

Lesson Plan & Study Guide



Spiritual Disciplines: Spiritual Gifts

Walking with Jesus

iFOLLOW

The iFollow Discipleship Series

Version 1.0 - 11/17/10



About the iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition

Categories

The iFollow Discipleship Series is designed to be used in congregations to assist people in their pursuit of God. This assumes that individuals are in unique places in their journey and there is no perfect set of lessons that everyone must complete to become a disciple—in fact discipleship is an eternal journey. Therefore the iFollow curriculum is a menu of milestones that an individual, small group, or even an entire church can choose from. The lessons can be placed in three general categories: **Meeting with Jesus** (does not assume a commitment to Jesus Christ); **Walking with Jesus** (assumes an acceptance of Jesus Christ); and **Working with Jesus** (assumes a desire to serve Jesus Christ).

Components

Each lesson has a presenter's manuscript which can be read word for word, but will be stronger if the presenter puts it in his/her own words and uses personal illustrations. The graphic slides can be played directly from the Pastor's DVD or customized and played from a computer. There are also several group activities and discussion questions to choose from as well as printable student handouts.

Usage

The lessons are designed to be used in small groups, pastor's Bible classes, prayer meetings, seminars, retreats, training sessions, discussion groups, and some lessons may be appropriate sermon outlines.

Credits

Curriculum Development: The iFollow Discipleship Series Pastor's Edition curriculum development was lead by the **Center for Creative Ministry**. **General Editor:** Monte Sahlin; **Assistant Editor:** Debbonnaire Kovacs; **Directional Advisory:** Brad Forbes, Carole Kilcher, Ceri Myers, Cesar Gonzalez, Clayton Kinney, Curtis Rittenour, Dave Osborne, Dave VanDenburgh, Gerry Chudleigh, Jane Thayer, Jerry Thomas, John Appel, Jose Rojas, Kim Johnson, Nicole Chao, Paul Richardson, Rich DuBose, Shasta Nelson, William Sutton; **Pastoral Advisory:** Claudio Consuegra, Collette Pekar, Dave Hutman, Don Driver, Fredrick Russell, Jerry Nelson, Jesse Wilson, Leslie Bumgardner, Loren Fenton, Rebecca Brillhart; **Unit Authors:** Alberto Valenzuela, Althea Pineda, Corienne Hay, Debbonnaire Kovacs, Ed Dickerson, Gianluca Bruno, Gil Bahnsen, Greg Nelson, Jack Calkins, James Whibberding, Karen Collum, Monte Sahlin, Norma Sahlin, Pam Splawinski, Patty Ntihuka, Reinder Bruinsma, Ryan Bell; **Additional contribution** by Maria Ovando-Gibson; **Additional editing:** Dave Gemmell, Meredith Carter; **Graphic Design:** Mind Over Media; **Layout:** Paul D. Young; **Web Development:** Narrow Gate Media.

License

iFollow Discipleship Pastor's Edition is produced by the NAD Church Resource Center for use by Seventh-day Adventist Congregations in Bermuda, Canada, and the United States. Churches may freely copy the lessons and PowerPoints for use within their congregations. Any other usage is prohibited without prior written consent from the NAD Church Resource Center. iFollow Discipleship, Copyright 2010, the North American Division Corporation of Seventh-day Adventists. NAD Church Resource Center, 12501 Old Columbia Pike, Silver Spring, MD 20904, 301-680-6339.



iFOLLOW

www.ifollowdiscipleship.org

Spiritual Disciplines: Spiritual Gifts

This presentation is designed for people who have decided to accept Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior.

Learning Objectives

1. Understand the Bible concept of spiritual gifts
2. Study the key New Testament passages on spiritual gifts
3. Identify the gift mix of each individual participant
4. Learn the doctrine of the ministry of the laity
5. Find specific opportunities for ministry that fit the gift mix of each individual

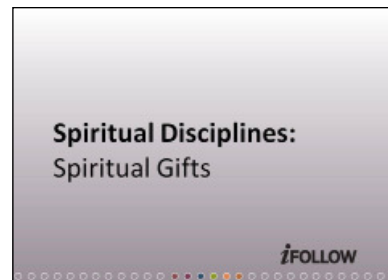
Content Outline

1. What does “spiritual gifts” mean?
2. Three Foundational Texts: Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4
3. The Ministry of the Laity
4. Some Theological Issues
5. The Bottom Line Application

Background Material for the Presenter

Christ calls His followers to an active faith. To be an authentic follower of Jesus and experience the full richness of the spiritual life, a person must become involved in some kind of service in Christ’s name. The theological word for service is “ministry.” The particular nature of one’s service is directed by the Holy Spirit through the giftedness that God bestows in each individual life.

How can you best serve Jesus? What are your spiritual gifts? Is God calling you to a specific mission or purpose in your life? We will get to all those questions; that is “the bottom line.” It is important to first lay a foundation in Scripture. What does the Bible mean by “spiritual gifts” and what does it specifically teach on this topic? It is often the cause of controversy or extravagant claims.



iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Walking with
Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Spiritual
Disciplines:**
Spiritual
Gifts

1

There are three key passages that provide considerable material on this topic, as well as a number of other texts that reinforce the principles in these key passages and add some additional information. We will study each of these three key passages in depth, but the story actually begins at the very beginning of the Christian church in Acts 2:17-21.

In the record of the very first public evangelistic sermon preached on behalf of the Christian faith, Peter takes his text from Joel 2:28-32. “In the last days, God says, I will pour my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

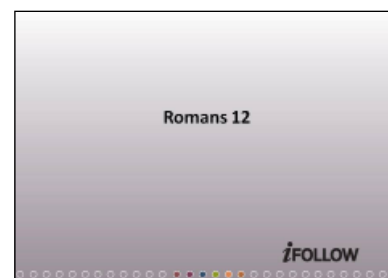
Jesus had set the stage for this event a few weeks earlier when He told His disciples at the Last Supper, “Now I am going to him who sent me” and promised to send the Holy Spirit as “counselor” and “guide.” (John 16:5, 7, 13, NIV) At the time of His Ascension, Christ reminded them of this and commanded, “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised ... you will be baptized by the Holy Spirit ... and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:4-5, 8, NIV)

By the end of Acts 2 there is a clear picture of the kind of enterprise that Christ was seeking to establish, the movement that would come to be called the Christian church. Many of the people who heard Peter’s sermon “were cut to the heart” and responded with the question, “What must we do?” (Acts 2:37) Peter told them, “Repent and be baptized ... so that your sins may be forgiven, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Verse 38) The Bible says that about 3,000 people became followers of Jesus that day.

These original Jesus followers “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ... All the believers were together [and] they gave to anyone as he had need. ... And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.” (Verses 42, 44-45, 47) This is Christ’s model for His people. This is what God expects of you as you become a follower of Jesus. Bible study and prayer, meals and fellowship with a small group of believers, meeting the needs of those we see suffering in the world around us, and sharing the hope that is in Jesus. And key to this is the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit, the “gift” from God.

Romans 12

In this chapter Paul appeals for an active, wholistic faith. “I urge you ... to offer your bodies as living sacrifices ... which is your spiritual worship. (Verse 1) Being a follower of Jesus



s not just about religion. It is about all of life, the physical, intellectual, economic, social, emotional, artistic and spiritual dimensions.

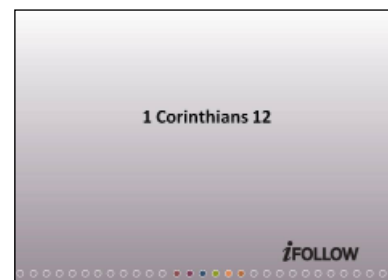
“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind,” Paul declares. Bend your life to “God’s purpose, His good, pleasing and perfect goals. ... Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but with careful reason in line with the measure of faith God has given to you.” (Verses 2-3) The high and mighty in New Testament times sat back and allowed others to serve them; the lowly did the serving. When the text says, “do not think of yourself more highly than you ought,” God is saying that He has expectations of you that go beyond self-centered considerations such as not having enough time for church ministries because of your demanding job. Or, wanting to invest time in a hobby or sport while giving God only a couple of hours at church on Sabbath. Or, closing your heart with prejudice against the poor, the alien, the sick, the prisoner, the widow, the children, the teenagers, etc. “They need to learn to take care of themselves” is not an acceptable attitude for genuine followers of Jesus. God expects you to serve!

“Each member [has] different gifts, according to the grace given us.” And then Paul lists a number of examples of these gifts, but his consistent theme with each example is “use it” (Verse 6), “serve” (Verse 7), “do it” (Verse 8). Whether your gift is prophesy, service, teaching, counseling, giving, leadership, showing compassion or anything else, the fundamental command of Scripture in this passage is that God expects you to be active in that area of giftedness in service to others. “Each member belongs to all the others.” (Verse 5) When you become part of the “body” (Verse 4), you take on certain obligations.

A passive faith in which one comes to church to be inspired or entertained or taken care of and has no time to volunteer during the week or take on ministry responsibilities is not a genuinely Christian faith. It is a religion “of this world.” Unfortunately a large number of Christians today are involved in this counterfeit kind of religion. Sociologists call it “consumer religion” in which people come to church to have their expectations met, not to meet the needs of others. That kind of religion is not encouraged in the Adventist Church. For Adventists faith is not about “me,” it is about “them”—the lost, the suffering, and the needy.

1 Corinthians 12

The topic of spiritual gifts is central to being a Christian. “About spiritual gifts,” Paul writes, “I do not want you to be ignorant.” (Verse 1) He believes that an active relationship with the Holy Spirit is essential to faith in Jesus. “No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” (Verse 3)



iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Walking with
Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Spiritual
Disciplines:**
Spiritual
Gifts

3

That is why this is such a foundational thing for you to learn and include in your spiritual life.

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different approaches to Christian work, but the same God works through all of them.” (Verses 4-6) Already in the First Century there was conflict among people in the church using different methods. Unfortunately the church today still has the same kind of conflicts, despite the fact that the Bible clearly says in this passage that the Holy Spirit intends for there to be different approaches.

Again, as in Romans 12, Paul illustrates this principle by giving several examples of spiritual gifts—wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, languages—that are all bestowed by the same Holy Spirit. (Verses 7-10) “All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each person, just as he determines.” (Verse 11)

All these different methods of implementing the grace of Christ in the world are given for the same purpose. “To each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” (Verse 7) The mission of Jesus in the world is the supreme focus of all truly Christian activities. The Holy Spirit focuses the variety of different approaches toward the central goal that Christ is working to achieve.

Paul uses the human body as a metaphor to explain the unity of a fellowship of Christian believers, a congregation. “The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one living organism. So it is with Christ.” (Verse 12) He goes on to illustrate how foolish it is for church members to back off or stay away because their gifts do not seem to be needed. “If the foot should say, ‘Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,’ it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.” (Verse 15) He uses an ear and an eye in verse 16 to repeat his point.

He then describes out how absurd it is for some church members to claim that their method or their approach is the one and only true way to follow Jesus. “If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?” (Verse 17) If you imagine a number of eyeballs rolling into church for worship, you can see that Paul is making a joke here in order to get across the importance of a key spiritual truth. The church needs many different kinds of people with different abilities, interests and approaches because God made it a diverse organism just as He made the human body a wonderfully complex thing that depends on many different kinds of tissues, organs, cells, etc. If you ever feel like you don’t fit in, remember it is God who made you that way. His body needs you precisely because you are different.

“But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.” (Verse 18) When we look upon another person in the church as odd or unnecessary because of their unique personality or approach to religion, remember we are condemning God’s creative decisions. He made us to be different. He does not intend for us to all be the same. Unity in the church does not equal uniformity of behavior or thought. “The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ And the head cannot say

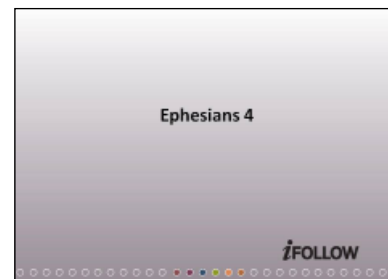
to the feet, ‘I don’t need you!’ On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable.” (Verses 21-22) Remember this text the next time someone gets up in church and says, “such-and-such is the real work of the church,” implying that other activities are not really necessary or a waste of time, money and energy.

“God has combined the members of the body ... so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.” (Verses 24-25) Seventh-day Adventists believe in a wholistic approach to the mission of Christ. This includes both evangelism and community service, both outreach and nurture, and both teaching Bible truth and social action to demonstrate the compassion of Christ in practical ways. Christian education is just as important to the mission of Christ as are media ministries and public campaigns, community service centers and health ministries. Those who try to play one off against the other or claim that their favorite approach deserves a larger piece of the pie than the others are not biblical in their claims.

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” (Verse 27) Because every believer—including you—has a specific “gift” from the Holy Spirit, each believer—including you—is organically connected with the body of Christ. Together we make up the body of Christ in this place. If each part of the body plays the role that God expects of him or her, then we—together, as a congregation—are able to be fully functional in the mission of Christ.

Ephesians 4

What are the spiritual implications of “gifts” and service? How central is this teaching to your personal spiritual life and connection with Christ? These are the questions that the New Testament addresses in this passage from the epistle to the church at Ephesus. It begins with a familiar statement repeated from Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12: “To each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.” (Verse 7) Then it moves on immediately to “why” this is true in verse 8.



Paul quotes a text from the Old Testament, the Bible as he knew it. “When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men.” (Psalm 68:18) In verses nine and 10, Paul applies this text to Jesus. The reference here may be unclear unless you know something about how certain things were done in Bible times. When a king went to war and then returned victorious, it was the custom to bring back wealth that had been expropriated from the defeated enemy. This would include captives who were sold as slaves as well as money, works of art, expensive furniture, etc. As Paul traveled around the Roman Empire in the First Century he may have actually seen one of these victory parades. The generals always distributed gifts from among the captured items to the citizens of the city.

What is the point that the text is trying to convey here? Spiritual gifts are the spoils of war in Christ's great conflict with evil and Satan. Because Jesus was victorious on the cross and ascended to the Father on resurrection day, He has the right to give gifts to His people. He has a right to His share of the skills, technology, intellectual and physical wealth in the world, and for Him nothing is more valuable than human beings.

In this sense each individual who becomes a follower of Jesus is a gift. Paul in this passage shifts the language from describing spiritual gifts as somewhat objective commodities or abilities (wisdom, prophecy, etc.) to personal roles. "He gave some to be [this], some to be [that]." (Verse 11) He uses several examples, "apostles ... prophets ... evangelists ... pastors and teachers," but in each case the spiritual gift is about "being" something. The "captives in his train" are men and women that Christ has liberated from His old enemy the devil who Christ—in His spiritual authority won on the cross in the victory over sin—appoints to be His agents in the world. In other words, if you believe in the liberation (salvation) that Christ has provided by dying on the cross and rising again on the third day, then you are gifted to be something in His missionary force in the world.

What is the purpose of spiritual gifts? The answer is clearly stated in verses 12 and 13. "To prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature." This is a very careful description of what is meant in Matthew 28:19-20 where Christ commissions His followers to "make disciples" by "going ... baptizing [and] teaching them all things." It is also a statement of what is necessary for the believer to become spiritually mature. If one does not embrace one's spiritual gift and join in with Christ in His mission in the world, then that person has no hope of attaining real spiritual development in the Christian faith.

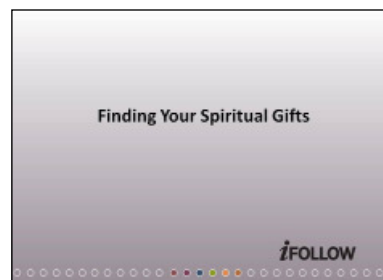
Spiritual maturity is defined in the last part of verse 13 as "attaining the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." Spiritual maturity is a balanced whole, not hyper zeal in one direction with all of the other dimensions ignored. Spiritual maturity is the full picture of Christ's message and mission, not unbalanced emphasis on a few points. Of course, it takes time to grow into a full knowledge of the Christian faith and a balanced, wholistic understanding of Christ's mission. But, if we do not embrace immediately the spiritual gift that Jesus has uniquely appointed to us as individuals and live out that ministry to the fullest, then we have no hope of attaining spiritual maturity.

If you are tempted to ignore the whole business of spiritual gifts because it does not make sense to you or because your life is busy and you think you cannot do more than show up for worship on Sabbath, then Paul has a specific admonition for you in verses 17 and 18: "You must no longer live as the nonbelievers do, in the futility of their thinking. They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts." Finding and accepting your spiritual gift is central to your spiritual life, your connection with the Holy Spirit and through Him with Christ and the Father.

It is not an overstatement of the text to summarize Ephesians 4 with the idea that it is through our spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit works in our lives. When people pray for an outpouring of the Holy Spirit and at the same time sit back and ignore the opportunities to find and use their gifts their behavior is frustrating, blocking their prayer. If you want to grow in Christ; if you want the Holy Spirit in your life, then you must begin with identifying and living out your spiritual gifts.

Finding Your Spiritual Gifts

It is rare that a new follower of Jesus has an experience like Paul's on the road to Damascus where God hits them over the head and speaks to them out of the blue. (See Acts 9.) Almost always God chooses to work through human agents who share the good news about Jesus and bring their friends and acquaintances to faith in Him. The same is true when it comes to identifying the spiritual gifts of most individuals. You should not wait for God to speak to you from a pillar of fire or in a dream. He will most likely work through His servants—your fellow human beings—to help you see what He has placed in you and the work to which He is calling you.



As a practical matter there are a number of ways that you can identify your spiritual gifts. It is also important to understand that in most cases a person does not have a single gift, but two, three or more gifts. The unique, individual aspect is in what is called your “gift mix,” the mix of spiritual gifts that are particular to you as an individual. So, these approaches to finding your spiritual gifts are more about identifying your specific mix of gifts than a particular, individual gift.

In the New Testament spiritual gifts are bestowed by the Holy Spirit and then confirmed by the local, primary community of believers where the individual is an active participant. This confirming experience is vital to the whole notion of spiritual gifts both because it helps the individual find their gifts and because it claims those gifts as part of the body. Remember, spiritual gifts are given “for the common good.” (See above.) So, the task of identifying your particular gift mix is an interactive experience which involves at least a small number of your fellow church members.

1 Corinthians 12:10 lists a gift of discernment, or the ability to “distinguish between spiritual gifts.” This passage indicates that some Christians have a special ability to help identify spiritual gifts. Some commentaries state that Ephesians 4:11-12 indicates that “pastors and teachers” have a special role in this regard, helping “to prepare God’s people for works of service.” It is a central duty of your pastor or elder or small group leader to help each believer in the group identify their spiritual gifts and grow in Christian maturity through, among other things, utilizing those gifts.

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Walking with
Jesus

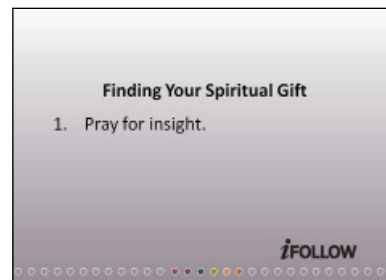
Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Spiritual
Disciplines:**
Spiritual
Gifts

7

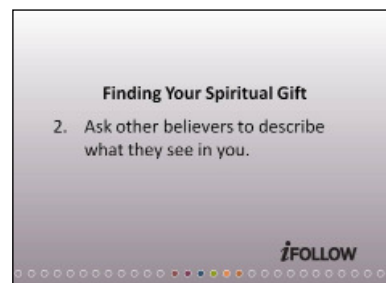
These realities help to frame the methods that may be used in identifying your spiritual gifts. Let's review the practical options available to you:

1. Pray for insight. If you are serious about this spiritual quest, it must be rooted in prayer. Ask God to reveal to you the particular mix of abilities He has created in you and how best to use these gifts for His mission in the world. Do not expect a miracle; that would be presumptuous. It is very unlikely that God is going to appear to you in a dream or send an angel to touch your tongue. We have no right to yearn for such a spectacular response. Remember, we are to “think humbly” of ourselves. God will answer your prayer, most likely through the accumulation of input from the other methods listed here and the “still, small voice” of the Holy Spirit as the information comes together.



2. Ask other believers to describe what they see in you.

This is the simplest place to get started. Simply ask other believers who have come to know you as a friend (or, perhaps, knew you even before you became a Christian), “What do you think I would be good at? What do you see in me as abilities that I might contribute to the work of Jesus in our community or in our congregation?” Listen to them carefully. Take notes. Ask more than one or two individuals. Look at your notes and see if themes emerge. If several people mention the same thing, that is worth considering. Respect the individual who asks for time to think; they may provide more insight than the person who responds immediately.



This method works better if the friends you ask for input have seen you in a variety of activities. If all they have seen of you is when you are participating in worship or sitting in a Bible study, then they really don't have enough observations of you to give valid responses. Most churches have a variety of one-day events and short-term projects for outreach and ministry, and it is important that you participate in a number of these with your friends so that they can get a range of observations upon which to base their feedback to you.

If you are a regular participant in a small group, this might be done as a group exercise. It is a common practice for small groups to go around the circle and for each member to describe what strengths and abilities they see in a new member. This is not usually done immediately after a new member joins the group, but perhaps six months or a year later. In some small group ministries it is the practice to do this on the one-year anniversary of a new member joining the group.

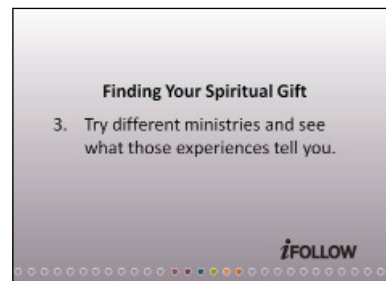
This same exercise is also done in classes on spiritual gifts. It is important to always consider this kind of input as one source of information that needs to be confirmed by other sources. No small group or class has the right to impose an idea about the gifts of

an individual on that person. It is simply information that is to be considered and prayed about.

3. Try different ministries and see what those experiences tell you.

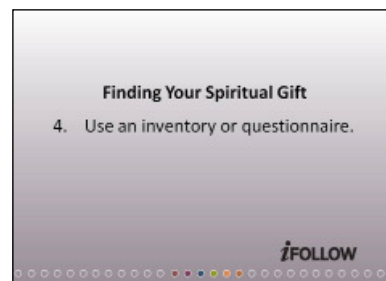
In this category is meant experiences different from the events and projects mentioned above. To be truly a ministry, an experience needs to be something that you do on a weekly or monthly basis for a longer period of time. For example, if you help with the children's Sabbath School or if you volunteer in the community food pantry each week, that would come under the category of a "ministry."

It is crucial to see how it feels to work with a team over a period of months and find out what that teaches you about yourself and your abilities.



It is essential that you try different ministries and not settle for the first one that you happen to become a part of. Until you have a wide variety of experiences, you cannot really know all that you are capable of. It is also true that if you experience the range of ministries in your congregation, then you will have knowledge of other ministries which you may not find to be a long-term fit with your gift mix. This helps to bring the various ministries together in a strategy in which they support one another instead of compete for human and other resources.

4. Use an inventory or questionnaire. A number of different versions of a paper "test" have been developed over the years to help followers of Jesus organize their thoughts about how their past experience may indicate the direction God has for their life and service. (See Handout 3.) This works only as well as you are completely honest in answering the questions, and it should never be considered as conclusive. It is simply one more source of information.



These inventory tools work best if you have had some experience in the church. Often the questions presume long experience in the church. In fact, some of the questionnaires can be confusing to a new believer because so much "insider" terminology is used. This is probably a tool to use after you've spent a year or more experimenting with several different ministries. It will help to organize your thoughts about the experiences you have had and show you some trends that you would not otherwise be able to see without the objective input of the instrument.

5. Think and pray about starting a new ministry. It is entirely possible that none of the existing ministries in your local church really fit your gifts. This is especially true in a small congregation or one that has done the same things for many years with no new initiatives. In fact, God may have brought you into His body and into this particular



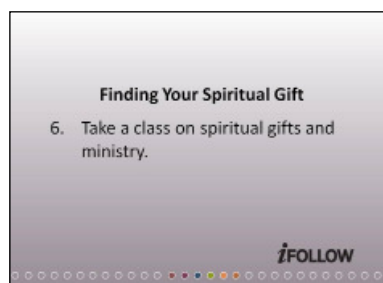
local fellowship because He wants to “do a new thing.” (Isaiah 43:19) Do not let anyone discourage you with some variation of “we’ve never done it that way before,” or “we tried that a few years ago and it did not work.” A key weakness of almost all Christian congregations is the way in which they get into a rut and avoid change. God brings new people into these churches—people with new and different gifts—precisely because He wants to shake things up.

If you think that God is possibly calling you to start a new ministry, sit down privately with your pastor and have a serious conversation with him or her. Talk honestly and openly about the difficulty of change that most congregations face. Explore the needs that you feel called to meet. Agree to think about it and pray about it for a period of time and then have another serious conversation. The guidance of your pastor is important; listen to him carefully. But, do not back down too soon if he is one who seeks to avoid the conflict that comes with change.

6. Take a class on spiritual gifts and ministry. The Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America has a curriculum for this very topic. It is called Connections. It includes eight lessons, although it is sometimes taught in a single weekend or four weekly sessions. It includes several paper instruments that explore not only your gifts, but also your interests and your personality style or how you interact with others. It is designed to be taught by a team of church members and/or the pastor. It includes some presentations on video or DVD, as well as group discussions and a one-on-one interview by a “consultant” (a trained church member) at the end to wrap up what you have learned and explore how to implement the findings.

Ask around in your church. If there are no plans to have a Connections class at some time in the next year, then ask the pastor to get the seminar package from AdventSource and at least share the textbook with you or, perhaps, go through the course with you in an individual tutorial. **[Note to presenter:** Clearly this would be the place to announce when your church will next present a Connections class.]

This is an important note to class this section on finding your spiritual gifts: Not every believer spends the rest of their life with the same gift mix. Some do, working for years at the same ministry. But it is clear that others are called to new and different ministries over time. Finding your spiritual gifts is not necessarily a permanent discovery. God may call you to something different at some point in the future. We must always begin every day by thanking God for the opportunity to serve Him again and asking if He has new directions for us.



The Ministry of the Laity

The New Testament uses the Greek word **laos** to mean “the people,” as in the phrase “the people of God.” It has become the English word “laity” or “layman” through the Latin translation of the Bible. The Bible does not know anything about the word “clergy.” It was invented after the New Testament was completed. Today, in English, it is common to refer to a “layman” as a person who is not professionally trained in a field, such as, “I am not an astronomer, I am just a layman who enjoys looking at the stars.” The stratification of this term into professional clergy and lay people is something that was manufactured outside the Bible.

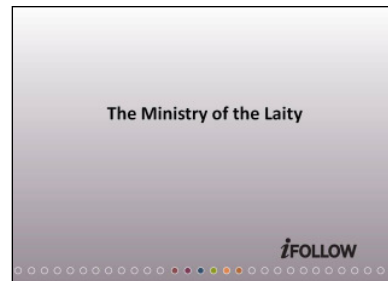
In fact, Protestants don’t believe in the lay/clergy division at all. One of the founding principles of the Protestant movement—the Reformation—is “the priesthood of all believers.” Every believer in Jesus, regardless of their education or status, may pray directly to God and secure their salvation through faith in Jesus. No one is dependent on another person to gain access to Christ.

Protestant pastors are considered to be facilitators and teachers, not priests. They may lead out in worship, but it is not required that worship leaders be trained or ordained. Their spiritual authority comes from their spiritual gifts as equippers and leaders, not from the laying on of hands. The ceremony of ordination is recognition of spiritual gifts, bestowed by the Holy Spirit, not a bestowal of anything.

The ministry of pastors and elders (spiritual leaders) in the body of Christ is understood by most. What is less well understood is the ministry of the rest of the believers. They all have spiritual gifts. God expects every single believer, without exception, to serve Him through His body. What can be described as the over-riding single theme of this service? How can it be defined concisely as compared to the ministry of pastors?

As the ministry of pastors and elders is to the believers in the church, so the ministry of the laity is to the non-believers outside the church. The church is a missionary agency; a sending organization that sends the members out into the world to do the work of God in the secular context. If you are not a pastor or elder, then your duty to God is to serve His unsaved children in the secular world. If you are not doing this, then you are unfaithful to the call of God on your life.

“God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts which each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity,” states the official Fundamental Beliefs document of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. “When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God’s varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with



iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Walking with
Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Spiritual
Disciplines:**
Spiritual
Gifts

11

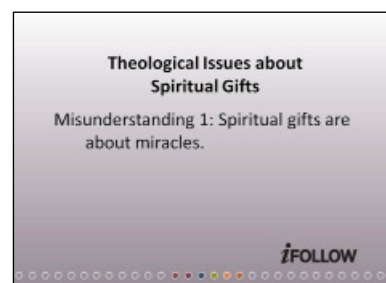
a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love.” (Paragraph 17, Fundamental Beliefs of Seventh-day Adventists)

Notice in the paragraph above, that spiritual gifts are given not only for the church, but also for “the common good of ... humanity.” The typical church member is to use his or her spiritual gifts in the secular world for the betterment of his or her neighbors, coworkers, professional associates, acquaintances in the community and the civic population in general. Jesus was once asked, “Who is my neighbor?” (Luke 10:29) He responded with a story (which may have been a current event at the time) about a man who was mugged and left to die on a deserted highway. Two respected religious leaders happened by and each left the man in a pool of blood and hurried on, evidently unwilling to get their hands dirty. Then a man despised for his ethnicity and heretical religion came along and immediately rendered first aid, put the wounded man on his mount and took him to the nearest town where he paid the innkeeper to care for the man until he was well enough to travel on. “Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?” Jesus asked His questioner, who gave the obvious response, “The one who showed compassion.” (Luke 10:36-37) The authentic followers of Jesus are those who employ their spiritual gifts to show compassion on all who are in need. This is the ministry of the laity, the people of God.

Theological Issues about Spiritual Gifts

There are a number of widespread misunderstandings about spiritual gifts. In fact, these concepts—which are not taught in the Bible—may be more widely known than the truth about this topic. If you discuss “spiritual gifts” with your friends, especially those outside the church, these ideas will come up.

Misunderstanding 1: Spiritual gifts are about miracles. It is widely believed that something is not a spiritual gift unless it is a miracle. God and the spiritual are relegated only to those events that seem to be outside the known scientific laws. Once something comes into the area of explainable knowledge used on an everyday basis, then it is no longer considered to be spiritual. There is simple, straight-forward evidence in Scripture that spiritual gifts are not primarily about miracles. In 1 Corinthians 12:10 the gift of miracles is listed. That alone indicates that not all gifts are about miracles. In fact, most are not. The follower of Jesus who feels a call to heal the sick, goes to medical school or nursing school and develops the ability to treat disease or promote health is exercising a spiritual gift even if they never witness any miracles of healing. Most health professionals—including those who are not believers—will tell you that on rare occasion they witness miracles, but that is not the focus of their service to humanity; it is the exception. This does not make their work any less spiritual or God-ordained. The same is



true of the other spiritual gifts, except for the obvious exception of that “gift of miracles” in 1 Corinthians 12:10.

Misunderstanding 2: The gift of languages is always miraculous and this miracle is the most important sign of the Holy Spirit in a person’s life.

There is a story in Acts 2 in which it is clear that the apostles were miraculously able to preach and be heard in languages they had not learned. Some have taken this event and elevated it to a mandatory miracle that every follower of Jesus must personally experience in order to have confirmation that God is really working their lives. There is no basis in the Bible to make this leap. Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 clearly teach that all spiritual gifts are equally important in God’s eyes and that none should be placed on a pedestal as more significant than others. There are also a number of New Testament stories in which the gospel is brought to various communities because the missionaries had learned the language through the normal process of education.

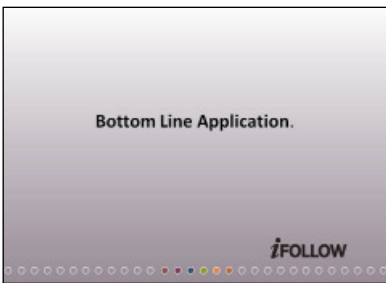
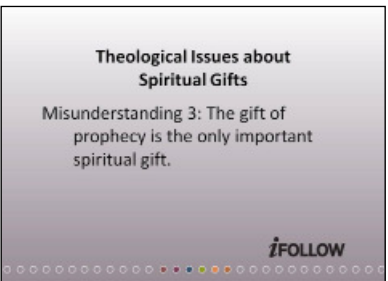
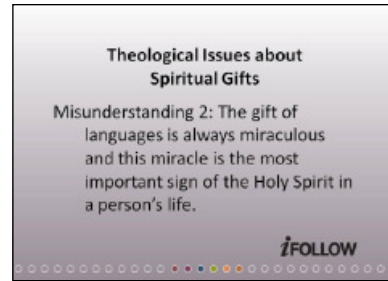
To further complicate this issue, there are some who believe that the most spiritual experience of the gift of languages is when a person speaks an unknown tongue. This supposed unknown tongue is considered to be a “spiritual language” direct from God. This idea is specifically denied in the Bible. In 1 Corinthians 14 it is clearly required that for the gift of languages to be an authentic spiritual manifestation from God, it must be accompanied by interpretation; it must actually convey ideas to someone present. Sounds that are unintelligible to all of those present are not from God, although they may come from some other source.

Misunderstanding 3: The gift of prophecy is the only important spiritual gift.

Some Adventists make the gift of prophecy of such importance that they tend to ignore all other spiritual gifts, including their own. Although it is clear that the gift of prophecy is one of the characteristics of God’s presence in the final segment of church history as outlined in the Book of Revelation, it should never become such a focus that believers ignore their own, individual spiritual gifts and call to ministry. Again, we must remember that Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 clearly teach that God considers all spiritual gifts to be equal in His eyes, and that “each” and “every” believer is gifted and expected to serve on the basis of his or her gifts.

Bottom Line Application

What will you personally do with this Bible concept of



spiritual gifts? This is not the kind of topic which is nice to know or just interesting. Now that you are aware of what the Bible teaches on this topic, God expects you to find your own spiritual gifts and begin to utilize them in service to Him, His church and humanity. This is crucial to the future of your spiritual life. This is now the most important focus for you as a follower of Jesus. My duty is to invite you to respond to Christ with a proactive step in faith. What steps will you take next? How can I support you in those steps?



Handouts in This Package

1. Bible Study
2. How to Identify Your Spiritual Gifts
3. Spiritual Gifts Inventory

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Walking with
Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Spiritual
Disciplines:**
Spiritual
Gifts

Additional Resources

Connections is the official curriculum of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in North America to help people find their spiritual gifts, ministry passion and a place of service within the church. It can be presented in four or eight sessions and the materials include a Participant's Guide for each individual in the class, an Implementation Guide for the pastor, a Leader's Guide for the presenters, and a Consultant's Guide for the volunteers who do individual interviews with each participant. There is a set of masters to make slides for an overhead projector and two DVDs, one with vignettes for each session and another to train the volunteer consultants who do the individual interviews. Published by the Center for Creative Ministry, these materials can be obtained through AdventSource.

Books

Bell, Skip (1985). *These Are Gifts*. Mount Vernon, OH: Published by the author.

Blanchard, Tim (1983). *A Practical Guide to Finding Your Spiritual Gifts*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House.

Boese, Neal and Haller, Patricia (n.d.). *Finding Your Spiritual Gifts*. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Division of Congregational Ministries. Published online at: archive.elca.org/evangelizingchurch/print/spiritualgifts.html

Brock, T. W. (n.d.). *Discovering Our Spiritual Gifts*. Published online at: http://www.fbcgwd.com/spiritual_gifts_inventory

DellaVecchio, Dorena and Winston, B. E. (2004). "A Seven-Scale Instrument to Measure the Romans 12 Motivational Gifts and a Proposition that the Romans 12 Gift Profiles Might Apply to Person-Job Fit Analysis," Working Paper. Virginia Beach, VA: Regent University School of Leadership Studies.

Dozier, Verna (1988). *The Calling of the Laity*. Washington, DC: Alban Institute.

Draper, J. B. (n.d.). *Spiritual Gifts and Your Church Planting Strategy*. Alpharetta, GA: North American Missions Board.

Edwards, R. D. (1979). *Every Believer a Minister*. Mountain View, CA: Pacific Press Publishing Association.

Flynn, L. B. (1994). *19 Gifts of the Spirit*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Gangel, K. O. (1983). *Unwrap Your Spiritual Gifts*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Gilbert, Larry (1991). *How to Find Meaning and Fulfillment through Understanding the Spiritual Gift within You*. Pasadena, CA: Church Growth Institute.

Hohensee, Donald and Odell, Allan (1992). *Your Spiritual Gifts*. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books.

Kinghorn, K. C. (1976). *Gifts of the Spirit*. Nashville: Abingdon.

Knowles, G. E. (1981). *How to Help Your Church Grow*, pp 33-36. Washington DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

MacGorman, J. W. (1974). *The Gifts of the Spirit*. Nashville: Broadman Press.

Mallory, Sue (2001). *The Equipping Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Mitchell, M. L. (1988). *Giftedness: Discovering Your Areas of Strength*. Minneapolis: Bethany House.

Naden, R. C. (1989). *Your Spiritual Gifts: Making the Great Discovery*. Berrien Springs, MI: IPD.

Schwartz, Christian (2004). *Three Colors of Ministry*. Saint Charles, IL: Church Smart Resources.

Stevens, R. P. (1992). *The Equipper's Guide*. Downer's Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press.

Wagner, C. P. (1979). *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*. Glendale, CA: Regal Books/Gospel Light Publications.

Videos

Naden, R. C. (1988). *Your Spiritual Gifts*, six presentations. Berrien Springs, MI: N Associates.

Instruments

Naden, R. C. and Cruise, R. J. (1981). *Spiritual Gifts Inventory*. Berrien Springs, MI: Institute for Church Ministry.

Instructional Product Development (1990). *The New Spiritual Gifts Inventory*. Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press.

Turner, John (n.d.) *Spiritual Gifts Inventory*. Disciples of Christ (Christian Church) African American Disciples Evangelism Network.

Websites

BuildingChurch.net is a nondenominational parachurch resource organization that provides a Gifted2Serve inventory that can be completed on line. It is automatically scored by the program. It includes 125 questions and provides statistical results for 25 gifts, essentially all of those mentioned in the New Testament. There is no indication that it has been statistically validated. It does include a link to an interpretative guide. There is no charge to use this program online. It can be accessed at: <http://buildingchurch.net/g2s-i.htm>

ChurchGrowth.org is a nondenominational parachurch resource organization that includes among its many features the Team Ministry Spiritual Gifts Inventory which can be done on line at no charge. It has 108 questions and reports on the nine spiritual gifts most often mentioned in the New Testament. It provides an individualized report that includes a bar graph of scores, a description of the dominant gift and several pages of personal analysis. There is no indication that this instrument has been statistically validated. It can be accessed at: www.churchgrowth.org/cgi-cg/gifts.cgi?intro=1

ElmerTowns.com has a Spiritual Gifts Questionnaire that can be filled out and scored on line at no charge. It includes the nine gifts mentioned most often in the New Testament. There is no indication that it has been statistically validated. This is one of the first such instruments and it can be accessed at: elmertowns.com/spiritual_gifts_test/

ReachingYouth.org provides a Spiritual Gifts Inventory edited and compiled by Rusty Freeman, a youth pastor in the Southwest Texas Conference of the United Methodist Church. It is designed for use with teens and young adults and there is no indication that it has been statistically validated. Although it is copyrighted, permission is granted on the cover for reproduction and use. It is published in PDF and can be downloaded at: www.reachingyouth.org/f/Spiritual_Gifts_Inventory_Revised.pdf

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Walking with
Jesus

Action Plan
& Presenter
Notes

**Spiritual
Disciplines:**
Spiritual
Gifts

Discussion Questions

1. What have you been told over the years about the topic of spiritual gifts?
2. What do you think Christ expects of you other than daily prayer, reading the Bible and going to church each week?
3. From our study of Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 12 and Ephesus 4, what most impressed you from these Bible passages?
4. Do you have any sense that God is calling you to a particular kind of volunteer service either in the church or in the world outside?
5. Have you ever filled out a Spiritual Gifts Inventory or paper instrument of any kind? If so, what has been your experience with it?
6. Why do you think that some people focus so much on miracles, the spiritual gift or languages or the gift of prophecy?
7. What steps do you plan to take to identify your spiritual gifts and begin to use them in Christ's mission?

Group Activity

Purpose: To explore the findings from the Spiritual Gifts Inventory.

Preparation: Make copies of Handout 3 (or a similar instrument) and distribute them in advance or during the exercise, depending on time and context. Also have a white board or overhead projector with blank sheets and marker or a chalk board or flip chart so that ideas can be put up during the discussion.

Assignment: Each participant is to complete the Spiritual Gifts Inventory and score it before the discussion begins. This might be done in the early part of the exercise (with each person working alone in silence) or they might complete this before the session begins.

1. Each participant shares the one, two or three gifts that had the highest score on the instrument. The first name of each individual should be posted for all to view, followed by the gift(s). Each participant should also take a couple of minutes to say how they feel about the process; does it represent reality for them or are there reasons why they doubt the outcome? Let each person express themselves at this point and do not get into discussion or reactions from others in the group at this point.
2. Once everyone has had a chance to share the results of their inventory, go around the circle a second time and give each person a chance to comment on the findings of the others in the group as well as their expressions of feelings. The focus should be kept on positive, affirmative statements about each individual.
3. A third round of comments: Each person states what they intend to do next with the results of their inventory. Will they try to use one or more of their listed gifts in a specific ministry or role? Will they explore other gifts to test the validity of the findings from their inventory? What specific steps does each person plan to take?

Debrief: Allow some time for each person to address the question: Has this exercise been helpful to you? Has it helped to clarify in your mind the results of the inventory?

Time: Allow about 30 minutes of quiet time for participants to fill out the Spiritual Gifts Inventory and score it, if they have not completed prior to the exercise. For the three rounds of the assignment, allow about two minutes per person for the first round and five minutes per person for each of the other two rounds. (For example, if there six people in the group, allow 12 minutes $[2+5+5=12]$ multiplied by six individuals, for a total of 70 minutes.) Allow an additional 10 to 15 minutes total for the debriefing.

Handout 1

Bible Study on Spiritual Gifts

Romans 12

1 Corinthians 12

Ephesians 4

Summary of Key Concepts

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Walking with
Jesus

HANDOUT

**Spiritual
Disciplines:**
Spiritual
Gifts

Handout 2

How to Identify Your Spiritual Gifts

1. Pray for insight.
2. Ask other believers to describe what they see in you.
3. Try different ministries and see what those experiences tell you.
4. Use an inventory or questionnaire.
5. Think and pray about starting a new ministry.
6. Take a class on spiritual gifts and ministry.

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Walking with
Jesus

HANDOUT

**Spiritual
Disciplines:**
Spiritual
Gifts

Handout 3

SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Each of the questions on the following pages is designed to evaluate a specific spiritual gift.

Read each question thoughtfully, then circle the number that indicates the DEGREE to which the statement is TRUE or FALSE in your life.

It is important that you circle a number for *every* question.

If it is always, or completely false, circle 1.

If it is usually or mostly false, circle 2.

If it is occasionally or partially true or false, circle 3.

If it is usually or mostly true, circle 4.

If it is always or completely true, circle 5.

If this evaluation is really to benefit you, you will need to be absolutely honest in every response! When you have answered all the questions follow the instructions printed at that point in this booklet and you will be able to evaluate the results of this inquiry yourself. Do *not* read ahead, however; take just one page at a time.

One final note before you begin. This investigation into your spiritual gifts will evaluate your *past and present experiences* more than your hopes and desires for the future. For this reason it will speak more intimately to those who have been members of the Lord's family for some months or more, than to those who are recently "new born" in Jesus. So if you have only recently accepted the Lord, try to think of the questions in anticipation rather than what you have already experienced.

HANDOUT

**Spiritual
 Disciplines:**
 Spiritual
 Gifts

| | False | | | | True |
|---|-------|---|---|---|------|
| 1. I feel very comfortable directing activities involving people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. I have been called directly by God to hold a highly responsible position of leadership among God's people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. I can discern the motives of most people | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. I find it easy to ask someone to make a decision for Jesus | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. When someone is hurting I am able to say something that genuinely comforts | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Even when God's will is not clear to me I still step out in faith | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 7. In an appeal for a worthy cause I'm among the first to give | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 8. I prefer to busy myself "behind the scenes" at a social gathering | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 9. I enjoy helping people by having them home for meals | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 10. Most of my "prayer time" is spent dealing with the needs of others | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 11. Salvation by faith alone is a truth I clearly understand | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 12. When faced with a complex problem I am able to identify the key factors that will lead to a solution | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 13. I would have felt it totally worthwhile to be one of the five missionaries killed taking the gospel to the Auca Indians | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 14. Helping society's outcasts, like drunks and addicts, would or does bring me great satisfaction | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 15. Living in rather primitive circumstances in a foreign country would not worry me as long as I could share the gospel | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 16. I'm excited about visiting church members in their homes on a regular basis | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 17. People in trouble are encouraged when I talk with them | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 18. I feel very much at home leading out in any Bible teaching setting | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 19. If someone is emotionally upset I can explain why they are upset and what they should do | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

HANDOUT

**Spiritual
 Disciplines:**
 Spiritual
 Gifts

| | False | | | True |
|---|-------|---|---|------|
| 20. There is a good spirit of unity and enthusiasm when I'm in charge | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 21. I'm usually consulted when matters of doctrine are being discussed | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 22. I can tell whether a person is being influenced more by the Lord or by Satan | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 23. Regularly I have the privilege of leading souls to Jesus | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 24. I am often asked to help those in trouble resolve their problems | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 25. I have complete faith the Lord will work out every problem that comes my way | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 26. I keep my purchases to a real minimum when appeals are made for others | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 27. When asked to help, even if I'm busy, I try to help | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 28. I always make it a point to greet strangers and when it's appropriate I invite them home | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 29. People in need regularly come to my mind, and I take their needs to God in prayer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 30. With the help of appropriate study materials I can find what God's Word teaches on most topics | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 31. I resolve "people" or relational problems in ways that make those affected satisfied | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 32. The idea of dying for my faith does not frighten me | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 33. I am extremely sensitive to the needs of the handicapped and enjoy talking with them and offering my help | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 34. I could cope with separation from loved ones in order to share the gospel in a foreign land | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 35. It does, or I believe it would, bring great satisfaction to occupy the same pulpit each week of the year | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 36. People often tell me, "God used you. You dealt exactly with my need" | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 37. I can prepare a logical class outline for a Bible class | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 38. I know when to take an uncompromising stand, and when to take a middle course between alternate positions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |

HANDOUT

**Spiritual
 Disciplines:**
 Spiritual
 Gifts

| | False | | | True |
|--|-------|---|---|------|
| 39. I'm happy to accept the loneliness that comes with leadership | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 40. When leaders are being chosen my opinions are normally sought | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 41. If someone came and asked me for money, I would know if the person really needed help or was a fraud | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 42. People under conviction seek me out and ask how they should surrender their lives to Jesus | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 43. People in need of good advice ask me for it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 44. I take God's promises at face value and believe them even if the fulfillment seems impossible | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 45. If I totaled my personal and church contributions they would probably equal a fifth or more of my income | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 46. If a church or community leader asked me to do a menial task like sweeping a sidewalk, I'd be delighted to do it | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 47. There are often a good number of people at our home for lunch after church service | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 48. I have a long and growing list of people whom I remember in prayer | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 49. I am perfectly at ease answering anyone's Bible questions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 50. I have the ability to develop progressive programs and see them through to a successful conclusion | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 51. If a civil court sentenced me to death for preaching the gospel, I'd be content to die for the Lord | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 52. I'd be very willing to help a shoddily dressed drunk across a busy intersection | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 53. I could happily adapt to the culture of another country if called to minister there | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 54. I see myself as a "shepherd" in my church with a total dedication to the welfare of all the "sheep." | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 55. God uses me to lift the spirits of the discouraged | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 56. Bible teachings come quickly to mind when I deal with a problem | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |
| 57. I can predict with unusual accuracy the long term results of decisions | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 5 |

HOW TO EVALUATE YOUR RESPONSES

Check back and make sure you have circled a number for every one of the 57 questions.

Now go to the next page. There you will find 57 spaces. Note the number you circled for question 1, and write that number in the first space. Note the number you circled for question 2, and write that number in the second space, and so on until you have placed a number in each of the 57 numbered squares.

Then, add the numbers from left to right. That is, add together the number in square 1, plus the number in square 20, plus the number in square 39. Write the total in the square under the column marked "Total."

When all the scores are totaled, scan down the list and circle the highest scores. There will probably be a cluster of from two to four that are quite close together.

Think for a moment about the gifts you have just circled, the ones with the highest scores. Which one would you like to consider *first* for further study and experimentation? Place a check beside that gift on the score sheet.

For example:

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|----|--------|
| 19 | 38 | 57 | 13 | Wisdom |
| 4 | 5 | 4 | 13 | ✓ |

Now write the names of the gifts with the highest scores on the blank lines at the top of the last page and you will have a permanent record of this initial investigation of your personal spiritual gifts.

Gifts mentioned in the New Testament but not included in this evaluation are: healing, miracles, tongues, interpretation of tongues, celibacy, voluntary poverty, and exorcism. These gifts are so spectacular or obvious that those who have them do not need help in recognizing the fact! But they would still need the affirmation of the other members of the local congregation in their appropriate use.

HANDOUT

**Spiritual
 Disciplines:**
 Spiritual
 Gifts

Score 1 Score 2 Score 3 Total GIFT
 3 + 4 + 2 = 9

| | | | | |
|----|----|----|--|----------------|
| 1 | 20 | 39 | | Administration |
| 2 | 21 | 40 | | Apostleship |
| 3 | 22 | 41 | | Discernment |
| 4 | 23 | 42 | | Evangelism |
| 5 | 24 | 43 | | Exhortation |
| 6 | 25 | 44 | | Faith |
| 7 | 26 | 45 | | Giving |
| 8 | 27 | 46 | | Helps |
| 9 | 28 | 47 | | Hospitality |
| 10 | 29 | 48 | | Intercession |
| 11 | 30 | 49 | | Knowledge |
| 12 | 31 | 50 | | Leadership |
| 13 | 32 | 51 | | Martyrdom |
| 14 | 33 | 52 | | Mercy |
| 15 | 34 | 53 | | Missionary |
| 16 | 35 | 54 | | Pastoring |
| 17 | 36 | 55 | | Prophecy |
| 18 | 37 | 56 | | Teaching |
| 19 | 38 | 57 | | Wisdom |

FINALLY

Place in the spaces below the gifts on which you scored the highest. You will probably find two to four scores that are quite close together. This is your *probable* “gift cluster.”

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Also add below any gifts you thought you had, even if the scores were not among the highest. These need further consideration along with those listed above.

5. _____
6. _____

You have just taken an important step in discovering your spiritual gift or gifts. *But a test can only indicate areas of high probability.* It does not mean for certain that these are your gifts. You now need to go further to confirm what gifts God has given you for use in His service. These would include such important activities as daily prayer, a study of the New Testament chapters dealing with spiritual gifts, and prayerful experimentation with the gifts that show the greatest promise. Hopefully, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, you will do all this and more.

The data from over 2,000 Christians whose responses have been analyzed suggests that any score below 9 represents such a low probability of giftedness in any area that it ought not to be considered positively at this time.

If you would like to send for some companion materials to help you explore this important subject, especially the meaning of your personal spiritual gifts, see the back cover of this booklet.

iFollow
Discipleship
Series:
Walking with
Jesus

HANDOUT

**Spiritual
Disciplines:**
Spiritual
Gifts