

Discovering Your

A vintage telescope with a brass or metal finish is positioned diagonally across the frame. It rests on an old, sepia-toned map of a region, likely Iceland, with various place names such as 'SOLOGIA', 'IATRIA', 'LINDESNES', and 'SCAGA PROVINCIA' visible. The map shows a coastline with several islands and a bay. The overall image has a historical and exploratory feel.

SPIRITUAL GIFT!

Cottonwood Community Church

THREE STAGES OF DISCOVERING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT

1. YOU ARE NOT SURE WHAT YOUR GIFT IS.

There may be several reasons for this including the tendency to confuse a ministry gift with a motivational gift.

2. YOU ARE SURE WHAT YOUR GIFT IS.

At this stage, you enjoy having fellowship with others who have the same gift. Beware of isolating yourself from interaction with all the gifts, since you will then tend to have a limited response to a given need or situation.

3. YOU DEMONSTRATE ALL THE GIFTS.

By learning to see a need or situation from the perspective of all seven gifts, you will greatly enhance the exercise and effectiveness of your own spiritual gift.

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1. What are the characteristics of the gift PHOPHECY?

Who in Scripture best illustrates the motivational gift of prophecy? **Peter.**

What guidelines are given for the gift of prophecy in Romans 12:9?

- **Love without hypocrisy**
- **Abhor evil**
- **Cling to good**

What basic principle does the prophet most need to exercise? **Clear conscience.**

Why is this true? **It allows the prophet to speak the truth boldly with love.**

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Need to express themselves</u> Prophets need to express their thoughts and ideas verbally, especially when matters of right and wrong are involved. In the written account of the Gospels, Peter spoke more often than any other disciple. He also became the spokesman for the early Church. (See Acts 2:14; 3:12; 4:8; 11:4). • <u>Quick impressions of people</u> Prophets tend to make quick judgments on what they see and hear. They also tend to express their views before others speak. In the Gospels, Peter spoke first more than any other disciple. (See Matthew 14:28; 15:15; 16:16; 16:33; 17:4; 19:27; John 6:68; 13:6). • <u>Alertness to dishonesty</u> Prophets have an amazing ability to sense when someone or something is not what it appears to be. They react harshly to any form of deception or dishonesty. Peter must have sensed deception in Ananias and Sapphira since he was prompted to question them about it. His condemnation resulted in their deaths. (See Acts 5:3-10). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Exposing without restoring</u> A prophet's primary concern about stopping the spread of evil tends to cause him to expose a sinner rather than restore him. In so doing, the prophet will fail a test of spirituality. (See Gal. 6:1). The prophet, however, believes that exposure of sin is the first step of restoration. • <u>Jumping to conclusions</u> Prophets tend to draw conclusions from a few known facts. Once a hasty conclusion has been made, prophets tend to look for confirming evidence. This action can result in their taking words and actions of the accused out of context in order to prove their points. • <u>Reacting harshly to sinners</u> When a prophet sees sin, he tends to denounce it so strongly that it appears to others as 'overkill'. After exposing the sin, the prophet tends to expect immediate repentance regardless of whether his rebuke was given in love or was even fully accurate. His motive in magnifying sin is to promote repentance.

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Desire for justice</u> Prophets tend to cut off those who sin so that justice will be done and others will be warned. Peter desired to cut off his offenders, and he asked Jesus how often he would have to forgive them. (See Matthew 18:21). A prophet knows that <i>“a little leaven leavens the whole lump.”</i> • <u>Open about their own faults</u> Prophets are as open about their own failures as they want others to be about theirs. When Christ appeared to the disciples, Peter fell on his knees and said, <i>“...Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord”</i> (Luke 5:8). • <u>Wholehearted involvement</u> Once prophets are committed to a cause, they are wholeheartedly involved in it. Within the context of their commitment, they are quick to respond to situations and opportunities. When Peter recognized Jesus walking on the water, he asked Jesus to bid him to come. (See Matthew 14:28). • <u>Loyalty to the truth vs. people</u> Prophets are loyal to truth even if it means cutting off relationships. When Jesus asked the disciples if they were also going to leave Him, Peter replied that he would stay because Christ had the words of eternal life. (See John 6:67-69). • <u>Willingness to suffer for right</u> Prophets are eager to suffer when it comes to standing for the truth or doing what is right. Peter rejoiced that he was counted worthy to suffer shame for Jesus when he was beaten for obeying God rather than men. (See Acts 5:29-42). • <u>Persuasive in defining truth</u> Prophets have a special ability to be articulate in defining what is right and what is wrong. Great conviction was brought to thousands on the Day of Pentecost when Peter pointed out, <i>“...And you with the help of wicked men, put Him to death by nailing Him to the cross.”</i> (Acts 2:23). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Being unforgiving</u> It is very difficult for a prophet to make a separation between sin and the sinner. Therefore, he tends to reject them both with equal vigor. Those who hear his harshness interpret his denunciations as angry tirades. Peter’s epistles provide a balance of truth and love. • <u>Condemning themselves</u> The harsh judgments which prophets have for others, they also have for themselves. They tend to be extremely self-critical and feel worthless when they fail. After Peter denied Jesus, the heavenly messenger knew his need for extra reassurance and said, <i>“...Go...tell His disciples and Peter...”</i> (Mark 16:7). • <u>Being impetuous</u> Because of his tendency to make quick decisions, a prophet can be very impulsive and can vacillate between extremes. At first Peter refused to allow Jesus to wash his feet; then he asked Jesus to wash his whole body. (See John 13:6-10). • <u>Cutting off people who fail</u> Whenever prophets see or hear something that is wrong, they feel responsible to speak out against it. It does not occur to them to ask: “Whose responsibility is this? Do I have all the facts? Do I need to take action at this time?” • <u>Lacking tactfulness in rebuke</u> Prophets tend to be painfully direct when correcting others, no matter who they are. This bluntness can cause the prophet embarrassment, as when Peter rebuked Jesus for telling the disciples of His death. (See Mark 8:31-32). • <u>Dwelling on the negative</u> Prophets tend to divide everything into two classes—right or wrong. Once they label a person or activity, that judgment tends to be fixed in their minds, and they often feel compelled to persuade others to agree with them.

2. What are the characteristics of the gift **SERVING?**

Who in Scripture best illustrates the motivational gift of serving? **Timothy.**

What guidelines are given for the gift of serving in Romans 12:10?

- **Kind affection**
- **Brotherly love**
- **Honor others**

What basic principle does the server most need to exercise? **Authority.**

Why is this true? **It gives the server protection for the management of his time.**

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>See and meet practical needs</u> Important needs that would seem insignificant to others catch the eye and attention of the server. These needs are usually physical; however, the server knows that by meeting them he will bring encouragement and strength to those who receive his help. Timothy’s serving ability is noted by Paul; <i>“For I have no man like-minded, who will naturally care for your state”</i> (Philippians 2:20). • <u>Free others to achieve</u> The joy of the server is not just initiating tasks, but knowing that through them he is bringing a peace of mind to another person which will allow that person to be more productive in the tasks which God has called him to do. Timothy served Paul so that Paul could carry out his ministry. His serving was <i>“...as a son with the father...”</i> (Philippians 2:22). • <u>Disregard for weariness</u> Because the server sees the importance of the tasks which he has begun, he will freely use up personal assets of time, money, and strength. His focus is not on himself, but rather on the completion of the tasks which he knows will benefit the individual and bring joy to himself. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Giving unrequested help</u> Sometimes the tasks which the server sees appear to be more important to the server than the one being served. It may even be that the one who has the needs is not aware of them to the degree that the server is. In either case, a server who uses his initiative in meeting these needs may be judged as ‘pushy or intrusive.’ • <u>Letting things be too important</u> In order to meet the needs of others, servers will often neglect their own home and personal responsibilities. They will meet the serving needs at home, but leave the other needs unmet. This transfer of attention may cause reaction by the server’s family and the feeling by the one being served that too much attention is being put on physical things. • <u>Working beyond physical limits</u> Inner tension resulting in physical ailments and especially stomach problems often occurs in servers. This condition is the consequence of extending themselves on either one job or taking on too many jobs. We know that Timothy had physical ailments by Paul’s instruction to him to take medication <i>“...Stop drinking only water, and use a little wine because of your stomach and your frequent illness.”</i> (I Timothy 5:23).

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="198 260 810 443"> <p>• <u>Difficulty in saying no</u> As the server effectively meets one need, others may ask for similar help, not realizing the inner motivation of the server. These requests, however, are difficult to turn down because they represent needs, and the server feels obligated at having been asked.</p> <li data-bbox="198 537 810 779"> <p>• <u>Alert to likes and dislikes</u> Those with the gift of serving have an amazing ability to find out and remember the special interests of the people they serve. Thus, birthdays and anniversaries are special occasions for them. They can often recall favorite foods, special colors, types of home furnishings, and favorite activities and use this knowledge in making occasions special.</p> <li data-bbox="198 814 810 1024"> <p>• <u>Needs approval</u> Appreciation confirms to the server that his work is necessary, and it is being blessed by the Lord. The server also desires clear direction. Paul gave Timothy more praise and precise instructions than any other assistant. (See I & II Timothy). Servers prefer working <u>with</u> a person rather than <u>for</u> a person.</p> <li data-bbox="198 1060 810 1302"> <p>• <u>Like short range projects</u> The tasks which attract a server are usually immediate needs. The server often becomes frustrated with long-range planning or a continuous task which seems to have no visible progress. Timothy was urged to maintain endurance as a good soldier and to continue in the calling which he was given of God. (See I Timothy 4:16 and II Timothy 2:3).</p> <li data-bbox="198 1337 810 1547"> <p>• <u>Put extra touches to jobs</u> The server knows that by doing more than is expected he will not only delight the one being served, but demonstrate that he is doing it unto the Lord. "Going the second mile" for a server may be trimming and sweeping after moving the lawn or putting a bow and flower around a lunch box</p> <li data-bbox="198 1612 810 1759"> <p>• <u>Meet needs quickly</u> In an effort to complete tasks, a server will try to avoid committees and what to him appears to be unnecessary "red tape." In order to avoid delays, the server will use personal funds.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="823 260 1419 501"> <p>• <u>Neglecting God given priorities</u> Servers are often placed in positions of responsibility because they are diligent workers. It is then easy for them to volunteer a helping hand or become involved in tasks which they should be delegating to others. This imbalance causes the server's authority to become frustrated because assigned tasks are not completed on schedule.</p> <li data-bbox="823 537 1419 720"> <p>• <u>Reacting to overlooked needs</u> A server may react to people around him who, in his judgment, walk right past obvious needs. He assumes that others see what he sees. If he tells someone about a need and that person does not follow through on his suggestion, the server may become resentful.</p> <li data-bbox="823 814 1419 1024"> <p>• <u>Resenting lack of appreciation</u> If a server is given a physical job simply because he is a server and is expected to get his joy from doing it, he may feel misused and react in anger. He will then fail to remember that he is working for the Lord. A server's perspective may also be lost if the one whom he is serving is not making wise use of his time.</p> <li data-bbox="823 1060 1419 1270"> <p>• <u>Working people around their schedule</u> Because of the server's lack of desire or ability to properly delegate tasks, he will often develop his own time schedule and force others to adapt to it. Lack of delegation may also hinder the family from feeling involved in his serving and cause them instead to feel that they are taken for granted.</p> <li data-bbox="823 1337 1419 1547"> <p>• <u>Being frustrated with time limits</u> A server may react to a rigid schedule, not realizing that it is for his own protection. He may feel that it hinders him from the joy of additional serving. Twice Timothy was told by Paul not to get sidetracked. "<i>Do your best to come to me quickly...Do your best to get here before winter...</i>" (See II Timothy 4:9,21).</p> <li data-bbox="823 1612 1419 1795"> <p>• <u>Interfering with God's discipline</u> The purposes of God may be frustrated when a server meets a need that God intended to bring about repentance. If a server would have met the physical needs of the prodigal son while he was in the sty, it would have hindered his return. (See Luke 15:11-31).</p>

3. What are the characteristics of the gift **TEACHING?**

Who in Scripture best illustrates the motivational gift of teaching? **Luke.**

What guidelines are given for the gift of teaching in Romans 12:11?

- **Diligent researcher**
- **Fervent spirit**
- **Serving God**

What basic principle does the teacher most need to exercise? **Meditation.**

Why is this true? **It allows the teacher to become mighty in spirit.**

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Needs to validate information</u> When a teacher hears important statements, whether given privately or publicly, he will desire to verify them. His motivation is to confirm that the statements are true and accurate and would, therefore, have the authority to bring spiritual freedom. Luke wrote his Gospel to Theophilus, <i>“So you may be certain of the things you have been taught”</i> (See Luke 1:4). • <u>Check out teachers</u> A person with the gift of teaching will be very alert to false teachers. He will want to find out their background before listening to them. He will also assume that others want to know his qualifications; thus, he will tend to give these before speaking. Luke began his Gospel by affirming that he was an eyewitness and that he <i>“...having investigated everything from the beginning...”</i> (Luke 1:3). • <u>Rely on established resources</u> A teacher has a need to go to primary sources to validate truth. He will also use accepted works of recognized authorities to further confirm statements which others make. Luke praised the Bereans for daily checking out Paul’s statements against the Old Testament Scriptures. (See Acts 17:11.) Luke also related his writings to the other Gospel accounts and to the Old Testament. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Becoming proud of knowledge</u> With the teacher’s thoroughness in checking out facts, he will acquire much knowledge. Since <i>“...knowledge puffs up...”</i> (I Corinthians 8:1), it is very easy for him to become proud. He may also appear prideful by giving far more information than is needed to prove a point. Further pride can be communicated by the attitude “It isn’t right until I check it out and say that it is right.” • <u>Despising lack of credentials</u> Many teachers attempt to control misinformation by requiring approved courses of instruction. By depending only on these courses, credentials can be overemphasized, and the practical wisdom of those whom teachers consider uneducated can be despised or minimized. In such cases, teachers make the mistake of concentrating on intellectual knowledge rather than spiritual perception. • <u>Depending on human reasoning</u> Since he is able to use scholarly resources, a teacher can easily give the impression that he is the only source of truth and that his gift is more important than the other gifts. The teacher may also react to the need to bring his intellect under the control of the Holy Spirit, thus putting his scholarship ahead of the spiritual insight that comes through meditating on Scripture.

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Presents truth systematically</u> Teachers tend to feel more comfortable when material is laid out in an orderly sequence. The teacher wants to know the events in the order in which they occurred. Luke emphasized the chronological structure of his Gospel when he explained that his approach was “...to write an orderly account for you...” (Luke 1:3). • <u>Gather many facts</u> Those with the gift of teaching often have a greater delight in researching facts than they do in teaching them. When they do speak or write, they feel constrained to give as many facts as possible. Luke’s Gospel is the longest of the four; he includes information left out by other writers, and he emphasizes the completeness of his account. (See Acts 1:1). • <u>Require thoroughness</u> A teacher enjoys giving details which are not noticed or mentioned by others. Luke gives precise descriptions of events, conversations, circumstances and physical conditions. He detailed more names, titles, cities, dates, events, and sidelights than any other Gospel writer. • <u>Uneasy with subjective truth</u> A teacher is concerned that truth be presented in balance. He recognizes the danger of using personal experience as a foundation for truth. He wants to go from Scripture to experience, rather than from experience to a proof text in Scripture. A teacher tends to remain silent until information has been heard, observed, and verified. Luke’s silence is conspicuous in the New Testament; none of his own statements are recorded. • <u>Persevere with accepted teachers</u> A teacher tends to remain loyal to a mentor or a school as long as any truth remains and does what he can to promote the truth. Luke demonstrated amazing loyalty to Paul and his message in prison, even after others left him. “...<i>Only Luke is with me</i>”...(II Timothy 4:11). • <u>Clarify misunderstandings</u> If a teacher learns that his facts are wrong, he will not simply accept the conclusion but will want to retrace his own investigation to determine at what point he got off the track. He will desire to use the same procedure in helping others who have strayed from the truth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Criticizing practical application</u> A teacher’s motivation to verify all statements by the authority of Scripture may hinder him in making wider Scriptural application. As he focuses on textual studies, he may miss the underlying principles that tie all Scripture together. “...<i>for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness</i>” (See II Timothy 3:16). • <u>Showing off research skills</u> When a Christian with the gift of teaching shares a conclusion, he feels obligated to explain how he arrived at it. He often assumes, wrongly, that because he enjoyed the research so much, others will also. Concentration on research may also cause a teacher to live in an unreal world which he has created by his exclusion of other people. • <u>Rejecting scriptural presuppositions</u> If a teacher fails to subject his intellect to the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit, he will need to re-examine the ‘foundational truths of Scripture.’ These are to be understood by faith. His theology will become the reorganization of Scripture around a philosophical base. • <u>Putting mind above Holy Spirit</u> The most effective way for anyone to keep his intellect under the control of the Holy Spirit is to meditate upon God’s word day and night. Neither the inspiration nor the true meaning of Scripture will be understood intellectually, but will be discerned spiritually. If a teacher fails to become mighty in Spirit, he will tend to become trusting of his own intellect. • <u>Taking teachings to extremes</u> Truth out of balance leads to heresy. Imbalance begins by studying a doctrine out of its moral setting (E.g.: the second coming without its purifying hope; communion without self-examination). Argumentation and division result. Imbalance also occurs by separating related truths (E.g.: mercy without justice, grace without law). • <u>Arguing over minor points</u> If a teacher leans on his own understanding, it is easy for him to reject an important spiritual truth because he detects a minor flaw in the presentation of it. He may further reject this truth because he is being asked to intellectually accept a conclusion without knowing how the other person arrived at it.

4. What are the characteristics of the gift **EXHORTING?**

Who in Scripture best illustrates the motivational gift of exhorting? **Paul.**

What guidelines are given for the gift of exhorting in Romans 12:12?

- **Rejoice in hope**
- **Patient in tribulation**
- **Constant readiness for prayer**

What basic principle does the exhorter most need to exercise? **God’s design.**

Why is this true? **It allows the exhorter to understand and explain God’s sovereignty.**

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Committed to spiritual growth</u> The motivation of an exhorter is to see spiritual growth take place in practical living, and he is willing to become personally involved to see it achieved. Paul said, “<i>...I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you</i>” (See Galatians 4:19). Paul further declared that he worked night and day to “<i>...present every man perfect (mature) in Christ Jesus</i>” (See Colossians 1:28). • <u>Able to see root problems</u> An exhorter can discern the spiritual maturity of another person. Based on this, the exhorter is motivated to search out hindrances in the lives of those who are not growing spiritually and to give further encouragement to those who are. Paul saw the Corinthians as spiritual infants and therefore could not speak unto them “<i>...as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal...</i>” (See I Corinthians 3:1). • <u>See steps of action</u> An exhorter has the ability to visualize spiritual achievement for another Christian and then help him work out practical steps of action to achieve it. These steps are designed to remove hindrances and develop personal disciplines through which the Holy Spirit can work. Paul told Timothy to flee youthful lusts, to avoid foolish questions, and to follow righteousness with a pure heart. (See II Timothy 2:22-23). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Keeping others waiting on them</u> An exhorter’s willingness to give people whatever time is necessary to help them grow spiritually often cuts into family time and personal responsibilities. He often assumes that his family will understand, until major resentments surface. Paul understood the sacrifices that he was making in his ministry; however, if an exhorter is married, his priority must be his marriage. (See I Corinthians 7:32-34). • <u>Looking to themselves for solutions</u> As an exhorter gains experience and success in counseling, he tends to categorize problems as he hears them and arrive at conclusions before getting all the facts. By failing to listen completely and sense direction from the Holy Spirit, an exhorter can be guilty of the folly of giving the wrong direction. (See Proverbs 18:13). • <u>Being proud of visible results</u> When an exhorter gives steps of action, he assumes that they will be carried out. He bases this expectation on the fact that he has “come alongside” and is working with the person to achieve agreed upon goals. As spiritual growth becomes visible, it is easy for an exhorter to take personal credit for it. He may also be tempted to settle for outward conformity rather than true inward change.

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="199 258 800 472"> <p>• <u>Raises hope for solutions</u> An exhorter tends to use examples from the lives of others to help Christians see the potential of daily victory. Paul used the testimony of one church to motivate another church. (See II Corinthians 9:2.) He used his own life to illustrate God’s grace since he was the chief of all sinners. (See I Timothy 1:15)</p> <li data-bbox="199 535 800 749"> <p>• <u>Turns problems into benefits</u> Mature exhorters have learned by experience that God gives special grace during trials. Based on this, Paul gloried in tribulation. His credentials were the persecutions which he experienced and the counseling God gave him during his afflictions. (See II Corinthians 1:1-7).</p> <li data-bbox="199 781 800 1024"> <p>• <u>Desire to be transparent</u> An exhorter knows that true growth will not take place where there is guilt. Paul told Timothy that his chief weapon was a clear conscience. (See I Timothy 1:19) An exhorter desires an open life to gain a wider hearing for the Gospel. Paul explained, “<i>...I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.</i>” (I Corinthians 9:22).</p> <li data-bbox="199 1087 800 1297"> <p>• <u>Gain insight through experience</u> The exhorter is motivated to learn “cause and effect sequences” and through them to discover underlying principles of life. He studies both Scripture and experience to find these. His motivation is to promote spiritual growth and to bring diverse groups of Christians together.</p> <li data-bbox="199 1329 800 1539"> <p>• <u>Urgency to act on clear steps</u> An exhorter tends to explain truth with logical reasoning in order to motivate people to act upon it. Paul’s writings in I Corinthians 15 have been studied in law schools for their logic. He reasoned with the Jews, the Greeks, King Agrippa, and others. (See Acts 18:4; 26:28).</p> <li data-bbox="199 1602 800 1854"> <p>• <u>Desire to share face to face</u> An exhorter needs to see the facial expressions of his listeners in order to determine their response and to ensure a positive result. Paul’s longing to see his fellow believers was constantly reaffirmed. (See I Thessalonians 2:17; 3:10; II Timothy 1:4). He used personal conferences extensively. (See I Thessalonians 2:11-12).</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="824 258 1417 510"> <p>• <u>Starting projects prematurely</u> Exhorters tend to jump into new projects without finishing existing ones. They use projects to motivate others, and then when others are involved, the exhorters find a better project. After several projects, those who are working on them may become frustrated. The exhorter, however, sees the projects as simply a means to accomplishing a bigger perspective.</p> <li data-bbox="824 531 1417 720"> <p>• <u>Treating people as projects</u> The exhorter is constantly on the lookout for steps of action which will bring lasting results. As he works with his family or friends, they may get the impression that they are simply another counseling project rather than real people who need personal attention.</p> <li data-bbox="824 783 1417 1056"> <p>• <u>Sharing private illustrations</u> The problem of treating family and friends as projects rather than people is made even worse as the exhorter shares private illustrations which came out of his counseling experiences. Exhorters depend heavily on illustrations to communicate their message. However, when these are used without permission, listeners become uneasy and those who were counseled become resentful.</p> <li data-bbox="824 1087 1417 1297"> <p>• <u>Presenting truth out of balance</u> Exhorters tend to avoid heavy doctrinal teaching which does not have immediate practical application. The result of this emphasis can be an imbalance of teaching which will eventually show up as doctrinal error. Thus, the exhorter needs the balancing ministry of the teacher.</p> <li data-bbox="824 1329 1417 1581"> <p>• <u>Setting unrealistic goals</u> Exhorters often visualize long-range projects and goals for people. These are usually presented without reference to the amount of time that will be required to achieve them. Those whom the exhorter motivates assume that the projects and goals will be achieved much sooner that they can be. This situation raises expectations and breeds disillusionment.</p> <li data-bbox="824 1602 1417 1822"> <p>• <u>Giving up on uncooperative people</u> Exhorters tend to lose hope with people who do not quickly and consistently respond to the steps of action which are given for spiritual growth. By surrounding himself with only those who do respond quickly, he loses valuable personal character training and insights which God must then teach in other ways.</p>

5. What are the characteristics of the gift **GIVING?**

Who in Scripture best illustrates the motivational gift of giving? **Matthew.**

What guidelines are given for the gift of giving in Romans 12:13?

- **Give to needs of Christians**
- **Practice hospitality**

What basic principle does the giver most need to exercise? **Ownership.**

Why is this true? **It allows the giver the freedom to respond to God's direction.**

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Able to see resources</u> A giver has an ability to discern wise investments. His motivation is to use assets of time, money and possessions to advance the work of the Lord. If a person with the gift of giving has limited funds, he is still able to use his ability of recognizing available resources and draw upon them when needed. • <u>Invest self with gift</u> A giver needs continuous reassurance that his decisions are in God's will whether he has little or much to give. To achieve this, he will first give himself and then his gift to the Lord. Since all believers must practice giving, Paul explained how the Macedonians <i>"...first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God"</i> (II Corinthians 8:5). • <u>Desire to give high quality</u> The giver's ability to discern value motivates him to provide quality gifts. He wants them to last. Matthew recorded in greater detail than any other Gospel writer the gifts given to Christ. He is the only writer who mentioned "the treasures" brought by the Magi; he described Mary's ointment as "very precious," and Joseph's tomb as "new" (See Matthew 2:11; 26:6-11; and 27:57-60). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Hoarding resources for self</u> An effective use of the gift of giving depends upon having the fear of the Lord. One way we learn the fear of the Lord is by regular giving. It was for this purpose that the tithe was established. (See Deuteronomy 14:22-23). If a giver stops exercising his gift, he will not only begin to lose the fear of the Lord, but his storing up will cause him to become stagnant. • <u>Using gifts to control people</u> A giver has a desire to make sure that his gifts are wisely invested and used. Thus, he will often buy a good quality item rather than giving the money for it. However, if items are purchased or projects are sponsored by a giver, he may be viewed as using his gifts to control lives and ministries. • <u>Forcing higher living standards</u> If a giver's focus is more on the quality of the gift than the need that it is meeting, he can cause the receiver to be dissatisfied with the quality of other things which he owns. A giver could also excuse personal luxuries on the basis that he is generous with his money. However, when he is not faithful in little, God will not trust him with much.

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="198 260 810 443"> <p>• <u>Hope gift answers prayer</u> A giver who is in fellowship with the Lord will be prompted to give even when a need is not obvious. His ultimate confirmation that this gift was according to God’s will comes when he learns that it fulfilled an unknown need or answered a special prayer.</p> <li data-bbox="198 476 810 688"> <p>• <u>Desire to give secretly</u> Just as the giver looks to the Lord for direction, so he wants recipients to look to the Lord for provision. The giver knows that future reward is more valuable than present praise, thus he will give quietly and often anonymously. Matthew is the only Gospel writer who emphasized secret giving. (See Matthew 6:1-4).</p> <li data-bbox="198 722 810 934"> <p>• <u>Concern that giving will corrupt</u> A mature giver understands the destructiveness of the love of money. He is very aware that the disciplines that God taught him in acquiring assets may not have been learned by those who need his assistance. Therefore, he looks for ways of giving which avoid dependency, slothfulness, or extravagance.</p> <li data-bbox="198 997 810 1209"> <p>• <u>Exercise personal thriftiness</u> The personal assets which the giver has are often the result of consistent personal frugality while being content with basics. A giver will always be concerned in getting the best buy, not with how much he has left. He will spend extra effort in saving money and being resourceful with what he has.</p> <li data-bbox="198 1243 810 1434"> <p>• <u>Use gifts to multiply giving</u> The motivation of a giver is to encourage others to give. He wants them to experience the joy and spiritual growth that comes by sacrificial giving. Thus, the giver may provide matching funds or the last payment in order to encourage others to give.</p> <li data-bbox="198 1488 810 1680"> <p>• <u>Confirm amount with counsel</u> A giver reacts to pressure appeals. He looks instead for financial need which others tend to overlook. A husband who has the gift of giving will often confirm the amount that he should give by seeing if his wife has the same amount in mind.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="823 260 1419 443"> <p>• <u>Feeling guilty about personal assets</u> A giver who is not in fellowship with the Lord will begin to feel guilty as he stores up funds. Even if he is preparing for a special need, he must have the reassurance from the Lord that his plans are according to God’s will.</p> <li data-bbox="823 476 1419 659"> <p>• <u>Rejecting pressure appeals</u> If a giver reacts to all appeals for funds and looks only for the hidden and unannounced needs, he may fail to get the mind of the Lord in a particular situation. He may also miss an important opportunity to give wise counsel as well as needed funds to a worthy ministry.</p> <li data-bbox="823 722 1419 961"> <p>• <u>Giving too sparingly to family</u> The frugality of a giver is often extended to his own wife and children. However, if he does not show the same concern, care, and delight in meeting their needs as he does others, they will react to his generosity. By listening to the Lord and the counsel of his wife, he will avoid the damaging consequences of unwise gifts or investments.</p> <li data-bbox="823 997 1419 1209"> <p>• <u>Giving to projects vs. people</u> If a giver loses his focus on meeting the needs of people, he may be unduly attracted to projects. His desire for measuring value may prompt him to build a “memorial to his generosity.” The emphasis of Scriptural giving is distributing to the necessity of saints. Paul’s collection was for the needy Christians.</p> <li data-bbox="823 1243 1419 1455"> <p>• <u>Causes people to look to him vs. God</u> When a giver lets others know what he is giving, he will cause many to turn their attention from the Lord to him. He also runs the danger of attracting carnal Christians with wrong motives. These people are trained to appeal to his human inclinations and extract funds which were not directed by the Lord.</p> <li data-bbox="823 1488 1419 1680"> <p>• <u>Waiting too long to give</u> If a giver is not instantly obedient to the promptings of the Holy Spirit, he may lose the joy of seeing God accomplish a miraculous provision through him. The one who was to receive the gift will also be denied the opportunity of seeing God provide funds precisely when needed.</p>

6. What are the characteristics of the gift **ORGANIZING?**

Who in Scripture best illustrates the motivational gift of organizing? **Nehemiah.**

What guidelines are given for the gift of organizing in Romans 12:14?

- **Bless persecutors**
- **Bless and curse not**

What basic principle does the organizer most need to exercise? **Suffering.**

Why is this true? **It causes the organizer to be sensitive to the needs of others.**

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Able to visualize final results</u> When a major project is given to an organizer, he is able to picture the completed task and what it will take to accomplish it. When Nehemiah was given the task of removing the “great affliction and reproach of God’s people in Jerusalem,” he immediately visualized the need to rebuild the walls. (See Nehemiah 1:2-3). • <u>Need loyalty in associates</u> In order for an organizer to visualize the completion of a task, he needs to know who and what his resources are. Since the efficiency of this entire operation depends upon the faithfulness of the workers, he would rather have fewer that he can count on than more that he cannot count on. Nehemiah required an oath of cooperation from the rulers, nobles, and people. (See Nehemiah 5:1-13). • <u>Ability to delegate</u> An organizer knows which tasks to delegate and which he must do himself. He also is able to sense which workers will need more assistance than others. Organizers are able to naturally maintain a continued accountability with their workers. Nehemiah delegated the building of the walls, but he retained responsibility for dealing with the enemies. (See Nehemiah 4:13). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Viewing people only as resources</u> If an organizer is in the position of authority, he can simply direct people based upon his gift of seeing the bigger picture. However if he is not in this position, he must earn the right to be heard. Then he must patiently explain that all the steps which he sees are required to reach the goal. An organizer will tend to make suggestions and then react or become discouraged when these are not followed. • <u>Building loyalty with favoritism</u> An organizer is very sensitive to loyalty. He depends upon it to accomplish his goals or the goals others have for him. An organizer in charge of a work may single out individuals whom he thinks are especially important to his goals and show them favoritism or partiality. If he is not in charge, he may cause disharmony by openly expressing frustration. • <u>Use delegation to avoid work</u> When a person with the gift of organization is not in charge, it is easy for him to delegate his responsibilities to others. His work may be completed; however, he will miss the character training and other objectives which the one who assigned him the task had in mind. His authority and others may then react to him and accuse him of laziness and irresponsibility.

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Withstand reaction to tasks</u> Once an organizer commits himself to a task, he is willing to endure much opposition to his leadership. This reaction may come from insiders or outsiders. However, he knows that without the continuous pressures that he must exert, the final goal will not be achieved. Nehemiah responded to persistent opposition from outside enemies and fellow workers. (See Nehemiah 4:8-18). • <u>Make jobs look easy</u> An organizer has the ability to take seemingly impossible tasks and break them down into achievable goals. Nehemiah took the huge task of rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem and broke it down into smaller sections which each family or group was able to complete. (See Nehemiah 3:1-32). • <u>Very alert to details</u> An organizer notices what others might consider small details, but which he knows are essential in order for the project to be completed in the proper way. He also tends to remove himself from distracting details in order to focus on the ultimate goal. Nehemiah did not get involved in actual building; however, he removed obstacles such as financial pressures which would have hindered the workers. (See Nehemiah 5:1-13). • <u>Complete tasks quickly</u> The efficiency of organizers begins before they start a project by checking out and securing needed resources. Nehemiah secured timber from the king's forest before the rebuilding began. Organizers also place workers according to their strengths and weaknesses so that maximum productivity can be achieved. • <u>Able to be decisive</u> Because the final goal is clearly visualized by the organizer, he is able to quickly evaluate requests and situations and make firm decisions. Nehemiah was consistently invited by his enemies to come and have a conference with them. His decision not to come was immediate and decisive. • <u>Completion involves cleanup</u> In an organizer's mind the job is not finished until everything is back in its place. He will inspire and encourage workers to complete a job by approval, praise, reproof, and challenge. The organizer's final joy is seeing all the parts come together. It doesn't matter to him if others appreciate the job as long as he knows it was accomplished according to the plans laid out. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Being unresponsive to appeals</u> When an organizer who is in charge of a project rejects valid suggestions or closes his ears to grievances, pressures result. These cause him to become harsh or even resign. When an organizer is not responsive to directions from his authorities, he must be disciplined. If he reacts, he will build patterns of resentment and pride. • <u>Putting projects ahead of people</u> When an organizer reacts to people who do not have his spiritual gift, he is usually focusing only on their inefficiency and disorganization. By reacting, he overlooks their real needs and potential and damages important relationships and the potential ministry which God intended for him. • <u>Overlooking workers' serious faults</u> If an organizer is given a position of authority in the local church, he will appoint workers on the basis of their ability to get the job done. If serious character flaws are discovered in a valuable worker, the organizer will be reluctant to dismiss him. Failure to do so, however, will communicate approval and acceptance of the behavior and will cause reaction or imitation by others. • <u>Failing to explain or praise</u> When an organizer is put in charge of several people to accomplish a job, he may tend to give instructions without explanation. This neglect causes fellow workers to feel like pawns in a chess game. Their feelings of being used are intensified if they are not given proper praise or appreciation when the work is done. • <u>Forcing decisions on others</u> An organizer can misuse his special abilities of persuasion and decisiveness by coercing others to help him achieve personal ambitions. They can also be misused on legitimate jobs by insensitivity to the schedules, weariness, or personal priorities of his workers. • <u>Losing interest in finished jobs</u> The fulfillment of an organizer is to see a job completed. However, before moving on to a new job he must make proper provision for maintenance of the completed job. When this trait is carried over into the personal life of an organizer, he is never content with the things that he has or that he has done.

1. What are the characteristics of the gift **MERCY?**

Who in Scripture best illustrates the motivational gift of mercy? **John.**

What guidelines are given for the gift of mercy in Romans 12:15?

- **Weep with**
- **Rejoice with**

What basic principle does the mercy most need to exercise? **Moral freedom.**

Why is this true? **It protects the one with the gift of mercy from improper relationships.**

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Deeply loyal to friends</u> A person with the gift of mercy will demonstrate loyalty to a friend by even reacting harshly toward those who attack him. When the Apostle John watched the Samaritans reject Jesus whom he loved, John wanted to call down fire from heaven to consume them. (See Luke 9:54). • <u>Need for deep friendships</u> The very nature of a person with the gift of mercy requires close friendships. These friendships, however, must have mutual commitment which is often reaffirmed. John enjoyed such a friendship with Christ. He was not only closer to Christ than most of the other disciples, but he referred to himself as the “<i>disciple whom Jesus loved.</i>” (See John 13:23; 19:26; 20:2; 21:7,20). • <u>Empathizing with hurting people</u> The gift of mercy enables the one having it to sense which individuals are hurting and to share the pain with them. Along with the pain, a mercy senses the full scope of emotions. John wrote his first epistle to give joy, fellowship, hope, and confidence and to cast out fear and torment. (See I John 1:3-4; 3:2-3; 4:18; 5:13-14). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Taking up offenses</u> The tendency of one with the gift of mercy is to take up an offense for someone who is being hurt by another person, especially if the one being hurt is a friend. Before comfort is given, a prophet should check out what caused the hurt, and an exhorter should give steps for properly responding to it. • <u>Becoming possessive</u> The deep need for commitment in a close friendship can cause those with the gift of mercy to monopolize the time and attention of others. As he experiences disappointments in one friendship, the mercy tends to place greater demands on a new friendship. • <u>Tolerating evil</u> If those with the gift of mercy do not have spiritual discernment as to why people suffer, they may give sympathy and encouragement to those who are suffering as a direct result of violating God’s moral laws. The one with the gift of mercy can learn discernment by seeing people through the eyes of the other spiritual gifts.

CHARACTERISTICS	MISUSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Decisions based on benefits</u> Those with the gift of mercy find it hard to be firm because they do not want to offend other people. Therefore, the mercy must see that greater hurt and offenses will occur if he fails to be decisive. When John was faced with denying Jesus, he demonstrated a boldness and decisiveness which caused the Sadducees to marvel. (See Acts 4:13). • <u>Deeply sensitive to loved ones</u> The gift of mercy carries with it the ability to sense genuine love. It, therefore, carries a greater vulnerability to deeper and more frequent hurts from those who fail to demonstrate sincere love. John used the word “love” more than any other disciple in his Gospel and epistles. • <u>Attract people in distress</u> One with the gift of mercy has a deep understanding of people who are going through mental or emotional distress. This sensitivity causes those with hurts to be drawn to him and to confide in him. When Christ died, he transferred responsibility for his grieving mother to John. • <u>Desire to remove hurts</u> Whereas an exhorter will try to help a person find benefit from his hurts, the one with the gift of mercy will try to remove the source of them. The message of John's first epistle was for Christians to stop hurting and hating each other. (See I John 3:11,15) • <u>Measure acceptance by closeness</u> A person with the gift of mercy tends to need physical closeness in order to be reassured of acceptance. The closeness includes rich times of fellowship. John sought out the closest place to Christ at the Last Supper and leaned upon the Lord. His need for physical closeness may also have prompted his request to sit next to Christ in glory. (See Mark 10:35-37). • <u>Attracted to prophets</u> The statement that opposites attract is certainly true with the motivational gifts. Those with the gift of mercy are attracted to those with the gift of prophecy. The firm truth of the prophet is thus balanced with the gentle love of the mercy. John spent more time with Peter than with any other disciple. (See Luke 22:8, Acts 3:1-11; 4:13-19; 8:14). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Failing to be firm</u> When a person with the gift of mercy is given a position of leadership, he will tend to avoid disciplinary action which is needed. As a result, the person who should have been disciplined is not brought to repentance, prophets react to his leadership, and other “mercies” react to the prophets. • <u>Leaning on emotions vs. reason</u> Because those with the gift of mercy have such sensitive feelings, they tend to base their decisions on emotions rather than on principles. Their subjective reasoning can easily cause them to reject Biblical doctrines which seem harsh to them. • <u>Defrauding opposite sex</u> A person of the opposite sex tends to be drawn to one who has the gift of mercy. This attraction comes about because of the ability of the “mercy” to be a sensitive, understanding and responsive listener. This factor must be considered in any relationship which a “mercy” has with a person of the opposite sex. • <u>Reacting to God's purposes</u> Unlike exhorters, who look at suffering as a means of receiving more grace and growing spiritually, those with the gift of mercy tend to react to the idea that God would allow a good person to suffer. Unless the person with the gift of mercy maintains a proper perspective, he can easily become bitter toward God. • <u>Failing to show deference</u> When a person with the gift of mercy demands physical closeness in a friendship, he may fail to consider the desires of others who need that person's time and attention. For this reason, John was gently reproved for his request to be next to Jesus in His kingdom. • <u>Cutting off insensitive people</u> A person whose words and actions reflect insensitivity to the feelings of other people will be quickly recognized and reacted to by the one with the gift of mercy. Rather than trying to help this insensitive person, the “mercy” will tend to close off his spirit and cut off fellowship with him.

UNDERSTAND THE BASIC MOTIVATION OF EACH SPIRITUAL GIFT

If each of the seven motivational gifts were represented in a family and someone dropped the dessert on the floor, here is what each one might say and why they would say it.

PROPHET

"That's what happens when you're not careful!"
(Motivation: To correct the problem.)

MERCY

"Don't feel badly. It could have happened to anyone."
(Motivation: To relieve embarrassment.)

SERVER

"Oh, let me help you clean it up."
(Motivation: To fulfill a need.)

TEACHER

"The reason that it fell is that it was too heavy on one side."
(Motivation: To discover why it happened.)

EXHORTER

"Next time, let's serve the dessert with the meal."
(Motivation: To correct the future.)

GIVER

"I'll be happy to buy a new dessert."
(Motivation: To give to a tangible need.)

ORGANIZER

"Jim, would you get the mop. Sue, please help pick it up; and Mary, help me fix another dessert."
(Motivation: To achieve the immediate goal of the group.)



UNDERSTAND HOW EACH GIFT RESPONDS IN A SITUATION

If seven Christians representing each of the motivational gifts visited a sick person in the hospital, here is what each one might say, based on the perspective of his gift.

SERVER

"Here's a little gift! Now, I brought your mail in, fed your dog, watered your plants, and washed your dishes."

TEACHER

"I did some research on your illness and I believe I can explain what's happening."

MERCY

"I can't begin to tell you how I felt when I learned you were so sick. How do you feel now?"

GIVER

"Do you have insurance to cover this kind of illness?"



ORGANIZER

"Don't worry about a thing. I've assigned your job to four others in the office."

EXHORTER

"How can we use what you're learning here to help others in the future?"

PROPHET

"What is God trying to say to you through this illness? Is there some sin you haven't confessed yet?"

Spiritual Gifts Survey

**WHICH ONE OF THESE
SEVEN PERSONS BEST DESCRIBES YOU?**

PERSON NUMBER **1**

- You want to make sure that statements are true and accurate.
- You desire to gain as much knowledge as you can.
- You react to people who make unfounded statements.
- You check the credentials of one who wants to teach you.
- You use your mind to check out an argument.
- You enjoy spending hours doing research on a subject.
- You like to tell others as many facts as you can on a topic.
- You pay close attention to words and phrases.
- You tend to be silent on a matter until you check it out.
- You like to study material in a systematic sequence.

_____ Score

PERSON NUMBER **2**

- You can visualize the final result of a major undertaking.
- You enjoy coordinating the efforts of many to reach a common goal.
- You can break down a large task into achievable goals.
- You are able to delegate assignments to others.
- You see people as resources that can be used to get a job done.
- You are willing to endure reaction in order to accomplish a task.
- You require loyalty in those who are under your supervision.
- You remove yourself from petty details to focus on the final goal.
- You can encourage your workers and inspire them to action.
- You move on to a new challenge once a job is finished.

_____ Score

PERSON NUMBER 3

- You see actions as either right or wrong.
- You react strongly to people who are not what they appear to be.
- You can usually detect when something is not what it appears to be.
- You can quickly discern a person's character.
- You feel a responsibility to correct those who do wrong.
- You separate yourself from those who refuse to repent of evil.
- You explain what is wrong with an item before you sell it.
- You let people know how you feel about important issues.
- You enjoy people who are completely honest with you.
- You are quick to judge yourself when you fail.
- You are willing to do right even if it means suffering alone for it.

_____Score

PERSON NUMBER 4

- You can sense when people have hurt feelings.
- You react to those who are insensitive to other's feelings.
- You are able to discern genuine love.
- You desire deep friendships in which there is mutual commitment.
- You seem to attract people who tell you their problems.
- You find it difficult to be firm or decisive with people.
- You tend to take up offenses for those whom you love.
- You need quality time to explain how you feel.
- You want to remove those who cause hurts to others.
- You often wonder why God allows people to suffer.

_____Score

5

PERSON NUMBER

- You motivate people to become what you see they could be.
- You like to give counsel in logical steps of action.
- You can usually discern a person's level of spiritual maturity.
- You enjoy working out projects to help people grow spiritually.
- You sometimes raise expectations of results prematurely.
- You dislike teaching which does not give practical direction.
- You like to see the facial responses of those whom you counsel.
- You often take "family time" to counsel others.
- You enjoy giving examples from the lives of others.
- You soon give up on those who do not follow your counsel.
- You find it hard to follow through on the project you have started.
- You identify with people where they are in order to counsel them.

_____Score

6

PERSON NUMBER

- You notice the practical needs of others and enjoy meeting them.
- You enjoy serving to free others for more important things.
- You are willing to neglect your own work to help others.
- You sometimes go beyond your physical strength in serving others.
- You can remember the likes and dislikes of others.
- You can usually detect ways to serve before anyone else can.
- You will even use your own funds to get a job done quickly.
- You do not mind doing jobs by yourself.
- You do not want public praise, but you do need to feel appreciated.
- You find it difficult to say "no" to those who ask for help.
- You like to put "extra touches" on the jobs you do.

_____Score

PERSON NUMBER **7**

- You are very frugal with money for yourself and your family.
- You enjoy investing money in the ministries of other people.
- You have an ability to make money by wise investments.
- You desire to keep your giving a secret.
- You react negatively to pressure appeals for money.
- You like to encourage others to give with your gifts.
- You want the ministries you support to be as effective as possible.
- You enjoy giving to needs which others tend to overlook.
- You sometimes fear that your gifts will corrupt those who get them.
- You desire to give gifts of high quality.
- You enjoy knowing that your gifts were specific answers to prayer.

_____ Score

WHICH PERSON DID YOU CHECK THE MOST?

Answer key:

1. TEACHER; 2. ADMINISTRATOR; 3. PROPHET; 4. MERCY; 5. EXHORTER; 6. SERVER; 7. GIVER.

Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Taken from the book
Keeping Your Balance
By Horton Byrd, MD

Chapter 17 **The Spiritual Gift God Has Given You**

The key to a smooth look in your clothes is the undergarment. The key to healthy emotions which cause your life to run more smoothly is the undergarment of self-acceptance. Such self-acceptance begins in the spirit.

We must accept our abilities. When Moses complained about his lack of ability when it came to doing the job God asked him to do, God asked a strange question: “Moses, what’s that in your hand?” Moses just held up the old rough stick he had used to walk with. When that stick was yielded to the Lord it was used to part the Red Sea, get water out of rocks, and became the handiest tool Moses ever dreamed of. God doesn’t demand that we create our own abilities, He just asks us to use what we have. Use it and don't ever feel inferior to another.

Natural abilities are not necessarily what our spiritual gift will be. While I have some creative abilities that I was born with that need to be brought under the control of the Holy Spirit, I also have a spiritual gift that, when properly used, plays an important part in the body of Christ. Now, whether I am a foot or an eye is not important. Each gift is as important as the other.

There has been much interest over the recent years in the proper discovery and understanding of spiritual gifts. In Romans 12:3-9 the seven intrinsic or “motivational” gifts of the Holy Spirit are listed. They are:

1. Prophecy—the declaring of Biblical truth.
2. Serving—the meeting of practical needs in the body of Christ.
3. Teaching—the research and examination of scriptural truths for sharing with other believers
4. Exhorting—the encouraging and personal equipping of other Christians.

5. Giving—the meeting of primarily financial needs through contributions of all kinds.
6. Administration or ruling—the organizing of the body of Christ for the purpose of accomplishing tasks.
7. Mercy—empathizing with and emotionally uplifting fellow Christians.

The following is a spiritual gifts inventory composed of seventy questions which should take approximately 25-30 minutes to complete. We would like to thank Rob Guenther of Edmonton, Alberta Canada for his gracious assistance in developing this spiritual gifts inventory.

Instructions:

For each statement, decide if that statement is MORE likely or LESS likely to describe you. There are no right or wrong answers here, only preferences. Respond by placing an “M” for MORE likely or and “L” for LESS likely in the blank next to each statement. The small letters to the left of each set of blanks will be used in scoring the inventory and should be covered up by a ruler or a folded piece of paper while you are completing the inventory.

“M” “L”

- (a) ____ ____ 1. I am able to recognize what responsibilities can or cannot be delegated.
- (p) ____ ____ 2. Discerning the character and motives of people is easy for me.
- (g) ____ ____ 3. I absolutely enjoy seeing a gift of mine being an answer to someone’s specific prayer.
- (m) ____ ____ 4. I feel especially comfortable when I’m around individuals who are very sensitive to the feelings of others.
- (e) ____ ____ 5. I like to associate and make plans with “action oriented” people.
- (p) ____ ____ 6. Speaking or declaring my position on matters is always important to me.
- (g) ____ ____ 7. I’m good at handling money and making wise investments.
- (p) ____ ____ 8. My commitment to the sovereignty of God is quite possibly my strongest tool for influencing other Christians.
- (m) ____ ____ 9. The emotional atmosphere with an individual or in a group is something I readily and easily sense.
- (t) ____ ____ 10. I see truth from the Bible as something you really have to dig for if you want quality.

“M” “L”

- (g)____ ____ 11. I almost always seek counsel before making a special financial gift above my routine tithe.
- (s)____ ____ 12. Remembering the specific likes and dislikes of people comes easy for me.
- (p)____ ____ 13. When I speak in public I am often frank and direct; some times my speech is seen as being harsh.
- (g)____ ____ 14. My giving is frequently a tool I use specifically to motivate others to financially support the Lord’s work.
- (t)____ ____ 15. To be honest, I enjoy doing the research behind a lesson I may prepare more than the actual presenting of it.
- (p)____ ____ 16. When I see others violate the truth of Scripture, it causes me personally the most intense form of inner pain.
- (a)____ ____ 17. I like to get things done as fast as possible, and sometimes I’ll sacrifice neatness for speed.
- (g)____ ____ 18. I enjoy finding a need and meeting it without anyone even knowing I was responsible.
- (e)____ ____ 19. I have a hard time staying interested in even a beautiful church service if I can’t find several practical applications.
- (a)____ ____ 20. When a job is done, my first thought is to look for a new challenge to get involved with and keep myself busy.
- (t)____ ____ 21. When I hear a significant new idea, I often remember it or write it down and compare it later with other truths I know from Scripture.
- (s)____ ____ 22. Although like everyone else I thrive on sincere appreciation for my work, I seem to be able more than most to detect insincerity in the praise of others.
- (m)____ ____ 23. When I am told of a difficult situation, my first impulse is to remove hurt and bring emotional healing to the people involved.
- (g)____ ____ 24. When I see a need to be met in others, I may wait on meeting that need simply in order to be able to give a more high quality gift.
- (a)____ ____ 25. Seeing all the pieces of a project come together and work smoothly is a source of great fulfillment to me. I like to be a project coordinator.
- (p)____ ____ 26. A person may claim inward conviction, but I will often demand outward evidences of change before I will embrace that someone in fellowship.

“M” “L”

- (m)____ ____27. In a group setting, I seem to be the one who feels the most responsible that everyone feels accepted.
- (p)____ ____28. I insist on validating my decisions, often even small ones, by direct scriptural passages.
- (a)____ ____29. People seek my counsel when they need an overall practical picture of a situation, especially when long-term goals need to be clarified.
- (s)____ ____30. I find much more enjoyment in reaching short-term goals than in attempting to reach long-range ones.
- (e)____ ____31. Finding concepts in the Scriptures which parallel everyday human experiences is something I enjoy doing and it seems to come relatively easy to me.
- (s)____ ____32. When a project I am working on gets stalled, I feel I should use my personal time, energy, and money if necessary to assure that it stays on schedule.
- (a)____ ____33. I am not excessively bothered by negative criticism from co-workers if it is required in order to accomplish the ultimate task.
- (p)____ ____34. I am interested to have others point out my blind spots, especially in areas of Biblical truth.
- (t)____ ____35. I cringe with disapproval when I hear a Biblical illustration not used exactly in its proper doctrinal context.
- (t)____ ____36. I would be quite willing to change church memberships in order to sit under the instruction of accurate doctrinal teaching, regardless of less “warmth” in the new fellowship.
- (s)____ ____37. I often wait to get involved in activities until I see a need that no one else is meeting, then I usually am strongly drawn to meet that need.
- (g)____ ____38. I tend to see needs that others have, especially financial or practical ones, which might go otherwise unnoticed by some church members.
- (s)____ ____39. I have a hard time saying no when asked to do things and therefore get involved in a large variety of activities.
- (g)____ ____40. Public acknowledgment of my giving makes me uncomfortable; I would rather give quietly to worthwhile projects.

“M” “L”

- (m)____ ____ 41. People in distress seem drawn to me and sometimes readily share deeply personal aspects of their problems with me.
- (g)____ ____ 42. When I make a contribution to a ministry, I develop a feeling of strong responsibility to the Lord for the quality and integrity of that ministry, even if I am not personally involved in its day to day operation.
- (e)____ ____ 43. Teaching without practical steps to applications seems to upset me more that it does most of my friends.
- (s)____ ____ 44. When everyone is tired on a work project, I seem to be one of the most able to maintain the stamina necessary to keep working on the task; and I find myself often using my energy to meet needs of my co-workers who are feeling worn out.
- (s)____ ____ 45. When I hear that a job is going to require extra work and long hours, it seems to make me want to get involved all the more.
- (t)____ ____ 46. I am one who places great emphasis on the accuracy of the words a person uses.
- (m)____ ____ 47. I have noticed that I often feel strained and uncomfortable around individuals who are not very sensitive to the needs of others.
- (e)____ ____ 48. I like to be involved in projects where specific goals are targeted for action and precise scriptural steps are given to fulfill those goals.
- (a)____ ____ 49. If there is no structured leadership in a situation, I am often the one who assumes responsibility to get things organized.
- (t)____ ____ 50. I enjoy the challenge of doing research to validate a Biblical truth.
- (e)____ ____ 51. When I am speaking or sharing with others, I seem to be intensely aware of visible signs of acceptance or rejection of what I am communicating.
- (s)____ ____ 52. Although I may be patient in certain areas, when it comes to meeting needs in other people, I become frustrated if I can't act quickly to meet those needs.

“M” “L”

- (t)_____ 53. I think the most important function of the pastor is the systematic saturation of his congregation with detailed Biblical truths from his personal research and study. (If it takes you more than 5 minutes to answer this question, mark it “M”)
- (p)_____ 54. When considering an action, my first thoughts are about what kind of impact it will have on God’s reputation in the community and His holiness.
- (m)_____ 55. Being firm with someone is usually my last recourse when dealing with a touchy situation.
- (a)_____ 56. I seem to be able to lay my hands quickly on the resources necessary to accomplish even difficult tasks, and others have asked me to help organize projects in the past.
- (s)_____ 57. I relish getting involved in projects, especially when the objective is to meet a practical need.
- (a)_____ 58. I don’t really feel comfortable beginning a day unless I’ve taken some time to organize the activities I need to accomplish. I usually try to keep a list of things I need to get done.
- (m)_____ 59. I am quite sensitive towards an action which will hurt the feelings of other people.
- (a)_____ 60. When facing a job, I am quite conscious of the amount of time I have to accomplish it, and I am frustrated when personal problems slow down efficiency.
- (e)_____ 61. In the midst of serious problems and trials in someone’s life, it is relatively easy for me to see how such difficulties can produce a new level of Christian maturity in his/her life.
- (p)_____ 62. Identifying and defining sin with a strong ability to hate evil is one of my most pronounced qualities.
- (t)_____ 63. When exposed to new Biblical truths, I feel obliged to challenge the knowledge of those teaching (not necessarily in a negative way, but just to be sure that their Biblical background is sound).
- (e)_____ 64. I enjoy getting together with other Christians one-on-one or in small groups to work out new solutions to scriptural problems.
- (m)_____ 65. When I am around other Christians who are suffering, I quickly sense their mental distress and often suffer emotionally along with them.

“M” “L”

- (t)____ ____ 66. I feel that a working understanding of the Greek and Hebrew languages in which the original Bible manuscripts were written is necessary for someone to be a Bible scholar.
- (m)____ ____ 67. Often I will avoid firmness in trying to spare the feelings of others, even if I appear weak or indecisive because of it.
- (e)____ ____ 68. I appear to disregard the feelings of those I’m counseling at times because I place such a high emphasis on taking steps of action to solve problems.
- (g)____ ____ 69. Knowing the worth of a project and understanding fully the intentions of its sponsors is my primary consideration when giving to a project.
- (e)____ ____ 70. When I use Scripture for practical application, it may appear that I am taking it out of context to some extent.

Instructions for scoring

Once you have completed the inventory, score each of the seven spiritual gifts as follows. For the spiritual gift of prophecy, go back over the test and count all the questions with a small “p” to the left of them in which you placed an “M” as the answer. (You will not count any questions in which you placed an “L” in the answer blank.) Once you have counted all the questions marked by the small letter “p” to which you answered “M” place that number in the blank just to the left of the word prophecy on the Scoring Graph below. (The number should be somewhere between 0-10). Once you have placed the number in the blank to the left of the word prophecy, blacken in the corresponding number of squares in the row to the right of the word prophecy. Now score the remaining six gifts in the same way. Once you have done this for all seven of the spiritual gifts included in this inventory, you will have a bar graph indicating which motivational gifts are your most prominent.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
____ Prophecy										
____ Serving										
____ Teaching										
____ Exhorting										
____ Giving										
____ Administration										
____ Mercy										

Using Your Gift

Once you have determined which of the seven gifts of the Spirit are your most prominent, then it is important that you realize that God would have you serve with that gift or gifts. If one of your gifts is **PROPHECY**, then you will tend to be persuasive in speech and you will enjoy bringing to light things that are not clear to other people. You will tend to gravitate toward that which is good and away from that which is evil, but you will have to be careful not to be critical. Love without hypocrisy is a major need of the person with the gift of prophecy. The importance which you have in the body of Christ is emphasized in I Corinthians 14:1 (NASB) which says, “Pursue love, yet desire earnestly spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.” Your willingness to proclaim Biblical truth openly is a key contribution to the members of the body of Christ.

If your most prominent gift is **SERVING**, then you will be especially able to discern the needs of people. You will probably be willing to endure personal discomfort and overlook your own requirements in the pursuit of meeting the needs of others. You must be responsible and not impulsive, and you must be willing to allow others to receive recognition, not hoping secretly to be singled out for special praise. You must be careful not to become proud of your works, and you must be especially sensitive not to prematurely meet the needs of others before they have a chance to realize those needs or before God has a chance to use those needs to build character into their lives. Individuals with the gift of serving have a tendency to become bitter over time when their hard work is not recognized or appreciated, and you must avoid this. The key verse for maintaining your perspective as a Christian with the gift of serving is Colossians 3:23-24 (NASB), “*Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men; knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.*”

If your gift is **TEACHING** then you will love to dig out the facts concerning the Scriptures and also to accumulate knowledge on the more exhausting details of the Bible. You must be careful while being diligent in the details of your work not to develop spiritual “tunnel vision.” This “tunnel vision” means concentration on the details of a particular fund of information rather than communicating the basic principles of Christian living. Christians with the spiritual gift of teaching have a tendency to become spiritually obese, being over-balanced in the accumulation of knowledge and under-balanced in the degree of application in their lives. Beware that you do not become more interested in finding truth than you are in ministering Christ’s love to your fellow Christians. The importance of teaching the Word of God clearly and accurately is reflected by the Apostle Paul’s instructions to his young disciple, Timothy, “*Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth*” (II Tim. 2:15, NASB)

If the Spiritual gift of **EXHORTATION** is one with which God has blessed you, then you will be drawn into personal counseling of other Christians. You will find yourself rejoicing in one-on-one contacts which result in life-changing decisions. You must always rejoice in hope and be patient with others who are slow to progress. Persistent prayer may not be as exciting to you as the friction of direct exhortation, and yet it will probably be the consistency of your prayer life which determines the degree to which God will be able to bless your exhortation and encouragement in the lives of others. You must be careful not to boast in the personal results of your ministry and certainly you will have to learn to deal with discouragement due to failures in the lives of other people. Be careful not to motivate others through the use of short term games such as meeting their more selfish needs, but be selective in sharing truth with those individuals who will cherish it and apply it over the long run. You will find yourself rallying to such verses as these: *“And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.”* *“Encourage one another day after day, as long as it is still called “Today,” lest any one of you be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin”* (Col. 1:28, Heb. 3:13, NASB)

If you have been blessed with the spiritual gift of **GIVING**, you will find that you are motivated to divert your personal assets to meet the needs of and further the ministries of others. You will seem to have the ability to make sometimes immediate decisions which may “make the difference” in the times of crisis in another person’s ministry. God will entrust you with the financial and physical resources to be empowered to help others when He taps you on the shoulder and shows you an opportunity. You must be aware that you do not become proud of the wealth of resources which God entrusts you, and you must be careful never to measure the success of other people by their material assets. You must be as willing to give genuinely to meet the needs of a stranger as you are to meet the needs of someone personally close to you. The gift of giving has been bestowed upon you not so that you can selectively shower your friends with assistance, but so that you can be a ready-made tool in the hand of God to meet the needs throughout the body of Christ. The joy and prosperity which God will extend to you as you properly utilize this gift are truly exciting, *“Give, and it will be given to you; good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, they will pour into your lap. For whatever measure you deal out to others, it will be dealt to you in return”* Luke 6:38, NASB)

The gift of **ADMINISTRATION** is crucial to the proper organization and maintenance of the New Testament Church. If this is your gift, you will notice that you seem to have the ability to coordinate activities within a group toward the accomplishment of a common goal. You will be gifted in the ability to distinguish major objectives from the less crucial ones around them. As others watch you in action, they will sense that you are an individual who can shrewdly accomplish a task efficiently. Of course, some will feel threatened by your ability to move decisively and with efficiency, and you must be willing to “bless those who curse you.” Pride in one’s power to excel is a real danger to the individual with the gift of administration. Also, you must be wary not to “use” people in order to accomplish goals, but rather be sure that you maintain Christ’s perspective of having a ministry in the lives of people. A dangerous tendency in those individuals with the gift of administration is overlooking major character faults in those who are useful to reaching goals. Paul states in I Timothy 3:4 (NASB) that the ability to be adequate to the task of administration is important enough to require it of elders; *“He must be one who manages his own household well.”*

If the spiritual gift God has blessed you with is **MERCY**, then you will find yourself motivated to feel empathy with the misfortunes and miseries of others. You will be the first in the crowd on many occasions to mentally and emotionally relate to another person who is suffering. You will feel the need to help others feel accepted, and other people may tell you things which they have not entrusted to any other person. You will find that you are able to share the happiest of times with others and also enter into grief with those who are in deep sorrow. You must be careful not to resent those who seem insensitive to personal needs, and you must be careful not to let your logic be guided by your emotions. You will have a tendency to fail to be firm when it is necessary, and it will be difficult for you to enforce Biblical priorities when you know that such actions may “hurt” someone else. As an individual with the gift of mercy, however, you will in many ways be able to reflect Christ’s own attitude toward others. *“And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience”* (Col. 3:12, NASB).

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HOW TO USE THE IRRITATIONS FROM OTHERS TO HELP YOU DISCOVER YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFT.

1. Ask yourself: “What do Christians do or not do that disappoints me and causes unbelievers to reject the Christian life?”

David’s sin brought reproach upon God’s people and gave great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme His name. Nathan exercised his gift of prophecy in bringing David to repentance.

2. Realize that your answer to this question will be greatly influenced by your spiritual gift:

- They compromise with the world. (Prophet)
- They fail to demonstrate true Christian concern. (Server)
- They are substituting experience for sound doctrine. (Teacher)
- They are not growing to spiritual maturity. (Exhorter)
- They are not trusting God for their finances. (Giver)
- They are not accomplishing any major goals. (Organizer)
- They do not have genuine love for each other. (Mercy)

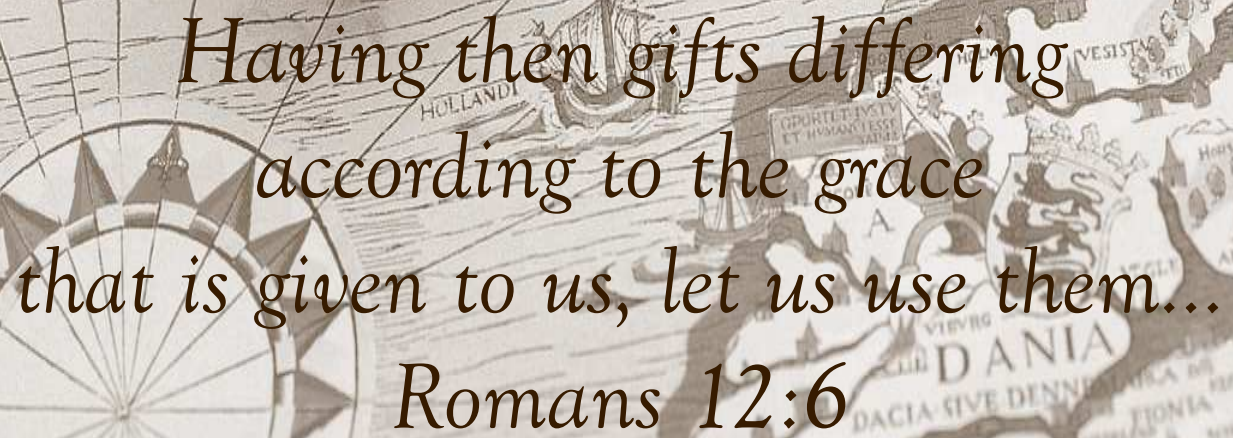
3. Determine what you can do now to begin resolving the problem that concerns you the most.

- Explain your understanding of the problem to God.
- Dedicate yourself to being part of the solution, whatever the cost.
- Ask God for wisdom as you read and memorize His Word daily.
- Take advantage of every little opportunity that He gives to you.
- Constantly evaluate your results in the light of God’s Word and lasting fruit.

My Spiritual Gift

Based upon what I have learned thus far, I believe that my spiritual gift is:

I am not certain what my spiritual gift is; however, I have been able to narrow it down to the following:



*Having then gifts differing
according to the grace
that is given to us, let us use them...*
Romans 12:6