

Spiritual Gifts Inventory

(Excerpted and adapted from the writings of Earl D. Radmacher, Th. D.)

Name: _____

My two top spiritual gifts are:

1. _____

and

2. _____

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

PORTAGE, WISCONSIN

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose of the following Spiritual Gift Inventory (SGI) is to help people identify effective ways to minister in the local church. Scripture would indicate that God has given to every believer, through the Holy Spirit, one or more spiritual gifts which He has distributed as He sees fit to every person in the Church (1 Cor 12:11). These gifts are the revelation of the Holy Spirit's activity among believers for the purpose of the "common good" of the Body of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 12:7). The result of this harmonious working together results in the outworking of God's sovereign plan (1 Cor 12:4-6).

Many have made the mistake of thinking that the utilization of spiritual gifts is the equivalent of "getting to work" for Jesus. This perspective puts the *saint* at the center of the activity rather than the *Savior*. When our focus is on nothing but Jesus Christ, we operate in the Spirit and the "building up of the Body of Christ" happens (Eph 4:12). Jesus is always the goal, not our effort and work to build up the Body. Spiritual gifts must be exercised spiritually. Being spiritual is always about having Jesus Christ as the pinnacle of our affections and adoration, serving Him faithfully out of love because of His great love for us. Any other approach is fueled by the flesh, pride, and self-seeking exaltation.

It is valuable to distinguish between gifts and ministries. A gift is not a natural talent, but rather a God-given ability which demonstrates to other believers that the Holy Spirit indwells the individual exercising the gift (1 Cor 12:7). It is always employed for the good of the church and should not at any time contribute to discord among members. To give an example, it would not be a gift, then, to play the piano or to sing, although either of these talents may be effective ministries through which a gift may be employed. Ministry opportunities in the local church serve as the vehicle through which every believer's gift should be employed.

The primary goal is the united work of all church members in love and peace to:

- 1) reach out to those who have not yet believed (evangelism)
- and
- 2) to build up and restore believers in the church (discipleship).

These twin goals of evangelism and discipleship are the responsibility of all who are in Christ Jesus our Lord – not just those in positions of leadership in the church. Every member of Christ's Body is a **minister** to the local church (discipleship) and a **missionary** to the world (evangelism).

A thorough study of major and minor gift passages led to the selection of eleven spiritual gifts falling into two categories:

SPEAKING GIFTS

Preaching
Exhortation
Teaching
Words of Wisdom
Words of Knowledge

SERVING GIFTS

Faith
Giving
Mercy
Helps
Leading (Administration)
Discernment

“As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

-1 Peter 4:10-11-

It should be clarified that the Bible makes mention of other gifts, such as the gift of eternal life in Romans 6:23. Not all gifts are spiritual gifts, and we realize that every “good gift” comes from God. This statement in James 1:17 pertains to the acknowledgment that God bestows His grace in ways beyond comprehension. We are all the recipients of God’s goodness and His gracious “gifts.” This extends beyond the more limited scope of a “spiritual gift” individually assigned by the Holy Spirit to each believer according to 1 Corinthians 12:11.

One list of spiritual gifts includes the offices that Jesus installed for the equipping of the local church (Eph 4:11): Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These offices are cited as “gifts” to the local church for its *equipping* but should not be understood in the same sense as each member having a spiritual gift with which to *edify* one another (Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:22-25). While these offices of leadership are clearly evidenced in the New Testament church, it would present some difficulty to include these positions as spiritual gifts. If a gift is defined as a God-given ability, then the positions cannot qualify because they fail to meet the requirements of the definition. A prophet, for example, is not an ability – although prophesying or preaching is. Hence, it is completely reasonable that someone might exercise the gift of wisdom, or faith, or administration, or yet another gift while holding the position of pastor, evangelist, or teacher.

A WORD ON THE SIGN GIFTS

While there are three classifications of spiritual gifts, only the speaking and serving gifts hold validity for today (Rom 12:6-7; Pet 4:11). The following SGI does not try to identify those spiritual gifts frequently referred to as “sign gifts” (healings, miracles, speaking in tongues, and interpretation of tongues). Within the church, opinion seems divided as to whether these gifts are to be employed today. It seems that the sign gifts became inactive after the apostles passed away in the first century (1 Cor 13:8). While some may disagree with this understanding, the

Scriptures are clear that the sign gifts were given in the first century as a testimony of judgment to unbelievers (Acts 9:32-43; 1 Cor 14:20-22) or as a sign of God's authentic work being done despite the absence of the New Testament (Acts 2:4-13; 10:34-48). Since the eleven gifts (specifically and clearly indicated in the Bible) are geared for either the evangelism of the non-believer and/or the discipleship of the believer, the following SGI has restricted its scope to only those eleven.

THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Speaking Gifts

Preaching (Prophecy)

The God-given ability to set before people the Word and wisdom of God persuasively through personality as a herald. (1 Corinthians 12:10; 13:2, 8-9)

- A strong emphasis on Biblical authority
- Speak clearly, organize material well
- Encourage and challenge people in matters of Biblical conduct
- Look for response, results
- Comfortable in working with groups of people
- Confident
- Ability to confront people when they are doing wrong

Pro: Consistent guidance from the Word of God that calls for response and action, dynamic

Con: Does not play well with those who have differences in primary and secondary issues of doctrine

Exhortation

The God-given ability to draw alongside of someone in order to comfort, to encourage, to rebuke, and to lead into insight toward action. (Romans 12:8)

- People-centered
- Stick with people through thick and thin
- See creative alternatives when facing problems
- Enjoy people, understand their feelings and attitudes
- Can be confrontative without being offensive
- Comfortable in either group or one-on-one setting
- Not easily discouraged, persistent
- See problems and struggles as an opportunity for growth
- Have a deep concern for people who are going through difficulties

Pro: Brings a positive and uplifting message in every situation

Con: Some encouragement methods can stray from the Word and run the route of self-esteem and appeals to one's pride

Teaching

The God-given ability to lay down in systematic order the complete ladder of a doctrine and to apply it incisively and diligently to life. (1 Corinthians 12:28-29; Romans 12:7)

- Employ a logical, systematic approach to Biblical study
- Heavy emphasis on responsible action in light of what is known
- Ability to explain things clearly and concisely
- Summarize, evaluate, or pick out main points in a presentation quickly
- Set an example in behavior (a model for others)
- Careful in study
- Give attention to detail
- Like to be prepared, to avoid impromptu situations
- Prefer group settings to one-on-one settings

Pro: Detailed instructions, aiding the saints in handling God's Word with precision, looks to connect the specifics of the Bible with the whole of the Bible

Con: Scrutinizes the ministries and teachings within the local church with little regard to personalities or feelings, may not be applying what they teach

Word of Wisdom

The God-given ability to locate formerly unknown principles as well as to combine known principles of God's Word and to communicate them to fresh situations.

(1 Corinthians 12:8)

- Understand complex matters quickly
- Easily pick out main points (a view to the practical)
- Can come up with alternatives when faced with difficult situations
- Consistent
- Try to discern God's mind in daily activities
- Assist people sometimes at the risk of being misunderstood
- Very responsible in tasks undertaken
- Ability to make decisions quickly and to put ideas into words
- Confident
- Able to take details and puts them together to make a complete picture

Pro: Insightful, life-lessons from God's Word that resonate practically

Con: Application receives more attention than the details of Scripture

Word of Knowledge

The God-given ability to arrange the facts of Scripture, to categorize these into principles, and to communicate them to repeated or familiar situations.

(1 Corinthians 12:8; 1 Corinthians 13:2, 8; 14:6)

- Enjoy study, digging for facts or details
- Persistent, thorough
- More task-centered than people-oriented as a rule
- Tend to become impatient with people who fail to learn
- Very precise
- Patient, stay with the project until completed in all its details
- Continually looking, searching for new information or data
- Enjoy talking to well-informed people
- Logical, scientific, serious
- Tend to avoid games or discussion on deeply personal matters

Pro: Knows the material inside and out, meticulous in approach, has a thought-out, educated answer from the Word of God

Con: Heavy on the details, lacks in application, stuffy, can teach over one's head

Serving Gifts

Faith

The God-given ability to see through mountainous problems to the Ultimate Resource with the vision that it is timely to rely absolutely on both God's ability and willingness to perform in this particular matter. (1 Corinthians 12:9; 13:2)

- Can quickly change from one task to another
- Confident
- Persuasive in getting others to join in on a project
- Challenge people to assume greater responsibilities to accomplish what needs to be done
- Set a pace for others
- Determined in spite of difficulties when working on a project
- Make decisions quickly, act quickly
- Willing to tackle the seemingly impossible
- Strong rest in God
- A leader

Pro: Stretches the church in all the right places so that God can work the impossible

Con: Can make many uncomfortable with their vision of what God is doing/can do

Giving

The God-given ability to make and to give things most liberally and beyond all human expectation. (Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 13:3)

- Dislike emotional appeals, wants the facts
- Ability to invest wisely
- Set and achieve long-range goals
- Use resources to get the most out of them
- Work to aid those needy people who are worthy of assistance
- Determines merits of a project before investing or getting others to invest
- Dislikes waste
- Make decisions quickly, but holds back when uncertain

Pro: Supplying above and beyond to make ministries happen

Con: Once known, they can become the target of every need

Mercy

The God-given ability to be sensitive or empathetic to people who are in affliction or misery and to lift internal burdens with cheerfulness. (Romans 12:8)

- Perceptive to people in need
- Find it hard to say “no” when asked to help
- Jump in quickly to help – sometimes without evaluating fully
- Lay aside personal desires and personal plans to help others
- A peacemaker
- Avoid arguments or controversial situations
- Rely heavily on feelings (sometimes hold them inside)
- Love people despite their faults
- Cheerful
- Try to find the best in people without doubting them

Pro: Willing to go where others will not, meeting felt-needs on the deepest level

Con: Often stretched thin, wanting to be all things to all people at all times

Helps

The God-given ability to see tasks and to do them for or with someone in order to lift external burdens. (1 Corinthians 12:28)

- Choose short-range projects on which to work
- Like to be told what to do
- Hard worker
- Stick to a task until it is finished
- Likes to be reassured that their efforts are needed and appreciated
- Considers any job important whether large or small
- Support and help those in leadership
- Takes orders well
- Joins in quickly to assist when needed

Pro: Can lead the church in humility, selfless service, and excellence for God’s glory

Con: Can be treated like a doormat by other believers, often overlooked

Leading (Administration)

The God-given executive ability to lead people with care, while collecting data, setting policy, and developing plans which will guide a course of action with skill and wisdom (Romans 12:8; 1 Corinthians 12:28)

- Assumes responsibility and stays on course until the work is accomplished
- Guides the efforts of the team on a project
- Develops, follows, and/or creates efficient plans
- Confronts people enthusiastically with the ability to confer, negotiate, and supervise in delegating responsibilities
- Good organizational skills, getting a high level of efficiency out of people and resources
- Remains calm despite obstacles, finding creative new approaches when needed
- Expresses opinions freely

Pro: Organizes and mobilizes those who would normally sit still, champions a cause well

Con: Can be overbearing or bossy, looks for everyone to be on board

Discerning of Spirits

The God-given judicial ability to stand over people in order to detect genuine or non-genuine motives by distinguishing the spirit-source behind any person's speech or act. (1 Corinthians 12:10)

- Evaluate situations quickly and accurately
- Good intuitive sense
- Quickly spot weak points in a presentation
- Willing and able to speak out
- See hidden motives or agendas
- Keen insight in seeing Biblical principles and in bringing them into practical situations
- Pinpoint difficulties in a situation when things aren't going well
- Can apply principles to the decision-making process

Pro: Warns the church of dangerous doctrines, false hopes, and divisive people

Con: Their exposure of one's teachings and motives can be taken personally, causing strife

USE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY

The Spiritual Gifts Inventory can be a useful tool to help believers clarify and prioritize their God-given gifts. To gain maximum benefit from the SGI, it is recommended that you have understood what the Bible teaches on our spiritual gifting as taught in our “The Gifts & The Body” Sermon Series.

There are limitations to the use of the SGI of which you need to be aware. The SGI is not a diagnostic tool. Nor should it be used to compare one person’s results against the results of another person. Believers are never told to be in competition with one another. The SGI is intended to provide an intra-personal profile which aids the individual to identify with their particular God-given abilities. Properly used, the SGI can be an incentive to encourage people to get involved in the building up of the local church.

Spiritual Gift Inventory

Select a value from 0-3 that best describes your response to each statement.

0 = Never 1 = Rarely 2 = Sometimes 3 = Almost Always

- _____ 1. I speak up for Christian principles even when what I say is not popular.
- _____ 2. I enjoy encouraging and giving counsel to those who are discouraged.
- _____ 3. I have an ability to study a passage of Scripture thoroughly and effectively share its truth with others.
- _____ 4. I often have insights offering practical solutions to difficult problems.
- _____ 5. I enjoy studying difficult questions about God’s Word and tend to find answers more easily and more quickly than others.
- _____ 6. I am confident of achieving great things for the glory of God.
- _____ 7. I enjoy giving money to those in serious financial need.
- _____ 8. I enjoy comforting people in hospitals, prisons, or nursing homes.
- _____ 9. I enjoy working behind the scenes without public recognition.
- _____ 10. People seem to look to me for leadership in a group where none exists.

- _____ 11. People often say I have good spiritual judgment.
- _____ 12. I feel a need to speak God's messages from the Bible to help people know what God expects of them.
- _____ 13. After I talk one-on-one with people, they often are spurred to take positive action.
- _____ 14. When a question arises from a difficult Bible passage, I am motivated to research the answer.
- _____ 15. When they don't know what to do, people often ask my advice.
- _____ 16. Gathering information from multiple sources to find answers or information is one of my abilities.
- _____ 17. I often step out and start successful projects other people won't attempt.
- _____ 18. I joyfully give money to the church well above my tithe.
- _____ 19. I feel compassion for hurting and lonely people and like to spend time with them to encourage.
- _____ 20. I would like to assist my pastor and other church leaders so they will have more time to accomplish their essential ministries.
- _____ 21. I can easily delegate significant responsibilities to other people.
- _____ 22. I am a good judge of character and can discern spiritual falsehood.
- _____ 23. It is comfortable for me to apply biblical principles to present day situations.
- _____ 24. I feel a need to challenge others to better themselves in their spiritual growth without condemning them.
- _____ 25. Others listen to and appreciate my teaching of Scripture.
- _____ 26. The Lord enables me to make appropriate application of biblical truth to practical solutions.
- _____ 27. I can independently recognize difficult biblical truths and principles.
- _____ 28. I trust God's faithfulness even when everything looks bad.

_____ 29. I wouldn't mind lowering my standard of living in order to be able to give more to the church or to others in need.

_____ 30. I want to do whatever I can for the needy people around me, even if I have to give up something.

_____ 31. I enjoy relieving others of routine tasks so they can get special projects done.

_____ 32. I am able to organize people, ideas, and projects to reach a specific goal.

_____ 33. I am able to distinguish between right and wrong in complex spiritual matters that other people can't seem to figure out.

_____ 34. I speak clearly and am able to organize and present biblical truth so that others understand what I have to say.

_____ 35. People will tell me things they won't tell anyone else because they find it easy to talk to me.

_____ 36. My thinking is organized and my approach systematic when presenting Bible lessons to a group.

_____ 37. I am able to interpret and apply Scripture with keen insight.

_____ 38. I will stick with a study once begun in order to develop a more complete picture.

_____ 39. I often exercise my faith through prayer, and the Lord answers my prayers in exciting ways.

_____ 40. When I give money to someone, I don't expect anything in return, and often give anonymously.

_____ 41. When I hear of people without jobs who can't pay their bills, I do what I can to help them.

_____ 42. I enjoy helping others get their work done.

_____ 43. I can work under pressure with discipline to accomplish established goals and objectives.

_____ 44. People come to me for help in distinguishing between spiritual truth and error.

- _____ 45. I find the fundamental truths of Scripture to be worth repeating over and over.
- _____ 46. I will stay with people and encourage them to finish a task once they have started it.
- _____ 47. I can explain the teaching of the Bible clearly and concisely.
- _____ 48. I can put ideas into words easily and can analyze and explain situations well.
- _____ 49. I have understood issues or problems in the church and seen answers when others didn't.
- _____ 50. I am willing to take on difficult assignments with a determination to meet obstacles head on.
- _____ 51. I desire to share my personal financial resources with others and to assist them in worthy endeavors.
- _____ 52. I will lay aside my own personal desires in order to help others.
- _____ 53. In difficult situations I am able to get to the heart of the problem and take steps to resolve it.
- _____ 54. I can see the "big picture" of a project and am able to coordinate others who only see various parts.
- _____ 55. I am able to pinpoint the sources of difficulty when evaluating a situation.
- _____ 56. I challenge people to set high standards of biblical conduct for their daily activities.
- _____ 57. I have deep concern for the spiritual welfare of Christians who are in a crisis.
- _____ 58. I have shared biblical truth with others in a way that they have found it meaningful and helpful.
- _____ 59. While discussing a problem I can share in such a way that clarifies what is needed to resolve it.
- _____ 60. I study the Bible systematically, trying to see how one part relates to another.
- _____ 61. I confidently expect God to respond to situations committed to Him in prayer.
- _____ 62. Sharing of my financial resources for Christian ministry is one of the greatest joys of my Christian walk.

- _____ 63. People tend to call on me when help is needed for someone in distress.
- _____ 64. I openly share my material possessions with others when they are in need.
- _____ 65. I enjoy working out the necessary details in order to organize people and resources for a more effective ministry.
- _____ 66. I seem to know when a situation is not right.
- _____ 67. I desire to proclaim the truth of God's Word with authority and with conviction.
- _____ 68. I enjoy sharing God's promises from Scripture as a means of encouragement.
- _____ 69. I enjoy communicating biblical truth to others and then seeing growth in their knowledge of the Christian faith.
- _____ 70. I apply spiritual truth effectively in my own life.
- _____ 71. I study matters thoroughly so as to locate information others often overlook.
- _____ 72. I have had great dreams and aspirations which have turned into reality despite the unlikeliness of accomplishing them.
- _____ 73. I feel confident when I give sacrificially that the Lord will provide for my needs.
- _____ 74. I receive great satisfaction and pleasure in preparing meals or in helping those less fortunate.
- _____ 75. I enjoy short-term tasks rather than long-term projects.
- _____ 76. People often respect my opinion and follow my direction.
- _____ 77. When counseling a person, I can identify a problem correctly.