14.

[Q] What does it mean in practical terms to "clothe" ourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ?

The inclination to sin begins with a dialogue between the sinful nature we were born with and the new nature God has given us. It is possible to have victory over any addiction, habit, or sin. Read Galatians 5:25–26.



- [Q] What do you think it means to “keep in step with the Spirit,” and how can that help us conquer sin?
- [Q] Read 2 Peter 1:4. What else can help us conquer sin?
- [Q] Read the following verses and name what self-control protects us against according to each one (answers for leader in parenthesis): 1 Peter 2:11 (*fleshly lusts*); James 3:3–12 (*the tongue*); Proverbs 23:29–35 (*drink/substance abuse*); 1 Thessalonians 4:3–8 (*sexual sins*); Mark 5:2–16 (*unclean spirits*); Proverbs 25:28 (*being ineffective*); James 3:16 (*envy and selfish ambition*).
- [Q] Read 1 Corinthians 9:25–27. What does Paul mean in these verses?
- [Q] Why would self-control be necessary to exercise your spiritual gifts?

Teaching point four: Let the Holy Spirit produce perseverance in you.

This valued characteristic, to persevere despite setbacks, trials, temptations, and sufferings, is closely linked to our maturity as believers. If we truly trust God, if we truly belong to Jesus, we persevere in obedience. As bondservants of the Most High, we are called to a genuine standard of commitment. Read Romans 15:4.

Nineteenth-century actor and writer George Iles wrote, “Hope is faith holding out its hand in the dark.” How does perseverance produce hope? As we stay faithful and persevere, we learn the valuable truth of God’s faithfulness in all circumstances. Read Romans 5:5.

Our salvation marks us as dangerous to the forces of evil. Our commitment to obedience and how we live our lives is significant to God’s kingdom. We are to fight the good fight.

- [Q] Read Luke 18:1–8 and Revelation 2:2–3. What does our perseverance mean to Christ?
- [Q] Read Hebrews 12:1–3. What is the key to perseverance according to this passage?
- [Q] Read 1 Timothy 4:14–16. What does perseverance have to do with our spiritual gifts?

Teaching point five: Let the Holy Spirit give you brotherly kindness.

Kindness is far more than sentiment. It is a godly trait—God describes himself as kind. In Jeremiah 9:24b, he says, “I am the Lord, who exercises kindness, justice and righteousness on earth, for in these I delight.”

Kindness is an attitude of spirit that manifests itself in good deeds. Think of kindness as a garment we wear. It is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit at work through our spiritual gifts. We have genuine regard for the welfare and feelings of others.

- [Q] Name some practical ways you can begin to make kindness your garment.



PART 3

Apply Your Findings

Action Point: Of the five things named in the teaching points, which one would you most like to see Christ work into your life? Tell the group and break into pairs to pray for each other.

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PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE FOR STUDY 3

Live a Transformed Life

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Teaching point two: Learn knowledge from God's Word.

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Teaching point four: Let the Holy Spirit produce perseverance in you.

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LEADER'S GUIDE FOR STUDY 4

Live Free of Shame

By learning the difference between healthy and unhealthy shame, we will be able to exercise our spiritual gifts.

Shame is the chain that hinders or prevents us from fully mobilizing our spiritual gifts. Although we understand the biblical concept of forgiveness on an intellectual level, we may continue to feel shame over what God has already forgiven. Shame can become a crippling emotion that prevents us from experiencing the joy of our salvation.

Lesson #4

Scripture:

Psalm 51:11–12

Based on:

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PART 1

Identify the Current Issue

Note to leader: At the beginning of the class, provide each person with the "Participant's Guide" included at the end of this study.

Like many emotions, our feelings of shame may not be logical. We may imagine that because we have a certain failure in our past, we are not worthy to be used by God. We think others cannot understand. We believe the lie that if others really knew us, they couldn't possibly like us. We keep and protect secrets that bind us in darkness and keep us from freedom. This faulty thinking is completely contrary to Scripture. Hebrews 4:13 says, "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." We are fully revealed to God, and guess what: He still loves us.

Discussion Questions:

- [Q] Why do our emotions often fail to catch up with our knowledge?
- [Q] How do you tell the difference between true and false guilt? Explain.
- [Q] Have you ever been crippled by guilt? If so, how did you get past it?

PART 2

Discover the Eternal Principles**Teaching point one: Feelings can sometimes be in conflict with knowledge.**

If we don't face our feelings, they can lead us to sin, because we are not being honest about ourselves. We are hiding, isolating, and denying our love to those who need us. Becoming honest with and about ourselves is a life-long process. As we become more committed to honesty, we experience deeper intimacy with Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, allowing him to truly transform us. Such honesty is necessary to be effective in ministering to others. Genuine intimacy with God is arrived at through the frequent process of conviction, repentance, forgiveness, and gratitude.

Yet, while feelings are valid and must be faced, they are often unreliable. If we do not feel forgiven, it may be important to examine the underlying reasons for shame. Since God's claims are true and perfect, we must believe what is written in his Word, which is not dependent upon circumstances, thinking, feelings, or thoughts. In other words, the inability to feel forgiven does not mean that God has not forgiven us.

- [Q] Read Psalm 103:8–13. According to this passage, what is God's heart toward us?
 - How have you experienced those things in your life? Give examples.
 - What does it mean that he doesn't treat us as our sins deserve?
 - What does it mean that he has removed our sins as far as the east is from the west?
 - How can we fear God, yet believe that he has forgiven us?



[Q] Read Ephesians 1:7. What are the “riches of God’s grace”?

- How has he lavished them upon us?

Teaching point two: Some kinds of shame are healthy.

Shame is like a telephone ringing, a jarring sound that unsettles us. We can choose to answer the phone and listen, or we can choose to ignore it. When shame is due to unconfessed sin, we cannot fulfill God’s purposes for us. In the words of King David, we have lost the “joy of our salvation.”

In healthy shame, the telephone of our conscience is ringing, and God’s Holy Spirit is on the other end of the line with something valuable to say. In such cases, we need to admit our sin and come clean. David had to do this when he sinned. Read Psalm 51:3–17.

Some characteristics of healthy shame are:

1. We can clearly identify our sin. It is not a vague feeling of guilt for no clear reason.
2. We are willing to hear and suffer the truth, even though it’s painful.
3. We are willing to confront destructive patterns in our lives.
4. We recognize that only God can deal with our sin.
5. We have a desire to live in obedience to God and to serve him.

A willingness to accept our failures, ask forgiveness, and seek to change our behavior makes us recipients of God’s grace. God allows valuable life lessons to mold our character through suffering and failure. These experiences give depth and meaning to our spiritual gifts. We have a story to share and victory to proclaim in the hope that we can comfort other Christians or lead the lost to Christ.

Feelings of humiliation and embarrassment tempt us to hide our sin. We may panic at the thought of exposure. We don’t want others to compare our behavior with their impressions of us as “good Christians.” When hiding our behavior becomes a pattern, we place a barrier between us and God. Imagine a child who has gotten into a box of chocolates. The evidence is everywhere on his face and hands, despite his claims of innocence. God sees our sin. He holds us accountable for the sins we hide from others. All sin spills into the lives of innocent persons he has placed in our care to protect and love. There are two reactions we can have to healthy shame. We can deny or minimize it, and stay enslaved to it, or we can humble ourselves before God and receive his love, forgiveness, and freedom.

[Q] According to Psalm 51:3, what is healthy shame?

Leader’s Note: *In healthy shame, your sin is usually clear. It is never a vague feeling of guilt. You know what you need to confess as sin.*

[Q] According to Psalm 51:6, how can we learn to respond to healthy shame?

[Q] According to Psalm 51:17, what does God want from us? Give an example of what that looks like in a person’s life.



[Q] According to Psalm 51:10, what should be our attitude toward sin?

[Q] Read 1 Timothy 6:11 and James 4:7–8. What should we do when we are tempted to sin or know we have sinned?

Teaching point three: Some shame is unhealthy.

In unhealthy shame, Satan is on the other end of the phone and is whispering defeat. Satan's lies are often echoes of destructive self-talk or a destructive pretence of sufficiency. Some of the lies we may tell ourselves are:

1. If they really knew me, they wouldn't have anything to do with me.
2. I have no value or worth.
3. I'll take care of myself. It's too risky to need others. I can't trust anyone.
4. If I don't respond to every need, nothing will get done.
5. If I stay in control, I'll be safe.
6. I'll just be pleasant and helpful, and the conflict will go away.
7. I can do what I want. I'm only hurting myself.

Painful events, even those we might not remember, can prompt us to close off our feelings. Feelings that go unrecognized or unresolved may spill into behaviors that continue to plague us through the consequences of unhealthy shame.

Many feelings spring from misplaced emotions, which prompt inappropriate reactions. This is especially true when the emotional climate of our circumstances seems dangerously similar to past abuse, loss, or suffering. This can result in hurtful behavior or habits that are destructive, yet dangerously familiar.

It is important to weigh our feelings in light of God's Word. Deeply felt childhood wounds can cause unhealthy shame. Professional Christian counseling can help those who struggle in this way.

Unhealthy shame exhibits the following:

1. We do not feel forgiven.
2. We feel shame, not because of our own behavior, but because of the sins of others. We take unreasonable and unrealistic responsibility for others. A pattern of accepting inappropriate blame may have begun early in childhood as a protective measure that allowed you to survive and cope. It may have also come in adulthood as you tried to minister to unhealthy people who laid blame for their problems at your door.
3. We do not feel we have worth. Unhealthy shame whispers, "You brought this pain on yourself because you are so flawed." It is vague and unspecific. You have no clear sin to confess, just a general feeling of worthlessness.



Unhealthy shame can prompt various responses. Here are three examples of behavior we can manifest when unresolved pain or trauma, resulting in deep feelings of shame, goes unrecognized. When insight and healing are not sought, we will hurt those closest to us.

Inadequacy (we've internalized the shame we feel)

- We feel insecure and victimized by life and have trouble trusting others.
- We do not feel we deserve happiness and may sabotage healthy relationships.
- We place unrealistic demands on others, which can drive friends and loved ones away and reinforce Satan's lie that we are worthless.
- We may continue in unhealthy relationships, failing to construct healthy boundaries and measures of protection.
- As parents we tend to overprotect our children. We avoid appropriate measures of discipline and do not allow children to learn the value of delayed gratification.

Pretense (we retreat into a false image)

- We feel internal, sometimes unrecognized, fear that painful past events will be repeated in the future; we have trouble trusting God.
- We measure the love of others based on performance and can be legalistic in our faith.
- We hold others to unreasonable standards of perfection, which increases the loneliness and isolation we feel.
- We expect others to "just know" when we are needy, and we are unreasonably disappointed when friends and loved ones can't read our minds.
- In marriage, we may emotionally withhold money or affection. We may exercise unhealthy control over children and use misappropriated power to mask feelings of vulnerability.

Idolatry (we act out in response to our shame)

- We believe that no one can meet our needs, and we cling to distractions or addictions, never slowing down long enough to risk introspection.
- We look to externals as excuses to stay in failed circumstances and will often self-medicate.
- We minimize destructive behavior and seek out enabling friends and spouses.
- We avoid intimacy with God and reject opportunities for the Holy Spirit to genuinely convict us.
- If undeterred by consequences, then lies, blame shifting, and self-protection will become a way of life.

Read 1 John 1:5–10.



- [Q] In light of what we've just talked about, what is the main difference between healthy and unhealthy shame?
- [Q] How does the fact that God is light help us to recognize healthy and unhealthy shame?
- [Q] What is the difference between admitting our sin and taking responsibility for the sins of others?
- How can we continue to care for and serve others without taking responsibility for their sin?

Optional Activity: *Identify whether or not the following people are feeling healthy or unhealthy shame:*

-Shannon constantly makes Jane feel guilty because Jane hasn't suffered in life as much as Shannon has.

-Jay seems to have it all together at church, but at home he goes into rages. He's starting to feel guilty about this double standard.

-Kayla felt guilty that she's been so rebellious at home after hearing a sermon on respecting authority.

-Mason felt guilty after the sermon, but he didn't know why. He feels that way a lot.

-Myra would like to teach Sunday school, but she feels that because of sin in her past, which she has confessed, that she would be a bad example to the kids.

Teaching point four: Distinguish between healthy and unhealthy shame.

It's good to recognize the difference between healthy and unhealthy shame. If you've been a victim of evil persons and circumstances, you may be experiencing unhealthy shame. God gives us the power, through his Holy Spirit, to recognize the difference between godly conviction and destructive self-talk. Make a practice of discerning the difference. If you continue to have difficulty, you may need to seek counseling.

If you are experiencing healthy shame, you need to do the following:

-Respond to conviction. If you know exactly what you've done wrong, admit it.

-Repent. Repentance involves a desire to change. You are not only sorry for what you've done, but you also don't want to repeat the sin. You want to change your ways.

-Believe you are forgiven. If you confess your sins, you are forgiven. Believe it.

-Be thankful. Gratitude restores your intimacy with God.

PART 3

Apply Your Findings

Lingering shame can prevent us from using our spiritual gifts. God does not want us to hold on to what he has already forgiven. He has given us victory to overcome every circumstance.



Action Point: Break into twos or threes. Assign to each group one of the following passages and ask them to explain to the whole group how it applies to this lesson:

Romans 8:35–39

Psalm 103:1–7

John 7:37

1 John 5:11–15

Close with a few minutes of silence to allow each person to consider what he or she needs to do about any shame they are feeling.

Study by Alexandra Clair Stancil, with JoHannah Reardon



Spiritual Gifts

Bible Study Course

PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE FOR STUDY 4

Live Free of Shame

By learning the difference between healthy and unhealthy shame, we will be able to exercise our spiritual gifts.

Shame is the chain that hinders or prevents us from fully mobilizing our spiritual gifts. Although we understand the biblical concept of forgiveness on an intellectual level, we may continue to feel shame over what God has already forgiven. Shame can become a crippling emotion that prevents us from experiencing the joy of our salvation.

Lesson #4

Scripture:

Psalm 51:11-12

Based on:

Spiritual Gifts course by Alexandra Clair Stancil, Abigail Press, Inc. 2005



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PART 1**Identify the Current Issue**

Like many emotions, our feelings of shame may not be logical. We may imagine that because we have a certain failure in our past, we are not worthy to be used by God. We think others cannot understand. We believe the lie that if others really knew us, they couldn't possibly like us. We keep and protect secrets that bind us in darkness and keep us from freedom. This faulty thinking is completely contrary to Scripture. Hebrews 4:13 says, "Nothing in all creation is hidden from God's sight. Everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." We are fully revealed to God, and guess what: He still loves us.

PART 2**Discover the Eternal Principles**

Teaching point one: Feelings can sometimes be in conflict with knowledge.

Teaching point two: Some kinds of shame are healthy.

Teaching point three: Some shame is unhealthy.

Teaching point four: Distinguish between healthy and unhealthy shame.

PART 3**Apply Your Findings**

Lingering shame can prevent us from using our spiritual gifts. God does not want us to hold on to what he has already forgiven. He has given us victory to overcome every circumstance.

Study by Alexandra Clair Stancil, with JoHannah Reardon



Spiritual Gifts

Bible Study Course

*Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things,
you do not know. Jeremiah 33:3*

Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Know Your Gifts – Discover Your Calling

Simply follow these three easy steps ...

1. Know Your Gifts

Take the Spiritual Gift Inventory by completing this form. You will find that some gifts are a fit for your personality. You have been using these gifts and talents all your life, but now you can be more intentional about using them to facilitate God's work. You may see that another gift is one you've prayed for at a time of crisis. Through this experience, God has equipped you to support others going through similar trials. Still other gifts are a complete surprise. We wonder what this gift is and become curious and even excited to see it realized in our lives. The gift descriptions will help clarify these gifts further and may give you an overview of God's plan for your life.

2. Equipped to Serve

The purpose of knowing your gifts is to use them for service in the kingdom of God. You will experience the joy of knowing that you are uniquely called for a specific time, purpose, and ministry. Hopefully, this course will help you to implement your gifts, equipping you to serve where you are most needed and make the greatest impact for Jesus Christ.

3. Getting Started

Make an appointment with your pastor or adult-ministry director to discuss your gifts and learn of the many volunteer opportunities within your church or in volunteer organizations.

*Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others,
faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10*



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What the Spiritual Gifts Inventory will tell about you:

Categorizing Spiritual Gifts

You are a unique creation of God. What does the Spiritual Gifts Inventory reveal about you? After taking the inventory, you'll see that your gifts fit into four broad categories:

Accountability Gifts

Exhortation
Teaching
Knowledge
Shepherding
Discernment

Healing Gifts

Mercy
Faith
Intercession
Hospitality

Facilitating Gifts

Service
Administration
Leadership
Giving
Creative Ability

Visionary Gifts

Evangelism
Prophecy
Healing
Deliverance

Upon completing the inventory, you might ask yourself: Into which area do most of my gifts fall? What balancing gifts are needed? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three categories, but usually not all four categories.

Applying Spiritual Gifts

Some gifts have various applications depending on how they are matched, such as: Giving and Discernment, or Discernment and Deliverance. Here we see two different applications for the gift of Discernment. Other gifts fit together in supportive harmony like Intercession and Faith, or Knowledge and Teaching. The one cannot be effective without the other. Take a look at your gifts and decide which gift fits with another. Below are various combinations frequently seen. God created you as a unique individual and your calling is equally unique in the scope of his divine plan. Pray over your confluence of gifts. What do they mean for you?

Administration/Leadership	Teaching/Exhortation	Mercy /Shepherding
Administration/Service	Exhortation/Prophecy	Mercy/Giving
Leadership/Creative Ability	Teaching/Knowledge	Healing/Mercy
Service/Giving	Prophecy/Knowledge	Evangelism/Exhortation
Knowledge/Teaching	Intercession/Faith	Evangelism/Prophecy
Service/Hospitality	Intercession/Healing	Discernment/Deliverance
Service/Creative Ability	Discernment/Giving	Prophecy/Discernment



Spiritual Gifts

Bible Study Course

Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Know Your Gifts – Discover Your Calling

Each statement in the questionnaire has five choices. Read each carefully and decide to what extent the statement is true of you. Write that numerical value in the box provided. Your first response is usually the best.

1. Never: 0%
2. Little: 10–40%
3. Some: 40–60%
4. Much: 60–80%
5. Very Much: 80–100%

There are no right or wrong answers. This questionnaire is designed to suggest your spiritual gifts.



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The Following Is True of Me

Place a number at each statement! (1) Never (2) Little (3) Some (4) Much (5) Very Much

- ___ 1. I have a talent for organizing ideas and tasks to accomplish a goal.
- ___ 2. God has gifted me with a creative talent that I have used to support the body of Christ.
- ___ 3. I don't judge quickly or jump to conclusions but wait on God's leading.
- ___ 4. I can see beneath the surface to spot the wrong motives or manipulative behavior of others.
- ___ 5. God uses me to encourage others to live for Christ.
- ___ 6. I can discern when people do not know Christ, and I often feel led to share the gospel.
- ___ 7. I trust that God is working even when I don't see tangible answers.
- ___ 8. I investigate Christian causes and ministries that need support before I give.
- ___ 9. People are helped or healed when I pray for them.
- ___ 10. I open my home to guests and do not mind unexpected visitors.
- ___ 11. I set aside time to pray each day and feel convicted by the Holy Spirit when I don't.
- ___ 12. I am able to distinguish spiritual truth from error, even when the error is subtle.
- ___ 13. I have a gift for inspiring others to serve by setting goals and objectives.
- ___ 14. Suffering, sickness, or poverty inspires me to minister.
- ___ 15. I have proclaimed God's Word with conviction and purpose.
- ___ 16. I like to support the body of Christ by serving where I'm needed.
- ___ 17. The Lord uses me to equip others for the work of ministry.
- ___ 18. I quickly sense when adults or children are unclear about biblical teaching, and share the truth from God's Word.
- ___ 19. I like to plan activities that involve people.
- ___ 20. I have a talent for making things work, even with limited resources.
- ___ 21. I've suspected that someone was harassed by evil spirits.
- ___ 22. I often spot phony persons before others do.
- ___ 23. I'm glad that others seek my help and advice for personal problems.
- ___ 24. I want to share the message of salvation with lost and hurting persons.
- ___ 25. I believe God's promises even when others doubt.
- ___ 26. I give cheerfully to Christian causes and would give more if I could.

Guide

1. Never:
0%

2. Little:
10–40%

3. Some:
40–60%

4. Much:
60–80%

5. Very Much:
80–100%



- ___ 27. I feel drawn to study and learn more about healing.
- ___ 28. I notice when little acts of kindness can make the difference for others.
- ___ 29. I'm faithful to give my pastor and church ministries needed prayer support.
- ___ 30. I can't get enough of God's Word and wish I could study more.
- ___ 31. I have accepted leadership roles and been successful at helping groups accomplish goals.
- ___ 32. The compassion I feel for others results in thoughtful deeds of kindness.
- ___ 33. God has used me to proclaim timely, urgent messages from his Word.
- ___ 34. I like to offer my assistance when I see that others need help.
- ___ 35. I would like to be in a position to guide and nurture other believers.
- ___ 36. I'm fascinated with the many Bible stories and like to share what God has shown me from his Word.
- ___ 37. I can delegate responsibility to others, matching their skills to a task.
- ___ 38. I have a desire to use my creative talents in support of God's kingdom.
- ___ 39. I sense the difference between demonic influence and human turmoil.
- ___ 40. I know when others are deceived by false teaching and feel compelled to share the truth from Scripture.
- ___ 41. When people confide in me, I can lovingly provide biblical answers for life's problems.
- ___ 42. God has used me to lead others to Christ.
- ___ 43. I don't hesitate to pray for God to work in circumstances that others consider hopeless.
- ___ 44. I encourage others to give to Christian causes that I feel a burden for.
- ___ 45. I practice intercessory prayer for physical and emotional wounds.
- ___ 46. I reach out to others, wanting them to feel valued and significant.
- ___ 47. I've had the experience of praying with conviction for urgent causes and persons not intimately known to me.
- ___ 48. When error infiltrates scriptural teaching, I am concerned for others and speak up.
- ___ 49. I enjoy providing oversight to groups and enjoy guiding their success.
- ___ 50. I sense when others are hurting and express God's love by reaching out.
- ___ 51. I have equipped myself to plead the cause of Christ to individuals and groups.
- ___ 52. I like to do work that allows others to succeed in theirs.
- ___ 53. I intervene when I see Christians being led astray.

Guide

1. Never:
0%

2. Little:
10–40%

3. Some:
40–60%

4. Much:
60–80%

5. Very Much:
80–100%



- ___ 54. God has used me to make Scripture clear and personal to others.
- ___ 55. I notice when God's work is hindered by poor organization and wasted resources.
- ___ 56. I often have original ideas and wish that God could use me more.
- ___ 57. I have prayed and felt a burden for those in bondage to occult beliefs.
- ___ 58. I can tell the difference between good and evil in today's world and feel a burden for those who are deceived.
- ___ 59. I've advised people to study God's Word for comfort and instruction.
- ___ 60. I hurt for friends and acquaintances who don't know Jesus.
- ___ 61. When I offer to pray for someone, I take the responsibility seriously.
- ___ 62. I give cheerfully when confronted with financial needs in God's kingdom.
- ___ 63. I often pray for sick and hurting persons not intimately known to me.
- ___ 64. I anticipate the needs of my guests and enjoy making them feel comfortable.
- ___ 65. I'm not hesitant to offer prayer to hurting persons and will continue to pray on my own afterwards.
- ___ 66. I can point questioning and confused persons to key passages of Scripture.
- ___ 67. I would like to motivate groups to specific ministry objectives.
- ___ 68. I would like to minister God's love to those with mental or physical disabilities.
- ___ 69. I want to encourage and build up the body of Christ by offering instruction from God's Word.
- ___ 70. I can serve God by offering my services in support of ministry.
- ___ 71. I'm concerned for the welfare of believers and feel compelled to support weaker persons in their faith.
- ___ 72. I enjoy helping others grow in their understanding of God's Word.
- ___ 73. God uses me to organize details and people in support of ministry.
- ___ 74. Others are inspired to worship and grow through my creative talent (music, writing, drama, painting, etc.).
- ___ 75. I have discerned the presence of evil in persons or circumstances.
- ___ 76. I pray and investigate unfamiliar causes that claim to be of Christ before I give.
- ___ 77. Others have been inspired to serve Jesus because of my encouragement.
- ___ 78. I can share the plan of salvation, making it clear and meaningful to nonbelievers.
- ___ 79. In the midst of trial and loss, God has used me to encourage others in their faith.
- ___ 80. I believe that everything I own belongs to Jesus Christ and give regularly to my church.

Guide

1. Never:
0%

2. Little:
10–40%

3. Some:
40–60%

4. Much:
60–80%

5. Very Much:
80–100%



- ___ 81. Through God's grace I've overcome obstacles, allowing me to minister his healing to hurting persons.
- ___ 82. People turn to me for advice because they know I care.
- ___ 83. I have great inner conviction that prayer is a powerful weapon against evil forces.
- ___ 84. I spend considerable time studying God's Word as well as the historical and archeological records of biblical times.
- ___ 85. I sense when groups or individuals are not effective and can offer good oversight.
- ___ 86. I can be God's hands and feet no matter how hopeless the circumstances.
- ___ 87. God has given me spiritual insight to speak out boldly against people or issues that bring dishonor to God's kingdom.
- ___ 88. I'm content to serve behind the scenes and do not need the thanks of men to feel significant.
- ___ 89. I've been a mentor to struggling Christians, guiding and nurturing their spiritual growth.
- ___ 90. I hold the interest of groups when I share from God's Word and can provoke meaningful discussion.
- ___ 91. I can see how details make the difference in planning a successful outcome.
- ___ 92. I feel energized and inspired when I am presented with a problem others have given up on.
- ___ 93. I believe exorcism, miracles, and healings still happen today.
- ___ 94. I can discern God's prophetic plan in past and current events.
- ___ 95. I'm sensitive to those who are troubled and hurting, and want to understand their motives and behavior.
- ___ 96. I've memorized key Bible verses so that I can share the message of salvation.
- ___ 97. I believe God's Word, even when prayer is not answered as hoped for.
- ___ 98. I am willing to live below my means so that I can give more to God's kingdom.
- ___ 99. I can discern when healing prayer is needed for the emotional wounds of others.
- ___ 100. I know that God is using me when I open my home to friends and strangers.
- ___ 101. I persist in prayer even if God does not respond immediately.
- ___ 102. I feel a hunger to read and understand God's Word and want to learn all I can.
- ___ 103. I maintain integrity and lead by example so that others can trust my authority.
- ___ 104. Sick and suffering persons are helped when I minister to them.

Guide

1. Never:
0%

2. Little:
10–40%

3. Some:
40–60%

4. Much:
60–80%

5. Very Much:
80–100%



- ___ 105. I have the ability to identify social and cultural trends that undermine the teachings of Christ.
- ___ 106. God uses me to build up and encourage the body of Christ when I help others.
- ___ 107. I want to be involved in supporting and nurturing new believers.
- ___ 108. I can speak before groups and like to talk about what God has done for me.

How to Use the Key Chart

1. You have placed a number beside each question. Now write that numerical value in the corresponding space on the Key Chart. For example, if question #1 is scored with a value of 4 (Much), write the number 4 in space number 1 of the Key Chart, and so on. Follow the sequence of the numbered columns carefully. Notice that the numbered columns alternate between Chart A and Chart B.

2. After you have written the numerical value for each question in each box of the Key Chart:

Working from left to right in **Chart A**, add together the three numbers in each row and write the total in the **Totals A Column**.

Working from right to left in **Chart B**, add together the three numbers in each row and write the total in the **Totals B Column**.

3. Circle no less than three and no more than five of the highest scores from the **Totals A Column** and their corresponding gifts. Now look at the box labeled **Chart A Results • Working Gifts**. Record the names of the gifts you have circled in Chart A. Write the highest scored gift on the appropriate line.

4. Next circle the highest scores from the **Totals B Column** and their corresponding gifts that are not already circled in the Totals A Column. Now look at the box labeled **Chart B Results • Gifts to Develop**.

Record the names of the gifts you have circled from Totals B Column in this box. Write the highest scored gift on the appropriate line.

You may have gifts that have the same numerical value. In other words, your highest scored gifts may include three with a value of 12. **Each should be listed separately on its own line. List no more than one gift per line.** If you run out of room, you can eliminate a gift by seeing which gift has the highest combined scores from the Totals A and Totals B columns. For example, the gifts of Faith and of Prophecy both have a value of 12 in the Totals A column. You only have room to write one more gift. In the Totals B column, Faith has a value of 14 and Prophecy has a value of 10; therefore, add Faith and not Prophecy. **Remember, list no more than one gift per line.**

Guide

1. Never:
0%

2. Little:
10–40%

3. Some:
40–60%

4. Much:
60–80%

5. Very Much:
80–100%



Key Chart

Chart A					Chart B			
			Totals A		Totals B			
1	37	73		Administration		91	55	19
2	38	74		Creative Ability		92	56	20
3	39	75		Deliverance		93	57	21
4	40	76		Discernment		94	58	22
5	41	77		Exhortation		95	59	23
6	42	78		Evangelism		96	60	24
7	43	79		Faith		97	61	25
8	44	80		Giving		98	62	26
9	45	81		Healing		99	63	27
10	46	82		Hospitality		100	64	28
11	47	83		Intercession		101	65	29
12	48	84		Knowledge		102	66	30
13	49	85		Leadership		103	67	31
14	50	86		Mercy		104	68	32
15	51	87		Prophecy		105	69	33
16	52	88		Service		106	70	34
17	53	89		Shepherding		107	71	35
18	54	90		Teaching		108	72	36

Key Chart Results

Chart A Results • Working Gifts

Highest scored gift _____
 2nd _____
 3rd _____
 4th _____
 5th _____

Chart B Results • Gifts to Develop

Highest not in Box A _____
 2nd _____
 3rd _____
 4th _____
 5th _____



Spiritual Gifts

Bible Study Course

Gift Descriptions

Click on the gift description you'd like to see:

ADMINISTRATION

CREATIVE ABILITY

DELIVERANCE

DISCERNMENT

EVANGELISM

EXHORTATION

FAITH

GIVING

HEALING

HOSPITALITY

INTERCESSION

KNOWLEDGE

LEADERSHIP

MERCY

PROPHECY

SERVICE

SHEPHERDING

TEACHING



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Administration

You have the special ability to strategize a plan of action from goals to completion. You like tasks that can be measured and derive satisfaction in seeing your work done well. You are able to identify and communicate key components of a project, breaking out and prioritizing tasks for optimum efficiency. You are not easily distracted and can focus attention on objectives as you patiently facilitate the daily work and details. Others may have the idea, but you are the one who can make it happen.

This gift is almost always found in combination with other gifts. Make a careful study of your companion gifts to learn where Jesus Christ may be calling you to serve.

Gifts of administration are valuable assets to the Body of Christ. Persons with this spiritual gift understand the mechanics of executing many tasks and details. They see ahead to the next step and can forecast obstacles that others may not recognize. The service they provide allows others to do their work more smoothly (2 Corinthians 9:12).

Administrators are not always natural leaders. Look to others for any relational strengths that you may lack. Don't be afraid to offer your excellent planning skills when you see the need. People with the gift of administration are sometimes content to stay in the background and offer advice only when something has failed or proved inefficient. You have a talent for anticipating obstacles as you work out the details. Offer this skill to the glory of God and be confident in the value of this much needed gift as you work to enhance the efficiency of a plan or project.

Spiritual gifts can be grouped into the following broad categories: Accountability Gifts, Healing Gifts, Facilitating Gifts, and Visionary Gifts. Which area do most of your gifts fit into? Does this provide insight into your calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.

Administration is a Facilitating Gift.



Creative Ability

When we think of creative ability, we usually think of the arts, such as music, writing, painting, or drama. These talents serve the body of Christ and honor God by calling attention to his creation, love, and divine purposes (Exodus 31:3–5).

Persons with a gift for being creative may also have a talent for solving problems. This ability, combined with a gift of leadership, can have significant impact on ministry. Those who think creatively are often innovative thinkers. They shed new light on old ideas or ways of doing things and are often original thinkers. Those with this gift can take the mundane and communicate brilliance, inspiring others to reach beyond limitations to fulfill the will and purpose of a Sovereign Creator.

Creative thinkers may also have a valuable talent for making the most of limited resources. They contemplate a project and see the possibilities in terms that are solution driven. When others throw up their hands and call a task or project “impossible,” they are more likely to imagine success.



Creative energy enhances every other gift, infusing the challenge of living for Christ with beauty, wonder, and freshness. Creative ability takes ministry in new directions and communicates a faith that is optimistic. How this impacts individuals and groups cannot be measured or overestimated.

Be intentional about utilizing your talents for Christ. In order to see the broader application of this gift and what it can mean for the Body of Christ, take a close look at your companion gifts. If teaching is a companion gift think how valuable you would be working with small groups or children. If hospitality or service is among your primary gifts think how your combined skills can enhance ministry in related areas.

Because your gifts may be highly visible to others, you might be called into service often. You have permission from God to set appropriate boundaries, which will facilitate your effectiveness and unique calling to serve the body of Christ. If you tend to be undisciplined in your walk with Christ commit to change that now. Invite your spouse, small group, or a good friend to hold you accountable so that your energies are not wasted.

Spiritual gifts can be grouped into the following broad categories: Accountability Gifts, Healing Gifts, Facilitating Gifts, and Visionary Gifts. Which area do most of your gifts fit into? Does this provide insight into your calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.

Creative Ability is a Facilitating Gift.



Deliverance

Deliverance can be a confusing topic. Various denominations define related terms differently. For the purpose of this discussion, deliverance is NOT exorcism. Instead, the following components may be present: confidential discussion, time for confession, prayer, and fasting.

Follow-up and a mentoring relationship, including the possibility of counseling with a Christian professional, may be necessary. Sin that has resulted in entrenched and unhealthy behaviors may require a serious commitment to bring about significant change. Christian friends, church attendance, and especially the reading of God's Word are necessary for any who are seeking genuine deliverance and victory.

All those who share Christ, and pray with or for unbelievers to be saved, are doing the work of deliverance. They are turning the lost from the dominion of Satan to God. They are inviting prayer for forgiveness of sins and for an eternal, life changing relationship with Jesus Christ.

Those who embrace deliverance as a calling and ministry take the supernatural seriously. They have an inner sense, a God-given intuition, of Satan at work in the lives of both the saved and the unsaved. They know that all unsaved persons need deliverance from sin and from oppression by satanic forces. They also know that once saved, individuals may need deliverance, not for salvation, but for freedom from evil that persists in maintaining a hold on them. Prayer for deliverance is not usually offered unless invited by a believer who recognizes that oppression or harassment by evil spirits is a component of a conflict, struggle, or suffering (Ephesians 6:12).

Those with a prior history of involvement with the occult may need special prayer for deliverance. If one's family has strong generational ties to occult beliefs and practices, deliverance and healing for damaged emotions and for the freedom to stand in Christ may be



necessary. Believers should not hold on to books or related artifacts or continue to indulge in practices used in support of their previous life.

Satan works through the consequences and hurts generated by the sin we inflict on ourselves. He also exploits childhood trauma. Children are ill equipped to understand and process trauma. Adult victims of such trauma may have confused or even absent memories. Our enemy will exploit unreasonable and misplaced emotions, gaining influence through festering wounds. Those who actively pursue deliverance as a ministry should network with one or two Christian counselors to whom they can feel confident in making a referral as part of the mentoring and follow-up process. When the need for deliverance goes unrecognized, counseling is often stymied (1 Peter 5:8).

What happens as a lost individual steps from darkness to light? What is it that we are saved from as we call upon the Savior of the universe in repentance and grief, seeking a solution to sin and exchanging spiritual estrangement for adoption into the family of God? Paul describes this moment with great eloquence in Acts 26, as he quotes Jesus Christ and describes his salvation experience. All unsaved persons, knowingly or unknowingly, overtly or passively, by intention or omission, are operating as enemies of God. Any Christian who expects to use this gift must understand and feel burdened by the reality of this concept.

Much of the sin in our lives, and especially hidden sin, results from a failure to forgive. The practice of deliverance requires spiritual maturity and a willingness to trust the sovereignty of God as we allow forgiveness to work in and through us.

All Christians can pray for deliverance, but some are gifted to do this work as a calling. A characteristic of those who most effectively use this gift is that they tend to be pragmatic. They do not jump to conclusions. An investigative bent, knowledge of God's Word, and a strong faith are necessary prerequisites. Sometimes this gift may seem like an unwelcome burden, because of the commitment to others that it requires.

Who cannot practice the ministry of deliverance?

- Those who are not disciplined and deliberate about prayer.
- Those who doubt their position and authority in Christ.
- Those who marginalize or deny the inspired Word of God.
- Those who have refused to seek forgiveness from those they have harmed or to forgive those who have harmed them.

Why is deliverance needed?

Our salvation unleashes an exciting and dynamic process of growth in Christ. We are new creatures because of his death and resurrection. However, many consequences continue to linger in our lives, including submerged trauma and hidden or addictive sins. Through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, who is called in Scripture the "comforter" and the "teacher," we begin a process of being equipped to serve. We can embrace this process or resist it, but now that we have the Holy Spirit living within our hearts, we cannot utterly reject it. When believers have no joy in Christ, when they resist the disciplines of the faith and refuse to grow and change, then the possibility of a need for deliverance should be explored. God's desire is that we be fully equipped to recognize and embrace a unique and "holy calling," through a personal



relationship with Jesus Christ. This process of being equipped will not end until we arrive in heaven and “the day dawns and the morning star rises in [our] hearts” (2 Peter 1:19).

Who needs Deliverance? (Some, but not all)

- Those who have been involved with the occult, false gods, or idolatry.
- Those who have consulted witch doctors or mediums.
- Those who have sought meditative, self-hypnotic altered states of consciousness.
- Those who have consulted healers or spiritual leaders associated with pagan religions, including eastern religions and cults.
- Christians who have partnered with any pseudo-Christian or pagan religion (all of which have a demonic presence behind the origins of worship).
- Those who have indulged in reading horoscopes, tarot cards, or any other such activity.
- Those who have been involved with channeling or curses.
- Those who experience persistent generational patterns of repetitive sin or tragedy that seem to stalk their family, and especially when early or premature death is a factor.
- Those who are in bondage to superstitions or ritualistic behavior.
- Those who are systematically tortured by past sins and damaging self talk related to what God has already forgiven.
- Some with unexplained illnesses that can not be diagnosed and who have not responded to legitimate medical treatment by credentialed medical professionals.
- Those who have suffered trauma associated with satanic ritual abuse.
- Some victims of violence and/or childhood trauma or abuse.

Those who pray for deliverance need to learn far more than this brief description can offer; it is not intended to be anything more than a brief overview of a few of the chief components related to this ministry. There is a need for those called to do this work to embrace their calling since so few churches recognize or offer legitimate help in this area.

Knowledge of God’s Word is important to the development of this gift. There are various applications for this gift. Paired with intercession and faith, this gift could have a strong prayer component related to spiritual warfare. Make a careful study of your companion gifts and pray for clarity in regard to God’s call upon your life. If you are lacking the gift of discernment, this is probably an area of interest and not a spiritual gift.

Spiritual gifts can be grouped into the following broad categories: Accountability Gifts, Healing Gifts, Facilitating Gifts, and Visionary Gifts. Which area do most of your gifts fit into? Does this provide insight into your calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.

Deliverance is a Visionary Gift.



Discernment

Persons with the gift of discernment use intuition balanced by knowledge of Scripture to spot a disingenuous person or false teaching, especially when the body of Christ is threatened. Some persons with a spiritual gift of discernment may be called to a deliverance ministry.

Study and pray over your companion gifts for a more individual application. For example, often the gift of giving is paired with that of discernment. This seems entirely logical since there are many competing interests for our dollars, and many people try to profit from fundraising pleas.

Those who develop this gift might know when someone is claiming power that only belongs to God. Throughout history the church has needed to be on guard against false teachers and false teaching. Those who have the companion gift of knowledge are adept at discerning falsehood. For this reason, they are needed in the church to distinguish sometimes very subtle errors in teaching Scripture that pervert the intent of God's Word.

There are many examples in Scripture that teach us about this gift. Barnabas exercised his spiritual gift of discernment shortly after Paul was blinded during his encounter with the risen Savior on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:26–28). Although he had no more objective evidence than the other believers, Barnabas used his gift of discernment to investigate for himself. Despite prevailing opinion and opposition, he facilitated Paul's acceptance as a true believer. In doing this he displayed courage in the face of risk. He also assisted in Paul's future ministry to the gentiles by defending him and speaking the truth about Paul's deliverance.

In the same way, "discerners" are often called to be investigators. They balance the gift of discernment with knowledge of Scripture and stay open to God's leading through prayer. They understand whether a person or claim is from Jesus Christ, from Satan, or egotistically centered on man's agenda.

People who have this ability sometimes wonder how they have arrived at certain conclusions before others. They question their right to judge, which is especially undermined by a culture steeped in situational ethics. Your gift requires you to be courageous and brave. Pray for sensitivity to the Holy Spirit, your teacher and comforter. Humble yourself before God in prayer, understanding that you may sometimes be wrong and that only God is infallible. Above all, be disciplined to study and know God's Word.

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Discernment is an Accountability Gift.



Evangelism

Evangelists reap what others have sowed. Many saints will faithfully persist in prayer and scatter seeds through their various gifts, but evangelists will arrive on the scene just at that juncture when the Holy Spirit is about to infuse a lost soul with saving grace.

Acts 8:26–39 gives us an inspiring example of the gift of evangelism. Evangelists are often prompted to witness to strangers in impromptu circumstances. Evangelists must develop sensitivity to these inner promptings, inspired by God.



Evangelists share the gospel with the unsaved in such a way that men and women are brought to the foot of the Cross in repentance, seeking forgiveness of sins and a personal relationship with a living and holy Savior. These persons never tire of delivering the same clear and simple message of Jesus Christ crucified and sinners saved through faith. They have the ability to speak to all persons, regardless of status or lack thereof, about the joys of knowing Christ juxtaposed with the deadly consequence of rejecting him.

Those who actively use this gift may have the experience of altering their plans due to inner promptings from the Holy Spirit. They will converse with strangers or make unplanned hospital or home visits. Preachers with this gift might alter a planned sermon because of a special sensitivity from the Holy Spirit for the souls that God has placed before them. If you are not a preacher you will have similar experiences of sharing Christ, sometimes in circumstances you have never imagined. For you, sharing Christ is a joy, and your faith sustains you through opposition. You trust God and not your own efforts.

Because there is great spiritual opposition to the exercise of your gift, you will benefit from joining a committed prayer group. If you have this gift and have not often used it, join a prayer group and attend on a regular basis. Ask God to make you alert and sensitive to those opportunities (divine appointments) to share Christ (2 Timothy 4:1–2).

Evangelists may be called, on many occasions, to share the message of salvation without knowing the outcome. The invitation has been given, but the person has declined the opportunity to trust Christ. Many evangelists will be surprised, when they get to heaven, to meet the “strangers” whose lives they have eternally impacted. Evangelists should continue to share Christ as the Holy Spirit leads, without giving in to discouragement. God calls you to faithfully implement your gift, entrusting the eventual outcome to God. Your blessings are many.

Circumstances will conspire to keep you from exercising this gift. You need people around you who will support your burden for sharing Christ. Be intentional about using this gift. Beware of self-talk and self-doubt that impede your best intentions to share Christ. It may seem easier to share Christ with strangers than with loved ones. Become comfortable in telling your personal salvation story.

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calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.*

Evangelism is a Visionary Gift.



Exhortation

Many Christian professional or lay counselors have the gift of exhortation, which has sometimes been called the gift of encouragement. Those with the gift of exhortation have the special ability to offer a rebuke or challenge in such a way that others are inspired to change. They can also encourage those who are despondent or struggling to persevere in their faith, offering the hope of Christ in dealing with life's difficulties. Others often confide in them; if they can keep a confidence and exercise healthy boundaries for themselves and others, they can have an effective and powerful ministry to the body of Christ. For this reason knowledge of Scripture is important so that they can share advice that is inspired from God's Word.



Persons with this gift sense when others are discouraged. They are sensitive to the frustrations of others, especially when self-doubt or damaging self-talk is an issue. At these times, exhorters are burdened to pray and often have companion gifts of faith and intercession. Exhorters are adept at identifying the causal impetus for change. Preparation and knowledge are prerequisites for effective ministry. It is also important to understand your authority in Christ to implement this gift, despite prevailing opinions or constraints of political correctness.

You are interested in the motivations of others and value sincerity and honesty in your interactions. If you decide to fully exercise this gift, others will seek you out because you are not inclined to be superficial. In fact you become impatient and even suspicious when others offer thoughtless advice, because you understand the significance of extending God's love and truth to hurting persons.

Others know and sense your attentive concern. Sincerity invites trust, and so those who need the truth seek after your advice. You have a talent for sharing yourself in such a way that persons are inspired to change or to persevere despite conflict and obstacles. Although you may not always be appreciated, you are the person with a talent for saying the right thing at the right time so that God's people can be victorious. You dispense hope and healing, and in the process your own life is touched by that love from God that you so willingly share.

Caution: Let your advice be firmly centered in God's wisdom. Because others are drawn to you, it will be important for you to set healthy and appropriate boundaries. You must also avoid becoming overly involved in the lives of others. Because your advice must be firmly rooted in Scripture, you need to read and study God's Word, seeking depth of understanding. Don't take credit for what God can accomplish through your gifts.

Many apologists/teachers have the gift of exhortation. Those with the gift of prophecy may also have this gift. Make a study of your companion gifts to learn more about your calling. If companion gifts are weak, set about studying Scripture in order to grow in your faith so that this gift can be fully operational, with a friendship/counseling application. Exhorters can help others understand concepts of healing through forgiveness in Jesus Christ. Seek this healing for yourself first if you harbor personal wounds or sin related to forgiveness.

When you feel inclined to reach out to someone you don't know, don't be afraid. Your gift is much needed and others are hungry for God's love exercised through your gift of exhortation and encouragement. Look for opportunities to help others either reaffirm their faith or come to new faith in Jesus Christ.

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calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.*

Exhortation is an Accountability Gift.



Faith

Corrie Ten Boom wrote the following description of faith: "Faith sees the invisible, believes the unbelievable, and receives the impossible."

The Christian life does not exist without faith, and while God has allotted a measure of faith to all his children, he has given this powerful force in greater measure to some (Romans 12:3). It



is our faith in God that gives us authority in Christ to heal, pray, and to live a godly life firmly fixed in the center of his will.

The exercise of faith through prayer or interaction with those around us must be accompanied by love. Love is the characteristic that differentiates true faith from false religions or individuals (1 Corinthians 13:2). Faith is that valuable assurance of God's sovereign will and purpose despite overwhelming odds and against all logic.

Persons with this gift trust Jesus Christ with great certainty, which allows you to see his hand and purpose in circumstances that baffle others. You do not need to know everything in order to trust. Trusting God is part of who you are. In trusting God, through the mystery of faith, you can become a great prayer warrior, and it is likely that you have the companion gift of intercession.

The prophet Daniel is an example of a man who possessed the gift of faith. Many of his prayers were prophetic in nature, and this ability to pray in the spirit is a characteristic of prayer rooted in the power of faith. Daniel never saw the majority of his prayers answered during his lifetime, and yet we have proof in Scripture that many came true after his death, while we still await the fulfillment of others. Like Daniel, your faith allows you to persist in prayer despite lack of immediate answers. Your gift of faith is a rock that can sustain ministry, change lives, and alter events.

Individuals with this gift communicate great hope and comfort to others in the midst of storms, conflicts, trials, and suffering. Whatever your companion gifts, faith will enhance them all. Faith is a powerful supernatural force that supports ministry, opposes evil, draws the lost to Christ, and confirms God's will in others. Those with this gift often feel the prompting of the Holy Spirit to reach out to others, even strangers, offering encouragement and prayer. You are especially capable of forming genuine, long lasting friendships. Your faith trusts in the power of the Holy Spirit to transform the most sin burdened life.

Those with the spiritual gift of faith communicate optimism in the power of God to work in all circumstances. You are quick to point those who are disillusioned and weary back to the Cross, reminding others of God's unfailing love. In this you are the friend that is needed at pivotal times.

Your faith is meant to be a beacon of light to other Christians and the lost. Be intentional about exercising your gifts. Take no credit for yourself because Jesus your Savior and Lord has richly blessed you for a divine reason and purpose.

In these words of Saint Augustine we sense the joy of discovering this very great truth: "Faith is to believe what you do not see; the reward of this faith is to see what you believe."

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calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.*

Faith can be a Healing Gift or a Visionary Gift.



Giving

Those with the gift of giving have a freedom from material constraints. Ownership does not determine your identity. Those with the gift of giving live with the underlying awareness that life is temporary and are more firmly focused on eternity than others are.

Those with this gift have a special responsibility to be intentional about stewardship. It may be that you have a natural talent for stewardship or that this is another spiritual gift. Possessions and riches hold less temptation for you. For this very reason, you must be connected to ministry and stay open to God's call to support his work.

Another avenue for this gift is in inspiring others to give. You can do this better than others because you long to give in the same way. You derive great joy in being part of a successful ministry. You want to facilitate God's work so that the lost can be won to Christ in greater numbers, so that the poor and hurting are ministered to, and so that God's Word can go out into the world unhindered by Satan. There are many blessings associated with giving to God's kingdom. All of them have eternal significance (Luke 16:9).

Rich or poor persons can have the gift of giving. The Macedonian church was very poor and yet they sacrificed to give to the suffering saints in Jerusalem (2 Corinthians 8:2–4). This kind of giving provides a compelling testimony of God's grace. When poor persons give out of their poverty, they are a source of conviction to rich persons who give from their abundance and somehow imagine it is the same. This sacrificial giving is always a significant challenge to the body of Christ.

Those with the gift of giving usually have a companion gift of discernment. This is because giving sustains ministry. We need those who give to be smart about their giving, to investigate and pray about the best places to give. If you have this gift you may want to read the gift description for discernment. A priority in giving must be the church, which is described in Scripture as God's household and the body of Christ.

Guard against the temptation to control what you give beyond what is healthy. Develop the "grace of giving," recognized in Scripture. Ask Jesus to allow you more opportunities to give. Just as valuable may be your talent for facilitating ministry through the giving of others whom you inspire or network with for kingdom purposes. You can accomplish this by making the financial needs of a ministry known to other persons, and might even be employed in a non-profit organization or a church. Make a concerted effort to stay connected and involved in a church body.

Be discerning about your giving and about those causes you decide to network for. God tells us that during the judgment some of our acts will be burned up as useless chaff, despite our best intentions. Give to kingdom purposes and do not allow a generous heart to lead you down another path.

Spiritual gifts can be grouped into the following broad categories: Accountability Gifts, Healing Gifts, Facilitating Gifts, and Visionary Gifts. Which area do most of your gifts fit into? Does this provide insight into your calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.

Giving is a Facilitating Gift.



Healing

The most significant healing that takes place is the healing of the heart from the ravages of sin and death (Romans 5:6–8). Only Jesus Christ can give us eternal life. In this context, all Christians who share the message of salvation and point the lost to Christ participate in the ministry of healing. Since our common calling is to point the lost to Jesus Christ, there is a strong and vital healing component in the exercise of God's grace through all the spiritual gifts.

Those with the gift of healing are called to the ministry of reconciliation. What is this ministry of reconciliation/healing?

The exercise of this gift requires a commitment to intercessory prayer, frequent accountability and repentance from known and hidden sin, sometimes fasting, and an ongoing search of Scripture. It is our faith through the power of the indwelling Holy Spirit that allows us to be God's ambassadors, "as though God were making his appeal through us." Because this is true, we can pray with confidence for both physical and emotional healing.

Physical illness is made up of various symptoms, and some of these symptoms come from complex and multiple sources. A person could need "healing prayer" for physical illness, for emotional pain, or for spiritual sickness. It has long been understood that emotional pain, from whatever source, can trigger or worsen physical illness. The person who prays for the healing of another should ask God to help him or her discern what kind of healing prayer is needed.

1. God rescues the ungodly, healing them from the ravages of sin and death.
2. God heals through the work of medical professionals.
3. God heals through the body's natural immune system.
4. Our Savior heals through the prayer, fasting, and "laying on of hands" of God's believers. Sometimes he chooses to heal miraculously and instantaneously (James 5:14–15).
5. God heals through intercession. In Numbers chapter 12 Aaron's wife Miriam had leprosy, which resulted from the sin of speaking against God's servant. Moses interceded on her behalf. Also James 5:15.
6. God heals through the words we speak. Some persons are particularly gifted to speak godly words of encouragement and counsel to others.
7. God heals through the process of confession and repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10).

Throughout the gospels, Jesus and his apostles identified sickness and death as Satan's work, related to the temptation of Adam and subsequent fall of man. They were quick to offer healing prayer. Healing and other miracles were signs that pointed to the authenticity of Jesus' claim that he was the Messiah, the promised Son of God.

The ministry of healing drew people to the teachings of Christ in the first century, just as the need to be healed brings people to church today. Some seek physical healing. Some are attracted to the church in their search for God. They need healing for the heart and soul through the person of Jesus Christ. Others will cross the threshold of a church hoping to find a solution for loneliness or personal conflicts. Despite their faith they feel unfulfilled and hope to find significance and change as members of God's family. These people are drawn to those with



healing gifts of mercy, faith, intercession, and hospitality. They need to be taught, counseled, or befriended. If we can be deliberate about using our healing gifts we will have a truly worthwhile and needed ministry.

Sometimes God will choose to heal miraculously and instantaneously, but more often he works through a process that includes medical intervention. Those with the gift of healing have a companion gift of faith. Our need for healing draws us closer to the person of Jesus Christ, as we learn what it means to depend on him and call him “Father.”

Many imagine a healing ministry in the context of emotionalism and manipulation or believe that the miracles described in Scripture are not applicable for today. Others believe that we should demand instant healing from God, and if healing doesn’t come as we expect, something is wrong with us. Making a study of this gift allows us to bring clarity. A commitment to intercessory prayer and a deep abiding faith in God’s sovereign right to work as he chooses is a necessary component of exercising the gift of healing. Healing takes place through the power of the Triune God and in the name of Jesus Christ. Healing comes by no other name (including that of angels). God allows suffering (Psalm 119:71), and our suffering will often point others to Jesus Christ. How we view suffering is significant to our Christian walk (1 Peter 2:20–21).

Every kind of illness can be traced to the fall of man in the Garden of Eden. The kind of sorrow that leads to repentance (2 Corinthians 7:10–11) is contrition that comes from a conviction of sin. God tells us that this kind of sorrow brings no regret. It frees us to live for Christ despite our many inadequacies. Through the healing and counseling gifts, we often assist persons through a process of being restored to Christ. In the interest of not offending people, we sometimes fail to suggest repentance, and yet this is a vital component of a healing ministry (Hebrews 12:7–13).

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Healing is a Healing Gift.



Hospitality

Persons with the gift of hospitality have a special ability to make family members, guests, or coworkers feel welcome and comfortable. Hurting persons are more likely to share their thoughts and insights when someone is exercising this gift.

Those with the gift of hospitality are sensitive to the feelings of others. They sense the emotional climate of groups and have an intuitive desire to ease tensions. They bring out the best in individuals, groups, and institutions. Those who fully develop this gift can be valuable leaders and administrators. They are astute observers of human nature and intuitively sense the underlying dynamics around them. When a change is needed or a different response is called for, they may be the first to notice and are quick to respond. This gift can be a powerful force for Christ in breaking down barriers and generating a spirit of fellowship and cooperation.

Those with this gift can be effective peacemakers and natural diplomats. The application for this gift may change with your life circumstances, so stay sensitive to how God may be calling you.



Persons with this gift can host small or large groups, welcome visiting missionaries, and support the efforts of others in the exercise of their gifts. In fact, every small group or Sunday school class needs someone with this gift to help create an inviting and caring atmosphere where participants can feel safe to share honestly. The potential of this gift to bring healing is significant.

Do people confide in you? This is often the case because brothers and sisters with this gift are especially warm and genuine in their personal interactions. Persons who may struggle under a personal burden feel “at home” and comfortable in your presence. Exercise your gift of hospitality in cooperation with your companion gifts. Seek that unique application that is part of your divine calling to bring healing to the body of Christ (Romans 12:11–13).

Those with this gift stand out in the secular workplace for their genuine and caring spirit. Look for opportunities to model the love of Christ to those who are unsaved or hurting. You have a divinely appointed ability to influence the secular work place, to heal hurts, and facilitate God’s plan.

Take this natural, God-given ability seriously and apply it strategically as a gift from your Savior. Make a conscious effort to be worthy of the trust that others place in you when they ask your advice, confide an issue, or depend on you to facilitate ministry. Think beyond the narrow definition of the word and consider the many ways this gift can be utilized in your daily walk with Jesus Christ. As your path intercepts those of family, strangers, friends, or acquaintances, consider the need of others to feel significant and affirmed. You are especially equipped to model the love of Jesus Christ.

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calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.*

Hospitality is a Healing Gift.



Intercession

Nothing happens in the kingdom of God without prayer, and because of prayer great and marvelous wonders are accomplished through believers. God desires, above all, a personal relationship with us, and through this special gift of intercession, you can develop that.

Intercessors may have the experience of being wakened from sleep to pray. They feel a supernatural burden to petition God for purposes and people not intimately known to them, and yet the Holy Spirit gives words and imparts knowledge that is sometimes surprising (Romans 8:26–27).

You feel a great burden for the unsaved, for those who are emotionally wounded, for the sick, and for those in the midst of spiritual battle. Feeling this burden is only the beginning for those who embrace this gift. Practicing intercession as a way of life will change, grow, and mature the character of the inner person. E. M. Bounds writes: “Our praying advances in power just as much as it rectifies the life. A prayerful life will grow in purity and devotion to God.”

You have the ability to pray for extended periods of time. You are called to set aside time for the relational significance of interacting with your Savior through prayer. If you ignore God’s call to pray, none of your gifts can be fully developed.



It is said that intercessors see more frequent and faster answers to prayer. This statement is misleading. Because intercessors pray more often, they are more likely to pray within the scope of God's will as he lays a burden or a call upon their heart and mind.

Above all, remember that your gift of intercession must be intentional and disciplined. Imagine yourself a soldier in the army of God. Victory has already been determined, but because of sin, many battles remain and lots of blood will be shed. You are among the frontline troops, honored for your bravery and courage. Your prayers affect the outcome of many bloody and fierce battles to defend by faith the purposes and will of a holy God, against the very real and utterly malevolent forces of evil. Your gift of intercession is identified as an important piece of battle equipment in the "full armor of God" (Ephesians 6:10–20).

Intercessors have great faith and pray in expectation of a godly outcome. This allows you to thank God in advance for his answers. Those who are committed to intercession develop an awareness of the supernatural components of faith that others may miss. Daniel is an example of a powerful intercessor. Many answers to his prayers came within his lifetime, but even more were realized after he had gone home to be with the Lord. Intercessors who develop their gift have the divinely inspired potential to pray prophetically for God's purposes.

You may want to make a study of the Book of Daniel, in particular Daniel 9:20–23 and 10:12–14. Through the Book of Daniel, we have a glimpse of the unseen spiritual warfare that is affected by prayer and especially by disciplined and committed prayer intercessors.

When we intercede in prayer, we are not alone. We seek the leading of the Holy Spirit. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ. Our prayers rise like incense as we kneel before the throne of grace. Angels and departed saints pray with us in the general assembly of heaven.

Caution: You must be sensitive to your conscience and not reluctant to ask for God's forgiveness or admit when you are wrong. Notice how many prayers recorded in Scripture begin with words of repentance. You must also be sensitive to circumstances that may conspire to keep you from prayer. Prayer is so very powerful that evil forces oppose it whenever possible.

Spiritual gifts can be grouped into the following broad categories: Accountability Gifts, Healing Gifts, Facilitating Gifts, and Visionary Gifts. Which area do most of your gifts fit into? Does this provide insight into your calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.

Intercession is a Healing or Visionary gift.



Knowledge

Those with the gift of knowledge are drawn to study God's Word. They are able to analyze Scripture and can clarify the intent of God's Word. An important role of this gift is to teach rich spiritual truths with depth and insight. Those with the gift of knowledge can also point out subtle errors of interpretation that might allow the God's Word to be abused or misapplied.

It is the Holy Spirit, our teacher and counselor, that reveals spiritual truth to believers (1 Corinthians 2:12–13). Paul makes the point in 1 Corinthians 2:1–5 that unless the Holy Spirit is the source of the message, no amount of learning or persuasive words will matter.

When knowledge is referred to in Scripture, it culminates in wisdom. Charles Stanley says that knowledge is acquired, but wisdom is given. Knowledge is acquired and may or may not lead to wisdom. The godly wisdom spoken about throughout Scripture has a supernatural influence in



our lives. This wisdom is the outcome, the point, and the purpose of acquiring knowledge from God's Word.

All spiritual gifts need to be firmly rooted in scriptural truths. Those with the gift of knowledge seek understanding and spiritual maturity (1 Peter 2:2). Knowledge is not necessarily accompanied by the gift of wisdom. God invites us to pray for wisdom as we study his Word and describes this gift as being a vital, active component of genuine faith (Proverbs 4:7).

God's power is made perfect in our weakness. Wisdom comes, not merely from the study of God's Word, but from frequent repentance and a perpetual awareness of our need for him. A willingness to be obedient and a commitment to honesty allow us to step aside as God's Holy Spirit imparts healing, supernatural power, and wisdom from God's immutable truths. God makes clear that knowledge for the sake of knowledge is useless (1 Corinthians 1:20).

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Knowledge is an Accountability Gift.



Leadership

Good leaders inspire others and articulate a vision of what could be. Fully effective leaders stay centered on Scripture as the foundation of all they seek to accomplish for God's kingdom. Leaders naturally inspire others to imagine success. They understand that success can only come by many parts accomplishing many tasks, and so they bring together multiple talents and strengths for a common purpose.

Leaders communicate effectively and can break down challenges into more easily accomplished parts, which they then delegate and oversee. They create an environment that nourishes creativity and is unafraid of innovation. Good leaders notice when others are spinning their wheels or likely to become unproductive, and are not afraid to change course or require a different model as they redefine goals and realign thinking.

Leaders inspire a unity of purpose so that when change is needed, others trust. Integrity is the watchword of all good leaders. They model the way by practicing those same qualities they prize in others. In doing this they lead by example, creating an atmosphere that values progress, builds confidence, and provides momentum, even as they inspire others to reach their full potential.

Leaders take the time to recognize the gifts of others, delegating responsibility with accountability at various levels. They do not have authority to abuse others, taking improper advantage of their position. At some point they will stand before God to give an account of how their leadership hindered or furthered God's purposes.

Leaders need to have a humble appreciation of their need to stay accountable to God. Equally important is a responsibility to view their position over others as no accident. Persons who have leadership as a spiritual gift, rather than a talent, have a strong sense of fairness. They are willing to share the limelight and remain committed to a personal standard of honesty. Because good leaders are naturally loved and respected, they can share Christ with great effectiveness and should not hesitate to do so.



As with all gifts, we can shirk or misuse our strengths, allowing them to become weaknesses manipulated by our Enemy. Leaders in the secular workplace must stay faithful to Christian principles despite challenges and temptations to do otherwise. The very qualities that make for an effective leader can be a powerful force for Christ in any environment. Those with the spiritual gift of leadership must remain aware of the high standard God will hold them to. God has entrusted to leaders the progress and accomplishments of his children. Leaders must not take for granted the power they have been given to influence outcomes, efficiency, and progress, as well as the personal accomplishments and growth of individuals and organizations.

Make a careful study of your companion gifts. This may provide direction and insight into the uniqueness of your calling. If you have this gift and are not in a position to use it, begin praying for your Savior to mature your faith and develop your companion gifts so that you can be fully used to impact his kingdom. Remember also that many gifts of leadership are needed in volunteer service to the church and other Christian non-profit agencies. Allow God to use your gifts in surprising and creative ways for his glory. Make a careful study of the life of Christ and seek to emulate his qualities of leadership.

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Leadership is a Facilitating Gift.



Mercy

This valuable spiritual gift empowers God's children to model the unconditional love of Jesus Christ. Those with this gift demonstrate true empathy (sharing the feelings and hurts of others). Mercy is greatly enhanced by cheerfulness (Romans 12:8b). The root of this cheerfulness is great faith, which trusts optimistically in the power of God's promises for hurting persons. Because you possess such faith, you can see beyond the constraints of sin and suffering to glimpse the eternally blessed possibilities. Your willingness to communicate the joy of your faith to those who have lost hope is significant.

You see beneath the façade of a brave front. For this reason it is important to trust those inclinations which prompt you to reach out to others. An encouraging word or act of kindness from you, the cup of cold water (Matthew 10:42), is powerful and significant, since it is often the gift of mercy that makes a difference in the life of another.

You understand emotions of helplessness, isolation, fear, and anger, and can offer great hope of change to others. The empathy you feel usually comes from personal suffering, so you can offer spiritual advice for those undergoing similar difficulties. Those who are most impacted by your gift are described in Scripture as the physically ill, those possessed by demons, the mentally impaired, the lame, the dumb, the lepers, as well as those who are spiritually dead in their trespasses and sins. Like Jesus, you are "moved to compassion" for all who suffer and for all who are lost.

Mercy is a Healing Gift, and through this gift you can offer the hope of change to those who are most burdened by sin. You are also "response" oriented. You want to see solutions realized in the lives of others, and may sometimes strive with an individual beyond what is healthy. Learning when to retreat in prayer and when to be less available requires discernment. On the



other hand, your desire to “never give up” is a picture of God’s desire that none of his children should perish (Matthew 18:14).

One of your greatest assets is your ability to love the sinner, inviting repentance and confession. You have a gift for doing this without devaluing the person. You are sometimes called to say hard, but true, words as you challenge others to change. The love that God has planted in your heart shines forth in genuine faith.

You possess powerful qualities of empathy and compassion that draw hurting persons to you. For this reason you need to fully understand when “help” is a hindrance, giving yourself permission to set limits without guilt. In doing this, ask the Holy Spirit to give you an additional gift of discernment or become accountable to a friend or spouse who has this gift. In the full operation of this gift, you model the principal of loving your brother or sister as yourself. Jesus identified this as the second most important commandment and very like the first, since only through the work of the Holy Spirit can we be instruments of true love (Matthew 22:37–39).

Hurting persons are less likely to be defensive in your company. You share Christ with courage. When others are daunted by the challenge to love the unlovely, you step forth since you are not intimidated by suffering or sin. Mother Teresa said about mercy: “You can not comfort the afflicted without afflicting the comfortable.” As you exercise the gift of mercy, you might at times challenge others to love, to risk, and to give more. You may also decide that you will strive with someone over time, persisting in love, but remembering that love fails without honesty.

Your overwhelming desire is to see hurting persons saved and rescued. The influence of your gift greatly impacts ministry at all levels, and in an increasingly narcissistic culture, you are needed more than ever before.

Caution: You may have a tendency to be codependent. Some have had the experience of failing needy persons by being too enmeshed—especially with loved ones. Understand your boundaries and the limitations of your responsibility in regard to the emotional and physical safety of yourself and others. Resist the temptation to rely on feelings, turning to Scripture as your authority. Maintain perspective by understanding where your first responsibilities lie, staying accountable to a spouse or friend.

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Mercy is a Healing Gift.



Prophecy

The gift of prophecy edifies the body of Christ, which is the church (1 Corinthians 14:1–4). True prophets have a sensitive conscience, which calls them to model godly love. Many are called into full-time Christian service. They have an urgent sense of God’s timing in the life of sinners and feel genuine grief when moral consequences impact the body of Christ. Read the story of the prophet Micaiah in 1 Kings 22. True prophets point the lost to Christ and seek to lovingly restore those Christians who have strayed.



God gives every true prophet a platform. This platform may exist in the Christian or secular arena and is always a voice for righteousness. Prophets are called to be defenders of truth and need a companion gift of discernment. It is not uncommon for them to feel ambivalent over potential risks demanded by their calling. When others are confused, they have crisp, decisive insight and can convey God's intent with authority. This persona of authority is significant and can be abused if not surrendered to the Holy Spirit.

The exercise of this gift is extremely valuable when social norms and biblical values are held in low esteem and are under attack by social and political agendas. Prophets of old spoke the truth and had a finely tuned awareness of right and wrong. They boldly and with great eloquence confronted kings and common citizens, as well as the religious establishments of their day, leaving us an indelible record of how God views sin and false religion: as a caustic and deadly agent capable of polluting the generations.

Modern prophets are no different. They are alarmed when false teaching threatens to pollute God's Word, or when those in positions of authority abuse power or privilege. Today we have the biblical record, and so prophets have no need to receive divine revelation, predicting future events. They are, however, visible in calling attention to social ills, injustice, and sin and predicting consequences as they agitate for change. Old Testament prophets were often not appreciated or fully understood until after future events or consequences had confirmed the message they were called to deliver. Sometimes this occurred fairly soon, but sometimes not until long after the prophet had died. We have many examples of this principle being played out in the events of history via the inspired words of Old Testament prophets. Because we have God's Word, prophecy today is not about predicting future events, but about having the discernment to warn against the obvious consequences of sin. A more contemporary example can be seen in the writings of Christian apologist Francis Schaeffer, whose warnings and predictions have found fruition in the late 20th and now the 21st century.

Those who choose to embrace and exercise this gift are often rugged individualists who have a strong internal compass, allowing them to rely less on outside influences and more on the voice of the Holy Spirit.

God has set some aside as modern-day prophets. Through the courage and clarity of these individuals we are challenged to live as we should. We are inspired to right wrongs for the sake of Christ and to radically change our lives in order to serve him in those dark places that God is most needed. The Holy Spirit has anointed true prophets to communicate in powerful and significant ways, offering us the opportunity to examine our defensiveness, repent, and change.

The test of a true Old Testament prophet was that they could never be wrong in predicting the future. This standard would certainly disqualify those television prophets who make outrageous claims, often repeated by Christians who are blinded by theatrics and manipulated by emotion. Knowledge of Scripture is an essential component of this gift being effective, since guarding against false teachings is a vital responsibility of modern-day prophets.

Prophets make effective preachers/teachers. Prophets sometimes lack worldly credentials and have come to faith out of profound brokenness. Those with this gift have insight to interpret God's will and Word with great spiritual depth. Those who exercise this gift are never comfortable or able to ignore the signs and symptoms of culture in relation to sin. This concept extends from the immediate environment to the broader societal stage. Prophets relate well to the words of Jeremiah, who describes a supernaturally blessed compulsion to speak for Christ and against evil (Jeremiah 20:9).



Paul was warned by a prophet about an upcoming trip to Jerusalem (Acts 21). The prophet Agabus most certainly knew that Paul's trip would be dangerous since the persecution of Christians in that city was no secret. Agabus communicated a divine warning which armed Paul more specifically for the task ahead. As you read the passage you will notice that Agabus spoke against prevailing opinion. While others wanted Paul to stay safe, Agabus had the courage to convey God's message. The message of a prophet will often evoke conflict. Jesus said, "Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword" (Matthew 10:34). It is often the task of a prophet to wield that sword.

Prophets have divine insight to pray within the will of God and confirm or reject prevailing opinion as God directs. Prophets attract criticism. As they teach and challenge the misconceptions of others, they can become objects of satanic opposition. The influence that prophets are called to exercise, and the territory they claim for Christ, will dismantle enemy strongholds. Prophets need the prayerful support of other believers. Many pastors exercise this gift in the church. All church members should pray for their pastor and his family.

Some believe that prophecy, as evidenced in the Old Testament, is no longer a gift for today. Others confuse the gift of prophecy with that of knowledge or wisdom. Still others think of prophecy in the narrow context of predicting future events. In any case, prophecy is under debate in many Christian circles, with some ascribing it too much significance and others too little. Like all gifts, that of prophecy balances and contributes needed directives to the body of Christ.

Make a careful study of your companion gifts. Some with this spiritual gift may be lawyers, writers, teachers, pastors, missionaries, or evangelists. Prophets are sometimes in the secular workplace standing in the gap for Christ: defending the helpless and the weak, righting wrongs, and deconstructing evil. Prophets speak Christ crucified and sinners saved; they predict future events, call attention to false teaching, point the finger at destructive societal and cultural trends, and always call the lost to the foot of the Cross, proclaiming the gospel with courage and insight.

Knowledge of Scripture is essential to developing the gift of prophecy and guards against a potential to abuse God's intent for this gift (1 Thessalonians 5:19–22).

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Prophecy is a Visionary Gift.



Service

"This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, men will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!" (2 Corinthians 9:12–15).



These verses describe the great impact of the spiritual gift of service on the body of Christ. Those who possess this gift are humble in nature. They do not seek attention or praise from men and are content to be about God's work.

It is true that too often faithful acts of service go unrecognized as the work of Christ is supported in many areas, in diverse ways, and through willing commitments. Those with this gift have a keen sensitivity to the needs around them. They anticipate tasks, value continuity, and attend to details that others may miss. The gift of service is proactive. While the rest of us are still talking and planning, you may have stepped forward to fix and facilitate.

The gift of service has great healing potential. Through acts of kindness, you reach out to those who are in want or hurting. Those with this gift like to feel needed, especially when they know God has called them to accomplish something for his kingdom. The joy of your salvation is realized in supporting ministry, and you do not value the thanks of people over the love of your Savior. This attests to strength of character realized through your spiritual life as you work behind the scenes and feel personal satisfaction in knowing that you have played a part.

You have a servant's heart and may want to make a study of the word "servant" in the context of our being bondservants by choice through faith. There are many wonderful verses that identify us as servants of Jesus Christ, including these words of Paul: "Am I now trying to win the approval of men, or of God? Or am I trying to please men? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant of Christ" (Galatians 1:10).

Because of your obedience and loyalty to God through acts of service, people respect you and look to you as an example. You are not all "talk," but live out the reality of a genuine faith. Your humble heart is evident so that when you share your testimony, witnessing to your love of Jesus Christ, your integrity is trusted.

The church is the most obvious place where your spiritual gift of service can be utilized. If you are not already serving in some capacity in the church begin praying about what you might do. Offer your assistance in some area where your spiritual gifts are needed.

Guard the joy of your salvation. Remind yourself frequently that God's love for you is infinite and eternal. Recognize when you are tired and need a break, and be willing to change direction when the Lord speaks. The best way to hear his voice above the busyness of service is through frequent prayer. In order to know where your gift of service will be best applied, pray over and learn about your other spiritual gifts.

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Service is a Facilitating Gift.



Shepherding

It does not surprise us that in Scripture we have the best definition of a shepherd. "He tends his flock like a shepherd: he gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young" (Isaiah 40:11).

Those with a shepherd's heart care deeply for others. They are able to take on the responsibility of caring for the spiritual protection and growth of an assembly of believers. Often the gift of



shepherding is paired with a talent for leadership or may exist in combination with mercy, revealing a somewhat different application with more of a counseling focus.

Shepherds have varied responsibilities, all with practical applications. Those with this gift could “shepherd” a family, a church, a Sunday school class, a prayer group, a Bible study group, or any other small or large group where the spiritual growth of others is possible. Jesus calls himself “shepherd” and models for us the character and attributes needed for this role to be effective in the body of Christ.

Psalm 23 provides a vivid description of how God relates to us as his flock, as well as a model of vision, purpose, and tasks for those with the spiritual gift of shepherding. Of all the gifts, this one implies a serious level of commitment to prepare oneself to care for the spiritual development and welfare of other believers while evidencing the mind and heart of Jesus Christ.

The duties of a shepherd have an essential spiritual and practical application. Read and contemplate, through prayer and reflection, all these passages:

Shepherds:

- Defend the flock (1 Samuel 17:34–36; John 10:11–15).
- Water the flock (Genesis 29:2–10; John 4:10–14; 7:37–38).
- Provide rest to the flock (Jeremiah 33:12).
- Know the flock (John 10:3–5; Psalm 139:1–4).
- Secure pasture for the flock (1 Chronicles 4:39–41; Jeremiah 29:11; Isaiah 25:1).
- Search out wayward Christians, returning them to the flock (Ezekiel 34:12–16; Luke 15:4–7).
- Point the lost to Christ (John 10:7–10).

Shepherds may need to guard against overwork. If necessary, be accountable to another person for issues related to time. If making time for family, recreation, and prayer/contemplation seems impossible, and if you have difficulty delegating to others, pray about overcoming any faulty thinking.

Shepherds who have a companion gift of mercy need to consciously avoid being codependent, while shepherds with a companion gift of leadership need to avoid isolating themselves, making time for peer interaction and refreshment. All shepherds are leaders, and all shepherds need a merciful heart. The role of the spouse in keeping life balanced is particularly important for shepherds.

If shepherding is a gift to develop, it may be that you are using this gift in ways that you are not aware of. Be deliberate about equipping yourself through the study of God’s Word so that he can use your talents and abilities in ministering to the body of Christ.

Shepherds can use their gifted abilities in the secular world as long as they are intentional about mentoring fellow Christians. They can do this because of a genuine and caring spirit that draws others to them.



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Shepherding is an Accountability Gift.



Teaching

If your spiritual gift is teaching, then teaching is more than a talent or ability; it is a divine calling. Your challenge is to know and love the infallible Word of God and to proclaim it clearly and earnestly. In order to teach effectively, it is crucial that the accompanying gift of knowledge be sought and acquired (Jeremiah 9:23–24).

Teachers who are divinely called have the ability to make God's Word come alive. They communicate God's wisdom so that others can grow in their faith. They derive great satisfaction from knowing they have been used by God to assist others to mature in their understanding and appreciation of God's Word.

As you study and prepare to teach, the Holy Spirit speaks to you. Through study and teaching, you often feel you receive more blessings than you give. You can be supernaturally inspired to impart scriptural answers for the difficulties of life. Those divinely called to teach know when they are teaching in the Spirit.

Teachers require a sensitive conscience in order to see clearly when sin prevents them from being used by God. Become familiar with Psalm 51. The honesty of a good teacher enriches the lives of those he or she interacts with through the mentoring components of the teacher/pupil relationship. You are humbled as you realize there is always more to learn in the rich depths of his Word.

It is impossible to read the New Testament writings of Paul without realizing that he was a gifted teacher (Colossians 2:2–3).

Teachers must also protect God's Word from misinterpretation and fallacy. The judgment that will fall on false teachers is clearly stated in many Scripture passages, including 2 Peter 2 and James 3:1. Stay focused on speaking and teaching God's truth, even when you are invited to do otherwise. Consider the restraint of culture that may influence or inhibit our willingness to aspire to a higher standard of honesty. Study to show yourself approved. The gift of teaching requires the discipline of study and prayer. Offer your spiritual gift to an organized assembly of believers. Let your love for others communicate and nourish intellect as you point the lost to Jesus Christ and inspire believers to grow, to sacrifice, and to serve.

A byproduct of this gift being fully surrendered to Jesus Christ is acquiring the additional gift of knowledge. The gift of knowledge protects against false teaching and discerns when God's word is being perverted or manipulated. Realize your role as a warrior for Christ in the satanic arena of falsehood. Teaching and creative talents combine very well in ministering to children and teens.

Willing and gifted teachers are always needed in the body of Christ. There is no substitute for the Word of God. The temptation today is to teach too many works written by other Christian writers and utilize Scripture less and less. Teachers who are mature in their gift will dig deeply into God's Word so that the Holy Spirit can communicate through them (2 Timothy 2:15).



Spiritual gifts can be grouped into the following broad categories: Accountability Gifts, Healing Gifts, Facilitating Gifts, and Visionary Gifts. Which area do most of your gifts fit into? Does this provide insight into your calling? Expect to see your gifts fit into two or three, but not four, categories.

Teaching is an Accountability Gift.



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-[Discovering & Using Our Spiritual Gifts](#)

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[Created to Be Creative](#), Arleen Jennings www.arleenjennings.com, (Tate Publishing, 2006; ISBN-13: 9781598864410)



[Discover Your Spiritual Gifts](#), C. Peter Wagner, (Gospel Light, 2001; ISBN-13: 9780830736782)



[What's So Spiritual About Your Gifts?](#), Henry Blackaby, Mel Blackaby, (Multnomah, 2004; ISBN-13: 9781590523445)



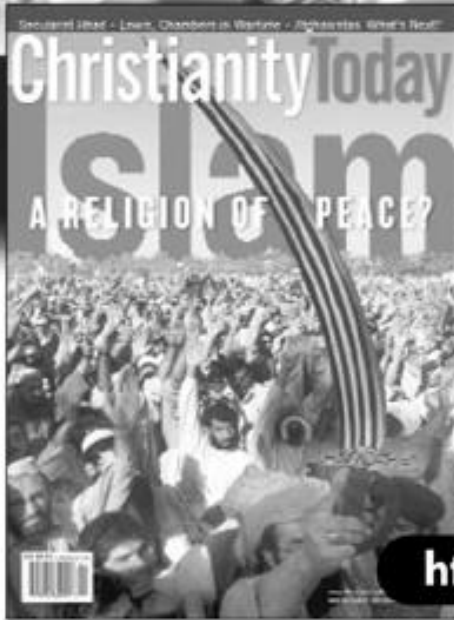
[Ministering Through Spiritual Gifts](#), Charles F. Stanley, (Thomas Nelson, 1999; ISBN-13: 9780785272878)



[Gifts: Learning a Lifestyle of Service, Pursuing Spiritual Transformation](#), John Ortberg, Laurie Pederson, Judson Poling, (Zondervan, 2000; ISBN-13: 9780310220770)



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