

Discovering The Will of God

Essential # 3: Spiritual Gifts

The final essential for knowing the Will of God is knowing your spiritual gift(s) (Rom.12:1-8). You may be asking yourself, “who me, I have a spiritual gift(s)?” Yes, if you are a born again child of God, then you have been given a spiritual gift(s). The importance in knowing your gift(s) is that **God’s purpose for your life will be in direct relation to your gifting**. It is important to note that a spiritual gift is **not the same as a talent or ability**. Since you may have possessed some sort of talent before coming to know Christ, and the Bible tells us that it was when we received God’s grace that we also received our spiritual gifting, then it is quite evident that talents and spiritual gifts are two separate things. This is not to say that the two may not be of the same nature or complimentary of each other, for in many cases they are. An example of this might be if someone had the talent of singing, God may give him or her the gift of exhortation and encouragement (praise and worship) or evangelism. In this case, their talent would be use as a vehicle for their gift. Another example would be if you had a talent for public speaking, God may give you the gift of teaching, or Pastor, or evangelist. Then again, you could have the talent of teaching and God gives you the gift of teaching as well. The important thing to remember is that **God created our talents and abilities in us, and our spiritual gifts will, in most cases, coincide with them**.

Spiritual **gifts should also not be confused with the fruit of the Spirit** or Christian roles. Simply stated, **spiritual gifts help us define what we do, while the fruit of the spirit helps define what we are**. However, while there are differences between the two, keep this fact in mind; **without the fruit of the spirit, your spiritual gifts are useless**.(1Cor.13) It is also worth mentioning that, in each of the primary passages concerning gifts (Romans12, 1Corth.12 and Eph.4), there is an accompanying passage on fruit. Finally, we must understand the difference between spiritual gifts, fruit of the spirit, and roles. **Christian roles are different from fruit in that they are more about our responsibilities as Christians than what we are or do**. As Christians we have the roles or responsibilities that are of a gift nature but are not what we are gifted with. If someone is sick your role as a Christian is to pray for their healing. Does this mean that you have the gift of healing or faith? No, but it is your responsibility as a believer to do so. If someone is down and out and

needs a place to sleep, you may offer them your guest room or couch but this does not mean that you have the gift of hospitality.

I pray that you will receive enough guidance through this study to get you on your way to discovering your gift(s) and in doing so you will be closer to uncovering God's purpose and plan for your life.

Ten Facts About Spiritual Gifts

1. Only Believers have spiritual gifts. (1Cor.2:14)
2. Every Christian has at least One spiritual gift. (1Cor.7:7 - 1Peter 4:10)
3. No one receives All the gifts. (1Cor. 12:27-30)
4. No single gift is given to Everyone. (1Cor. 12:29-30)
5. You can't Earn or Work for a spiritual gift. (Eph. 4:7)
6. God/Holy Spirit decides what gifts you get. (1Cor 12:11,18)
7. The gifts I'm given are Permanent. (Rom. 11:29)
8. I am to Develop the gifts God gives me. (1 Tim. 4:14)
9. It is a sin to Waste the gift God gave me. (1Cor.4:1-2 - Mt. 25:14-30)
10. Using my gifts Honors God and Expands me. (John 15:8)

*These ten facts were derived from the Saddleback Church 301 class material

How Do I Discover My Gifts

Five Practical Steps

1. PRAYER. - If you really mean business in your search, you will ask God to show you your gifts. God wants you to be aware of your gifts and will lead you in an exciting journey of discovery. (J.E.O'Day)
2. SCRIPTURE - We have already talked about the Word of God being the will of God, as well as the scripture being the final authority. Therefore, we must

search out the scriptures in regards to spiritual gifts so that we are informed and not in error.

3. *SELF EVALUATION* - Take some time to reflect on the things that you really enjoy doing, things that bring you satisfaction and that you are good at. Make a list of these things along with the reasons why you enjoy doing them. This will help you identify your motivation for doing them. This is an important step in discovering your gifts. Nevertheless, remember that talents are not gifts.
4. *EXPERIMENT* - Once you think you have identified your gift(s), simply try it out. Find out if the gift “fits” you. Do you enjoy using this gift? Do others benefit from your use of this gift? Do you feel fulfilled using it?
5. *AFFIRMATION* - Seek out the advice of others. Look for honest opinions from those who are spiritually mature. If you do not receive affirmation from the Body, then you may not be operating in your gift. Be careful however, to ask those who are spiritually mature in the word and the working of the gifts.

Pit Falls

GIFT EXALTATION - This pit fall usually comes from others and not from the person who has the gift. This is the act of exalting one gift over another. This most typically happens when someone has a gift that is a sign or prophetic gift, such as tongues and/or interpretation, healing or prophecy. People become so impressed that they begin to hold up these types of gifts above the others. When this happens, in many cases the person with the gift will begin to believe it and they will fall into the same trap.

GIFT PROJECTION - This pit fall usually come from the person with the gift. I see this more in the area of the gifts of faith and evangelism. What happens here is the person with the gift feels as if everyone should be as active, enthused, involved and productive with the gift as they are. They believe that they are just ordinary Christians, and that if others did what they did, the results would occur. They feel so comfortable in their gift that they feel the entire Body of Christ feels the same. This is where the understanding of gifts and roles comes into play. We must realize that God has given us our gifts for the building up of the Body, and that together, through each one using their own gift, is the will of God accomplished.

A Short List of Spiritual Gifts

Prophecy	Faith	Pastor
Service	Healing	Celibacy
Teaching	Miracles	Martyrdom
Exhortation	Discerning of Spirits	Missionary
Giving	Tongues	Intercession
Leadership	Interpretation of tongues	Voluntary poverty
Mercy	Helps	Deliverance
Wisdom	Administration	Hospitality
Knowledge	Evangelist	Music

NOTES

If you truly desire to know the will of God for your life, you will seek diligently to discover your spiritual gifts, and always remember:

- Spiritual Gifts are given by God in order to equip us to perform our purpose.
- A spiritual gift is not a supped up natural talent or ability.
- “Every true function of the body of Christ has a ‘member’ to perform it, and every member a function to perform.” ~ W.T. Purkiser
- We are to “covet” and “desire” spiritual gifts. 1Corth. 12:31 / 14:1

Gift Grace Connection

- Greek word for spiritual gift is *charisma*; the plural is *charismata*.
- Charisma comes from the root word *charis*, which in the Greek means grace.
- There is an inseparable connection between gifts and grace.

- Romans 6:23 - “for the wages of sin is death, but the *gift* [charismata] of God is eternal life...”
- Eph. 4:7 - “But to each one of us *grace* was given according to the measure of Christ’s *gift*.”
- Romans 12:3 - “...God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.
- Romans 12:6 - “Having *gifts* differing according to the *grace* that is given to us let us use them...”
- We minister God’s grace when we use our gifts to the service of others.
- Gifts were given for the benefit of others.
 - 1Peter 4:10 - “Each one should use whatever *gift* he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s *grace* in its various forms.”
- The more you use your gift, the stronger it gets and the more proficient you become at using it.
 - 2 Tim. 1:6 “I remind you to keep using the gift God gave you...let it grow, as a small flame grows into a fire.”