

DOCTRINE OF THE GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

1. Definition:

A **spiritual gift** is a particular or special ability **sovereignly bestowed** by **God the Holy Spirit** upon each individual believer in the church age at the moment of salvation to contribute to the function and growth of the body of Christ and to ultimately glorify God. (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Cor. 12:1, 4-11; Eph. 4:11-13; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11)

2. Vocabulary:

- a. πνευματικός - pneumatikos - (Greek adj.) - spiritual (things, gifts), pertaining to the spirit (1 Cor. 12:1; 14:1)
- b. χάρισμα - charisma - (Greek noun) - gift (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:10)
- c. φανέρωσις - phanerosis - (Gr. Noun) - manifestation (1 Cor. 12:7)

3. The **basis** for these gifts is the **“grace that was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift.”** These gifts were instituted by Jesus Christ at His ascension. (Eph. 4:7-11; cf. Rom. 12:3-8)

4. The **purpose** of the spiritual gifts is the **edification** (the building up) of the body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:7; 14:12, 26, 40; Eph. 4:16; 1 Pet. 4:10)

5. Every believer has **at least one spiritual gift**; and all believers are anatomically and functionally a part of the body of Christ. (1 Cor. 12:11, 27; Eph. 4:16; 1 Pet. 4:10, 11)

6. There are many **different spiritual gifts**, but all are to work together harmoniously and efficiently. The fact that there are different spiritual gifts given by God to believers does not imply superiority or inferiority among believers. (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4, 14-26)

7. Spiritual gifts are to be **exercised faithfully** and **managed responsibly** as any other responsibility assigned to a believer in the church. (Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 4:1, 2; 1 Cor. 14:32, 33, 40; 1 Pet. 4:10)

8. Spiritual gifts should be **permitted and encouraged** to function within the local church. (Rom. 12:6-8; 1 Pet. 4:10)

9. While spiritual gifts are vital to the Christian way of life, they **must be balanced** with the love produced by the filling of the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:31-13:8)

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10. There are three dimensions of the Christian life with respect to spiritual gifts:
- a. *“there are varieties of gifts,”* - These are the specific spiritual abilities given by the God the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor. 12:4)
 - b. *“there are varieties of ministries,”* - These are specific areas of service directed by Jesus Christ, the head of the church. (1 Cor. 12:5)
 - c. *“there are varieties of effects,”* - These refer to the production in ministries accomplished through the gifts. This production was planned by God the Father. (1 Cor. 12:6)
11. The **communication gifts** are given **special recognition** because the communication of the Word of God **prepares the believers** to live the Christian way of life. Therefore, believers should make listening to the teaching of the word of God a priority in life. (Rom. 15:19; 1 Cor. 12:28-31; 14:3-5, 19; 2 Cor. 12:12; Eph. 4:11, 12)
12. The Bible does not give one complete list of the **“gifts of the Spirit;”** but there are **several partial lists** (Eph. 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28-30; Rom. 12:6-8), and additional information about spiritual gifts is given in various places in the New Testament.
13. **Classification** of spiritual gifts:
- a. **Temporary spiritual gifts:**
 - (1) They were operational **during the Apostolic Age**, the transitional period between Pentecost and the completion of the canon of Scripture. (1 Cor. 13:8-10)
 - (2) They were special **“sign gifts”** given in particular to the apostles to validate their ministries.
 - (a) *“And God was performing extraordinary miracles by the hands of Paul.”*(Acts 19:11, 12; 2 Cor. 12:12)
 - (b) The **gift of tongues** was a fulfillment of Old Testament prophecy. (Isa. 28:10-13; Acts 2:4-18)
 - (c) The **Jews ask for signs**. (1 Cor. 1:22)
 - (d) The Apostles received **special revelation**. (Eph. 3:2-5)
 - (e) The gift of **Apostleship ceased**; there is no such thing as apostolic succession. There are only 12 apostles ever. (Rev. 21:14; cf. Acts 1:21-26; 1 Cor. 15:8-10)
 - b. **Permanent spiritual gifts:**
 - (1) These spiritual gifts are in operation during the **entire Church Age** until the Rapture.
 - (2) These gifts are always exercised in conjunction with the word of God, never apart from it. (1 Tim. 4:6, 7; 6:3-5; 2 Tim. 1:13; 2:2; Titus 1:9; 2:1)

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- c. The list of **temporary spiritual gifts** (sign gifts):
- (1) Apostleship (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11)
 - (2) Prophecy (foretelling) (Acts 15:32; Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10, 28; 14:22; Eph. 4:11)
 - (3) Miracles (1 Cor. 12: 10, 28)
 - (4) Healings (Acts 5:12-16; 9:32-42; 20:6-12; 1 Cor. 12:9, 28)
 - (5) Tongues (speaking in various languages) (1 Cor. 12:10; 13:8)
 - (6) Interpretation of Tongues (various languages) (1 Cor. 12:10; 14:13, 26-28)
 - (7) Word of Knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8, 28; 13:8; Col. 2:2, 3) Some believe this is a permanent gift.
 - (8) Word of Wisdom (1 Cor. 12:8) Some believe this is a permanent gift.
 - (9) Distinguishing spirits (1 Cor. 12:10; 1 Tim. 4:1) Some believe this is a permanent gift.
 - (10) Faith (1 Cor. 12:9; cf. Heb 11; Rom. 4:18-21) Some believe this is a permanent gift.
- d. The list of **permanent spiritual gifts**:
- (1) Pastor-teacher (Acts 20:17-28; Eph. 4:11, 12; Heb. 13:17; 1 Pet. 5:1-3)
 - (2) Evangelist (Acts 8:5, 6; 21:8; Eph. 4:11, 12; 2 Tim. 4:5)
 - (3) Teacher (Acts 20:20, 21; Rom. 12:7; 1 Cor. 12:28)
 - (4) Exhortation (encouragement, comfort, admonishment, entreaty) (Acts 14:22; Rom. 12:8; 1 Tim. 4:13; cf. Heb. 10:25)
 - (5) Leadership (Rom. 12:8; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb 13:7)
 - (6) Administration (1 Cor. 12:28; Titus 1:5)
 - (7) Helps (Rom. 16:2; 1 Cor. 12:28; cf. Gal. 6:2, 10)
 - (8) Giving (sharing) (Rom. 12:8; cf. 2 Cor. 8:1-7)
 - (10) Service (Ministering) (Rom. 12:7; 16:1; 2 Tim. 1: 16-18)
- e. These are **probable spiritual gifts** although they are not listed as spiritual gifts.
- (1) Missionary (Acts 22:21; Rom. 10:15; 1 Cor. 9:19-23)
 - (2) Prayer (1 Tim. 2:1, 2; James 5:14-16)
 - (3) Hospitality (Rom. 16:23; Heb. 13:1, 2; 1 Pet. 4:9, 10)
 - (4) Celibacy (1 Cor. 7:7)

14. It is important to remember that all believers are expected to live the Christian way of life according to the filling of the Holy Spirit and to fulfill many of the ministries represented by spiritual gifts even though they may not have special gifts in those particular areas. Several examples of these are as follows:

- a. All **believers are to give** of their substance to the needs of the saints, but not all have the spiritual gift of giving. (1 Cor. 12:8 with 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:7)

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- b. All **believers are to give the gospel**, but not all have the spiritual gift of evangelism. (Eph. 4:11 with 2 Tim. 4:5; Eph. 6:15)
- c. All **believers are to serve one another**, but not all have the spiritual gift of service. (Rom. 12:7 with Gal. 5:13; Eph. 4:12)
- d. All **believers are to show mercy**, but not all have the spiritual gift of showing mercy. (Rom. 12:8 with Jude 22, 23)