

Spiritual Gifts Inventory & Assessment: What You Need to Know

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Spiritual gifts can either seem like something for the early Church in ages long past . . . or like something so hard to pin down, they're more to be accepted than understood.

But after exploring which spiritual gifts are listed in the Bible (an inventory, if you will), taking steps to discover your gifts, and perhaps taking an assessment or two, you'll be much further down the path toward serving in your strengths.

Here's what we'll explore today:

- [What are spiritual gifts?](#)
- [Which Scripture passages mention spiritual gifts? \(Spiritual gifts inventory\)](#)
- [Are there other gifts of the Spirit?](#)
- [How do these gifts of the Spirit work?](#)
- [Spiritual gifts assessments](#)
- [A final thought about searching for your spiritual gifts](#)
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What are spiritual gifts?

The *Lexham Bible Dictionary* ([available free](#)) defines spiritual gifts as “ministries or abilities that the Holy Spirit gives to Christians for the edification of the Church.”¹

It continues, “Spiritual gifts should be understood as **primarily events** (e.g., a healing) **or activities or functions** (e.g., the act of teaching or role as teacher) **in the Church**, and only secondarily as the abilities or empowerments to perform them.”²

Another short definition is from Vern Poythress' [What Are Spiritual Gifts?](#):

The Bible indicates in several places that God equips and empowers people for service within the Church, which is the body of Christ. Since God is the source for our abilities, these empowerments may be called “gifts” from God.³

In [The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts](#), Sam Storms answers not only what spiritual gifts are—but also what they're not:

Spiritual gifts, or the *charismata*, are God's answer to the human question "Why can't we do that?" They are the manifestation and power of God the Holy Spirit through, which he intends to lead the Church into the fullness of its ordained end. . . .

Spiritual gifts are not God bestowing to his people something external to himself. They are not some tangible "stuff" or substance separable from God. Spiritual gifts are nothing less than God himself in us, energizing our souls, imparting revelation to our minds, infusing power in our wills, and working his sovereign and gracious purposes through us.

Spiritual gifts must never be viewed deistically, as if a God "out there" has sent some "thing" to us "down here." Spiritual gifts are God present in, with, and through human thoughts, human deeds, human words, human love.⁴

Which Scripture passages mention spiritual gifts? (Spiritual gifts inventory)

[*Lexham Bible Dictionary*](#) lists these specific gifts Paul references in key passages:

In [1 Corinthians 12:8–10, 28](#)

Word of wisdom	Prophecy and prophets	Teachers
Word of knowledge	Tongues	Deeds of power
Faith	Interpretation of tongues	Forms of assistance
Healing	Apostles	Forms of leadership

In [Romans 12:6–8](#)

- Prophecy
- Ministry
- Teaching
- Exhortation
- Giving
- Leading
- Showing mercy

In [Ephesians 4:11](#)

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Evangelists
- Pastors
- Teachers

In Dr. Craig Blomberg's [video course on 1 Corinthians](#), he explains more about the gifts of the Spirit mentioned in that book:

Wisdom

One person may have a gift of wisdom or knowledge—two words that are very similar, but wisdom typically referred to knowledge applied in the woof and warp of life.

Faith

Some have the gift of faith. Every Christian must have faith even to be saved, but this is a special measure of faith to believe God and see him respond for things the average person doesn't envision.

Healings, miracles

There are gifts of healings and miracles, the only place in the list where Paul changes the nouns to plurals, which may suggest different kinds of healings or miracles or may suggest different occasions for them. Another interesting difference of these two gifts from the rest of the list is they are not the kind of thing that people necessarily have as ongoing abilities or responsibilities but require the Spirit's choice to work in a particular moment in a way that he doesn't necessarily in every single instance.

Prophecy

The gift of prophecy . . . speaking a word that came from God however long a person may have meditated on it or prepared how to say it, or however spontaneous it may have been given, and the gifts of discerning, prophecy determining its origin: Is this from the Lord, is this of human manufacture, or something worse?

Tongues and Interpretation

Tongues and their interpretation—why is it last on the list? Not because Paul is necessarily making it the least of the gifts in all situations, but we will discover that it is the most problematic gift at Corinth, and so he perhaps deliberately waits and puts it at the end.

“Tongues,” a Greek word that again has a very broad semantic range and can mean everything from the literal part of one's anatomy fit in one's mouth to any human utterance in some linguistic configuration, known, unknown, or a collection of syllables that God uses to provide meaning to someone in a particular context.⁵

Are there other gifts of the Spirit?

Bible scholars say yes, there *are* other gifts of the Spirit.

Blomberg says in the course [Book Study: Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians](#) that Paul presents “a **sampling** of the gifts of the Spirit.”⁶

Storms also touches on this in [The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts](#): “I'm inclined to believe there are potentially as many gifts as there are needs in the life of the Church and in the experience of individual Christians.”⁷

[Lexham Bible Dictionary](#) agrees and explains that the gifts used for everyday service in the Church matter just as much as gifts recognized as miraculous:

Paul doesn't suggest that the various gifts in these passages encompass all of the possible gifts given by the Spirit. Furthermore, it seems that Paul doesn't categorically differentiate between the miraculous, transcendent, or spontaneous gifts with those that are more mundane, indicative of a regular function performed in the Church, or that overlap with latent talents possessed by members of the Church.⁸

How do these gifts of the Spirit work?

Blomberg says that “Every person, every Christian believer, has at least one spiritual gift, and they're not designed for personal use; they're not designed for the benefit of the secular world but for the common good, which, as we will see, Paul specifies even more particularly later on as the upbuilding of the church.”²

So these gifts work through each Christian as believers serve their church body.

Some people may have more than one gift ([1 Cor 14:13, 18](#)).

And some gifts overlap with others: “for example, the gift of apostle probably encapsulates the gifts of teaching and leadership.”¹⁰

Regardless of which gift(s) each person has, they all come from just one source—the Spirit ([1 Cor 12:4–6](#)). And the Spirit empowers each person to use their gifts.

Spiritual gifts assessments

Want to discover your spiritual gift? An assessment can help . . . but it's not where you start.

First, take a look at whether you meet these prerequisites, outlined by C. Peter Wagner in [Discover Your Spiritual Gifts](#):

1. You have to be a Christian.
2. You have to believe in spiritual gifts.
3. You have to be willing to work.
4. You have to pray.

Before you continue, you might want a little more clarification on prerequisite three.

Here it is, from Wagner:

God has given you one or more spiritual gifts for a reason: He has a ministry assignment that he wants you to accomplish in the body of Christ, a specific job for which he has personally equipped you. God knows whether you are serious about working for him. If he sees that you just want to discover your gift for the fun of it or because everybody else is doing it or because it gives you some new status, you cannot expect him to help you very much. If, however, you promise to use your spiritual gift, whatever it may be, for the

glory of God and for the welfare of the body of Christ, he will definitely help you.¹¹

Next, you can take these five steps Wagner recommends for finding your gifts:

1. Explore the possibilities through studying the Bible, reading, finding out your church's position on gifts, getting to know gifted people, and talking about gifts with others.
2. Experiment with as many gifts as you can, starting by looking for needs.
3. Examine your feelings.
4. Evaluate your effectiveness.
5. Expect confirmation from the body.¹²

Finally, to help nudge you in the right direction, you might take a spiritual gifts assessment.

Here are a few online assessment options:

- [Discover Your Kingdom Strengths](#)
- [Fivefold Spiritual Gifts Test](#) (name and email address required to receive results)
- [Discover Your Spiritual Gifts](#) (name and email address required to receive results)
- [APEST Personal Vocation Assessment](#) (\$10)
- [Spiritual Gifts Test Inventory Assessment](#)
- [Printable Spiritual Gifts Test](#)

You'll also find a complete assessment in Discover Your Gifts. As you might expect from Wagner's steps to finding your spiritual gifts above, he asks readers not to rely too heavily on the assessment—to see results as a starting point for prayer and meditation.

A final thought about searching for your spiritual gifts

As you reflect on what your gifting might be, consider this advice from Storms in [*The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts*](#):

16 Personalities

<https://www.16personalities.com/free-personality-test>