



**SPIRIT,
LEAD ME**

**THE GIFTS
OF THE SPIRIT**

Discover / Develop / Deploy

THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

1. A MESSAGE OF WISDOM

(1 Cor 12:8) A message of Wisdom is an insight into the mysterious workings of God in Christ. It is knowing “this is what God is doing in this situation” and what we should do. Technically a message of wisdom is an utterance gift, spoken words. If you have this gift, people will come to you for advice and say, I don’t know what do you think I should do, what is God doing? I think is what God is doing, this is who he is talking.

Whereas wisdom in general is knowing what do to in situations where the moral laws don’t apply (i.e. they are not right and wrong issues). It is knowing what to do in a particular situation. It is navigating through a minefield of possibilities.

2. A MESSAGE OF KNOWLEDGE

(1 Cor 12:8) God given information for building up individuals or the church. It can be factual information that could not be known without the Spirit’s revelation such as Peter’s knowledge of Ananias and Sapphira’s sin in Acts. It could be something that God wants one believe to pass on to another, this could be encouragement, or information about a decision, or sometimes it is it confront sin. Sometimes people talk about impressions or a burden for someone, “I think God wants to me to say this to you....”

3. FAITH

(1 Cor 12:9) Since faith is a gift that not everyone has, it can't mean saving faith in Jesus or faithfulness. People with the gift of faith find it easy to believe God. It is not gullibility or optimism, but the confidence that God will do what he has promised. Hebrews 11 tells of the 'Hall of Faith,' a group of people who were assured of things they could not see or prove, but they trusted in God's character and promises and lived accordingly. The gift of faith encourages and inspires others to trust God more! It boosts morale!

4. GIFTS OF HEALINGS

(1 Cor 12:9) (1 Cor 12:28) Healing is restoring people to wholeness. Although the Apostles seemed to be able to heal at will, when Paul talks about healing as gift in the church in Corinthians he uses the plural form. Meaning each act of healing is a grace gift. In 1 Cor. 12 what is described, is not some have the gift of healing or could be called healers, but rather that God gives gifts of healings. This explanation also fits with James 5, where the elders' prayer, is a request that God in his grace might give the gift of healing to the sick person. God does heal today and each healing is a grace gift, but there are no healers who can always heal in every situation, has history has proven that.

5. MIRACULOUS POWERS / MIRACLES

(1 Cor 12:10) (1 Cor 12:28) Literally workings of power. Supernatural interventions of God which authenticate the gospel message and bring God glory. Miracles may could be healings, exorcisms, raising the dead, provision of resources, miraculous change in circumstances etc. To some extend how important miracles are depends on the culture. If the culture has a lot of occult practices, then miracles show that God has greater power! That he is the Almighty. God may use other signs and wonders to authenticate his presence, but personally I think chasing after miraculous signs like gold dust is not particularly helpful.

Why don't we see many miracles?

1. Lack of expectation – we don't expect God to do supernatural acts. So we don't see them.
2. Lack of Faith – we don't believe God can, will, or wants to intervene. We see Jesus unable to perform miraculous signs in places where there was no faith or expectation. Not that he lacked power, but they lacked faith and expectation.
3. Lack of practice and courage to seek the miraculous. Solution, keep trying, be bold.

Avoid getting hung up on miracles one way or the other. Both the scriptures (Acts and 1 Corinthians) as well as long term social studies have shown that when the miraculous signs dry up, so do the disciples. Miracles don't make immature Christians mature, the Word of God and the inner work of the Spirit do that! Chasing the miraculous will inhibit your growth. So will ignoring the miraculous, every time God intervenes in our world it is supernatural, when he prompts you to pray or convicts you of sin, that's supernatural, get used to it.

6. PROPHECY

(1 Cor 12:10) (1 Cor 12:28) (Rom 12:6) (Eph 4:11) While words of wisdom and knowledge are inferences, paraphrases and imprecise messages, prophecy is the very Words of God spoken through a person into a specific time and place. Prophecy is therefore more precise than a message or wisdom or knowledge. Prophecy is a timely and specific word, usually spoken in first person, since God himself is speaking through that person (e.g. God says to Jeremiah, I will put my words in your mouth.)

Prophecy involves both foretelling and forth-telling.

- Foretelling – telling what God will do in the future (like Acts 11)
- Forth-telling – encouraging, rebuking, informing, correcting, exhorting and strengthening (like 1 Cor 14:3)

Prophecy must be completely congruent with the Bible, and weighed by the church (especially the leaders).

Prophecy is less important now – since we have the scriptures (hence built on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets)

New Testament prophecy is non-ecstatic, meaning the prophet is not in a trance but is in control and knows what they are doing. They are compelled to speak, but have control of their faculties.

Just as there are false teachers who distort the Word of God and lead others astray, so there are false prophets who distort the Word of God and lead others astray.

7. DISCERNMENT / DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN SPIRITS

(1 Cor 12:10) Divine enablement to discern what spiritual forces are at play in a particular environment. It is a bit like supernatural intuition. It's distinguishing between the three spiritual realms – the Holy Spirit, human spirit, or evil spirits – and discerning which are in operation in a given case, person, situation, location.

It's the ability to distinguish between truth and error, between spirits, between good and evil, right and wrong.

8. SPEAKING IN DIFFERENT KINDS OF TONGUES

(1 Cor 12:10) (1 Cor 12:28). The Tongues in the book of Acts are different to the tongues in the Corinthians.

The Acts tongues were real human languages spoken to unbelievers to authenticate the presence and power of the Holy Spirit and the gospel. They were signs for unbelievers that pointed to Jesus and showed that the message was real. These tongues have finished, they were part of the inauguration of the age of the Spirit across the three people groups, Jews (Acts 2), half Jews, the Samaritans (Acts 8), and non-Jews, Gentiles (Acts 10). It is a misunderstanding of these three Acts passages that leads some people to think that unless you can speak in tongues you don't have the Holy Spirit. But Paul says in 1 Cor 12:30, do all speak in tongues? (No).

The tongues that are available for the church today are the Corinthian type. The Corinthian tongues are a private prayer language given to believers to help them pray and worship without the constraints of language. Corinthian tongues are not real languages and are not signs for unbelievers. Because of this, speaking in tongues loudly in public is confusing for unbelievers and unhelpful for other believers. Speaking in tongues should be done privately and quietly if done in public. Tongues build up the church by building up the individual.

9. INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

(1 Cor 12:10) Interpretation or translation of tongues is the companion gift to tongues. I understand it as a concessional gift. Meaning if someone does speak in tongues publicly so everyone hears, this is very unhelpful and now someone needs to 'tidy things up' by making sense of what was said, otherwise it's pointless for everyone except the speaker.

10. APOSTOLIC GIFT

(1 Cor 12:28) The original apostles were eyewitnesses of the resurrection who had been with Jesus, and were personally commissioned by him. Apostle means send one, specifically sent with authority!

The apostles were essential in the founding of the church and Ephesians 2:20 says the church was built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. So there are no more apostles like Peter or John or Paul.

But the gift of being sent to start new things continues. Those with an apostolic gifting are those gifted as pioneers and entrepreneurs, who have divine ability to start new gospel work, modern day church planters and missionaries are good examples of apostolic leaders. Apostolic gifts are leadership gifts.

11. TEACHERS

(1 Cor 12:28) (Romans 12:7). Teachers help Christians to grow up towards maturity by helping them apply and understand the Word of God. New Testament teachers include Barnabas, Paul, Apollos, Timothy, and Priscilla and Aquila. 1 Cor 12:28 places teaching third after apostles and prophets. Ephesians 4:11 places it fourth after apostles, prophets, and evangelists, and links it with pastoring, so it becomes pastor-teacher.

This order is both chronological and logical. The apostles are the pioneers who along with the prophets set the foundation for the church (Eph 2:20) especially by writing the New Testament. The evangelists then make converts by preaching the gospel. The teachers then teach the converts. Without the others preceding them, teachers would have nothing and no-one to teach.

Teachers teach large groups (Acts 11:26), small groups, and one on one (Acts 18:26). In New Testament times teachers had to learn from other teachers before they could teach. There were no text books or podcasts available.

While prophecy is a spontaneous gift, teaching is a static gift that requires ongoing study and learning. Teachers should invest in both learning and teaching.

12.HELPING

(1 Cor 12:28) Helping is literally taking the place of someone else in accomplishing practical and necessary tasks to free up, support, or meet the needs of others. It's, "here let me step in and do that for you." This is the only place the word occurs in the NT. It's not a word gift, but a practical action gift.

13. ADMINISTRATION

(1 Cor 12:28) Guidance, administration, able to direct. Literally the word means to pilot or steer – a divine enablement to understand what makes an organisation function, and plan and execute procedures that accomplish ministry goals. Bring efficiency and effectiveness and order to chaos. Able to organise people, tasks and events.

14.SERVING

(Rom 12:7) The word here is word used servants serving as waiters. And our word deacon comes from this word. It is a very general term, and simply means serving or ministering. It is an action gift not a word gift like prophecy or teaching. The emphasis is on heartfelt and sacrificial service of others, ministering to others and meeting their needs. Humbly doing was is needed.

15. ENCOURAGEMENT

(Rom 12:8) Putting courage into someone. Think injecting adrenalin from an epi-pen and an allergic reaction. Encouragement is strengthening and comforting others, especially those that are wavering in their faith. It's stimulating others to remember that they have been taught – reminding them of what they know is really true, though they've forgotten it. It's about helping people live out the gospel. It's the same word that's used of the Holy Spirit as the comforter and counsellor. It's a powerful gift, injecting courage.

16. GIVING

(Rom 12:8) To contribute money and other resources to the Lord's work with cheerfulness and generosity.

These people are not necessarily rich, but find it easier to give away resources than keep them.

They give to others without ulterior motives.

The Spirit has gifted some people to make lots of money and cheerfully give it away!

17. LEADING

(Rom 12:8) The word used is *proistamenos* which means to direct, be set over, be over, preside, superintend, rule, lead, manage, or administer. In Romans 12:8 is translated lead – if it is to lead, do it diligently.

It's the word used in 1 Tim 5:17 translated as direct the affairs, "17 The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching."

It is translated as manage (1 Tim 3), lead (Romans 12:8), and as rule in other places. Certainly this means that Pastors should have the gift of leadership. They should pray, teach, care, evangelize, equip, and also provide leadership, including organisational leadership. This is not business management thinking, but what the Bible says! Not all leaders are pastors. Not all pastors need to have strong leadership gifts, but all should have some gifting, and the most gifted leaders should be lead pastor.

Like other gifts leadership needs to be discovered, developed and deployed. Just as some people are natural teachers, so there are natural leaders. But in addition to this leadership is a gift. Some people, both male and female, have been given a special gift of leadership to build up the church. Paul says in Romans 12:8 that leaders should exercise their gift with eagerness/diligence. Leadership is one of the easier gifts to identify and develop.

18. MERCY

(Rom 12:8) Mercy is compassionate action to those in need. It is special ministry to the sick, suffering, weak and distressed. This may include, visiting the sick, caring for the elderly or disabled, and providing for the poor.

Mercy must be shown cheerfully, not begrudgingly. People with this gift are especially used by God to show love, care, compassion and honor to sick, poor, lonely and suffering people.

19. EVANGELISM

Ephesians 4 mentions evangelists as a gift to the church. Although we are all to share our faith as witnesses, some people are especially gifted at helping others become Christians. They share the gospel with ease and effectiveness. They recruit people to follow Jesus. Sometimes through up front preaching and sometimes through interpersonal sharing. One of the ways you know you are an evangelist, is that no matter how many people are here in church you only think about those that aren't yet here. You see lost people.

20. HOSPITALITY

(1 Peter 4:9-10) Hospitality doesn't mean cooking for friends and throwing parties. It literally means to love strangers. Loving strangers by providing fellowship, food and shelter.

God gives everyone in the church unique ways in which they are able to serve others. How we should serve God, depends on our S.H.A.P.E.

**Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities,
Personality, Experiences**

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