



The Spiritual Gifts

By Beth Jones

All of us were created by God for a special purpose and calling. Every person who has ever been born and will be born was created for one primary purpose: to honor and glorify God and to be His representative on earth. In Genesis 1:27, NLT, it says, “So God created human beings in his own image. In the image of God he created them; male and female he created them.”

God also created you for a unique, specific purpose, your mission and calling from God. There is no one else on earth or in history just like you. God designed you wonderfully and fearfully in your mother’s womb with a unique set of fingerprints, hair, eyes, DNA, personality, intelligence, talents, skills, abilities, and spiritual gifts.

What is your purpose?

It’s important that you discover what that specific purpose is. Without purpose, your life will be empty and void. It will leave you unfulfilled. If you never discover your purpose, you will never be satisfied and happy, and you won’t fulfill your great destiny from God.

It’s likely that you won’t find out what your life purpose is all at once. Discovering your purpose takes time and is an exciting adventure. I also believe that our purpose evolves with our spiritual growth and maturity.

Joyce Meyer is an anointed woman called to be a teacher and preacher of God's word, with a world-wide ministry that has helped thousands of women (and men!). But she wasn't ready for that enormous responsibility in her 20's. God had to heal Joyce's wounds, prepare her heart, refine and polish her. The Potter has to work with the clay first to remove the imperfections before that vessel is fit and ready to be used for His glory.

Our roles throughout our lives, and therefore our purpose for that season, also change. A woman may be a wife and mother for a time, but eventually those children grow up and fly the nest. God then has something else that is wonderful in store for her, a brand new, exciting chapter in her life.

The Spiritual Gifts

Our spiritual gifts do not change, though. They are given to us by God when He created us. He knows our purpose and calling, even before we are born (Jeremiah 1:5).

The spiritual gifts are closely tied to your life purpose. They are foundational in your calling. They work hand in hand with other natural gifts, abilities, and talents that you have. Everyone has a spiritual gift or spiritual gifts. They are never about us, but are to be used for God's glory. They have a vital role in the church and the advancement of God's kingdom, and in this world.

Krista Dunk says in her excellent book, *Step Out and Take Your Place* (<http://www.stepoutandtakeyourplace.com/>):

“Spiritual gifts are God-given, supernatural abilities—different from our talents, learned skills, and natural abilities. These spiritual gifts enable ordinary believers like you and me to be able to minister to other people in extraordinary ways. Using our gifts in the ways they were created and for the purposes they were designed helps to advance the causes of the Kingdom of God. In order to be effective in serving and in advancing the Kingdom, we have to know what gifts God has given to us individually. Those gifts will help us determine how and where we can best serve in ministry.”

Here is a list of the spiritual gifts:

Ministry Gifts - Ephesians 4 (also known as the 5 Fold Ministry, which are the five main positions of church leadership. They are specifically used in, and for building up and equipping, the body of Christ):

Apostle/Apostolic - (Greek Word: apostolos - 'apo'=from 'stello'=send; one sent forth) – one who is sent forth to new places with the gospel; establish new works; plant churches.

Prophet/Prophecy - (Greek Word: prophetes - the forth-telling of the will of God; 'pro'=forth; 'phemi'=to speak) – one who speaks God's message of truth. This can involve foretelling of the future, but its primary function is to comfort, encourage, build up/edify the body of Christ.

Evangelist/Evangelism (Greek Word: euaggelistes - preacher of gospel; eu=well, angelos=message - messenger of good) – a messenger of the good news of the gospel. These people just want others to be saved!

Pastor/Pastoral – responsible for spiritually caring for and encouraging the spiritual growth and maturity of a group of believers who are entrusted to their care; shepherds of people.

Teacher/Teaching – share the Bible’s eternal truths with others; instruct others in the Bible in a logical way to communicate truth and understanding, to help them grow and mature in faith.

Not everyone has one of, a combination of, or all of the 5-fold ministry gifts. This is a specific calling by God to church leadership.

Manifestation or “Charismatic” Gifts (1 Corinthians 12). They are manifestations of the Holy Spirit. These gifts work through willing believers as and when they are needed. God will use whoever is willing and available for His glory. We can never claim these gifts as something that we have “earned” or “deserve.” God bestows these gifts upon us by His grace and through our willingness to walk in humble obedience to His Word:

Spoken manifestations:

Prophecy - (Greek Word: prophetes - the forth-telling of the will of God; 'pro'=forth; 'phemi'=to speak) – one who speaks God’s message of truth. This can involve foretelling of the future, but its primary function is to comfort, encourage, build up/edify the body of Christ. People with the gift of prophecy are not always the most popular people around, because they speak truth to others. But it is an incredible, precious gift and the gift which the apostle Paul said to desire above all others. Prophecy is the testimony of Jesus Christ; it always points to Him.

Speaking in tongues - (1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:27-28) - to speak in a language not previously learned so unbelievers can hear God's message in their own language or so that the body of Christ will be edified. Some people believe the gift of tongues is demonic, or the gift of tongues has passed away with Jesus’ death and the death of the apostles. This is simply not true. There are demonic tongues which exist, because Satan tries to counterfeit everything God does, but that does not mean that tongues are not real or are not Biblical.

Interpretation of tongues - (1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:27-28) - to translate the message of someone who has spoken in tongues. This revelation comes from God’s Spirit. This gift works closely in association with the gift of prophecy for building up and edifying the body of Christ. The gift always points to Christ. The gift of tongues and the gift of interpretation of tongues should be done “decently and in order.”

Action manifestations:

Faith – (1 Corinthians 12:8-10) - to be firmly persuaded of God's power and Word to accomplish His will and purpose; to have such a confidence in God and His Word that life's circumstances and obstacles can't shake that conviction. People with a gift of faith believe God can and will do anything. Nothing is impossible with God! I love faith people! They will believe for anything! 😊 Our daughter Leah has this spiritual gift. It is a POWERFUL gift because it makes room for the miraculous.

Healing - (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30) – the beautiful gift through which God makes people whole either physically, emotionally, mentally, or spiritually. This gift did not pass away with Jesus' death and resurrection and the apostles' death. God can and does heal people today. I have seen the evidence of this in my own life, and in the life of my family's lives and others I love. God desires to heal you! Jesus went around healing people, not making them sick. Many times healing comes as a result of faith; however, this is not always the case. The father with the boy who had epilepsy cried out to Jesus, "I believe; help my unbelief!" God knows exactly where we are at. He longs to show us mercy and compassion, as Jesus did with the multitudes.

Miracles - (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28) – with this gift, God performs awesome deeds which witnesses acknowledge are supernaturally accomplished. There is no denying it. It is not of a human origin and there can be no other explanation than it was the work of God. When the man who was blind from birth was healed by Jesus and was questioned again by the authorities, wanting him to say Jesus was a sinner and they didn't know where He came from, he told them that Jesus had to have come from God and such a miracle could only be done from the hand of God. Yes, God is still in the miracle-working business today! I share about this in my book *Walking With God* about God miraculously healing our daughter Leah.

<http://www.bethjones.net/my-products/walking-with-god-ebook-now-available/>

Revelation manifestations:

Word of Wisdom - (1 Corinthians 12:8) - to make spiritual truths relevant and practical for decision-making and daily life situations. There is certainly more needed of this gift today! The gift of the word of wisdom comes by revelation of the Holy Spirit. It is not an earthly, carnal wisdom – not man's opinion or thoughts - but God's wisdom that has always existed, straight from His heart of love and compassion for you. He cares about every tiny detail of your life! This gift can be a timely word from someone to help you with making an important, possibly life-altering decision. This gift works closely with the gift of prophecy.

Knowledge – (1 Corinthians 12:8) - to learn as much about the Bible as possible through research and analyzing that information. We can learn knowledge through many books, classes, online training, etc. But knowledge of God and His word is the most important knowledge and understanding we can get. Many passages in the Proverbs tell us to diligently seek God's wisdom, knowledge and understanding above everything else. God's word is our compass and our map for this life. This gift also can be the word of knowledge, a supernatural insight into a person and/or his or her life, that comes from revelation of the Holy Spirit. This gift works closely with the gift of prophecy.

Discerning of Spirits - (1 Corinthians 12:10) - to clearly distinguish truth from error by judging whether the behavior or teaching is from God, Satan, human error, or human power. The Bible tells us to test everything and hold fast onto what is good (1 Thessalonians 5:21). We need to know if what is being said or done or manifested is from God, Satan or humans. This gift is a powerful, much needed gift in the body of Christ today as the coming of Christ draws closer and the darkness in the earth becomes even darker. This gift works closely with prophecy and also operates powerfully in deliverance ministry to set people free from being captives of Satan's strongholds.

Serving Gifts:

Administration –1 Corinthians 12:28- (Greek Word: kubernesias - to steer, guide, helmsmen) - to guide the body of Christ toward accomplishing God-given through planning, organizing, and supervising others. Not all pastors or preachers have a gift of administration. These are the people you want in charge to get things done! They are usually detail-oriented and very organized. They see what needs to get done and make sure it is! They are also wonderful people to put on committees for events, projects, special holidays, etc. They are leaders and usually make wise decisions.

Encouragement (speaking gift) – this gift uplifts, comforts, restores others. People with this spiritual gift have a need to see that others are encouraged and edified! I have this gift. It is my passion to encourage women to fulfill their great purpose through pursuing their passion and through daily intimacy with Jesus. One friend of mine has told me that this gift “oozes” out of me. ☺ This gift may work closely with gifts of compassion/mercy, the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and healing.

Exhortation (speaking gift) –(Romans 12:8) - (Greek Word: paraklesis - calling to one's side)-to come alongside someone with words of encouragement, comfort, consolation, and counsel to help them become all that God wants them to be. A person with this gift wants to see someone who is not reaching his or her potential do so, and will challenge that person to reach higher in their walk with God – to not be satisfied with the status quo and the mediocre.

Giving – (Romans 12:8) - to share what material resources you have liberally and with joy without a thought of return. People with this gift love and thrive from giving to others: their money, material possessions, their time, their encouragement. Our daughter Heather and I both have this gift. It makes us both so happy to buy presents for people at Christmas, birthdays, and other special occasions or to give money to missions and other needs. To stop a person from giving, who has the gift of giving, crushes them and steals their joy. Those with the gift can often perceive needs supernaturally and are moved by God's Spirit to give with His heart of love to provide for them. They are also moved by His Spirit when the needs are openly shared. Their motivation does not come from being noticed or praised for giving, so they may sometimes give anonymously.

Helps/Serving - (1 Corinthians 12:28) - to give help or assistance to others in the body of Christ to free them up for ministry. You can easily see the gift of helps/serving in people. These are the people who start wiping tables and tearing them down after the church's Sunday dinner. They are quick to aid others who accidentally fall down. They are the worker bees in a church or organization. They thrive from "doing." It's automatic, just in their blood to start helping with any project needed around the church, whether it's painting a room, setting up tables, or cooking or cleaning for the Sunday dinner. If they don't know how to do the job that is needed, they will find someone who can do it. These people are unselfish people who help to make ministry run smoothly – the hands and feet doing the practical needed work. They make wonderful missionaries.

Hospitality - – (1 Peter 4:9, 10) -(Greek Word: philoxenos - love of strangers; 'philos'=love; 'xenos'=stranger)- to warmly welcome people, even strangers, into their home or church to serve those in need of food or lodging. My husband Ray has this gift. When I first met him, he had a Bible study in his home every Friday evening, with 30 or 40 people attending, bringing a potluck dinner. People with the gift of hospitality love nothing more than having guests over. They make wonderful greeters or care team ministry leaders at the church, ensuring that those who come into the front door feel loved and welcome – and will come back.

Intercession/Prayer – to pray or stand in the gap in prayer for others. Those with this spiritual gift enjoy and even love to pray. Their personal prayer life is strong and they have authority when they pray. This gift can work closely with the gifts of prophecy, faith, compassion/mercy, healing, word of wisdom, and discerning of spirits. Sometimes those with this gift may be woken up in the middle of the night by God to pray and intercede. Prayer is one of my strongest gifts. Without even seeking it out, I am often called or emailed by others who ask me to pray for something. I am happy to do so. I have faith that God hears my prayers and that He will answer. I have seen many answers to prayer as a result of mine and other people's prayers and faith. Jesus modeled for us a lifestyle of prayer, so this is an important gift.

Leadership - (Romans 12:8) - to motivate others with God's goals. This gift is often unmistakable. How can you tell if someone is a leader? He or she will have followers! Some people seem to be "born leaders," while others grow into a leadership role as they mature in their faith, abilities, and understanding. My husband Ray is a leader. Examples of other leaders are Joyce Meyer, Mother Theresa, Beth Moore, Billy Graham, and Sarah Palin. Leaders don't want to "lord over" others and are never to be dominating or manipulating, controlling the lives of others. They simply want to encourage others to do what is right and best, to come to a higher place in God, obeying Him and being all He created them to be.

Mercy/Compassion -(Romans 12:8) - to be sensitive toward those who are suffering, whether physically, mentally, or emotionally, and feel sympathy with their pain, speaking words of compassion and caring for them with actions of love to alleviate their distress. Jesus was often moved with mercy and compassion toward the multitudes who were suffering and needed His touch and His words. This gift often works alongside healing and miracles. Those with this gift

hurt when others hurt. They are the “hearts” of the church, and are people after God’s own heart of Love.

Miscellaneous Gifts, which encompass many other gifts found in various places in the Bible:

Craftsmanship – those who have gifts with crafts, making furniture, sewing, etc. Lydia was a maker of purple clothing; workers with the gift of craftsmanship built the ark and the temple.

Music - those with a musical or singing talent; worshippers, worship leaders, dancers, banner wavers. King David was a Psalmist; Miriam danced with a cymbal in her hand.

Missionary (may be related to leadership/ministry gifts) – people with this gift minister to those in another culture, such as the apostle Paul and the apostle Thomas. Missionaries may serve on the field full-term, or be short-term missionaries going into countries for a week or other short periods of time to do specific needed work/ministry there, and then return home.

Ray, our daughter Heather and I have this gift. Ray has been to Haiti 5 times, the last time being right after the big earthquake in Haiti, to do security and medical missions work there. He has also done short-term missions trips to Mexico several times and to Israel. Our daughter Heather went on a month-long missions trip with Youth With a Mission to Peru, Brazil, and Columbia; a month long missions trip to India; and has done several U.S. state-wide missions trips. She did a short-term mission trip in Nashville, TN, after the flood, and a short-term mission trip to Joplin, MO, for an outreach after the tornado that devastated Joplin. I did a mission trip to Israel, went with Ray on his 3rd mission trip to Haiti, and went with Heather and her team to help in Joplin, MO. Our family now has African on our hearts.

Missionaries may also minister in their own back yard, such as inner city missions, pro-life centers, and soup kitchens.

Voluntary Poverty – I don’t have this gift! Those with this gift vow to give up worldly goods/money for the sake of and cause of following Christ. Many priests, nuns, and many of today’s younger generation who are missionaries at the International House of Prayer in Kansas City, MO, take a vow of poverty.

Voluntary Celibacy – (1 Corinthians 7:7, 8) - to voluntarily remain single without regret and with the ability to not have sex, to serve God without distraction. The apostle Paul said it would be best if others would follow his example to do this, but if not then marry to avoid temptation. I personally believe this gift is quite rare because most people *need* to be married and don’t have the ability to not have sex for extended periods of time (just my opinion).

Interpretation of Dreams –the ability to interpret dreams with God’s wisdom and understanding. This gift works closely with the prophetic, the word of wisdom, and knowledge. An example of this in the Bible would be Joseph, who interpreted Pharaoh’s dreams, and Daniel, who interpreted Nebuchadnezzar’s dreams. This gift still exists today, but it is important to always interpret dreams in light of Scripture. Not every dream is from God (some are pizza dreams!), but God still can and

does use dreams to speak to our hearts. "He said, "Hear now My words: If there is a prophet among you, I, the LORD, shall make Myself known to him in a vision. I shall speak with him in a dream." Numbers 12:6 (NASB)

God's wonderful plan and the Gifts

As you can see, there are many spiritual gifts listed in the Bible. We deserve none of them, but God in His grace allows us to participate in His wonderful plan to save humanity and be with them forever. He wants us to use these precious gifts for advancing His kingdom for His glory. We should never take credit for them ourselves as they come from God, and we should not take them for granted. We also should not hold back in fear or intimidation from using them.

If you gave your spouse a special gift which you had saved for months to buy, you would be hurt if he said "thank you," and then put it in the back of the closet, not using or enjoying it. This must be how God feels when we put our gifts on the shelf, too, "for another day" (or year!). God wants you to use your gifts as an act of worship to Him and to bless, minister to, and help other people.

The Glory

The enemy is the one who does not want you to use your gifts, because they are from God and they glorify Jesus Christ. When signs and wonders exist, the kingdom of God is on display! It is God's glory realm and magnifies Him! We should be humbled and awed that God has given them to us and wants to use us for His glory!

If you do not know what your spiritual gifts are or your purpose, I encourage you to buy Krista Dunk's book, *Step Out and Take Your Place* (<http://www.stepoutandtakeyourplace.com/>) and the book, *The Gifts and Ministries of the Holy Spirit* by Lester Sumrall, available at Amazon.

What will you hear when you face God one day? How did you use His gifts?

There is no one else on earth or in history like you. God has put great gifts inside of you that He desires to use for His glory and to further His kingdom. How sad it would be if you got to heaven and found out that you never "opened" those gifts He gave you, or accomplished your life purpose, like the man who hid his talents. But how wonderful to hear from God, "Well-done, thou good and faithful servant! You willingly, obediently, and joyfully allowed Me to use you for My glory!"

There are many spiritual gifts tests online. Below are a few places you can go to find out what yours are – and to begin using them.

Find a good, Bible-teaching church whose staff believes in, teaches on, and uses the spiritual gifts in their congregation in a balanced, Biblical way.

Spiritual Gifts Tests:

<http://www.bibleistrue.com/sgtest/testa.htm>

<http://www.kodachrome.org/spiritgift/>

<http://www.buildingchurch.net/g2s-i.htm>

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Beth Jones, Christian speaker, author, life coach, wife and mom

Encouraging women to fulfill their great purpose through pursuing their passion and through daily intimacy with Jesus.

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