

# GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

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## DEFINITION

In the Scripture, Spiritual Gifts are described with many Greek words. For example in 1Cor. 12 alone, the following words were used by St. Paul:

Verse 1 <i>pneumatika</i>	=	Spirituals (i.e. spiritual things/persons)
Verse 4 & 9 <i>charismata</i>	=	Grace-gifts (given by the Spirit)
Verse 5 <i>diakonai</i>	=	Services (rendered to the Lord)
Verse 6 <i>energemata</i>	=	Working-powers (enabled by God)
Verse 7 <i>phanerosis</i>	=	Manifestations (that show the Spirit)

Rom 12:6 and Eph 4:7-8 describe the Gifts (**Charisma**, from Greek **charis**=grace and **-ma**=an object i.e. "grace thing") as "grace gift" (**charis doma**) given to us in accordance with the Christian Faith. Jesus called them signs of our faith in Him (Mk 16:17).

Of all these words CHARISMATA is most commonly used to refer to Spiritual Gifts. "**CHARISMA(TA)**" also means GRACE-GRATUITI(ES) or LOVE-BONUS(ES) or FAVOUR-ENDOWMENT(S). (Literally **CHARIS** means GRACE, and **CHARISMA** means ENDOWMENT, BONUS or GRACIOUS GRATUITY) i.e. **GRATUITOUS ABILITIES FOR GRATUITOUS SERVICES**.

In summary Spiritual Gifts should be understood to mean: **"DIVERSITIES OF SPECIAL GRACES DISTRIBUTED BY GOD AND ENTRUSTED TO EVERY BELIEVER, ENABLING EACH TO VARIOUSLY MANIFEST THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE SERVICE OF THE LORD, SUCH THAT OTHER MEMBERS OF CHRIST'S BODY (THE CHURCH) ARE BENEFITED AND EDIFIED"**.

Spiritual Gifts are God's free unmerited endowments meant to be used for the profit of others in the Church as the Lord leads and pleases, unlike witchcraft or occultist powers which are personally obtained at the price of wicked rituals and occult initiations for personal profit and manipulation of other people. Saint Paul warned that we must not use or run after Spiritual Gifts with idolatrous mentality (1Cor 12:1-2).

**Notice that in the Old Testament, Spiritual endowments were called Spirits. For instance the Spiritual Gift of Prophecy or Knowledge or Wisdom was called the Spirit of Prophecy or Knowledge or Wisdom.**

From 1Cor. 12:4-9 and Eph. 4:11-12 and Rom. 12:3-6 we learn that:

- (i) It is God Himself Who gives Spiritual Gifts to all believers by His grace and makes them work in believers.
- (ii) Spiritual Gifts are given for the profit of all, for the equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry and for the edification of the Church.

**For detailed definition of each gift visit:** <http://www.scribd.com/doc/16049039/SPIRITUAL-GIFTS-IN-THE-NEW-TESTAMENT>

## IDENTIFICATION

The following portions of the Scripture list out some Spiritual Gifts:

- |                             |                             |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (i) 1Cor. 12:7-13 (Nine);   | (ii) 1Cor. 12:28-31 (Nine); |
| (iii) 1Cor. 13:1-3 (Seven); | (iv) Rom 12:6-8 (Seven);    |
| (v) 1Cor. 14:6,26 (Six);    | (vi) Eph. 4:11 (Five);      |
| (vii) Mark 16:17-18 (Four); |                             |

In these different portions of the Scripture, some gifts are called different names while some are omitted or included. On the whole, we can identify over 24 different Gifts. Therefore, there are NOT ONLY NINE Spiritual Gifts in the New Testament Scriptures as commonly taught among some Pentecostals today but MORE THAN NINETEEN Spiritual Gifts. Below is an attempt to group these gifts (25 of them) into five for better understanding (see 1Cor 12:7-12:28-31; 14:6-26; Rom 12:6-8; Eph. 4:11; Mark 16:17-18) and 1Cor 13:1-3).

## CLASSIFICATION

1. UTTERANCE OR INSPIRATIONAL GIFTS:
  - a. Tongues (of men and Angels),
  - b. Psalms (Songs),
  - c. Interpretation (of Tongues),
  - d. Wisdom (Counselling),
  - e. Exhortation (Encouragement),
  - f. Knowledge,
  - g. Evangelists (Preaching), and
  - h. Prophecy,
  - i. Teaching,
2. DECIPHERING OR 'PERCEPTIONAL' GIFTS:
  - j. Revelation/Mysteries,
  - k. Discernment (of Spirits).

Some Utterance Gifts like Interpretation and Prophecy also operate in combination with the 'Perceptual' Gifts.
3. POWER OR DEMONSTRATIONAL GIFTS:
  - l. Faith (that moves mountains)
  - m. Miracles,
  - n. Exorcism (Casting out/Deliverance),
  - o. Healings, and
  - p. Immunity (to scorpions, serpents and poisons).
4. PASTORAL OR ORGANISATIONAL GIFTS:
  - q. Apostle (Missionary),
  - r. Pastor (Shepherd),
  - s. Leadership (Ruling/Administration),
  - t. Service (Ministry).
5. SACRIFICIAL OR 'DEPRIVATIONAL' GIFTS:
  - u. Giving (even till poverty),
  - v. Helps,
  - w. Martyrdom (even by burning),
  - x. Mercy, and
  - y. Continence (or Celibacy) see 1Cor. 7:7.

### NOTE:

1. This fifth group are the most costly to the gifted person and least valued by many Christians, so they are not very popularly taught in the Church today. The Church is losing a lot by being selective in emphasis on Spiritual Gifts
2. Despite this abundant number of charismatic Gifts, only spectacular few like: Tongues, Interpretation, Prophecy, Miracles, Healings, Exorcism (Deliverance), and Revelation/Mysteries (mistaking called Word of Knowledge) are the ones popularly sought and taught nowadays.
3. Today some of the gifts such as Helps, Mercy, Service and Giving are not regarded as supernatural and fantastic enough to be called spiritual gifts.
4. Many of the Gifts are absent in the Churches today because the Spirit is grieved, despised and quenched (1Thes. 5:19-21, Eph. 4:30-32).

## SPIRITUALLY OFFERED SKILLS, TALENTS AND PRIVILEGES

*Apart from Spiritual gifts mentioned in the Scripture, there are:*

- **acquired SKILLS** (e.g. Education, Technical and Physical skills, Musical instrumentation),
- **natural TALENTS/CAPITAL/ASSETS** (naturally endowed abilities and qualities e.g. intelligence, eloquence, artistry, hospitality, stamina, voice) and even
- **advantageous PRIVILEGES** (e.g. Position, Possession, Personality), which are needed in the Church today.

When a believer filled with the Holy Spirit **offers** these skills, talents and privileges **for good spiritual service** to edify the Church in accordance with God's will, such skills, talents and privileges serve similar purpose as the spiritual Gifts? (e.g. Possessions (Exo 35:29); Craftsmanship/Technology Exo. 35:30-35; Superman Strength Judg 14:6; Music Skills 1Chron. 15:22; Intellectual Learning Matt. 13:52; Acts 26:24-25).

**USE YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS WELL AS FAITHFUL STEWARDS (1Pet 4:10) and OFFER YOUR SKILLS, TALENTS AND PRIVILEGES FOR GOOD SPIRITUAL SERVICE.**

# DISCOVERING AND DEVELOPING YOUR GIFTS

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## SEVEN STEPS TO DISCOVERING YOUR GIFTS

Christians are SAVED TO SERVE (2Co 5:18-19); they are freely gifted to freely serve others. Having been made a living part of Christ's Body, every truly regenerate member of the Church should be committed to one form of spiritual service (Ministry) or special work (Role or Responsibility) within the Body of Christ and to the furtherance of God's Kingdom. The Spiritual Gifts give the **ABILITY** but necessity and demand entrusts us with the **RESPONSIBILITY**.

Since every believer has his/her function and gift (1Co 7:7; 1Pe 4:10; 1Co 12:12-14), Christians should be concerned with discovering, and excelling in their Gifts following the suggestions below. **While the discovery of our original or specific gifts tarries, every believer should readily attempt at excelling in some ROLES needed by the Church or ask for some GIFTS according to what we desire or perceive is necessary as Christ and His Apostles indicated (Mat 7:11; Luk 11:13; 1Cor 12:27-31 and 14:1-5). No one should be idle in the Church of Christ on the excuse that one has not discovered one's Spiritual Gift.**

1. **EXAMINE** yourself to be sure you have been regenerated into Christ's body by repenting and believing in Christ. This guarantees that you have a gift allocated to you in order to carry out your function as a part of Christ's Body (Eph 1:13-14; Rom 8:9; Rom 10:9-13).
2. **STUDY** to know, about the varieties of Spiritual Gifts, which one could use in the Church for profit and edification.
3. **PRAY** and depend on God for guidance and leading of the Spirit not mere coincidence or presumption. This leading depends on necessity, disposition, satisfaction, demand and one's consecration. (Rom 12:1-2; Act 13:1-2).
4. **EXERCISE** yourself as needs arise around you and experiment in God's work as you join others take-up responsibilities and meet needs by getting actively involved with: -  
**Church Programmes** (e.g. Worship services, Bible studies, Prayer meetings, Evangelism/Witnessing outreaches, Fellowship meetings, Seminars, Retreats, Workshops, Conventions);  
**Church Ministries** (e.g. Groups or Teams for Missions, Visitation, Counselling, Welfare, Charity, Deliverance, Healing, Intercession, Debate/Apologetics, Leadership, Discipleship, Drama, Music); and  
**Church Committees** (e.g. Fund Raising, Publicity, Publishing, Planning/Organising, Broadcasting, Research, Technical/Multimedia, Projects).
5. **OBSERVE** your experiences and note areas of ministry, programmes or roles where your spiritual **Gifts**, natural **Talents** (natural endowments/capital/assets) or acquired **Skills** and even attained or opportune **Privileges** are extra-ordinarily effective or appreciated/demanded by others, which give you peace, joy and fulfilment, as well as where you feel a sense of burden and zeal.  
Sometimes your natural abilities/qualities (**Talents**=Capital/Assets/Endowments) and acquired **Skills** or opportune **Privileges** may be preparatory or enhancing to your Spiritual Gifts (Mat 13:52).
6. **ANALYSE** feedbacks from brethren about what gifts or ministry for which they commend you, appreciate and respect in you, demand your services, contribution, involvement or ministration (1Ti 4:14; 2Ti 4:5 and 2Ti 1:6).
7. **SUBMIT** readily to the Holy Spirit by operating fervently and diligently in whatever gift or gifts to which He has led you and convinced you to be your area of occupying and function, in accordance with God's perfect will (Col 4:17; Act 20:24; 2Ti 4:2-4).

Do not be found wanting or haughty in the exercise of your gifts (Act 20:28-29; Luk 19:12-13; Luk 19:16-17; Luk 19:20-26).

## SEVEN STEPS TO DEVELOPING YOUR GIFTS

While reminding Timothy about the discovery of the spiritual Gifts he had, St. Paul also went ahead to urge Timothy to:

- (i) not neglect his spiritual gift,
- (ii) but fan it into flame and
- (iii) fulfil his ministry (1Ti 4:14; 2Ti 1:6; and 2Ti 4:5).

Following the wisdom of the Apostle, let us discuss some steps for developing our gifts and maximizing their use till we fulfil our ministry.

1. **BE READY** always to make your gifts available for meeting the needs of the CHURCH (Rom 12:1-2; 1Co 12:7). The gifts are not for your own needs nor are you to restrict them only at your convenience (2Ti 4:1-2).
2. **REMEMBER** always that your gifts and Ministry belong to God and that He has given them to you **IN TRUST** to dispense His grace faithfully for the benefit of the Church and for His own glory (1Co 4:1; 2Co 4:1; 1Pet 4:10).
3. **CHALLENGE** and help others to labour more for the Lord using your gifts or ministry, but do not ridicule or discourage others who have different gifts from yours (Rom 11:13-14).  
It is better to say, “You can do better than I do with the help of God” than to say “You don’t want to do as I do” or “You can’t do what I do”.
4. **DO NOT DOMINATE** others with your Gifts, rather **DISPENSE** to edify and serve them (Rom 12:3-6 a) **IN LOVE**.  
*To serve IN LOVE is to dispense your Gifts patiently, kindly, humbly, and with simplicity (1Cor 13:4); serving others with decorum, selflessness, without ever feeling annoyed or resentful (1Cor 13:5). To dispense your Gift with love is to abhor sin and uphold the truth in the exercise of your Gifts (1Cor 13:6); with persistent forbearance, unflinching faith, tenacious hope and unfailing endurance (1Cor 13:7) till Christ comes.*
5. **GIVE PRIORITY** attention with all diligence to your gifts or Ministry to excel in exercising it, because the Church needs your gifts at its best, and you will account to God on how you used your gifts. (1Co 4:2; Rom 14:12).
6. **COOPERATE** and team up with others gifted brethren (not **SEPARATE** or break away from them) by the use of your gifts and Ministry in the Church (Gal 2:7-10).  
It is childish and unspiritual for us to criticize others, cause division, struggle for position and recognition, and break away from our church because we are gifted, as is commonly done these days (1Co 3:1-3)
7. **MAXIMISE** your gifts and ministry as in the following scriptural injunctions to:
  - (i) Fan your gift to flame - by putting it to full use (2Ti 1:6);
  - (ii) Not neglect your gift but be wholly absorbed in them (1Ti 4:14-15);
  - (iii) Magnify (show the significance of) your ministry (Rom 11:13-14);
  - (iv) Give your Gifts **excellence** and value through the Spiritual Fruit - using it to edify and show love (1Co 12:31; 1Co 13:1-4).

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