

## Spiritual Gifts Definitions: Ruach part 9

“The Scriptures plainly imply the imperative of possessing the gifts of the Spirit. Paul urges that we both “covet” and “desire” spiritual gifts (1 Cor. 12:31, 14:1). It does not appear to be an optional matter with us but rather a scriptural mandate to those who have been filled with the Spirit.”

~A.W. Tozer

The gifts of the Spirit are not trophies, talents, traits or toys. The gifts of the Spirit are God’s supernatural expressions of love, caring, kindness, healing and concern—bestowed on us and through us.

~John Wimber

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. ... All these are the work of the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.”

~1 Corinthians 12:7, 11

### Motivational Gifts (Romans 12:3-8)

#### 1. Prophecy (Rom. 12:6, 1 Cor. 12:10)

The Gift of Prophecy is the special ability that God gives to members of the Body of Christ to receive and communicate an immediate message of God to His gathered people, a group among them, or any one of His people individually, through a divinely anointed utterance" (David Pitches).

**Example:** Zacharias (Luke 1:67-79).

The Greek word for prophecy, "propheteia," implies that one is speaking for another; speaking on behalf of God. We are exhorted to specifically desire to prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:1,31)

Prophecy is designed by God to:

1. Strengthen the Church (1 Corinthians 14:3).
2. Encourage the Church (1 Corinthians 14:3).
3. Comfort the Church (1 Corinthians 14:3).
4. Instruct the Church (1 Corinthians 14:31).
5. To affect unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:24).

Prophecy touches the Church at its point of need. It is based on revelation ... the revelation of God's love, care and desire for His people to be built up. It is not to be used to criticize or "bash" the Church.

## **2. Serving (Rom. 12:7)**

The special ability that God gives certain member of the Body of Christ to identify unmet needs involved in a task related to God's work, and to make use of those resources to meet those needs and help accomplish the desired results

**Example:** Choosing the seven (Acts 6:1-7)

This is a practical gift. Those with the gift of service enjoy doing routine tasks around in the church regardless of how they effect others. They do their work with joy and would rather support than lead. This gift can be confused with the gifts of Mercy and Helps. Helps focuses on Christian works freeing others to accomplish their ministry. Mercy focuses on people in distress and reflects God's love and compassion. Service focuses on accomplishing tasks that may otherwise go undone in order to move the greater goal of ministry and the mission of the church forward.

## **3. Teaching (Rom. 12:7)**

The gift of teaching is the ability to communicate information relevant to the health and ministry of the Body in such a way that the people can learn it. People with this gift love to study Scripture and other materials in order to communicate have they have learned to other people. Those with this gift tend to organize vast amounts of information in such a way as to make it easy to communicate, understand, and remember.

**Example:** Jesus teaching (Matt.s 7:28-29) Judas and Silas (Acts 15:32)

Encouraging, Prophecy, and teaching are communication gifts and can be confused. Good communicators tend to have a mix of these three gifts. Exhortation focuses on personal and practical application of the message. Prophecy focuses on the urgency and impact of the message. Teaching focuses on bringing thorough understanding of the message.

## **4. Encouraging/exhorting (Rom. 12:8)**

This gift empowers those who receive it to minister words of comfort, consolation and counsel in such a way that they feel helped and healed. The Greek word translated here is "Paraklesis", which is related to the "Paraklete" or Holy Spirit. Paraklesis means to "call to one's side." So an encourager comes along side to help, comfort counsel and encourage.

**Example:** Barnabas (Acts 4:36, 9:27, 13:43)

This gift can be used both publicly and privately and is helpful for counseling, discipleship, mentoring, and preaching.

### **5. Giving (Rom. 12:8)**

A person with the gift of giving is motivated to conserve and share resources in order to meet ministry needs, and they do so with cheerfulness. While all believers are commanded to practice Spirit-led giving to support the works of God, some people have a call and a spirit of generosity that enables them to give remarkably greater amounts.

**Examples:** Jesus' teaching (Matt. 6:2-4) The Philippians (Phil. 4:17)

Sometimes their families often think givers are very stingy—much too concerned about counting pennies—but the people to whom they give think they are extremely generous. Financial health is a hallmark of their lives, they conserve in order to bless others.

### **6. Leadership (Rom. 12:8)**

The Greek word for the spiritual gift of leadership is *proistemi*. This word means to lead, to assist, to protect and to care for others. The person with this gift leads, protects and guides the church work together in unity for the mission of the church and God's kingdom. This posture is what connects this gift to that of the Shepherd/pastor and different than the gift of administration. While the gift of leadership often has administrative gifts, it's focus is more on people than tasks

**Examples:** Thessalonian leaders (1 Thess. 5:12)

Those with the gift of leadership tend to be visionary, risk takers who are less concerned with the details and more concerned with the people. They will strive to protect those they lead and respond well in crisis situations.

## Ministry Gifts: (Eph. 4:11-13)

### **7. Apostle (Eph. 4:11)**

Apostles extend the gospel. As the “sent ones,” they ensure that the faith is transmitted from one context to another and from one generation to the next. They are always thinking about the future, bridging barriers, establishing the church in new contexts, developing leaders, networking trans-locally. The shepherding and teaching functions are needed to ensure people are cared for rather than simply used. (Alan Hirsch)

**Examples:** Paul (1 Cor. 3:10, 2 Cor. 12:12)

The apostolic gift tends to incorporate the gifts of Evangelist, Teacher, Shepherd and Teacher in order to establish new works especially when when fellow workers are few. In each generation as the Gospel goes forth the Lord sends apostles “until we all reach unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, and become mature, attain the full measure of the fulness of Christ.” (Eph. 4:13)

### **7. Prophet (Eph. 4:11)**

Prophets know God's will. They are particularly attuned to God and his truth for today. They bring correction and challenge the dominant assumptions we inherit from the culture. They insist that the community obey what God has commanded. They question the status quo. (Alan Hirsch)

**Examples:** Paul (1 Cor. 3:10, 2 Cor. 12:12)

The gift of prophecy is different than the ministry of the prophet. However, the Prophet will utilize the gift of prophecy more than others. The apostle Paul taught that not every believer is a prophet (1 Corinthians 12:19), but also said that all believers can prophesy (1 Corinthians 14:31). The office of prophet is one of the leadership offices in the body of Christ that exists to “equip the saints for the work of the ministry” (Ephesians 4:11-12). Not all believers are called to such a leadership office, but the prophet is.

### **8. Evangelist (Eph. 4:11)**

Evangelists recruit. These infectious communicators of the gospel message recruit others to the cause. They call for a personal response to God's redemption in Christ, and also draw believers to

engage the wider mission, growing the church.( Alan Hirsch) While all Christians are called to evangelize and reach out to the lost with the Gospel ([Matthew 28:18-20](#)), some are given an extra measure of faith and effectiveness in this area. The Evangelist has increased capacity to and sensitivity in leading people to Jesus and as such also help others share their faith more effectively.

**Examples:** Phillip (Acts 8)

The Greek word for evangelists is ‘Euaggelistes’ which means “one who brings good news.” This word is only found two other places in the New Testament: [Acts 21:8](#) and [2 Timothy 4:5](#). Evangelists are given the unique ability by the Holy Spirit to clearly and effectively communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to others. They are burdened in their hearts for the lost and will go out of their way to share the truth with them. Evangelists are able to overcome the normal fear of rejection and engage non-believers in meaningful conversations about Jesus. Their gift allows them to communicate with all types of people and therefore they receive a greater response to the message of salvation through Jesus Christ.

## **9. Shepherd (Eph. 4:11)**

Shepherds nurture and protect. Caregivers of the community, they focus on the protection and spiritual maturity of God's flock, cultivating a loving and spiritually mature network of relationships, making and developing disciples. (Alan Hirsch)

The Greek word for shepherd is ‘Poimen’ and we translate it as ‘Pastor’ and it simply means shepherd or overseer. Unfortunately the word pastor has come to be identified with a particular position in the church. However, when the person in that position of leadership exercises the gift of ‘poimen’ the people experience growth, health and mission. The spiritual gift of pastor or pastor/shepherd is one that carries many different responsibilities. This gift is closely related to the spiritual gifts of leadership and teaching.

**Examples:** Jesus (John 10:1-18) Peter (1 Peter 5:1-4)

In the Biblical context, shepherds had several different responsibilities to their sheep and ultimately, to the owner of the sheep. They kept a lookout for predators and protected the sheep from attackers. They cared for wounded and sick sheep, nursing them back to health. They rescued them if they became lost or trapped. They spent enormous amounts of time with them guiding them to the places of nourishment and rest. The result was a trust and relationship that kept the sheep following the shepherd. The sheep were attuned to the shepherd's voice to the point that even if they were temporarily mixed with another herd, at the call of the shepherd they would separate and follow him. Pastors are called shepherds because their calling and gifting are much like those who care for sheep.

## **10. Teacher (Eph. 4:11)**

Teachers understand and explain. Communicators of God's truth and wisdom, they help others remain biblically grounded to better discern God's will, guiding others toward wisdom, helping the community remain faithful to Christ's word, and constructing a transferable doctrine. (Alan Hirsch)

Teachers have been entrusted with the task of effectively communicating what the Bible says, what it means, and how we as followers of Jesus Christ are to apply it to our lives here and now.

The Greek word for those with the spiritual gift of teaching is didaskalos. From the root of this word we get our English word, "didactic." The word didasko means to teach, instruct, instill doctrine, explain, and expound. Those with the spiritual gift of teaching love to study the Word of God for extended periods of time. They consume the Scriptures as food for their hearts, souls and minds with the expressed purpose of knowing Him and then making Him known to others.

**Examples:** Barnabas (Acts 11:22) Antioch Leaders (Acts 13:1)

The Holy Spirit gives certain people the spiritual gift of teaching so that they would help the church fulfill her ministry as "a pillar and buttress of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). Without this gift, the church would quickly fall into error and sin. Teachers are there to make sure that doesn't happen. They hate when Scripture is abused and used out of context or with ill intent. They love the truth and speak the truth in love.

## Manifestation Gifts: 1 Cor. 12:7-11, 27-31)

### **11. Word of Wisdom (1 Cor. 12:8)**

"The supernatural application of knowledge" (Rev. Dennis Bennett, U.S.A.).

"Wisdom" is "skill, cleverness, the right application of knowledge."

The Word of Wisdom gives us the skill in knowing how and when to minister accurately by the Holy Spirit into peoples' lives. It makes the timing right and enables the other Gifts to make a significant impact.

**Examples:** Jerusalem Council (Acts 15)

"The word of wisdom is that anointing of the Holy Spirit which is exercised when issues arise and when there are important decisions that must be made. It is that imparting of the word of wisdom that just is so right that it brings divided factions together. People say, "Oh yes, that is good." And it is just that word of wisdom."

~Chuck Smith

"The word of wisdom gives us God's direction—to lead a group, solve a problem, discern God's plan, or to please God with an ethical course of action. God shows us what He sees so we know what to do."

### **12. Word of Knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8)**

The word of knowledge gives us God's instruction by granting us Spirit-inspired insight into previously given revelation (usually Scripture). It causes us to recognize God's voice and acknowledge His will." "This definition emerges through a word study of the term "knowledge" in the New Testament, i.e., the Greek words gnosis and epignosis" (Robbins, "VLI Syllabus," p. 3).

"This is the supernatural revelation of fact about a person or situation, which is not learned through the efforts of the natural mind, but is a fragment of knowledge freely given by God, disclosing the truth which the Spirit wishes to be made known concerning a particular person or situation."

~John Wimber

"The revelation of facts past, present or future which were not learned through the efforts of the natural mind" (Rev. Dennis Bennett).

"God-given disclosures" (Michael Green).

**Examples:** Jesus & the Samaritan Woman (John 4:15-19) Ananias & Paul (Acts 9:22,26)  
Peter Understanding Torah differently (Acts 10)

In essence the Word of Knowledge is information that we receive supernaturally to minister in a given situation and is most often accompanied with “wisdom” to make a transformative application.

#### **The Purpose of The Word of Knowledge:**

1. To bring supernatural encouragement.
2. To give confirmation to what God has already been saying or doing.
3. To give insight and understanding of what is ahead in the purposes of God.
4. To help in counseling/evangelistic situations.
5. To unlock hindrances to healing/unanswered prayers.
6. To give strategies in spiritual warfare.
7. To reveal where sin is being covered up.
8. To open up a meeting or situation for God to move.

#### **13. Faith (1 Cor. 12:9)**

"The mysterious surge of confidence which sometimes arises within a person faced with a specific situation or need"

~John Wimber

This gift can apply personally, or for others, or for Christian projects, i.e. finance for church building. This shows up in the persons life as an extraordinary confidence concerning God's will in a given situation. While all believers posses faith, this is a noticeable increase from most people's "saving" faith.

**Examples:** Daniel in the Lions Den (Daniel 6) Abraham (Rom. 4:18-21)

The gift of faith is the God-given anticipation (a mysterious surge of confidence) that God is about to act through a word or deed followed by its realization in spite of contrary circumstances.

## **14. Healing (1 Cor. 12:9)**

"To supernaturally bring cure for the sick, physical, spiritual and emotional; to make whole in the fullest sense of the word; saving from disease and its effects" (Rodney Francis).

"The 'gifts' of 'healings' are sign gifts, used to demonstrate God's power and loving presence in the world. This is differentiated from "Divine covenantal healing" As such healing is under the discretion and sovereignty of God, and not the will of the person with the gift."

~Pastor Monty

**Examples:** Man Born Blind (John 9:1-12)

These gifts of healing occur if it will bring the greatest glory to God and expand His kingdom.

## **15. Miracles/Miraculous Powers (1 Cor. 12:10)**

Also called "Miraculous Powers" are supernatural events that occur outside the bounds of what is natural. "A remarkable or surprising event that happens by the direct intervention of God, not following the general known laws of nature" (Dr. David Yonggi Cho, South Korea). The Greek phrase *energemata dynameon* literally translates "workings of powers." The double plural most likely means that these gifts were diverse and were not permanently available at the will of the gifted believer, but instead were bestowed at various times and circumstances.

**Examples:** Aeneas and Dorcas (Acts 9:32-43) Paul (2 Cor. 12:12)

This Gift is desperately needed to impact an unbelieving Christendom and an even more unbelieving world! Those with the spiritual gift of miracles often have a heightened sensitivity to the presence and power of God through His Holy Spirit. They have a special measure of faith and desire for God to reveal Himself and draw many to faith in His Son Jesus Christ. They take care not to draw attention to themselves or have a following of people, but are constantly pointing others to Jesus. Those with this gift understand that God is Sovereign and He can work when and how He desires, but they make sure they are available and listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. \*\*healing and miracles are often combined since they both involve the occurrence of events beyond natural means. However, one is focused on healing the human body while the other is focused on other miraculous events that alter the course of nature.

## **16. Discerning of Spirits (1 Cor.12:10)**

Holy Spirit gives the gift of discernment to enable certain Christians to clearly recognize and distinguish between the influence of God, Satan, the world, and the flesh in a given situation. The Greek word for the gift of discernment is *diakrisis*. The word describes being able to distinguish, discern, judge or appraise a person, statement, situation, or environment. In the New Testament it describes the ability to distinguish between spirits as in 1 Corinthians 12:10, and to discern good and evil as in Hebrews 5:14.

Examples: Jesus Rebukes Peter (Matt 16:21-23) Peter & Cornelius Acts 10:30-35

This is an important gift in the body when matured to help discern between right and wrong motives and the spiritual forces in situations.

## **17. Speaking in Tongues (1 Cor.12:10)**

Speaking in tongues is the utterance of prayer or of a message glorifying God, typically spoken to God (1 Corinthians 14:2), in a language that is unknown to the one speaking it. This gift allows a person to speak to God in a language that they have never learned and/or to receive and communicate a message of God to His people through a language the gifted person has never learned.

**Examples:** Pentecost (Acts 2:4) Corinthians (1 Cor. 14)

Scripture gives us two descriptive uses: known tongues, in which the language spoken was an actual language that could be understood and unknown tongues, an utterance that was unintelligible to its hearers. The first example is the tongues that were spoken by the disciples at Pentecost (Acts 2:4). Here, Jews from all over were able to hear the message of Jesus spoken in their own languages by the disciples who had no knowledge of these languages! The latter example comes from Acts and describes two circumstances when believers are filled with the Holy Spirit and then begin to speak in tongues (Acts 10:44–46, 19:5–6). In 1 Corinthians 14, Paul is referring specifically to unknown tongues.

- Not every believer receives this gift. The gift of tongues is not a requirement or a necessary sign of salvation. See 1 Corinthians 12:30.
- Tongues can be human languages such as those heard in Acts 2, but often may be languages no one understands. See 1 Corinthians 14:2.

- Tongues are not “ecstatic speech” but are always orderly and are able to be controlled by the one speaking. See 1 Corinthians 14:27-28, 33, 39-40
- No tongues should be spoken in the church gathering without interpretation. See 1 Corinthians 14:27-28.
- Tongues should not be forbidden. See 1 Corinthians 14:39.

### **18. Interpretation of Tongues (1 Cor.12:10, 1 Cor. 14)**

The spiritual gift of interpretation of tongues is found alongside the gift of speaking in tongues in 1 Corinthians 12:10. The Greek word for interpretation is *hermeneia* and simply means to interpret, explain, or expound some message that is not able to be understood in a natural way. Thus, this spiritual gift is the supernatural ability to understand and explain messages uttered in an unknown language.

Tongues as a ministry gift to the Church is useless without this gift in operation. It is an interpretation, not a word for word translation.

For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. 3 But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort. 4 Anyone who speaks in a tongue edifies themselves, but the one who prophesies edifies the church. 5 I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather have you prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, so that the church may be edified.

~1 Corinthians 14:2-5

### **19. Helping ( 1 Cor. 12:28)**

The gift of helps is the divine strength or ability to work in a supportive role for the accomplishment of tasks in Christian ministry with the ability to often see the need before others do. The person with this gift often enjoy doing mundane tasks in order to free others to do the ministry God has called them to do. People with this gift avoid the spotlight and are not generally looking for recognition.

Example: Dorcas (Acts 9:36) Phoebe (Romans 16:1-2)

The gifts of helps, mercy, and service are often confused. Helps focuses on Christian works and freeing others to to accomplish their God-given ministries. Mercy focuses on people in distress and reflects God’s love and compassion. Service focuses on accomplishing little tasks that may

otherwise go undone in order to move the greater goal of the ministry or church towards completion.

## **20. Guidance (Administration) (1 Cor. 12:28)**

Administration is described as managing, directing, running, governing, dispensing, supervising, organizing, and processing. This is the gift of being able to steer people toward the accomplishment of God-given goals and directives by planning, organizing, and supervising others. This includes the ability to plan and work with people to delegate responsibilities, track progress, and evaluate the effectiveness of procedures. Administrators attend to details, communicate effectively, and often take as much pleasure in working behind the scenes as they do in standing in the spotlight.

**Examples:** Jesus teaching building a tower (Luke 14:28-30) Titus establishing leadership (Titus 1:5)

The Greek word for the spiritual gift of administration is kubernes. This is a unique term that refers to a shipmaster or captain. The literal meaning is “to steer,” or “to rule or govern.” It carries the idea of someone who guides and directs a group of people toward a goal or destination.

## **21. Mercy (Romans 12:8)**

All Christians are called to be merciful because God has been merciful to us (Matthew 18:33; Ephesians 2:4-6). The Greek word for the spiritual gift of mercy is eleeo. It means to be patient and compassionate toward those who are suffering or afflicted. The concern for the physical as well as spiritual and emotional need of those who are hurting is covered by the gift of mercy. Those with this gift have great empathy for others in their trials and sufferings. They are able to come alongside people over extended periods of time and see them through their healing process. They are truly and literally the hands and feet of God to the afflicted.

**Examples:** Famine relief (Acts 11:28-30) Good Samaritan (Luke 10:33)

People with this gift find it extremely difficult not to help those who seem less fortunate than themselves. Some of the ministries these people enjoy are hospital visits, nursing homes, prisons, and shut-ins.

## **22. Intercession:**

People with this gift stand in the gap and pray for other people, nations, organizations or communities etc. Intercessory prayer is a gift from the Holy Spirit that allows you to prevail in compassionate prayer on someone else’s behalf motivated solely by the heart of God.

“I looked for someone among them who would build up the wall and stand before me in the gap on behalf of the land so I would not have to destroy it, but I found no one.” ~Ezek 22:30

**Examples:** “First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made for all people . . .” ~1 Timothy 2:1

Paul goes on to give specific instruction concerning prayer for leaders and so, Paul’s admonition is not only a directive for Timothy (as a leader in the church) in how to pray for the Body, but also clearly instructional for the Body of Christ as a whole.

**You probably have the gift of intercessions if:**

- You have a deep concern for certain regions or areas that other don’t seem to notice. Do you know someone who is constantly asking you to pray for something that you don’t feel a particular interest in? For example, they always want to pray for the government. Not that this is not an important area to focus on but this is their constant request. That is usually a sign that they have been given the assignment from the Lord to pray for the government.
- You have compassion to the point of tears for persons or places that have no direct connection to you.
- You have knowledge about persons or places that are not directly connected to you.
- You have an ability to related to people or places that are not directly connected to you.
- You get lost in prayer and can pray for a much longer period of time that most.
- The first thing that you do or think when you hear about a problem is pray.
- When you pray words come out of your mouth with information that you didn’t know you knew.
- You are very sure within your heart that when you pray for certain things the prayer is being answered instantly.
- You have the ability to exercise more faith than others for miracles in prayer
- You are happy to pray for others and consider it a honor that they would ask you.
- You sometimes experience an emotional or even physical pain for others when praying for them.
- And the most important trait is that things happen or answers to prayers come very fast when you pray.