

Discovering Your Unique Ministry Contribution

SERVANT GIFT PROFILE

Step 1: Recognize God's description of ministry (four major pillars)

1. Every member is a minister (Ephesians 4:16 – “according to the proper working of each individual part...”)
2. Every ministry is important (1 Corinthians 12:18-22 – “if the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be?”)
3. Every member is interdependent (57x we are commanded participate in a “one another” experience)
4. Ministry is the expression of your unique gift mix (1 Peter 4:10 – “as each one has received a special gift...”)

Step 2: Understand the definition of spiritual gifts: They are ministry empowerments and skills given to every believer (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:7) by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:11) for the benefit of others (Rom. 12:3-8; 1 Cor. 12:7, 25-26; Eph. 4:11-16; 1 Peter 4:10-11).

Step 3: Understand the design of spiritual gifts: Gifts have various purposes depending upon your giftedness.

1. Evangelism: *Apostles” (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11) and “evangelists” (Eph. 4:11) were given to plant churches and share the gospel effectively with others.
2. Equipping: Some gifts assist other believers to become more faithful and fruitful in living for Christ (Eph. 4:11-12)
3. Edification: Gifts are given for “the building up of the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:11) and to unify God’s people (Eph. 4:13 – “until we all attain to the unity of the faith...”)
4. Encouragement: Some are gifted to come to the side of others and provide counsel or comfort (Rom. 12:8; 1:11-12)
5. Exaltation: All gifts are given to honor the Lord who gave them as they are actively used to bring God’s blessing and benefit to others.
6. *Evidence: Some gifts (miracles, healings, languages, interpretation of languages) had a temporary purpose which authenticated the truthfulness of God’s message or the messenger (Mark 16:17-18, Hebrews 2:3-4, Acts 2:22, 2 Cor. 12:12, Eph. 3:5, 1 Cor. 13:8-10; 14:20-22). The gift of Apostle is included in this list as it required the working of signs, wonders and miracles (2 Cor. 12:12) and was foundational to the church (Eph. 2:20). Additionally, the gift of prophecy had a revelatory aspect that was fulfilled when God’s Word was completed and was also part of the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20). It still is active as a gift for proclaiming God’s completed Word, but not for proclaiming new or special truth from God. The use of these sign gifts fulfilled their purposes when God’s Word was completed (Note: some believe these gifts are still in operation and are known as continuationists).

Step 4: Review the diversity of spiritual gifts. There are 21 different spiritual gifts listed in four passages (Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:7-11, 28-30; Eph 4:11; 1 Pet 4:10-11).

*see step 3 (#6) for explanations of these gifts

1. *Apostles (Eph 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28)
2. *Prophets (Eph 4:11; 1 Cor. 12:28)
3. Evangelists (Eph. 4:11)
4. Pastor-teachers (Eph. 4:11)
5. *Prophecy (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:10)
6. Service (Rom. 12:7)
7. Teaching (Rom. 12:7)
8. Exhortation (Rom. 12:8)
9. Giving (Rom. 12:8)
10. Leading (Rom. 12:8)
11. Showing Mercy (Rom. 12:8)
12. Word of wisdom (1 Cor. 12:8)
13. Word of knowledge (1 Cor. 12:8)
14. Faith (1 Cor. 12:9)
15. *Gifts of healing (1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30)
16. *Effecting of miracles (1 Cor. 12:10, 28-29)
17. Distinguishing of spirits (1 Cor. 12:10)
18. *Kinds of tongues/languages (1 Cor. 12:10, 28, 30)
19. *Interpretation of tongues/languages (1 Cor. 12:10, 30)
20. Helps (1 Cor. 12:28)
21. Administration (1 Cor. 12:28)

*These gifts were temporary in nature and fulfilled their purpose in authenticating God's message or messenger (Mark 16:17-18, Hebrews 2:3-4, Acts 2:22, 2 Cor. 12:12, Eph. 3:5, 2:20, 1 Cor. 13:8-10; 14:20-22)

Other possible gifts suggested: hospitality (1 Pet 4:9-11 due to the "just as" phrase in v. 10); singleness (1 Cor. 7:7); marriage (1 Cor. 7:7); casting out demons (Mark 16:17-18); physical protection (Mark 16:17-18); music ("a psalm" – 1 Cor. 14:26)

Step 5: Be aware of the some of the dangers of spiritual gifts:

1. Undiscovered gifts (1 Cor. 12:1: "Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware")
2. Unused gifts (1 Tim. 4:14: "do not neglect the spiritual gift within you...")
3. Unappreciated gifts (1 Cor. 12:14-27 – "and the eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'...")
4. Uncontrolled gifts (1 Cor. 13-14 was written to address the misuse and abuse of certain gifts)
5. Unrelated gifts: Be careful not to confuse the gifts of the Spirit with the fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), natural talents, Christian roles or spiritual maturity.

Step 6: Seek to discover your spiritual gifts. While God doesn't provide specific instructions on how to discover your gift, He does provide biblical principles by which you can identify your giftedness. Ask and answer the following questions:

1. What do you learn by reading the biblical instruction about spiritual gifts? Read through the following passages on gifts: Rom 12:3-8; 1 Cor 12:7-11, 28-30; Eph 4:11; 1 Pet 4:10-11
2. What God-given desires, interests, passions and abilities do you observe about yourself as you serve in ministry and interact with others?
3. Is there an issue/group/area you have a burden for?
4. If you couldn't fail, what area of ministry would you most like to participate?
5. What kind of ministry do you find a sense of joy and fulfillment in doing?
6. What do others around you observe about your ministry skills?
7. What noticeable results do you see in the lives of others as you serve?

Step 7: Request the discerning perspective of those who know you the best. Give the Spiritual Gift Assessment (on the following page) to a spouse, family member or friend and have them record their observations. You may want to give this assessment to more than one person to get a broader perspective.

Spiritual Gift Assessment

Name of Observer:

Relationship:

Your spouse, family member, or friend is seeking to better understand who God has made them to be.

Your perspective and observations can be helpful in that process. Please read the descriptions below and mark one of the following letters in the space provided.

D=Definitely true, yes, certain gift

P=Possibly true, potential gift

O=Does not appear to display the gift

?=I do not know, have not observed

_____ **PROPHET or PROPHECY:** The divine enablement to proclaim God's truth with power and clarity in a timely and culturally sensitive way for correction, repentance and edification.

_____ **EVANGELIST:** The divine enablement to effectively communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ to unbelievers in such a way that they respond in faith.

_____ **PASTOR-TEACHER:** The divine enablement to communicate God's truth in such a way that people's lives are nurtured and motivated to grow in the faith.

_____ **WORD OF KNOWLEDGE:** The divine enablement to discover, analyze and clarify biblical truth.

_____ **WORD OF WISDOM:** The divine enablement to understand and apply biblical truth accurately to a given situation.

_____ **EXHORTATION:** The divine enablement to encourage and counsel others to make God-honoring changes that honors God's Word and meets their need.

_____ **TEACHING:** The divine enablement to communicate scriptural truth with accuracy, simplicity and wisdom.

_____ **FAITH:** The divine enablement to discern the Lord's will and act on it with an unwavering trust in God's ability.

_____ **DISTINGUISHING OF SPIRITS:** The divine enablement to distinguish between truth and error and the divine, human or satanic origin.

_____ **HELPS:** The divine enablement to help those in need and ministry.

_____ **SERVING:** The divine enablement to assist in practical ways causing things to run efficiently and effectively.

_____ **GIVING:** The divine enablement to contribute personal resources to the ministry with a selfless spirit and great generosity.

_____ **LEADERSHIP:** The divine enablement to attract, lead and motivate people to accomplish the work of the ministry.

_____ **ADMINISTRATION:** The divine enablement to organize, plan, and execute the tasks of ministry that accomplish the desired mission.

_____ **SHOWING MERCY:** The divine enablement to minister cheerfully and compassionately to people who are suffering and in need.