



SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Duane L. Anderson

Spiritual Gifts

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Spiritual Gifts

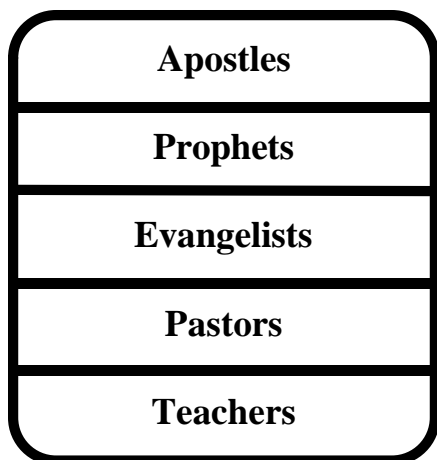
Scripture gives us a number of passages that contain lists of spiritual gifts. The proper use of these spiritual gifts will strengthen the ministry of the local church. The misuse of some of these gifts has led to much confusion. This has also led to the neglect and misunderstanding of the spiritual gifts that God has given us for today. This paper is an attempt to clarify some of the confusion so that we can effectively exercise the spiritual gifts that God has given us. The passages which give us lists of spiritual gifts are:

Romans 12:3-8
Ephesians 4:11-13
I Corinthians 12:1-14:40
I Peter 4:7-11

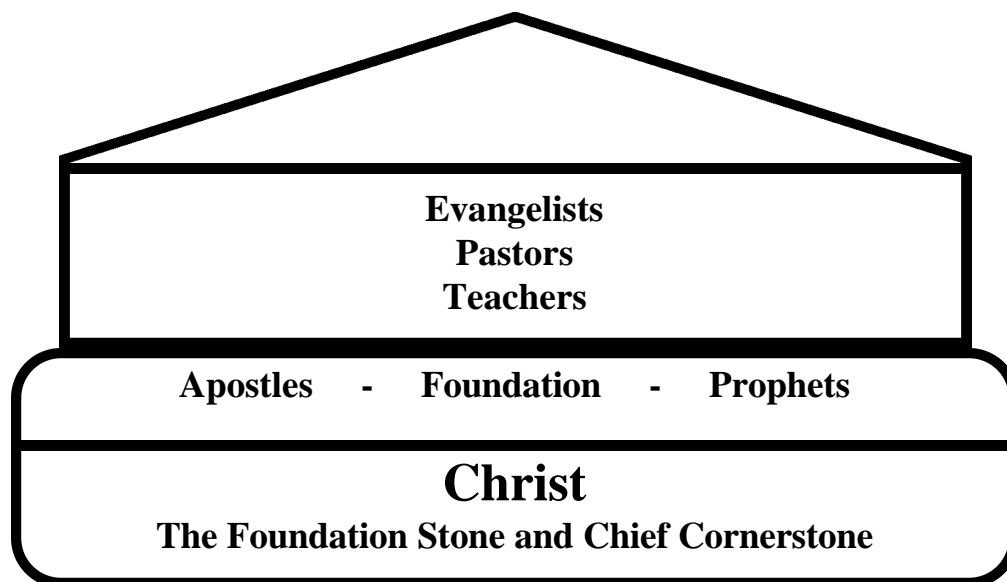
According to Romans 12:3-8 we see that God has allotted to each a measure of faith (verse 3). In verse 6 we see that each one of us has been given at least one grace gift. Then we have the following seven grace gifts listed:

Prophecy
Ministry (Serving)
Teaching
Exhorting
Giving
Leading
Showing Mercy

Ephesians 4:7 points out the fact that this grace was given to us according to the measure of Christ's gift. In Ephesians 4:11-13 we also see that God has given certain men gifts to equip the saints for the work of the ministry. According to I Timothy 4:14 this gift of equipping is recognized by those who are the spiritual leaders at the time that a man meets the qualifications for spiritual leadership. The equipping gifts listed in Ephesians 4:11-13 are as follows:



However, Ephesians 2:19-22 points out the fact that apostles and prophets are the foundation of the church, Jesus Christ, Himself being the chief cornerstone. The ministry of the apostles was to give us eyewitness testimony of the resurrection of Christ (Acts 1:21-22). The ministry of the prophets was to give us the written Word of God (II Peter 1:19-21). As a result, the ministry of the apostles was to lay the foundation of the church by giving us eyewitness testimony of the resurrection of Christ and to give us the written Word of God. They completed their ministry and today evangelists, pastors and teachers equip the saints to build on that foundation.



Signs of the Apostles

In order to validate their ministry as apostles, the apostles were given certain gifts or signs. II Corinthians 12:12 - **Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.** (NKJV) God used these signs to verify the testimony of the apostles about the resurrection of Christ. Hebrews 2:3-4 says, **How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?** (NKJV) These gifts are as follows:

healing - Acts 5:12-15, Hebrews 2:4

miracles - II Corinthians 12:12, Acts 5:12, Hebrews 2:4

tongues - Acts 11:15, I Corinthians 14:21-22

The passage in I Corinthians 14:21-22 points out the fact that tongues were a sign to the unbelieving Jews thus validating the fact that tongues in Acts were a sign to unbelieving Jews each time the Gospel went to a new group of people. As a result, apostles were present in each instance in Acts where tongues are mentioned in Acts 2, Acts 10 and Acts 19. This is also confirmed by the fact that an intransitive is used in I Corinthians 13:8 in reference to tongues while a transitive is used in reference to prophecies and knowledge. (See The Corinthian Catastrophe by George Gardiner pages 33 and 34 for a fuller explanation of this difference.)

Today we are seeing many groups who are emphasizing healing, miracles and tongues. However, we have seen that these particular signs were the signs of the apostles. There are several passages which help to make what is happening today easier to understand.

First I Corinthians 13:11 tells us, **When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things.** (NKJV) A young child or toddler often imitates others. Several other passages where the word translated child is used speak of spiritual toddlers or immature Christians - I Corinthians 3:1-3, Ephesians 4:14, Hebrews 5:11-14. It may be that some Christians emphasize things which they can see rather than accepting the promises of God by faith. If that is the case, this verse in I Corinthians 13:11 points out that some things will become unimportant and be put away when a person grows to spiritual maturity. One evidence of growing maturity is learning to walk by faith and not by sight as we see in II Corinthians 5:7.

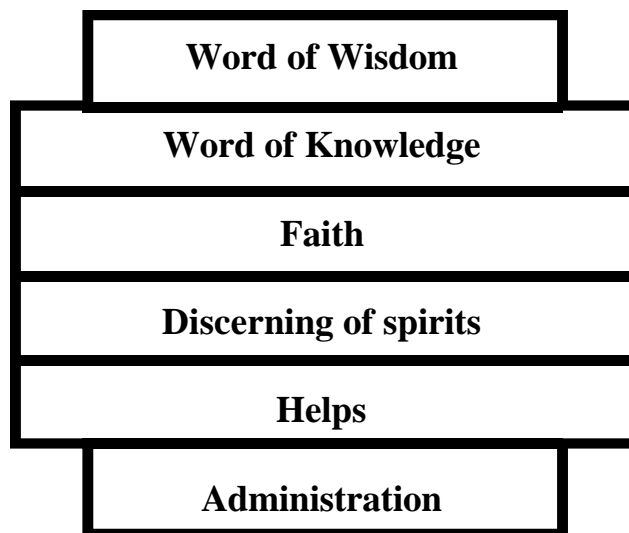
Second, a person does not need to be a Christian in order to do miracles. Matthew 7:15-23 tells us that there will be many who think that they are Christians doing various miracles that have never placed their trust in Christ. Matthew 7:21-23 says, **Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 'Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 'And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!'** (NKJV)

Third, we see in II Corinthians 11:13-15 that those who are false apostles will come as ministers of righteousness, **For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness, whose end will be according to their works.** (NKJV) Some of the leaders of the miracle movements show by their denial of basic Biblical doctrines that they are actually false teachers.

Finally, we see in II Thessalonians 2:8-12 that the anti-christ will deceive the world with all power and signs and lying wonders. As a result, it should not surprise us to see a strong emphasis on such things as healing, miracles and tongues as the time of the anti-christ comes closer.

Other gifts in I Corinthians

Several other gifts are mentioned in I Corinthians 12. These include:



Gifts in I Peter 4

In I Peter 4:7-11 the one possible gift that is mentioned is the gift of hospitality when verse 9 tells us, **Be hospitable to one another without grumbling.** (NKJV) These verses primarily tell us how to use our spiritual gifts rather than giving a list of spiritual gifts.

The first thing we see about the use of our spiritual gifts is that we are to have fervent love for one another. The word that is translated fervent is used only one other time in the New Testament in Acts 12:5 where we see that it is related to prayer. There it is translated as constant prayer. Love is the **agape** love that Christ showed for us by His death on the cross. We are to exercise our spiritual gifts with a constant love that shows self sacrifice and obedience to God. This same thought is emphasized in the passage in I Corinthians 13 about spiritual gifts where we see that spiritual gifts must be exercised in love.

Second, verse 10 tells us that we are to use our spiritual gifts to, **“Serve one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.”** Here we see that we are to be good managers of all that is involved in the grace of God as we serve one another. As we serve (minister to) one another in love, we are being used by God to show His grace to other Christians.

Third, verse 11 tells us that when we speak we are, **“To speak the oracles of God.”** The oracles of God mean the very words of God. This means that as we speak we are to share the Word of God and not our own ideas and opinions. The Word of God will meet the needs of others while our words may not have any impact.

Verse 11 also tells us, **If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.** (NKJV) Here we see that we are to serve one another with the ability that God supplies and not in our own strength.

When we speak the Word of God and serve one another with the strength that God supplies, we realize that what happens is the work of God and not the result of our own efforts. We will also do what we do through the love of Christ which is motivating us. That is why it will bring glory to God and do the work of God.

God’s will done in God’s way with God’s Word will do God’s work.

Equipping Gifts and Serving Gifts

As we look at the gifts that we have listed from the various passages, we see that there are three equipping gifts for today and a whole variety of serving gifts. The spiritual leaders who have been given the equipping gifts are to equip each Christian to use his or her gifts to serve the Lord. Let's look at these gifts in a diagram form and then we will give a definition for each of the gifts.

	Evangelists	Pastors	Teachers
Prophecy			
Ministry (Serving)			
Teaching			
Exhorting			
Giving			
Leading			
Showing Mercy			
Word of Wisdom			
Word of Knowledge			
Faith			
Discerning of spirits			
Helps			
Administration			
Hospitality			

Equipping Gifts

The equipping gifts are listed for us in Ephesians 4:11-13. These verse tell us, **And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;** (NKJV) We saw earlier that the apostles and prophets are the foundation of the church. That leaves the three equipping gifts: evangelists, pastors and teachers.

Just before His death, Christ gave a very important command in John 13:34-35, "**A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."** (NKJV)

Christ gave a second important command just before He returned to heaven in Matthew 28:18-20 where we read, **And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth. "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, *even to the end of the age.*" Amen.** (NKJV)

In these two commands we see that every Christian has three responsibilities.

As we are going, we are to **Preach the Gospel** - Mark 16:15

As we love one another, we are to **Minister to One Another** - Galatians 6:2

As we make disciples, we are to **Teach the Word of God** - Matthew 28:20

God has given spiritual leaders various equipping gifts so that all Christians may be equipped for these three basic ministries. As a result, spiritual leaders have been given an equipping gift to equip the saints for the work of the ministry.

Equipping Gift	Equip the Saints to:
Evangelists	Preach the Gospel
Pastors	Minister to One Another
Teachers	Teach the Word of God

Results of an Effective Equipping Ministry

Christians are equipped for the work of the ministry

The body of Christ is edified (built up)

Christians come to the unity of the faith

Christians grow in their knowledge of the Son of God

Christians grow to spiritual maturity

Understanding the Serving Gifts

Prophecy

Since the prophets gave us the completed written Word of God, the gift of prophecy does not speak about giving new revelation since that is clearly forbidden in Revelation 22:18-19. Instead the one with the gift of prophecy is to prophesy what has already been written down in the Word of God. Three key passages help us to understand this gift better.

I Corinthians 14:3

But he who prophesies speaks edification and exhortation and comfort to men. (NKJV)

I Peter 1:10

Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, (NKJV)

Jude 14-15

Now Enoch, the seventh from Adam, prophesied about these men also, saying, "Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of His saints, "to execute judgment on all, to convict all who are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have committed in an ungodly way, and of all the harsh things which ungodly sinners have spoken against Him." (NKJV)

The gift of prophecy: To quote the Word of God to edify, to exhort and to comfort, to announce the grace which is provided in salvation and to warn of judgment for ungodly deeds. The person with this gift will often quote the Scripture without explaining it as Peter did in his sermon in Acts 2.

Ministry (Serving)

The Christian who has the gift of serving will usually emphasize practical ways to help other Christians. This will involve many different kinds of ministry but the purpose will be to serve other Christians. Four key passages help us to understand this gift better.

Romans 16:1-2

I commend to you Phoebe our sister, who is a servant of the church in Cenchrea, that you may receive her in the Lord in a manner worthy of the saints, and assist her in whatever business she has need of you; for indeed she has been a helper of many and of myself also. (NKJV)

Acts 6:1-2

Now in those days, when *the number of* the disciples was multiplying, there arose a complaint against the Hebrews by the Hellenists, because their widows were neglected in the daily distribution. Then the twelve summoned the multitude of the disciples and said, "It is not desirable that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. (NKJV)

II Corinthians 8:1-4

Moreover, brethren, we make known to you the grace of God bestowed on the churches of Macedonia: that in a great trial of affliction the abundance of their joy and their deep poverty abounded in the riches of their liberality. For I bear witness that according to *their* ability, yes, and beyond *their* ability, *they were* freely willing, imploring us with much urgency that we would receive the gift and the fellowship of the ministering to the saints. (NKJV)

I Corinthians 16:15

I urge you, brethren -- you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and *that* they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints -- (NKJV)

The gift of serving: To serve the saints by helping, by serving, by sharing and by devoting our time to the ministry of the saints. The gift will often involve manual projects and short term goals.

Teaching

The Christian who has the gift of teaching will tend to emphasize purity of doctrine and will emphasize the importance of much study in order to make certain that there is purity of doctrine. The concern of one who has this gift is for sound doctrine in all teaching and the application of that teaching so that it produces obedience and godly living. Three key passages help us to understand this gift better.

I Timothy 4:16

Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you. (NKJV)

Titus 2:7-8

In all things showing yourself *to be* a pattern of good works; in doctrine *showing* integrity, reverence, incorruptibility, sound speech that cannot be condemned, that one who is an opponent may be ashamed, having nothing evil to say of you. (NKJV)

Titus 1:9

Holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. (NKJV)

The gift of teaching: To spend much time in study so that there will be purity of doctrine in all teaching. This teaching will include both teaching those who want to learn and refuting those who contradict.

Exhorting

The Christian who has the gift of exhorting will tend to emphasize growth toward spiritual maturity so that the Word of God will not be blasphemed. He will urge others to pursue a course of conduct which is always perspective, looking toward the future. Four key passages help us to understand this gift better.

I Thessalonians 4:9-10

But concerning brotherly love you have no need that I should write to you, for you yourselves are taught by God to love one another; and indeed you do so toward all the brethren who are in all Macedonia. But we urge you, brethren, that you increase more and more; (NKJV)

I Timothy 6:1-2

Let as many bondservants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, so that the name of God and *His* doctrine may not be blasphemed. ² And those who have believing masters, let them not despise *them* because they are brethren, but rather serve *them* because those who are benefited are believers and beloved. Teach and exhort these things. (NKJV)

Titus 2:15

Speak these things, exhort, and rebuke with all authority. Let no one despise you. (NKJV)

Titus 2:4-5

That they admonish the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, to be discreet, chaste, homemakers, good, obedient to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be blasphemed. (NKJV)

The gift of exhorting: To encourage the saints to love, to good works and to godly living by giving specific steps so that the Word of God will not be blasphemed. The person with this gift will often encourage individuals to take small specific steps which will help them to work toward spiritual development and goals.

Giving

The Christian who has the gift of giving tends to emphasize giving to needs which are often not recognized by others. There will also often be an emphasis on giving to missions so that the Word of God can be carried worldwide. Four key passages help us to understand this gift better.

Romans 12:8

He who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (NKJV)

Romans 1:11-12

For I long to see you, that I may impart to you some spiritual gift, so that you may be established -- that is, that I may be encouraged together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me. (NKJV)

Ephesians 4:28

Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with *his* hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. (NKJV)

I Thessalonians 2:8

So, affectionately longing for you, we were well pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God, but also our own lives, because you had become dear to us. (NKJV)

The gift of giving: To give generously so that faith may be strengthened, needs may be met and others may be able to minister because we have given of our own souls. The person with the gift of giving will often encourage other Christians to share in the ministry of giving so that his or her giving is multiplied.

Leading

The word translated lead actually means to stand before or lead. In order to lead effectively, God has given the person with this gift the ability to see what a church or other ministry needs to do to accomplish the work of God in the future. The Christian who has the gift of leading (ruling) tends to take a long range view and to make long range plans so that the work of God can be completed smoothly and efficiently. Three key passages help us to understand this gift better.

I Thessalonians 5:12

And we urge you, brethren, to recognize those who labor among you, and are over you in the Lord and admonish you, (NKJV)

Titus 3:8

This is a faithful saying, and these things I want you to affirm constantly, that those who have believed in God should be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable to men. (NKJV)

Titus 3:14

And let our *people* also learn to maintain good works, to *meet* urgent needs, that they may not be unfruitful. (NKJV)

The gift of leading: To lead under the leadership of the Lord so that the good works of all will be profitable and fruitful. The person with this gift will often be given insight by the Lord which helps that person to see what a group needs to do to move forward and make progress in their ministry.

Showing Mercy

The Christian who has the gift of showing mercy tends to be more sensitive to the inner feelings of others and demonstrates loving concern to those who are in inner distress. The person with this gift is usually effective at offering comfort to those experiencing inner distress. Three key passages help us to understand this gift better.

Matthew 20:30-34

And behold, two blind men sitting by the road, when they heard that Jesus was passing by, cried out, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!" Then the multitude warned them that they should be quiet; but they cried out all the more, saying, "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David!" So Jesus stood still and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?" They said to Him, "Lord, that our eyes may be opened." So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him. (NKJV)

II Corinthians 1:3-4

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God. (NKJV)

Romans 12:8

He who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. (NKJV)

The gift of showing mercy: To feel such sympathy with the misery of another that it produces comfort and thankfulness for the opportunity to show mercy.

Word of Wisdom

The word that is translated wisdom in the New Testament is used most often to speak of the ability to understand God's will and apply it obediently. The Christian who has this gift is able to apply the Word of God to the situations that people face in life and to apply God's Word to the problems and questions that people bring. Four key passages help us to understand this gift better.

Acts 6:10

And they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke. (NKJV)

James 3:13

Who *is* wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct *that* his works *are done* in the meekness of wisdom. (NKJV)

I Corinthians 2:13

These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. (NKJV)

Colossians 1:28

Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. (NKJV)

The gift of the word of wisdom: To share the wisdom of God by showing godly wisdom in living and by applying spiritual wisdom to life so that Christians can make progress in their growth to spiritual maturity.

Word of Knowledge

The word that is translated knowledge in the New Testament means to know through inquiry and investigation. The Christian who has this gift is able to understand through study the meaning of the text and the related passages so that he can in turn explain the Word of God and make it clear to others. Three key passages help us to understand this gift better.

I Corinthians 2:9-10

But as it is written: "Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed *them* to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. (NKJV)

I Corinthians 2:13-14

These things we also speak, not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned. (NKJV)

Colossians 2:3

In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. (NKJV)

The gift of the word of knowledge: The ability to discover through study the full meaning of the text, context, phrases, related passages and truths and then help provide that understanding to others.

Faith

The gift of faith is different than saving faith and speaks of the ability to trust God in difficult and demanding ways. This faith is strong in spite of overwhelming obstacles and human impossibilities. This gift is primarily exercised through prayer to God in asking and trusting God to do what is beyond His normal provision. Three key passages help us to understand this gift better.

Matthew 17:20

So Jesus said to them, "Because of your unbelief; for assuredly, I say to you, if you have faith as a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible for you. (NKJV)

Hebrews 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (NKJV)

James 5:16-18

Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much. Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit. (NKJV)

The gift of faith: The ability to trust God in difficult and demanding ways in spite of overwhelming obstacles and human impossibilities. It is exercised through prayer to God as a person ask and trusts God to do what is beyond His normal provision. The person with this gift is the kind of person who makes the ministries of others effective through fervent prayer and the assurance that God is able to and will do the impossible.

Discerning of spirits

Because young and immature Christians often cannot discern between the true and the false, God has given this particular gift to certain Christians to give them the ability to discern what is not in agreement with Scripture and actually has its source from Satan, the father of lies. Four key passages help us to understand this gift better.

John 8:44

"You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *does not* stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it. (NKJV)

Hebrew 5:13-14

For everyone who partakes *only* of milk *is* unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, *that is*, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. (NKJV)

Acts 20:29-31

"For I know this, that after my departure savage wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock. "Also from among yourselves men will rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves. "Therefore watch, and remember that for three years I did not cease to warn everyone night and day with tears. (NKJV)

I Corinthians 14:29

Let two or three prophets speak, and let the others judge. (NKJV)

The gift of discerning of spirits: The special ability to recognize those ideas, philosophies and teachings which are not in agreement with Scripture but have their source in Satan, the father of lies and correct those false teachings with the Word of God.

Helps

The gift of helps is similar to the gift of serving in that it speaks of helping and serving others. However, it is different in the sense that the word translated helps means to take the burden off someone and place it on oneself. It has the special thought of helping the poor, weak and needy. Four key passages help us to understand this gift better.

Acts 20:35

"I have shown you in every way, by laboring like this, that you must support the weak. And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.' " (NKJV)

I Thessalonians 5:14

Now we exhort you, brethren, warn those who are unruly, comfort the fainthearted, uphold the weak, be patient with all. (NKJV)

Philippians 2:25

Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; (NKJV)

I Corinthians 16:15

I urge you, brethren -- you know the household of Stephanas, that it is the firstfruits of Achaia, and *that* they have devoted themselves to the ministry of the saints -- (NKJV)

The gift of helps: The special ability to help other Christians, especially the poor, weak and needy, by taking the burden off of someone and placing that burden on oneself.

Administration

The word that is translated administration comes from the same root word as the word for the pilot of a ship. It has the thought of one who steers the ship and guides it to the harbor. The gift of administration speaks of those who have been given the special ability to make wise decisions and to mobilize, motivate and direct others toward an objective. Three key passages help us to understand this gift better.

Acts 27:11

Nevertheless the centurion was more persuaded by the helmsman and the owner of the ship than by the things spoken by Paul. (NKJV)

Acts 8:4

Therefore those who were scattered went everywhere preaching the word. (NKJV)

II Timothy 2:11-12

This is a faithful saying: For if we died with Him, We shall also live with Him. If we endure, We shall also reign with Him. If we deny Him, He also will deny us. (NKJV)

The gift of administration: The ability to make wise decisions and to mobilize, motivate, direct others, and delegate responsibility to help a group of Christians accomplish a purpose, fulfill objectives and reach the goals that they have been led of the Lord to establish. It may be helpful to distinguish between the gift of leading and the gift of administration. The person with the gift of leading is the person who can make long range plans and lead a group toward those goals. The person with the gift of administration organizes all of the details and delegates the responsibilities to various individuals to help the group reach those goals.

Hospitality

The gift of hospitality is the special gift of being able to make people feel comfortable and at home both in the church and in the home. Christians with this gift are especially effective at making others feel comfortable. Four passages help us to understand this gift better.

I Peter 4:8-9

And above all things have fervent love for one another, for "love will cover a multitude of sins." *Be* hospitable to one another without grumbling. (NKJV)

Romans 12:13

Distributing to the needs of the saints, given to hospitality. (NKJV)

Hebrews 13:2

Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so *doing* some have unwittingly entertained angels. (NKJV)

Acts 16:15

And when she and her household were baptized, she begged *us*, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us. (NKJV)

The gift of hospitality: The ability to make people feel comfortable and at home so that there will be the opportunity to have an effective ministry to them.

Commandments and Gifts

Actually each Christian is commanded to do each of the things that have been mentioned in these spiritual gifts. That means that obedience will cause us to do each of these things as we have opportunity. However, the gifts that we have been given give us an ability beyond that of most Christians to minister in that way. They also cause us to see needs which other Christians do not see. In addition, we can exercise our spiritual gifts for an extended period at any one time.

There are two attitudes that we must avoid in order to be effective in the use of our spiritual gifts. First, we must not be proud because we have been given those gifts. Second, we must not be critical of other Christians because they do not see the same needs we see. We see those needs because we have been given spiritual gifts to meet those needs. The fact that we see those needs gives us the opportunity to exercise our spiritual gifts without being critical of others.