

## SPIRITUAL GIFTS

God creates each individual as a unique human being. Never have two people been exactly alike. We have one-of-a-kind fingerprints, DNA sequences, personalities, strengths, weaknesses, backgrounds, experiences, skills, and interests. To top it all off, God gives the Holy Spirit as a gift to every Christian! God's Spirit manifests Himself in singular ways within each of us. Every believer has a unique function to perform in life—and in the Body of Christ.

Spiritual gifts are supernatural in origin. Just before Jesus left His disciples and returned to heaven, He told them to wait for the gift that He would send. Not many days later, God's Spirit arrived in unforgettable fashion. The Holy Spirit is the gift that Jesus promised! The Holy Spirit generously endows every believer with a spiritual gift for service to others. When we use our gifts in the power of the Holy Spirit, the body of Christ is strengthened and God gets all the credit and glory.

The New Testament refers to approximately 25 different spiritual gifts. Some gifts are similar to each other in function and application (e.g. "helps" and "service"). English Bible versions use a variety of different words to translate the names of each spiritual gift. The names and definitions we'll use when referring to each spiritual gift are listed below. The Bible study, *My Masterpiece Adventure*, explores these gifts in more detail.

- Parentheses ( ) indicate names of spiritual gifts used by popular English Bible translations.
- Brackets [ ] indicate spiritual gifts that are similar to the featured gift.

**Serving** (service)—divine power to complete tasks that support and encourage other people.

**Helping** (helps)—divine power to befriend people and to assist them with special needs.

*Note:* The spiritual gifts of serving and helping are similar. People with the gift of serving usually enjoy working on projects. People with the gift of helping usually enjoy working with people.

**Exercising Faith** (faith)—divine power to show confidence in God's ability to resolve a problem, even when other people doubt.

*[Praying (intercession, intercedes, prays)—divine power to pray consistently for others, seeing frequent answers.]*

**Applying Wisdom** (wisdom, word of wisdom, wise advice)—divine power to understand a situation and to provide God's insight or advice.

*[Discerning of Spirits (discernment, distinguishing spirits)—divine power to distinguish between truth and error; understanding whether a concept is from God, man, or satan.]*

**Proclaiming** (prophecy, prophet)—divine power to reveal the truth of God's Word, explaining it clearly and with conviction.

**Evangelizing** (evangelism, evangelist)—divine power to testify about Jesus Christ, leading people to personal faith in Him.

*[Pioneering (apostleship, apostle, missionary)—divine power to cross cultural barriers and to establish a church where there was no previous knowledge of the Gospel.]*

**Teaching** (teacher)—divine power to communicate Biblical principles so that Christians understand and grow in the faith.

*[Knowing (knowledge, word of knowledge)—divine power to comprehend truth about a situation and reveal it to the church.]*

**Showing Mercy** (mercy, compassion, kindness)—divine power to express compassion and support for people who suffer pain and problems.

**Leading** (leadership, ruleth, leads)—divine power to grasp God's purposes, influencing others to accomplish God's work.

*[Shepherding (pastor)—divine power to feed, guide, and nurture a community of Christians.]*

**Managing** (administration, governments)—divine power to organize and plan, directing people to complete tasks well.

**Giving**—divine power to generously and joyously give to the Lord, meeting the needs of the church and other people.

*[Showing Hospitality (hospitality)—divine power to care for people by providing food, shelter, and fellowship.]*

**Encouraging** (encouragement, exhortation, encourage)—divine power to motivate people to do their best, taking righteous action.

## Other New Testament Spiritual Gifts

**Speaking in Tongues** (tongues, unknown languages)—divine power to speak, in a language not previously learned, God's message to the church.

**Interpreting Tongues** (interpretation, interpret)—divine power to explain to the church God's message through someone speaking in tongues.

**Healing**—divine power to supernaturally restore a person's body, mind, or spirit in the name of Christ.

**Performing Miracles** (miracles)—divine power to call on God to perform signs and wonders that defy natural law.