



The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

Introduction

The following is adapted from a brochure I was given a long time ago. I'm not sure of the original source; but the material is solid, and can be a good springboard from which you can pursue further study on the Holy Spirit and His gifts. I would next recommend you get a copy of Pastor Chuck Smith's excellent book, "*Living Water.*"

Pastor Gene

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If you are a Christian, God has special gifts available to you. No Christian is left out. First Corinthians 12:7 says, "The manifestation [talking about gifts] of the Spirit is given to *every* man to profit withal." The reason for the gifts is to help you grow in the Lord, and also to edify or build up your brothers and sisters in the Lord. Ephesians 4:12 tells us that the gifts are for "the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the Body of Christ." The Body of Christ (all Christians) is strengthened when you use your gifts.

Spiritual gifts are not natural abilities, otherwise non-Christians would have them, too. Spiritual gifts are supernatural abilities given by the Holy Spirit to Christians.

There are several lists of gifts in the New Testament:

1. The gifts listed in the fourth chapter of Ephesians are *office* gifts. There are the offices of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher.
2. The gifts listed in the twelfth chapter of Romans are *ministry* gifts. These gifts are given to Christians as ongoing gifts throughout their lives to minister to others.
3. The gifts listed in First Corinthians, chapter twelve, are *manifestation* gifts. These gifts are manifested through the believer as they are ministering to the Lord or others. In fact, we should expect the manifestation gifts when we come to minister before the Lord and others.

Here is an example of how the gifts work together: Think of a pastor being in the office of a pastor, using a ministry gift of, let's say, teaching. While he is ministering with this gift, the Lord manifests a word of knowledge to him. As he steps out in faith, and mentions it, a person's life is touched by God.

Office Gifts - Ephesians 4:11

Apostle - The gift of apostle applies to a special group of men who were "apostles of Christ," consisting of 12 (Luke 6:12,13; Matthias was chosen in Acts to replace Judas) together with Paul (Galatians 1:1). In a general sense, it could well apply to those sent out with a commission used to describe "apostles of the churches" (Second Corinthians 8:23, Philippians 2:25) such as missionaries. (Barnabas, Acts 14:14, James, the Lord's brother calling Silas, First Thessalonians 2:6).

Prophets - Men of inspired utterance for the young church; See Acts 15:32 where it is said that in Antioch "Judas and Silas, being prophets also themselves exhorted the brethren with many words, and confirmed [strengthened] many."

Evangelists - This word occurs in the New Testament three times. Luke calls Phillip an evangelist in Acts 21:8. Timothy is told to do the work of an evangelist in Second Timothy 4:5. The evangelist is a messenger, a deliverer of the "Good News." The primary message of the evangelist centers on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, His coming again, and the need for all men everywhere to repent and believe.

Pastor-Teachers - Literally, "*shepherds*," meaning to feed the flock with spiritual food and to protect the flock from spiritual danger; gifted to be responsible for the day to day building of the church.

Ministry Gifts - Romans 12:6-8

Prophecy - This is a ministry gift and also a manifestation gift. (See explanation under manifestation gifts).

Ministering - "Personal ministering." Ministering to the personal needs of the believers. In Acts, chapter 6, the needs of the growing church were met by those with the gift of ministering as filled by seven deacons. (Gift of practical service).

Teaching - The message of Christ is to be proclaimed but must also be explained. This is the ministry of the teacher. It is having the ability to convey spiritual truths to others so they understand them and will want to apply them to their lives.

Exhortation - The Greek word means literally, "to call alongside." It is the word *paraclete*. It is the ability to come along side of a fellow Christian and help them in the way of counseling, encouragement, and advice. (Galatians 6:2, Romans 15:1).

Giving - "Cheerful liberality." It is having the desire and faith to give above and beyond the normal tithe and offerings. This includes things other than just money; like time, cloths, food, etc. It is simple kindness which delights in the sheer pleasure of giving for giving's sake.

Ruling, Governments - The gift of administration. The gift of management of the affairs of the church. It must be carried out with zeal and diligence while showing compassion to those you are working with.

Mercy - Joyful compassion. Getting on the inside of another person while bringing a cheerfulness to their wounded heart. The ability to empathize with another person going through difficulties and helping them realize the great love and forgiveness God has for them.

Hospitality - (First Peter 4:9-10) The desire and ability to open up your heart and home to others to make them feel welcomed and comfortable. Doing just this meets the needs of countless people. When coupled with other gifts, it conveys the love of Christ.

Helps - (First Corinthians 12:28) There were apparently people without holding a particular office, rendered services to the church enabled by the special gifts of the Spirit which they had received. Having the ability to see a need and doing something about it. (Such as cooking meals for a family in need, special work at the church, helping the poor).

Manifestation Gifts - First Corinthians 12:7-10

Word of knowledge - The word of knowledge is a supernatural revelation by the Holy Spirit of certain facts in the mind of God. God gives you a revelation by the Spirit of some detail of His infinite knowledge about a person or situation that you have no way of finding out. The first thing to do when you receive a work of knowledge is to pray whether you should share it with the person, or church, or whether it should be kept between you and God so that you might intercede for the individual.

Word of Wisdom - An unprepared inspired word from God given by the Holy Spirit spontaneously to meet a particular crisis situation or answer some question directed at you.

Prophecy - In it's simplest form, it is a supernaturally inspired and anointed utterance conveying what is on the heart and mind of God. Its purpose is edification, exhortation, and comfort of the entire Body. Edification means that prophecy will build-up those that hear. Exhortation means to encourage, urge-on or stir-up love. Comfort means to console.

Faith - The gift of faith is above and beyond the 'average' amount of faith. It is when, without any question, you know the thinking desired will come to pass because it is a gift of faith that comes direct from God, not your experience or spiritual maturity.

Healing - Healing can take place: By the individual praying for himself to be healed and having faith to expect the results (James 5:15, Matthew 9:29); by having the elders pray for you (James 5:14); and by praying for each other in the Body (James 5:16). Also, healings take place as a gift that is given by God and can occur without anything accomplished by others. It is by God's sheer grace and generosity that He may choose to heal and no one can lay claim to the reasons why the healing took place but God.

Miracles - Asking God to do something that supercedes the natural laws that we know, like asking God to part the Red Sea, multiply food, or change circumstances (like the weather) to meet a need and glorify God.

Discerning of Spirits - The ability to know a false teaching when presented; whether someone is demon-possessed; or if someone is not what they say they are.

Tongues - is a language given to a Christian that is unknown to him. It is praise or prayer directed to God, *not* men (First Corinthians 14:2). It's purpose is to edify and strengthen the Christian exercising it. If it is interpreted, it edifies others.

Interpretation of Tongues - is being given the understanding of tongues spoken by someone else or yourself, even though you don't know the language. And since tongues is praise or prayer to God, not men, a true interpretation will be praise or prayer also. Remember, it is an interpretation, *not* a word for word translation.

How Do You Know Which Gifts God Has Given You?

We can trust in God to know exactly which gifts will be best for us. It is encouraging and comforting to know that God is the One who decides how to distribute the gifts (First Corinthians 12:11).

First of all then, go to God in prayer and ask Him to reveal which gifts He has distributed to you. You may find out the next day, you may not realize which ones you have until later.

Try an area of ministry. The Holy Spirit unveils gifts as we are willing to step out in faith and help others. There is no shame in trying even if the area of ministry doesn't end up being yours.

Delight in the Lord. As we delight ourselves in the Lord, He shall give us the desires of our hearts. (Psalm 37:4) If our motives are pure, our desires will line up with God's. A desire for certain gifts may give an indication. Remember, it is still up to God to distribute, so a desire for a certain gift does not guarantee it.

Do you enjoy an area of ministry? The word for gift (*charisma*) is related to the word for joy (*chara*). There is a joy that comes when we help others with the use of the gifts.

Ask other brothers and sisters in the Lord which gifts they notice in you. It will help to get an objective viewpoint.

Combining all these together should give you a good indication of which gifts God has given you.