

Unwrapping Your Gifts

Did you know there may still be some unopened gifts from your re-birthday party? Spiritual gifts are a possession of each Christ-follower received at the moment of re-birth. Yet many believers never get around to opening *all* their gifts. Let's unwrap some life-changing biblical truths!

What is a spiritual gift?

It is an _____ given by _____ to EACH _____ for the purpose of _____ up the church. It is NOT the same as a talent used for personal development or secular work.

How do you determine what your gifts are?

Start with a free spiritual gifts survey at gifts.churchgrowth.org to begin to get an understanding of what your spiritual gifts may be. Your church may have access to one as well. Note: No test or survey can determine *everything* about your spiritual gifts, but it's a good place to start. Ask a church leader for more information.

Our Privilege on THIS Side of the Cross

The Holy Spirit was not available to reside in ALL believers' hearts until AFTER Christ ascended and then sent the Spirit on Pentecost. Now, each Christ-follower experiences a blessing that people before the Cross could not experience.

Biblical references for spiritual gifts

The New Testament lists are the most common references for lists of spiritual gifts available to all Christ-followers. However, no list is _____.

Can you name some vital ministry tasks in our churches today that are *not* included on these lists?

<p>Ephesians 4:11 List</p> <p>Apostles (special messengers) Prophets (inspired preachers and expounders) Evangelists (preachers of the Gospel, traveling missionaries) Pastors (shepherds of His flock) Teachers</p>	<p>Romans 12:6-8 List</p> <p>Prophecy Practical Service Teaching Exhortation (encouragement) Contribution (giving) Superintending (leading) Mercy</p>
<p>1 Corinthians 12:8-10 List</p> <p>Wisdom Knowledge Wonder-working faith Healing Miracles Prophetic insight (the gift of interpreting the divine will and purpose) Discernment of spirits Various of kinds of tongues Interpretation of tongues</p>	<p>1 Corinthians 12:28-30 List</p> <p>Apostles (special messengers) Prophets (inspired preachers and expounders) Teachers Wonder-workers Healing Helps Administrators Speakers of different (unknown) tongues Interpretation of tongues</p>

Thinking outside the box

Let's consider some other gifts that were given to people in the Old Testament through the Holy Spirit for certain tasks at specific times:

Joseph, son of Jacob, was given the ability to _____.

See Genesis 41:14-45

Miriam, sister of Moses, was given a prophet who was given a _____

that retold the story of God's triumph over the Egyptians on behalf of the Israelites. See Exodus 15:20-21

Bezalel and **Oholiab**, servants under Moses in the wilderness, were given special abilities in _____

to build the tabernacle and make the holy vestments. See Exodus 31:1-11

Hannah, the mother of Samuel, was given a _____ that prophesied a coming king and a Messiah for Israel. See 1 Samuel 2:1-10

David, the future king of Israel, was given the ability to _____,

which soothed a weary King Saul. See 1 Samuel 16:14-23 and most of the Psalms

All the biblical writers were given the ability to _____

_____, which have instructed us through the ages.

What Are YOUR Gifts?

What tasks do you enjoy most when serving your church?

Are there some talents you use outside the church that could indeed be a spiritual gift if put to work in the church?

Steps to determining your gifts

1. Be assured of your salvation. You cannot receive a spiritual gift without first accepting Christ as your Savior and Lord and allowing the Holy Spirit to reside in you.
2. Humbly ask God to reveal your gifts to you through your own study of God's Word, your work in the church, and by talking with your wise Christian friends and church leaders.
3. Be honest with yourself and with God about what you *enjoy* doing. When used for God's glory, your spiritual gifts will bring you exceeding joy and fulfillment.
4. Try some on. Make yourself available for a variety of ministry needs in your church. You will quickly discover which ones bring more stress and dread than a feeling of accomplishment. Fulfill your responsibility in each thing you volunteer for, and when you realize you are not a good fit for something, let a church leader know and ask to be placed in another ministry. You can be assured that God has provided others with the necessary gifts in your church to fulfill the needs. You are not personally responsible for *all* the ministries in your church.
5. Listen carefully to the affirmations of your work from others. They may see a gift in you that you hadn't considered a special gift, because it comes so easily to you.

Dr. Laura Savage-Rains is a speaker, author, and leadership and ministry coach. Her award-winning book, *God Chose a Woman First: Discover the Keys to Resilient Confidence through the Voices of Biblical Women*, is available on Amazon. Contact her at Laura@WomensMinistryCoach.com