**Definition of the Term: "Spiritual Gift"**
"*A spiritual gift is any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the Church.*"[1] Another definition: "*a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ, according to God's grace, for use within the context of the Body.*"[2]

**What Spiritual Gifts are not:**

- Spiritual Gifts are not natural talents: (baseball, gymnastics, etc.)
- Spiritual Gifts are not Fruit of the Spirit: (love, joy, peace, etc.)
- Spiritual Gifts are not Christian Roles: (sharing our faith, pay tithes, etc.)
- Spiritual Gifts are not Magic.

**Each Christian has at least one Spiritual Gift**. (1 Peter 4:10, 11)

**Spiritual Gifts may vary in strength, intensity, or scope**. (Romans 12:6)

**Scriptural Passages**
Major discussions of Spiritual Gifts in the NT: Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12; and Eph. 4. First Cor. 7:7; 1 Cor.13:3; and 1 Pet. 4:9-10 present a few others. We can compile the following list:

1. Prophecy (can include preaching, inspired utterance)
2. Service (ministry)
3. Teaching (communication of truth)
4. Exhortation (stimulating faith, encouraging)
5. Giving (contributing, generosity, sharing)
6. Leadership (authority, ruling, administration)
7. Mercy (sympathy, comfort to the sorrowing, showing kindness)
8. Wisdom (wise advice, wise speech)
9. Knowledge (studying, speaking with knowledge)
10. Faith (supernatural belief)
11. Healing (cure of ailments)
12. Miracles (doing great deeds)
13. Discerning of spirits (discrimination in spiritual matters)
14. Tongues (speaking in languages never learned, ecstatic utterance)
15. Interpretation of tongues
16. Apostle (ambassador for the Lord; pastor of pastors)
17. Helps (investors of time in others)
18. Administration (governments, getting others to work together)
19. Evangelist (preacher of the Gospel)
20. Pastor (caring for God's people; shepherd)
21. Celibacy (unmarried and sexually pure)
22. Voluntary Poverty
23. Martyrdom (Giving one's life for the faith)
24. Hospitality

[1] Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994), p. 1016.

[2] C. Peter Wagner, *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1994), p. 34.

**Spiritual Gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10**

### Knowledge-Based Gifts

Wisdom: The special ability to know how given knowledge may best be applied to specific needs arising in the Body of Christ.

Knowledge: The special ability to discover, accumulate, analyze, and clarify information and ideas that are pertinent to the wellbeing of the Body.

Discerning of Spirits: The special ability to know with assurance whether certain behavior purported to be of God is in reality divine, human, or Satanic.

### Power Gifts

Faith: The special ability to discern with extraordinary confidence the will and purposes of God for His work.

Healing: The special ability to serve as human intermediaries through whom God cures illness and restores health apart from the use of natural means.

Miracles: The special ability to serve as human intermediaries through whom God performs powerful acts that are perceived by observers to have altered the ordinary course of nature.

### Verbal Gifts

Prophecy: The special ability to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to His people with authority and urgency perceived by the hearers.

Tongues: The special ability (a) to speak to God in a language that they have never learned and/or (b) to receive and communicate a message of God to his people through a divinely anointed utterance in a language they never learned.

Interpretation of Tongues: The special ability to make known in the vernacular the message of one who speaks in tongues.

### Spiritual Gifts: General Comments

With any Spiritual Gift one or more of the following happens:

1. God reveals something to us.
2. God empowers us to speak.
3. God empowers us to do some action.

- Stirring up Spiritual Gifts requires connectedness to God so that we can participate with him.
- If we are to work with God, we need to know something about how God operates.
- Spiritual Gifts are not mysterious; they are ways that God equips his people to meet the various tasks of ministry.

## DISCOVERING YOUR GIFTS

- To discover Spiritual Gifts, you must be saved.
- Secondly, to discover your Spiritual Gifts, you must believe that God actually gives Gifts.
- Thirdly, you must be willing to expend some effort.
- Fourthly, you must be willing to pray.

*** Discovery of our Gifts comes from what I like to call "Sanctified Trial and Error."**

- We should begin to step out in faith in a loving and supportive atmosphere.
- As you begin to stretch out in faith, do so in a spirit of humility.
- Once a particular gift does emerge, the community will recognize it. The gift itself will produce results!

**THE CALL TO MINISTRY**

a. If you are called to ministry, you will have the inward testimony of the Holy Spirit, which compels you to go forth.
b. The Lord will equip you with the gifts for the task of ministry.
c. The testimony of both the leadership and the laity of the church will confirm that God has called you to the ministry.
d. The fruit of your ministry will attest to the call.

## STIRRING UP THE GIFTS

*** Flowing in Spiritual Gifts is made easier by our walk with God on a daily, moment-by-moment basis.**

- We need to Submit to the Will of God (1 Corinthians 12:11).
- Closely related to Submission to the Will of God is Desiring that God Receive Glory.
- To Flow in Spiritual Gifts, we need to Pursue the Heart of God (i.e., love)
- Finally, to flow in Spiritual Gifts, we need to commit ourselves to Christian roles.

## OTHER THINGS THAT STIR UP SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- Meditation on the Word of God
- Forgiveness
- Expectancy (desire, intensity, and persistence)
- Worship and Praise
- Continual Infilling with the Holy Spirit
- Praying in the Holy Spirit
- Continual Use of Known Gifts

## DEAL WITH SIN ISSUES!

Read 2 Chronicles 7:14

For additional information on spiritual gifts, read *In Pursuit of Wholeness*, pp. 139-44.