

Spiritual Gifts Support Material

Village's Position on Spiritual Gifts

As a church family, we believe God has gifted and equipped all Christians for the work of the ministry and the advancement of His Kingdom. It is our desire to earnestly seek the fullness of the Holy Spirit in every area of our lives, including the use of our spiritual gift(s). However, for our gifts to have their maximum impact in our church body, we believe it is essential that we operate in the guidelines set forth in Scripture. If we are using our gifts as God intended them to be used, we will be advancing His agenda, advancing the mission and vision of the church, and growing in our personal maturity with Christ. Some key principles in living out our spiritual gifts are:

1. Spiritual gifts are a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. They should therefore reflect His power and His purposes as well as communicate His grace. *Romans 1:11; I Corinthians 12:7; I Peter 4:10*
2. All the gifts are of critical value and worth in the kingdom of God. *I Corinthians 12:22-26*
3. The important issue is not only that you recognize your gifts, but that you are using your gifts to advance the Kingdom of God. *I Peter 4:10*
4. Spiritual gifts are to be used for the common good of the church...any use of gifts for self-promotion or the advancement of personal agendas is contrary to the will of God. *I Corinthians 12:7*
5. God distributes the gifts throughout the church body as He wills, but some gifts (healing, miracles, tongues, interpretation of tongues) are less commonly seen and are more the exception than the rule. *I Corinthians 12:4; 11*
6. We only assess for spiritual gifts that are identified in Scripture (*Romans 12; I Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4*) but do recognize that the gifts lists are not exhaustive.

Verbal Gifts

ADMINISTRATION

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of administration has the ability to organize information, events or material to work effectively for the Body of Christ.

Biblical References:

“And in the church God appointed . . . those with the gifts of administration.”

1 Corinthians 12:28

Gift Characteristics:

1. Administration comes from the word “Kubernesis.” It is derived from language used by sailors in the Mediterranean and means to “steer a ship” (*1 Corinthians 12:28*) – which then became the Latin word “gubernare” – to govern or guide.
2. *Acts 27:11* uses this same word to describe the pilot or helmsman of a ship who helps steer, guide, mediate or maintain order.
3. Our contemporary idea of “administrative skills” may not fully represent the extent of this spiritual gift.

EXHORTATION / ENCOURAGEMENT

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of exhortation/encouragement has the ability to come alongside others to provide encouragement as well as positive correction.

Biblical References:

“We have gifts that differ according to the grace given us. If a person’s gift is . . . encouraging, let them encourage.” *Romans 12:6, 8a*

Gift Characteristics:

1. Exhortation/Encouragement comes from the word “Parakaleo” as found in *Romans 12:8*. It means to urge or appeal. At its root, it has the idea of getting close to someone to literally call alongside and console or reconcile. It defines one who comes alongside and generally provides a positive urging or fresh courage to a faint heart.
2. In *1 Thessalonians 3:2*, it means “to comfort” and *1 Thessalonians 4:1 & Philippians 4:2*, it means to encourage or exhort.
3. Barnabas obviously had this gift. In fact, his name means “Son of Encouragement.” His spiritual gift manifested itself in Barnabas’ willingness to reach out to Paul when no one dared, and to stand with John Mark when others forsook him.

KNOWLEDGE

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of knowledge has the spiritual insight to understand and effectively use information, from either natural sources or the Scriptures, for the advancement of God’s purposes.

Biblical References:

“To one there is given through the Spirit the message of . . . Knowledge . . .”
1 Corinthians 12:8

Gift Characteristics:

1. Knowledge “gnosis” means to perceive, to recognize or to know.
2. The ability to intelligently order things in one’s mind and having a grasp on reality.
1 Corinthians 12:8.
3. Someone with the spiritual gift of knowledge has spiritual insight and understanding concerning the meaning of Scripture.

LEADERSHIP

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of leadership has the ability to inspire, motivate and direct the efforts of others, mobilize the Church to accomplish God’s work, as well as envision the future.

Biblical References:

“We have gifts that differ according to the grace given us. If a person’s gift is . . . leadership, let him govern diligently.” *Romans 12:6, 8c*

Gift Characteristics:

1. Leadership “prohistemi” means to be concerned for, care, rule and direct.
Romans 12:8
2. Paul describes the basic idea of giving leadership in the church. Those with this gift have a call, passion, haste and diligence to mobilize the church to action. Ability to envision the future.
1 Thessalonians 5:12

PROPHECY

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of prophecy has the ability to proclaim God’s truths in a way relevant to current situations and to envision how God would will things to change.

Biblical References:

“We have differing gifts, according to the grace given us. If a person’s gift is prophesying, let him use it in proportion to his faith.” *Romans 12:6*

Gift Characteristics:

1. Prophecy “propheteia” means to tell something God has brought spontaneously to mind. One who speaks to God’s people under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. *Romans 12:6*
2. Peter noted that its manifestation is indicative of the fulfillment of Joel. The pouring out of the Spirit in the last days. *Acts 2:17*

TEACHING

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of teaching has the ability to discover, clarify, explain, apply and preach biblical truths.

Biblical References:

“We have differing gifts, according to the grace given us . . . if it is teaching, let him teach . . .”
Romans 12:6,7

Gift Characteristics:

1. Teaching “*didasko*” means to teach. To cause someone to accept something. (*Romans 12:7*)
2. The term teaching in the Gospels and Acts has a meaning closer to preaching and proclaiming. Calling for a decision, instructing people regarding what God requires.
3. The term teaching in the epistles had a sense of handing down a fixed body of doctrine.

WISDOM

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of wisdom has the ability to apply truth of life situations that enable hearers to be skillful at living.

Biblical References:

“To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom . . .”
I Corinthians 12:8

Gift Characteristics:

1. Wisdom “*sophia*” means one skilled in the art of living, able to apply truth to life.
2. Wisdom is also used to describe one with unusual skill in a defined area, whether handicraft, art, economic shrewdness and government.
3. Paul saw himself as a wise master builder of the community. *I Corinthians 3:10*
4. *James 3:13* suggests that a key to wisdom is our behavior (good life, good deeds and humility).
5. To speak a wise word at a given moment of need, demonstrating God’s perspective.

Less Verbal Gifts

DISCERNMENT

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of discernment has the ability to distinguish between the Spirit of God and the spirit of falsehood.

Biblical References:

“To another distinguishing between spirits”*I Corinthians 12:10*

Gift Characteristics:

1. Discernment “*diakrisis*” means one who judges or makes a distinction between.
I Corinthians 12:10.
2. *I John 4:1-4* warns the church of spirits - some of which are not to be trusted. Not all the spiritual activity in a church is of God. Many false ones have gone out into the world. Every church is

vulnerable to false spirits. Jesus warned of those who would do things in His name, even though he does not recognize them. *Matthew 7:21-23*

FAITH

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of faith has the ability to believe, trust, and be assured that God will accomplish extraordinary works.

Biblical References:

“To another faith by the same spirit”
I Corinthians 12:10

Gift Characteristics:

1. Faith “pistis” as a spiritual gift is mentioned nowhere else. However, a few passages can give us a sense of what the gift is and what it can do. *Matthew 17:20* Jesus spoke of the faith to move mountains. The smallest faith has unlimited potential. *Hebrews 11:1* suggests a person with an unusual assurance of things hoped for, a strong conviction of things not seen.
2. The depth in one’s ability to believe and see beyond the barriers. When a person with the gift of faith functions in the body such that the body acts wisely upon the such faith, obstacles are brought down, the body is preserved from faintheartness and God is pleased.

GIVING

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of giving has the unusual ability to be generous with their material wealth and/or time to further God’s purposes.

Biblical References:

“We have differing gifts, according to the grace given us . . . if it is contributing to the needs of others, let him give generously . . .” *Romans 12:6-8*

Gift Characteristics:

1. Giving “metadidome” means to give, impart and share. It is used in reference with various kinds of giving.
2. Imparting one’s gift to another – *Romans 12:8*
3. Sharing the Gospel – *I Thessalonians. 2:8*
4. Giving to those in need – *Eph. 4:28*

HELPS/SERVICE

Definition: A person with the spiritual gift of helps/service has the ability to work along side others to help or assist the accomplishment of practical and often behind-the-scenes tasks that sustain the body of Christ.

Biblical References:

“And in the church God appointed . . . those able to help others . . .

I Corinthians 12:28

Gift Characteristics:

1. Helps “antilempsis” means to help, assist or aid someone: to give, impart, and share. It is used in reference with various kinds of giving.
2. *Romans 12:17* uses the word “diakonia” which means, “gifted in service.” Being available to help when the need arises.
3. *James 1:27* “to help the weak”
4. *I Timothy 5* – Those with a gift of helping others

MERCY

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of mercy has the ability to identify with the suffering of others and effectively comfort, console, and minister to their needs.

Biblical References:

“We have differing gifts, according to the grace given us . . . if it is showing mercy, let him do it cheerfully.” *Romans 12:8*

Gift Characteristics:

1. Mercy “eleos” means to have compassion, pity and mercy. It is used in the New Testament to describe the act of being sensitive to human misery and suffering.
2. The term mercy is more than a ministry to the hurting; it is the very definition of salvation. In the heart of the Gospel is God’s act of mercy. Everything we are and do is a consequence of mercy.
3. Mercy is the sign of discipleship. *James 3:17*

Exceptional Gifts

HEALING

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of healing has the ability to call on God for the curing of illness and the restoration of health.

Biblical References:

“And in the church God appointed . . . also those having gifts of healing . . .”
I Corinthians 12:28

Gift Characteristics:

Healing “*iamaton*” means the ability to bring comfort and health to those who are suffering.

Is Healing for Today?

1. Some would say **YES**

- ❖ It is the birthright of every believer. *John 14:12; Hebrews 13:8; I Peter 2:24*
- 2. Some would say **NO**
 - ❖ The gift of healing authenticated the ministry of Christ and the apostles, but it is no longer normative for today. *John 20:30-31*

Looking Closer—The Two Issues Debated

- **YES** – greater things shall we do. *John 14:12; Acts 3:6-8*
- **RESPONSE** – but what are the greater things? Healing?
Jesus performed many miracles—walking on water, feeding the 5,000, paying taxes from fish. Does Jesus expect us to replicate these?
Perhaps the “greater things” are the spiritual victories that will be ours as the Spirit now comes to indwell.
- **YES** – Jesus is the same yesterday, today and forever—and we should expect the same ministries today. *Hebrews 13:8*
- **RESPONSE** – the context suggests that what remains the same is His character—not His works.
 - ❖ In fact, miracles were never how Jesus wanted His ministry defined (*Matthew 8:4 & 9:30*) and in the post resurrection period, there is no record Jesus healed at all. Jesus did not want miracles to overshadow His reason for coming. *Matthew 11:4-5*
- **YES** – By His wounds we have been healed—there is healing in the atonement. *I Peter 2:24*
- **RESPONSE** – Is Peter speaking of physical healing here? The context would suggest it is spiritual. Christ died for our sins, not our sickness. Sickness is a consequence of sin, just as sweat is a consequence of work, and pain is a consequence of childbirth. We live with these, and will until the end of the age (*Genesis 3:17-19*). To expect physical healing in the atonement is to expect we can be free from the thorns in the ground or pain in childbirth.

Moving to an Answer

Only God knows if one will be healed. We should pray in faith – we should call for the elders (*James 5:13-15*). We should use the best in medical technology. We should confess any known sin and we should believe in God without putting Him to the test.

He may heal and He may not. It depends upon what purpose He seeks to accomplish. To conclude otherwise – to assume it is always His will to heal often adds guilt to grief, raises false hopes, hinders compassion for those who remain in their suffering, and causes us to miss what God is doing as we are preoccupied with healing rather than with the lessons He desires to impart. In either case – He is compassionate (*Hebrews 4:15*) always sovereign (*Luke 8*) and always wise.

MIRACLES

Definition:

A person with this spiritual gift of miracles is one through whom God manifests supernatural signs and wonders, particularly through the ministry of deliverance.

Biblical References:

“And in the church God appointed . . . workers of miracles . . .” *I Corinthians 12:28*

Gift Characteristics:

Miracles “energemata duvameon” means various manifestations of God’s power in supernatural ways at critical moments.

TONGUES

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of tongues has the ability to speak in a heretofore-unknown language, yet known in human language.

Biblical References:

“And in the church God appointed . . . and those speaking in different kinds of tongues.
I Corinthians 12:28

Gift Characteristics:

Tongues “glossolalia” means spirit inspired utterances.

Are Tongues for Today?

- Some would say **YES**. They are an unknown language, evidence of the baptism of the Spirit, and are for the edification of the body and the believer.
- Some would say **NO**. They were known languages serving as a sign to the unbelieving, an authentication of Christ’s ministry, and served their purpose with the completion of written revelation. *I Corinthians 13:8*

Moving to an Answer

Tongues/Interpretation of Tongues: We believe that tongues are an exceptional gift. We also believe that while worship should reflect the freedom of the Spirit, God also honors unity and order. Because the gift of tongues in particular can be divisive, we discourage their manifestation during corporate worship. Where they are manifested, they must follow the mandates of Scripture—known languages that are a sign to non-Christians (*I Corinthians 14:22*) that are accompanied with the gift of interpretation in a context of order (*I Corinthians 14:26-40*). They do not indicate a secondary work of the Spirit (e.g. second baptism of Spirit) or an elitist experience of the Spirit. Like all gifts, they must edify the Body but they play a lesser role in the life of the church. *I Corinthians 14:5*

“**Heavenly Prayer Languages,**” in contrast to tongues, are not listed as a spiritual gift in Scripture (i.e. a form of speaking in tongues) but are a form of private worship. *I Corinthians 14:2; Romans 8: 26-27*

INTERPRETATION OF TONGUES

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of interpretation of tongues has the supernatural ability to interpret these known languages.

Biblical References:

“ To another . . . the interpretation of tongues. *I Corinthians 12:10*

Gift Characteristics:

Interpretation of tongues “hermeneia glosson ” means the interpretation and articulation of the known language.

PROPHECY

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of prophecy has the supernatural ability to receive a specific and spontaneous word from God that is useful to the edification of the body.

Biblical References:

“ And in the Church God has appointed prophets . . .
I Corinthians 12:28

Gift Characteristics:

1. From *propheteia* – the telling of something God has brought simultaneously to mind – *Romans 12:6; I Corinthians 12:10*
 - one who speaks to God’s people under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit
 - inspired utterances come through direct revelation from God
2. Peter noted that its manifestation is indicative of the fulfillment of Joel – the pouring out of the Spirit in the last days, so that all might know and speak for the Lord – *Acts 2:17*
3. As a specific gift, prophecy appears to have been operative in early church – *I Thessalonians 5:20*
 - in *I Corinthians 14:29-33* – Paul established guidelines

Is Prophecy A Gift for Today?

1. Some, who define the gift as predictive prophecy in the tradition of OT and NT prophets in which they held a special office and were organs of direct revelation, would concur that the gift has died out as the prophets have died out
 - just as there are no apostles comparable to the apostles of Christ – there are no prophets comparable to the biblical prophets
 - if so—we would have to add their words to Scripture
 - their foundational purpose has been served – *Ephesians 2:20*
 - the completed revelation of God’s Word makes the gift obsolete
2. Some would equate preaching with prophecy – forth telling the truth of Scripture.

3. Some would see it as a distinctive gift from preaching – a gift in force for today, where God impresses upon the mind and heart a message from God so powerful it must be unveiled to the body.

Moving To an Answer

We believe God has revealed Himself in primary ways (creation, Living Word, written Word) and continues to do so in secondary ways that do not have the same authority as Scripture. This may occur when the preacher proclaims God's Word as we would expect to hear God's voice through careful exegesis.

We also believe the gift of prophecy may express itself through a word spontaneously brought to one's mind, on certain but rare occasions, generated by the Spirit. In either case, all must be tested by the authority of God's written Word and serve to strengthen, encourage and comfort the believer. I Corinthians 14:3, 29

Ongoing Gifted Ministers

EVANGELIST

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of evangelism has the unusual passion and skill to minister the gospel accompanied by an unusually positive response.

Biblical References:

"It was He who gave some . . . to be evangelists . . ." *Ephesians 4:11*

Gift Characteristics:

1. Evangelist "Euaggelistes" comes from the Greek word meaning "one who announces good news."
2. The word translated "evangelist" occurs three times in the New Testament Acts 21:8, Ephesians 4:11, and II Timothy 4:5
3. The gift of evangelism is simply a special ability in communicating the good news of the Gospel. (Billy Graham)

PASTOR

Definition:

A person with the spiritual gift of pastor has the ability to teach, guide, protect and care for the body of Christ.

Biblical References:

"It was He who gave some . . . to be pastors . . ." *Ephesians 4:11*

Gift Characteristics:

1. Pastor “Poimen” is used only once with the root idea of “Shepherd.” *Ephesians 4:11*
2. Peter talks about the “Chief Shepherd” who will someday appear. *1 Peter 5:4*
3. If Jesus is the Chief Shepherd, then there must be assistant Shepherds.
4. Billy Graham believes that thousands of Christians with the gift of “pastor” will never become a pastor of a church. However, they can use their gift to help the overworked ministers at their church.

Developing Your Spiritual Gift

1. Observe how others with your gift, work with individuals or groups.
2. Develop skills to enhance your gift, such as increased Bible knowledge, listening, counseling, teaching, problem solving or coaching experience.
3. Start by taking responsibility for a small project.
4. Finally, you must be empowered by the Holy Spirit to be effective.
 - *Ephesians 5:18* – Be filled with the Spirit
 - *Galatians 5:22-23* – Show evidence of the fruit of the Spirit in your life
 - *Ephesians 4:30* – Don’t grieve the Spirit
 - *1 Thessalonians 5:19* – Don’t quench the Spirit