

# Exploring Your Spiritual Gifts

Adapted from [www.umc.org](http://www.umc.org)

The Spiritual Gifts listed below are found within the Pauline epistles to Rome, Ephesus, and Corinth (Romans 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12–13) and recognized by the first-century church. While all of life is a gift from God, these twenty Spiritual Gifts are lifted up within Scripture as the gifts of the Spirit, given specifically for the upbuilding of the body of Christ.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

The gift of administration allows a person to organize people and resources for greater efficiency, effectiveness, and success. Administrators have the natural ability to apply resources where they will do the greatest good. Administrators are good with details and are deeply aware of how all the parts of a group or organization work together to achieve their goals.

### **Reflection questions:**

- In what ways do you use your gift of administration at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement administration and enable you to increase the value and impact of your administrative gifts?
- In what ways can you improve your use and knowledge of administration?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

## **APOSTLESHIP**

The gift of apostleship compels people to reach out to new and unfamiliar groups and individuals to invite them into relationship with God and community. Apostles share the story of faith in other lands, cultures, and traditions, as well as welcoming the stranger in their own land. Apostles extend the hand of friendship to those of other generations, nations, and languages. Many apostles desire to be missionaries.

### **Reflection questions:**

- In what ways do you use apostleship at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement apostleship, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your gifts?
- In what ways can you broaden your understanding and knowledge of apostleship?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

## **COMPASSION**

The gift of compassion moves people to action on behalf of those in need. Compassion is not a simple caring about others, but such a radical caring that we have no choice but to make

sacrifices for others. Those with the gift of compassion rarely ask “Should I help,” but instead focus on how to help. Compassion makes us fundamentally aware of the Christ in others and springs from our desire to care for all of God’s creatures and creation.

**Reflection questions:**

- How do you live your gift of compassion at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement compassion, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your gift?
- In what ways can you improve your use and knowledge of compassion?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**DISCERNMENT**

Discernment is a gift of deep intuition and insight. Discerning people can separate truth from fiction and know at a visceral level when people are being honest. Deeply sensitive and “tuned in,” those with the gift of discernment are open to feelings, new ideas, and intuition as valid and credible information. Discernment is not irrational, but trans-rational—beyond empirical—knowledge.

**Reflection questions:**

- How does discernment impact your life at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement discernment, and enable you to increase the value and impact of using your gift?
- In what ways can you deepen and increase your discerning gift?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**EVANGELISM**

The gift of evangelism is the gift of faith-sharing and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to those we meet. Evangelism is primarily a one-to-one or small group experience, grounded in building relationships with others and inviting them to make a decision for Christ. Gifted evangelists do not force their faith on others, but offer relationship with God as a gift, and are ready to tell the story of God and Christ in their own lives.

**Reflection questions:**

- How do you live your gift at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement evangelism, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your faith sharing gifts?
- In what ways can you strengthen and develop the gift of evangelism?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**EXHORTATION**

The gift of exhortation is manifest in people who offer encouragement, wise counsel,

unflagging support, and empowerment. Those who exhort stay focused on helping people maximize their own potential and live from their own gifts and skills. Exhorters help people feel good about themselves, build confidence, and not grow discouraged. Often, those with the gift of exhortation make others feel good just by being present.

**Reflection questions:**

- In what ways do you use exhortation at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement exhortation, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your gift?
- In what ways can you improve and strengthen the gift of exhortation?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**FAITH**

The gift of faith is more than belief in Jesus Christ, but an abiding foundation of confidence that God works all things together for good, and that the people of God can rise above any obstacle. Faith is the bedrock upon which we build lives, congregations, and communities. People with the gift of faith hold fast to the deep conviction that no matter what we see with our eyes, we can trust the promises and plan of God.

**Reflection questions:**

- How does the gift of faith express itself at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement faith, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your gift?
- In what ways can you improve your use and knowledge of your gift?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**GIVING**

The gift of giving is the deep commitment to provide whatever resources are needed to support God's will and plan. In addition to radical generosity, those who possess the gift of giving have the uncanny ability to discover and channel new sources of money, time, and energy to needs. Money management skills, grant writing abilities, and the easy knack of asking for donations and cultivating donors are among common skills of gifted givers.

**Reflection questions:**

- In what ways do you use your gift at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement giving, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your gift?
- In what ways can you improve your use and knowledge of your gift?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

## **HEALING**

The gift of healing is not about transferring spiritual power to eliminate suffering and disease, but the ability to channel God's grace and healing love to those who suffer physical, emotional, or spiritual pain. Healers are moved to be present with those who suffer. Healers pray for those who suffer, visit those who are ill, and are usually moved to extend a hand of comfort and touch to those who are afflicted. Healers give their time and energy to offering aid and comfort to others.

### **Reflection questions:**

- How does the gift of healing express itself at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement healing, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your gift?
- In what ways can you strengthen and develop your gift?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

## **HELPING**

Helping is a gift of support and behind-the-scenes effort that make groups, families, and congregations more effective. Not everyone is gifted to lead, but many are gifted to follow and handle the tasks that are so essential, but less glamorous. Helpers love to serve others, support others, and assist others in the important work of ministry and mission. Tireless in their willingness to serve, helpers are less interested in receiving thanks and recognition than in doing good, valuable work.

### **Reflection questions:**

- In what ways do you use your gift at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement helping, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your supportive gifts?
- In what ways can you improve the use of your helping gifts?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

## **INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES**

Those who are gifted to interpret tongues help build bridges across cultural, generational, and language divides. People who possess this gift have an innate ability to learn new languages and cultural practices and can help others understand them as well. Foreign speaking people are attracted to those with this gift and feel intuitively that they will be better understood and received by interpreters. Interpretation breaks down barriers.

### **Reflection questions:**

- Where are you able to use interpretation at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement interpretation, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your interpretive gifts?

- In what ways can you improve your use and knowledge of the gift of interpretation?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

### **KNOWLEDGE**

The gift of knowledge allows people to automatically convert facts, data, and information into useful and important knowledge. People possessing this gift can learn in a variety of ways, retain what they learn, and understand how learning can be applied in meaningful and productive ways. Those gifted with knowledge have a voracious and insatiable desire to learn more, and they seek multiple avenues for deepening their understanding of God's world, God's will, and God's people.

#### **Reflection questions:**

- How do you use the gift of knowledge at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement knowledge, and maximize the value and impact of your gift?
- In what ways can you strengthen and develop your knowledge?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

### **LEADERSHIP**

The gift of leadership is a visionary and forward-looking gift that enables people to stay focused on where God might be leading us as individuals, congregations, and communities at any given time. Leaders look more to where we are going rather than where we currently are, or where we have been. Leaders motivate others to work together in ways that help them achieve more together than any could on their own. Leaders provide examples of how we should order our lives to honor and glorify God.

#### **Reflection questions:**

- In what ways do you use your gift at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement leadership, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your leadership gifts?
- In what ways can you improve your use and knowledge of your gift?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

### **MIRACLES**

The gift of miracles is not about performing miracles, but about living in the miraculous reality of God's creation. Those gifted with miracles never doubt the power and presence of God in creation and are able to help others see and believe in God's power. The gift of miracles does not focus on the extraordinary but sees the miraculous in the mundane and normal. Living in the spirit of the miraculous, people see God in nature, in relationships, in kind acts, and in the power of love.

**Reflection questions:**

- In what ways do you use your gift at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement miracles, and enable you to increase the value and impact of the miraculous in your life and the lives of others?
- In what ways can you develop your knowledge and understanding of the gift of miracles and share it with others?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**PROPHECY**

The gift of prophecy is the ability to speak God's word to others, or more appropriately to be open for God to speak God's word through us. Prophets do not predict the future but offer insight and perspective on current conditions and how things might turn out if changes aren't made. Prophets are incisive, clear, and often controversial, communicators. Prophets see things that others often don't, and they have the courage to "tell it like it ought to be."

**Reflection questions:**

- How does prophecy impact your life at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement prophecy, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your gift
- In what ways can you develop and improve the use of prophecy?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**SERVANTHOOD**

Servanthood is the gift of doing for others, sometimes to the exclusion of meeting personal needs. Servants look for ways to do for others both within and beyond the congregation and community. Servants do not choose to serve but serve from a sense of identity and call. Gifted servants never feel put-upon or taken advantage of, but see each opportunity to do for others as a way to be true to self.

**Reflection questions:**

- How do you live the servant's gift at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement servanthood, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your service?
- In what ways can you improve your use and knowledge of your gift?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**SHEPHERDING**

The gift of shepherding is the gift of mentoring and providing spiritual guidance to others to help them develop in the discipleship and faith formation. Shepherds take an active and individualized interest in the life of faith of others. Shepherds share from their own faith journey to make the way easier for others. Shepherds are good at asking provocative questions,

recommending appropriate resources and experiences, and helping people find their own way to the next level of their development.

**Reflection questions:**

- In what ways are you a shepherd at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement shepherding, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your mentoring gifts?
- In what ways can you improve as a shepherd and guide for others?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**TEACHING**

The gift of teaching allows people to transform data and information into life-changing knowledge. Teachers do not have to stand in front of a class to teach. Often gifted teachers communicate best in informal, one-on-one settings. Teachers have the uncanny knack of helping people learn effortlessly. People internalize and retain the knowledge and learning they receive from gifted teachers. Good teachers transform more than they inform.

**Reflection questions:**

- In what ways are you a teacher at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement teaching, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your gift?
- In what ways can you broaden and improve your use and knowledge of teaching?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

**TONGUES**

The gift of tongues is a communication gift that allows people to speak foreign languages and convey concepts they never formally studied. People with this gift “pick up” the ability to communicate across barriers of language, culture, age, or physical limitation (some people with the gift of tongues work with the deaf or blind). The identification of the gift of tongues as a “secret” prayer language is often misunderstood. An individual manifesting the gift in this way must always be paired with someone who has the gift of interpretation of tongues. These gifts are given for the upbuilding of the body of Christ.

**Reflection questions:**

- In what ways do you use your gift at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement tongues, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your communication gifts?
- In what ways can you improve your use and knowledge of your gift?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?

## **WISDOM**

The gift of wisdom allows people to understand deeper meaning and apply knowledge, beliefs, and experience to everyday situations. Wise, gifted individuals make connections and help other make them as well — to understand the implications of our beliefs and actions. Those gifted with wisdom often understand root causes of disagreements, conflict, and barriers to growth and development. People with wisdom help others understand and clarify options to make good decisions.

### **Reflection questions:**

- How do you live your gift of wisdom at home, at work, in relationships with friends?
- What other gifts best complement wisdom, and enable you to increase the value and impact of your gift?
- In what ways can you develop and increase in gift of wisdom?
- Where do other people see evidence of this gift in your life?