

Charismatology

The Doctrine of Spiritual Gifts. A study on the grace provision for the spiritual gifts of believers in the Dispensation of the Church. Technically, Charismatology intersects Ecclesiology (Doctrine of the Church) Pneumatology (Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, a primary division of Theology), and Eschatology (Doctrine of Last Things—End Times).

Old Testament Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual gifts were given here and there prior to the Dispensation of the Church. Craftsmen were gifted for the construction of the Tabernacle and the Temple (Ex. 31:1-11; 35:30-35; 36:1-2,8; 1st Kgs. 7:14; 2nd Chr. 2:7,13,14). Various prophets were gifted and sent to Israel (Jer. 7:25; 25:4; 26:5; 35:15) and even an occasional Gentile nation (Num. 22:5).

Millennial Spiritual Gifts

The outpouring of the Holy Spirit will be a feature of the coming Millennium (Joel 2:28-29), and that coming aspect of pneumatika is rightly considered under Eschatology (Doctrine of Last Things). Peter cited the Joel passage to describe the events of Pentecost (Acts 2:16ff.), but the inception of the Church does not fulfill the promises made to Israel. The context of Joel 2 is clearly Millennial, and the promised blessings are for Israel—not the Church.

Differences Between Joel 2 and Acts 2	
Joel 2:28-29	Acts 2
“After this” follows the zealous deliverance of Israel from the Gentiles (Joel 2:18-20).	No such parallel with the inception of the Church.
The Spirit is poured on all mankind (Joel 2:28).	The Spirit is poured out upon a select group of believers in Jerusalem (Acts 2:1-4).
The Jewish people (your sons and daughters) will receive gifts of prophecy (incl. dreams & visions) (Joel 2:28). No mention of tongues.	The Spirit-filled Church Members began speaking in tongues (Acts 2:4). No mention of prophecy.

The future role of Israel with a prophetic ministry towards the Gentiles is an eschatological study and a pneumatological study that touches upon Ecclesiastical Charismatology but must be as clearly distinguished as the Old Testament manifestations of spiritual giftedness.

Ecclesiastical Spiritual Gifts (Ecclesiastical Charismatology)

Our present stewardship of the Church features grace/spiritual gifts (χάρισματα charismata ^{Strong's #5486} & πνευματικά pneumatika ^{Strong's #4152}) given on a universal basis. Every believer today has at least one spiritual gift (1st Pet. 4:10).

The new believer needs to understand that the impartation of Divine power is not given for the pursuit of miraculous events or the participation in ecstatic experience. Spiritual gifts are provided for grace service to Members of the Body of Christ (1st Pet. 4:10).

Scriptural Authority for Spiritual Gifts

The primary texts for spiritual gift studies are as follows. 1st Cor. 12-14 is the longest and most thorough passage. The great love passage is contained within the context of a three chapter discourse on spiritual gifts. The most complete listings of individual gifts is given in this passage. A secondary text which compliments 1st Cor. 12 very well is Rom. 12:6-8.

Secondary texts for spiritual gift studies also must examine Eph. 4:11 and relate it to the function of local churches for the equipping of the saints. Finally, 1st Pet. 4:11 is another passage which casts illumination upon the subject.

Varieties and Sameness

The introduction to the primary New Testament text concerning spiritual gifts presents three facets of gifting that ought to be recognized (1st Cor. 12:4-6). Gifts, ministries, and effects are related yet distinct concepts as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit equip Members of the Church. Significantly, only the concepts of gifts and the person of the Holy Spirit are amplified in the following context of the passage.

The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts

Ecclesiastical Spiritual Gifts have both general and particular purposes. In general, every gift is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit (1st Cor. 12:7) and are to be utilized for the edification of the Body of Christ (1st Cor. 12:7; 14:26; 1st Pet. 4:10). In addition to the general purpose of all gifts, particular gifts either had or continue to have particular purposes. Of paramount importance, it must be understood that the ecclesiastical gifts of Apostle and Prophet had the particular purpose of building the foundation of the Church, and revealing the mystery Doctrine of Christ (Eph. 2:20; 3:5). This is why a distinction is drawn between the Apostolic Church and the Post-Apostolic Church.

Biblical Lists of Spiritual Gifts

1 Cor 12:8–10	1 Cor 12:28	1 Cor 12:29–30	Rom. 12:6–8	Eph 4:11	1 Pet 4:11
word of wisdom λόγος σοφίας	apostles ἀποστόλους	apostles ἀπόστολοι	prophecy προφητείαν	apostles ἀποστόλους	speaking τις λαλεῖ serving τις διακονεῖ
word of knowledge λόγος γνώσεως	prophets προφήτας	prophets προφήται	service διακονίαν	prophets προφήτας	
faith πίστις	teachers διδασκάλους	teachers διδάσκαλοι	teaching ὁ διδάσκων	evangelists εὐαγγελιστάς	
gifts of healing χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων	miracles δυνάμεις	miracles δυνάμεις	exhortation ὁ παρακαλῶν	pastor-teachers ποιμένες καὶ διδασκάλους	
effects of miracles ἐνεργήματα δυνάμεων	gifts of healings χαρίσματα ἰαμάτων	gifts of healings χαρίσματα ἔχουσιν ἰαμάτων	giving ὁ μεταδίδους		
prophecy προφητεία	helps ἀντιλήμψεις	tongues γλώσσαις λαλοῦσιν	leadership ὁ προϊστάμενος		
distinguishing spirits διακρίσεις πνευμάτων	administrations κυβερνήσεις	interpret διερμηνεύουσιν	showing mercy ὁ ἐλεῶν		
kinds of tongues γένη γλωσσῶν	kinds of tongues γένη γλωσσῶν				
interpretation of tongues ἐρμηνεία γλωσσῶν					

Shaded areas indicate a gift that has not been mentioned in any previous column. Red text indicates a permanent spiritual gift.

Cessation of Particular Spiritual Gifts

The Old Testament giftings illustrate something very important for us. When the particular purpose for a gift is complete, the distribution of that gift ceases. Tabernacle-building and Temple-building are good examples for temporary giftedness. Nobody today receives the gift of Tabernacle-building because it would be ludicrous for God to distribute such a gift.

The Church originally featured twenty spiritual gifts. Some of particular purposes that some particular gifts had in the early (Apostolic) Church are no longer features of the present (Post-Apostolic) Church. It has already been observed that the particular purpose for the Apostles and Prophets was foundational. Since those particular purposes are no longer extant, those particular gifts are no longer distributed. Those gifts have “ceased” to be distributed.

Other such gift cessation is clearly outlined in the New Testament. 1st Cor. 13:8ff. explicitly marks the cessation of certain gifts, and implicitly marks the cessation of others. Explicitly marked are Prophecy, Tongues, and Word of Knowledge. Implicitly marked are Distinguishing Spirits, Interpretation of Tongues, & Word of Wisdom.

Tongues is actually a separate matter from Prophecy and Word of Knowledge (1st Cor. 13:8). Tongues “ceases,” but Prophecy and Word of Knowledge are “done away.” The end of Prophecy and Word of Knowledge is developed in the final portion of 1st Cor. 13. The particular purpose of Tongues is given its own full development (1st Cor. 14:1-19) and the understanding of Tongues cessation comes when it is related to its Old Testament prophecy (1st Cor. 14:20-22 cf. Isa. 28:1-29 exp. vv.11-13). Tongues ceases when its particular purpose for warning Israel of destruction is complete. No believer has been given the gift of Tongues since the destruction of Jerusalem in 70AD.

Prophecy and Word of Knowledge have another basis for their being abolished (1st Cor. 13:8-12). These gifts functioned in a revelatory manner during the Apostolic Age of the Church (1st Cor. 14:6,26; Eph. 1:17). Without a New Testament to unfold the wisdom and knowledge of the Old Testament for Church application, these revelatory gifts served to do just that. Remember: the foundation of the Church was laid by the Apostles and the Prophets (Eph. 2:20; 3:5).

1st Cor. 13:9-13 describes a condition of the Church where Word of Knowledge gives a partial mirror-like view. View of what? A view of a believer’s own heart and how accountable we are to God (1st Cor. 14:14-25 cf. Heb. 4:12-13). Prophecy gives a different partial mirror-like view. These different parts must be put together and even so the view is mirror-like. By extension, the gifts of Apostle and Word of Wisdom would be other revelatory gifts supplying these partial mirror-like views.

As more and more of the New Testament was written, there would be less and less need for these revelatory gifts to unfold the wisdom and knowledge of the Old Testament for Church application. The New Testament text would be fulfilling that function. So, the arrival of “the perfect” would supply a complete face-to-face-like view of our stewardship responsibility before God. With no further particular purpose for these particular gifts, God the Father abolished their distribution.

Phil. 2:25-30, 1st Tim. 5:23, and 2nd Tim. 4:20b would add Healing to the gifts which were disappearing as the New Testament was being completed and the Apostolic Age was drawing to a close. 2nd Cor. 12:12 and Heb. 2:2-4 would add Miracles to the gifts which had particular purposes tied to the various apostolic ministries.

Permanent Ecclesiastical Gifts

The gifts which have ongoing particular purposes for the edification of the Church have an ongoing distribution throughout the Dispensation of the Church, Age of the Local Church. Such gifts include Faith-Worker, Teacher, Helper, Administrator, Server, Exhorter/Encourager/Comforter, Giver, Leader, Mercy Shower, Evangelist, and Pastor-Teacher. These gifts can be described based upon their Biblical descriptions, but the varieties of ministries and working effects for each gift can be described by Biblical illustrations and present experiential illustrations.

Faith-Worker (1st Cor. 12:9; 13:2; cf. Jas. 2:17 & Heb. 11:33-38). A fruit of the Spirit is faith, and every believer ought to express faith to one another (Gal. 5:22). Believers with this particular gift, however, manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary “proportion” of faith (Rom. 12:6) enabling them to come alongside and help other believers who may be weak in faith (Rom. 14:1). Such believers would obviously anchor congregational prayer meetings (Jas. 1:6). Such believers would also thrive in hospital or visitation ministries.

Teacher (1st Cor. 12:28,29; Rom. 12:7). Every believer ought to grow to a maturity status that will equip them for teaching (Heb. 5:12), and those who are growing into a teaching position of responsibility in a local church must pay heed to the accountability warnings (Jas. 3:1). Believers with this particular gift, however, manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary grace enablement that communicates the Word of God with power (1st Cor. 2:13; 1st Thess. 1:5). Such believers would have teaching ministries in and out of local churches, and would be expected to step into the Office of Overseer upon reaching the Maturity Status of Elder.

Helper (1st Cor. 12:28). Every believer ought to be helpful to one another as well as towards those outside the church (Acts 20:35; Rom. 8:23-26). Believers with this particular gift, however, manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary grace enablement that compliments other believers’ giftings in the coordinated achievement of work. Such believers could provide logistical support functions for a local church ministry (1st Cor. 16:16). Helpers may serve in the Office of Deacon (Rom. 15:24; Rom. 16:2), or may serve as helpers without any Office for years and years.

Administrator (1st Cor. 12:28). One who steers, pilots, or guides. Governments (KJV, ASV, Darby); Administrators (Ampl., ISV, NASB, NIV, NKJV); Managing (HCSB). Guidance is always necessary for all believers of all dispensations (Prov. 11:14). Believers with this particular gift manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary grace enablement that is able to pilot particular ministries through dangerous waters. Such believers would supply needed management functions for any number of local church ministries, and fit logically into the Offices of Deacon

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or Overseer. Stephanas is sometimes taught in this context (1st Cor. 16:15-18). Edersheim affirmed his conclusion that Judas Iscariot was an Administrator⁴.

Server/Minister (Rom. 12:7). The diakonia service/ministry is related etymologically to the Office title of Deacon (diakonos). Every believer is expected to serve/minister every other believer in the body (1st Cor. 3:5; 2nd Cor. 6:4; Eph. 4:12). Believers with this particular gift, however, manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary grace enablement that not only serves but edifies in that personal service ministry. Tychicus is an example of such a faithful Minister (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7), and Epaphroditus also engaged in such personal service ministry (Phil. 2:25). Though not illustrative of NT spiritual giftedness, the OT examples of Joseph (Gen. 39:4), Joshua (Ex. 24:13; 33:11; Num. 11:28), and Gehazi (2nd Kgs. 4:12,25; 5:20-25) portray the equivalent function of the personal server/minister. Note also that Elisha filled this role while training under Elijah (1st Kgs. 19:21).

Paraclete (Exhorter/Encourager/Comforter) (Rom. 12:8). One of the most difficult spiritual gifts to describe and define is the spiritual gift that is revealed as a participle of the Greek verb parakaleo. The difficulty lies in the broad spectrum that this verb represents—from exhort to encourage to comfort. So, which is it? Does a believer with this gift exhort? Does he encourage? Does he comfort? Yes. Of course, each of these areas are areas where all believers would be expected to accomplish such activities. Believers with this particular gift, however, manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary grace enablement that comes alongside a fellow believer in ways that only the Paraclete could (John 14:16,26; 15:26; 16:7). This gift might be exercised through prayer ministries, music ministries, visitation ministries, etc. As a speaking gift, such believers compliment other speaking gifts in wonderful ways, and are valuable in both the Office of Deacon and Office of Overseer.

Giver (Rom. 12:8; 1st Cor. 13:3). Sharing with one who has need is a responsibility for all believers (Eph. 4:28; 2nd Cor. 8:1-5; 9:10-15). Believers with this particular gift, however, manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary grace enablement that provides abundantly, cheerfully, and vitally for particular ministries (1st Tim. 6:17-19). Believers with this gift receive potentially the greatest personal inner-happiness (Acts 20:35; Phil. 4:17). The Lord had a number of women with a grace orientation to support His ministry in a way that foreshadows the nature and function of this ecclesiastical charisma (Lk. 8:3).

Leader (Rom. 12:8; 1st Thess. 5:12). Believers with this particular gift manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary grace enablement that takes initiative, stands in front, and charts a course for other believers to follow. The exercise of this gift requires diligence and exhausting labor (1st Thess. 5:12). Believers with this gift are valuable for every ministry and every effective work within a local church. Believers with this gift will fit logically into the Office of Deacon where they can be put in charge over various tasks (Acts 6:3; 1st Tim. 3:12). Believers with this gift will fit logically into the Office of Overseer when they grow into the Maturity Status of Elder (1st Tim. 5:17; cf. 3:4; Heb. 13:7,17,24).

Mercy Shower (Rom. 12:8). All believers are expected to demonstrate mercy towards one another. Believers with this particular gift, however, manifest the Holy Spirit through an

⁴ Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*, Vol. 2, Page 472.

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extraordinary grace enablement that extends mercy to others with a power that keeps them from losing heart (2nd Cor. 4:1). Tabitha is a superb NT illustration of this gift which was manifest through a clothing ministry (Acts 9:36,39). Another common ministry for the gift of Mercy Shower is the ministry of hospitality. The Shunammite woman demonstrated this grace orientation to support Elisha (2nd Kgs. 4:10). Lydia demonstrated this aspect of hospitality in the NT (Acts 16:14-15). Other ministries which show mercy could include spheres of nursing, prison visitation, etc. (Heb. 13:1-3; 2nd Tim. 1:16-18). This gift may be a large factor in a fervent effectual prayer ministry (2nd Tim. 1:16).

Evangelist (Eph. 4:11; Acts 21:8; 2nd Tim. 4:5). All believers are expected to proclaim the Gospel to this lost and dying world (1st Pet. 3:15). Believers with this particular gift, however, manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary grace enablement that drives them into such Gospel ministries (1st Cor. 9:14,16). Evangelists and Pastor-Teachers are specifically given by Jesus Christ to local churches for the equipping of the saints for the work of service. As the two primary equipping-gifts, Evangelists and Pastor-Teachers are Divinely suited to the Office of Overseer within a local church ministry.

Pastor-Teacher (Eph. 4:11). The final gift in our study is the one that is often over-emphasized to a point of undue prominence. Given that a flock without a shepherd is in serious trouble, it is often recognized that every local church (flock) must have a pastor (shepherd). All Overseers and Elders, regardless of their spiritual gift are commanded to shepherd the flock (Acts 20:28; 1st Pet. 5:2). Believers with this particular gift, however, manifest the Holy Spirit through an extraordinary grace enablement that fulfills the spiritual expectations of shepherding better than any other spiritual gift. Like the Evangelist, the Pastor-Teacher is Divinely suited to the Office of Overseer, once his preparation and training for that ministry is complete. This gift has perhaps more Scripture to define and describe it than any other individual gift. Psalm 23, the Good Shepherd (John 10), and Ezekiel 34 provide extensive doctrinal information for the role of a shepherd in a local church.

Recognizing Spiritual Gifts

How does a believer recognize his gift? Should we make use of the great American answer-anything device? Tyco's Magic 8 Ball can supply 20 different answers, but if you purchase it for \$7.99 at amazon.com you will also want to order Inside the Magic 8 Ball: The Complete User's Guide for \$23.59. This amazing American answering accessory has been available since 1946, but what did generations of believers do prior to that when faced with a crisis in decision making?



Seriously, then, identification of one's spiritual gift is not child's play and should not utilize a child's toy. The bottom-line reality is that each believer's spiritual gift is a matter for personal application of the will of God for your life. It is no different than any other particular application of God's will, and the principles learned in Thelematology all apply.

1. Study to show yourself approved (2nd Tim. 2:15).
2. Consult the wisdom of elders (Ex. 18:19; Prov. 1:5; Acts 8:34-35; 18:24-26).
3. Ask the Father in prayer (Jms. 1:5; 3:17; Prov. 2:3-7).
4. Consider carefully providential circumstances, and evaluate them according to Biblical understanding of God's will (Acts 8:36; 11:11; 2nd Kgs. 7:8-9; 1st Sam. 24:4).
5. Examine your heart motivation (1st Cor. 2:16; 1st Jn. 5:15; 2nd Sam. 7:3).

Better than Spiritual Gifts

Inserted into the Spiritual Gift "cradle" of 1st Corinthians 12-14 is the precious "baby" Love (1st Cor. 13:1-8a). The great Love poem is a matter for the deepest of all Biblical studies. God is Love, and plunging into the depths of Love is to plunge into the deep things of God.

The sphere of love is the primary realm in which believers need to operate. Spiritual gifts are important, but when used apart from the agape love mindset, their use is worse than not knowing your gift in the first place!

Conclusion to Basic Doctrinal Studies

A believer who has grasped these 10 categories of Basics, culminating with teaching on Spiritual Gifts, is equipped to step into active service in and for the Lord Jesus Christ according to the Father's purpose for saving him in the first place (Eph. 2:10).