

# What are spiritual gifts?

## **NT passages on spiritual gifts:**

### Romans 12:3-8

- prophecy (in proportion to faith)
- ministry (use in ministering)
- teaches (use in teaching)
- exhorts (use in exhortation)
- gives (with liberality)
- leads (with diligence)
- mercy (with cheerfulness)

### 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

- word of wisdom
- word of knowledge
- faith
- gifts of healings
- working of miracles
- prophecy
- discerning of spirits
- different kinds of tongues
- interpretation of tongues

### 1 Corinthians 12:27-31

- first apostles
- second prophets
- third teachers
- miracles
- gifts of healings
- helps
- administrations
- varieties of tongues

### 1 Corinthians 14

- prophesy
- tongues
- interpretation of tongues
- revelation
- knowledge
- teaching
- psalms (song worship)
- interpretation (of any gift)

### Ephesians 4:7-13

- apostles
- prophets
- evangelists
- pastors
- teachers

## **List:**

1. Apostles - office
2. Prophets - office
3. Teachers - office
4. Miracles
5. Healings
6. Helps
7. Administrations
8. Prophecy
9. Tongues
10. Interpretation of tongues
11. Ministry
12. Teaching
13. Exhortation
14. Giving
15. Leading
16. Mercy
17. Wisdom
18. Knowledge
19. Faith
20. Discernment of spirits
21. Revelation
22. Psalms
23. Interpretation (of any gift)
24. Evangelists - office
25. Pastors - office

## **Important Notes:**

- These passages are non-exhaustive lists, there may or may not be more gifts that are unlisted. It is more important to freely serve with all natural and spiritual gifts than to feel restricted by the list.
- Numbers 1-10 are in hierarchy order based on authority in the church and the opportunity to love others through the gift, the rest are in order of appearance in scripture.

## **Different views on spiritual gifts:**

### 1. Underemphasis:

- A. All gifts once existed, but all have ceased to exist.
- B. The gifts are not abilities, they are only ministries in the church.

### 2. Overemphasis:

- A. One or more of the gifts are necessary to prove salvation.
- B. Practicing the gifts in an uncontrolled or disorderly manner.

### 3. Most biblical view:

- A. All gifts are still in use today, there is no indication otherwise in scripture. \*exceptions listed below
- B. All gifts are abilities that are used in church ministry.  
Spiritual gifts are distinct from natural gifts like physical and mental abilities, which are also from God.
- C. None of the gifts are necessary to prove salvation.  
But all believers have one or more gifts and are responsible to use them. Gifts can be temporary or continuous.
- D. The gifts are to be used in a controlled and orderly manner.  
The desire for the gifts should be motivated by love, for the purpose of equipping and edifying the church.

\*The office of the Apostles has ceased because no one meets the Acts 1:21-26 criteria of seeing Jesus in the flesh and being chosen by Him to be an apostle. But apostleship still exists in the sense of church planting and bringing the gospel to unreached people.

\*The office of the Prophets has ceased because Revelation 22:18 does not authorize additional prophetic revelation. But the gift of prophesy still exists, both foretelling (explaining the future) and forthtelling (explaining the present), but it doesn't carry the authority of Scripture or Old Testament prophets who would speak "thus says the Lord." The gift of revelation still exists as well, revelation meaning disclosing of the truth of God.

## Spiritual Gifts Definitions

**Administration** - The divine strength or ability to organize multiple tasks and groups of people to accomplish these tasks. ([Luke 14:28-30](#), [Acts 6:1-7](#), [1 Corinthians 12:28](#), [1 Chronicles 18:14](#))

- Detail oriented Develops strategies to reach a goal
- Can bring order out of chaos
- Action oriented
- Can build a successful system to bring about effective ministry
- Efficient/Thorough/Organized/Conscientious

**Discernment of Spirits** - The divine strength or ability to spiritually identify and distinguish Spirits and spiritual activity. ([1 Corinthians 12:10](#), [2 Kings 6:17](#), [Matthew 16:21-23](#), [Acts 5:1-11](#))

- We see this in Scripture as visibly seeing spirits
- or being able to identify the source of supernatural occurrences
- or awareness of spiritual activity
- or being able to know the content of someone's spirit to avoid deception

**Evangelism** - The divine strength or ability to help non-Christians take the necessary steps to becoming a born-again Christian. ([Acts 8:5-6](#), [Acts 8:26-40](#), [Ephesians 4:11-14](#), [Mark 16:15](#))

- Strong desire to share the good news of Christ with others
- Ability to naturally turn a conversation toward Christ
- Desires to build relationships with non-believers
- Adaptable in presenting the good news of Christ to the various needs of others
- Not afraid to challenge non-believers to follow Christ
- Sincere/Bold/Candid/Confident

**Exhortation** - The divine strength or ability to encourage others through the written or spoken word and biblical truth. ([Acts 14:22](#), [Romans 12:8](#), [1 Timothy 4:13](#))

- Perceptive to the needs of others
- Comes alongside of discouraged and hurting people to comfort and strengthen
- Loves to point people toward God and His promises for hope
- Motivates others to grow
- Tends to have people see them out for counsel and support
- Positive/Compassionate/Motivating/Supportive/Sensitive

**Faith** - The divine strength or ability to believe in God for unseen supernatural results in every area of life. ([Hebrew 11:1-3](#), [Acts 11:22-24](#), [Romans 4:18-21](#), [1 Corinthians 12:9](#))

- A deep commitment to Scripture/resilient faith/ unquestioning faith in God
- a deep trust of God's sovereignty, love, and other divine qualities

**Giving** - The divine strength or ability to distribute ones own wealth and to give by offerings for the purpose of advancing the Kingdom of God on earth. ([Mark 12:41-44](#), [Romans 12:8](#), [2 Corinthians 8:1-7](#), [2 Corinthians 9:7](#))

- Desire to give toward growth in God's Kingdom
- Does not seek fanfare and recognition
- May have a special ability to make money and therefore able to give more to God
- Effective in managing their money
- Generous giving brings real joy to their lives
- Sacrificial/Informed/Disciplined/Resourceful/Charitable

**Healing** - The divine strength or ability to act as an intermediary in faith, prayer and by the laying on of hands for the healing of physical and mental illnesses. ([Acts 3:1-10](#), [Acts 9:32-35](#), [1 Corinthians 12:9](#))

- A deep belief in God's compassion and power/Merciful-empathetic/Attentive/Insightful

**Helps** - The divine strength or ability to work in a supportive role for the accomplishment of tasks in Christian ministry. ([Mark 15:40-41](#), [Acts 9:36](#), [Romans 16:1-2](#))

- Behind the scenes service to others
- Sensitive to the needs of others and willing to help meet those needs
- Serving is the heartbeat of their lives
- Sees serving as a spiritual discipline
- Helpful/Willing/Dependable/Practical/"Whatever it takes"
- Help new people feel welcome
- Create an environment where fellowship can be experience and relationships built
- Help people feel at ease in a new and unfamiliar setting
- Friendly/Sensitive/Inviting/Trusting/Warm/Caring

**Knowledge** - The divine strength or ability to understand and to bring clarity to situations and circumstance often accompanied by a word from God. ([Acts 5:1-11](#), [1 Corinthians 12:8](#), [Colossians 2:2-3](#))

- Ability to think analytically and objectively
- Loves to dig into Scripture to discover new insights
- Able to organize information for practical use and teaching
- Confident that biblical truth can transform lives
- Inquisitive/Responsive/Discerning/Studious/Observant/Insightful
- Receiving information from the Lord

**Leadership** - The divine strength or ability to influence people at their level while directing and focusing them on the big picture, vision or idea. ([Romans 12:8](#), [1 Timothy 3:1-13](#), [Hebrews 13:17](#))

- Goal/Vision oriented/Determined/Able to inspire others to follow
- Helping inspire others
- Being someone others generally follow

**Mercy** - The divine strength or ability to feel empathy and to care for those who are hurting in any way. ([Proverbs 14:31](#), [Matthew 9:35-36](#), [Mark 9:41](#), [1 Thessalonians 5:14](#))

- Ability to discern the pain in others
- Could have suffering in your past that heightens your level of empathy
- Able to come alongside the hurting and respond in an appropriate manner
- Feels for and serves the lonely and outcasts
- Serve cheerfully in situations where the conditions are difficult and desperate
- Empathetic/Caring/Responsive/Listener/Compassionate/Loving/Sensitive

**Miracles** - The divine strength or ability to alter the natural outcome of life in a supernatural way. ([Acts 9:36-42](#), [Romans 15:18-19](#), [1 Corinthians 12:10](#))

- Prophetic/boldness/steeped in scripture/unquestioning faith in God

**Pastor/Shepherd** - The divine strength or ability to care for the personal need of others by nurturing and mending life issues. ([John 10:1-18](#), [Ephesians 4:11-14](#), [1 Timothy 3:1-7](#))

- Loves being with and ministering to people
- People rather than task-oriented
- Is energized by helping and supporting others in their walk with Christ
- Models with lifestyle what it means to be a follower of Christ
- Develops trust through long-term relationships
- Influencer, Relational, Guide, Protective, Supportive

**Prophecy** - The divine strength or ability to boldly speak and bring clarity to scriptural and doctrinal truth, in some case foretelling God's plan. ([Acts 2:37-40](#), [1 Corinthians 14:1-4](#), [1 Thessalonians 1:5](#))

- 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."

**Teaching** - The divine strength or ability to study and learn from the scriptures primarily to bring understanding and depth to other Christians. ([Acts 5:42](#), [Acts 18:24-28](#), [1 Corinthians 12:28](#), [Ephesians 4:11-14](#))

- Communicate God's Word in a powerful and practical way
- Ability to challenge others to study and apply God's Word
- Desire to give attention to detail and accuracy
- Willing to take the time to study God's Word in order to be prepared to teach
- Disciplined/Practical/Analytical/Articulate/Teachable

**Tongues (and Interpretation of Tongues)** - The divine strength or ability to pray in a heavenly language to encourage your spirit and to commune with God. The gift of tongues is separate from the gift of interpretation of tongues and should be used together. ([\*Acts 2:1-13\*](#), [\*1 Corinthians 12:10\*](#), [\*1 Corinthians 14:1-14\*](#))

- Can be used as a personal prayer language
- Speaking a human language that the speaker has never learned before
- Can be used to deepen their relationship with God
- Used with the gift of interpretation of tongues can encourage those who hear it

**Wisdom** - The divine strength or ability to apply the truths of scripture in a practical way, producing the fruitful outcome and character of Jesus Christ. ([\*Acts 6:3\*](#), [\*Acts 6:10\*](#), [\*1 Corinthians 2:6-13\*](#))

- Focus on the unseen consequences as they determine the next steps to take
- Receive an understanding of what is necessary to meet the needs of others
- Provide God-given solutions in the midst of conflict and confusion
- Hear God's direction in a given situation
- Apply spiritual truth in specific and practical ways