

Get a Grip #5: Supernatural “I”: Your Spiritual Gifts



“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering (stewarding) God’s grace in its various forms...so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 4:10-11)

There are three main Pauline passages listing Spiritual Gifts.

Romans 12:3-8 - “We have different gifts, according to the grace give us.”

1 Corinthians 12:1-13 - “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work..”

Ephesians 4:1-16 - “So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”

*When I went to Kazakhstan for the first time, while talking about Spiritual Gifts, I discovered that the Kazaks have 20 words for sheep but not one word for the concept of “super-natural.” Because of this, I had to figure out a way to talk about the nature of Spiritual Gifts. Here’s what I said: “Spiritual Gifts are where God is **powerful** in you!” That concept has revolutionized the way that I talk about Spiritual Gifts. It is not where you are good at something but rather how you are powerful in the Spirit. It is not your natural skills or strength. but rather the dynamic rising up of the power of God in and through you. Paul Ford*



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Christians who are good stewards lead or serve most powerfully through their *Spiritual Gifts*.

The Body Life Questions we must ask are...

- Where are you powerful?
- How are you weak?
- Who do you need?

The 65-35 Principle. What does it mean to be a good steward of my Spiritual Gifts?

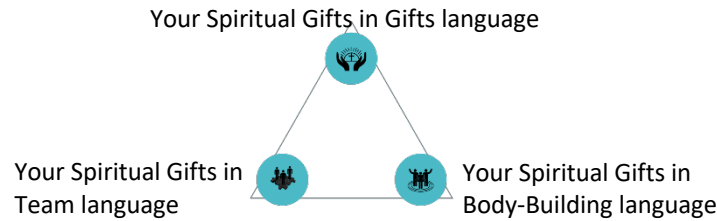
- Spend 65% of your time in your gifts and ministry burden/passion.
- Spend 35% in of your time in roles where you are not powerful.

Three critical Body Life issues at stake: power, fruit and joy.

- **Power:** Where do you experience God’s power?
- **Fruit:** Where do you see your greatest fruitfulness?
- **Joy:** Where do you experience supernatural joy in life and ministry?



Overview of the Gifts Triangle from *Your Leadership Grip*



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You have Equipping Gifts, Supporting Gifts or a Combination that God has designed for you to fulfill a unique role in your team and community of faith.

The First Angle: Understanding my Spiritual Gifts

Equipping Spiritual Gifts

evangelism... exhortation-encouragement... faith... leadership... pastoring... prophecy... teaching... wisdom...

Some would include *discernment* and *knowledge*

- These gifts are more **verbal** in function. Is the power in my words or my actions?
- People with these gifts equip or lead others powerfully in two ways: **Upfront and/or Alongside**
- Which style is more important in the kingdom? It is NOT about where you are standing, but rather HOW God's power works through your Spiritual Gifts!
- The ministry of equippers ("*katartidzo*" - to mend, equip, train in Ephesians 4:12) is NOT to do all the ministry, but rather to equip and release others to play their God-designed parts.
- A common leadership problem in Western Christianity is that it becomes more about leading than equipping; being upfront more than being powerful where you are gifted!

Supporting Spiritual Gifts

administration... giving... helps... mercy... service...

- These gifts are more **action**-oriented. Is the power in my words or my actions?
- By God's design, supporting gifted people do not lead powerfully, they are gifted primarily to serve and support. God did this on purpose!

Three essential insights about Equipping and Supporting Gifts

1. How do we detect where a person is most effective if we do not know their gifts? Watch for power in their words (equipping gifts) or their actions (supporting gifts)
2. Supporters must be freed to support and not lead!
We must be careful NOT to equate faithfulness with leadership. People with all supporting gifts are faithful, but NOT empowered and gifted by God to lead or equip others. Some ministries actually WATCH for those who serve the most, and then invite them out to be leaders. This is a huge mistake if such people's gifts are all supporting gifts.
3. What if a person has a combination of equipping and supporting gifts?
Be aware of the tendency to hold on to ministry roles and NOT release to others. If an equipping-supporting combo gifted person does not share ministry—by holding on to various ministry Roles, body life is stifled and the equipping/releasing process is stalled.

Confirming Your Spiritual Gifts



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“Gift Blending” is the melding together of your Spiritual Gift combination in a unique mix or blend which further distinguishes the flavor of your uniqueness.

What is your gift combination or blend?

Most of us have gift combinations that blend together in unique ways. Because of this, learn to ask yourself and others the following questions:

With what gifts do you lead powerfully? The leadership gift or a combination of other gifts ...pastoring and administration, or exhortation and administration, or evangelism and administration, etc.? (Note: what would be missing is the supernatural ability to originate vision.)

With what gifts do you teach powerfully? The teaching gift or a combination of two other gifts that cause you to teach powerfully...exhortation and leadership, prophecy and leadership, exhortation and prophecy, exhortation and wisdom, etc.?

With what gifts do you preach powerfully? The prophecy gift or teaching and leadership, or exhortation and teaching, or evangelism and exhortation, or wisdom and leadership, etc.?

With what gifts do you pastor powerfully? The pastoring gift or a combination of exhortation and mercy, leadership and mercy, etc.?

With what gifts do you support powerfully? The gift of exhortation, faith, giving, helps, mercy, service, etc.?

Gift Liabilities: People tend to understand their Spiritual Gifts most clearly through their Gift Liabilities. From *Your Leadership Grip* determine whether or not the gift liabilities for each of your Spiritual Gifts fit you. Reminder: a gift liability is when you try to exercise a gift through your own strength instead of the Holy Spirit’s power.



In pairs: Discuss what Spiritual Gifts you believe that you have and WHY. As your partner shares, play the role of “sober estimator.” Ask questions about each other’s gifts to help you discover more clearly just what gifts you have and in what order of strength. ***(See the following “Spiritual Gifts Definitions” for more detail on Definitions, Characteristics and Liabilities of the gifts.)***



Take the time to record the lessons you have learned from this section in your “Reflection Journal.”





Spiritual Gift Definitions

Administration

Definition: The supernatural ability to provide organization for the goals of the body of Christ by designing and carrying out an efficient plan of action

Gift Characteristics:

1. Like a helmsman on ship, they plot the course, or, for an orchestra, they bring together all the different parts of music for the various musicians to play.
2. Carry vision into reality by putting the details into a plan of action.
3. Tend to be more task- and detail-centered than people-centered, often linear planners
4. Focus on the details of the vision, part by part, rather than the "big picture."

Gift Liabilities:

1. May view people as "task completers" rather than people.\
2. May be unresponsive to others' suggestions and changes in plans they have made.
3. May rely on their well-organized plans rather than the Spirit and prayer
4. May be too careful and block the overall vision with their many specific details.

Discernment of Spirits

Definition: The supernatural ability to determine whether a certain action has its source in God, man, or Satan.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Able to discern the source of a message or special word as being from God or Satan.
2. Able to discern a person's spiritual motivation to be from God or Satan.
3. Have a profound sense of the spiritual realm, often sensing things in the spiritual realm that others simply do not experience.
4. Often able to help others discover the spiritual source of their problems.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May unnecessarily become overzealous in hunting satanic heresy.
2. May be overly judgmental of others and their motives.
3. May be insensitive to the process needed for real change in a person's life when offering spiritual input on source of problems or spiritual warfare.
4. May expect everyone else to be as spiritually discerning as they are, and thus frustrated when others are not such.

Evangelism

Definition: The supernatural ability to share the Gospel with unbelievers in such a way that people respond and became followers of Jesus Christ.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Share the Gospel in such a way that people respond by accepting Christ.
2. Have an ongoing desire to share the Good News with many people.
3. Often most effective in one type of evangelistic effort and not necessarily others: i.e. one-to-one, open air preaching, small group settings, etc.
4. Want others to share their faith effectively and win the world for Jesus Christ.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May motivate by guilt when encouraging others to share their faith.

2. May be very narrow in their evangelistic focus and discount the gifts of others.
3. May see people as "targets" and not as people with needs.
4. Often are seen as overly directive by others, Christian or non-Christian.

Exhortation (Encouragement)

Definition: The supernatural ability to encourage, comfort, challenge or rebuke others to action in such a way that they respond.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Encourages and motivates others to practical application of specific Biblical truths.
2. Able to tell others the truth about them with great encouragement and understanding.
3. May take the form of rebuke, though people will still feel helped by such an approach.
4. Often more effective in short-term encouragement than long-term counseling or support.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May offer "quick fixes" and appear insensitive to longer-term needs.
2. May jump to conclusions before listening to the whole story.
3. May offer too direct or harsh counsel at one extreme or be insensitive to the real need at the other.
4. May become more action-centered than person-centered at times because of desire for the person to take practical steps.

Faith

Definition: The supernatural ability to trust God with extra-ordinary confidence, knowing that He will work out His purposes in every situation.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Able to trust God to work in supernatural ways, even when the situation seems impossible.
2. Willing to pursue God's will in the midst of enormous difficulties or barriers.
3. Willing to yield to God's will rather than question or waver because of circumstances.
4. Often move out in faith when others are unwilling.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May exercise faith without love.
2. May be impatient when others are more timid or careful.
3. May be stubborn and unyielding instead of being willing to listen to counsel.
4. May see concern about their vision as criticism and hindrance to God's work rather than helpful questioning.

Giving

Definition: The supernatural ability to give freely, cheerfully and sacrificially of one's money or possessions for the sake of Christ and His body.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Give freely out of whatever resources are available.
2. See money and possessions as tools to serve God, and sets those resources aside for special use.
3. Their giving is often quiet and confidential -- no fanfare is desired.
4. Show strong interest and support in the people and causes they support.

Gift Liabilities:

1. Giver's own family may suffer because too much has been given away!
2. May be critical of how others spend their money.
3. May expect others to give like they do.
4. May be misled into giving to causes which do not further the cause of Christ.

Helps

Definition: The supernatural ability to unselfishly meet the needs of others, freeing them to exercise their spiritual gift(s). The helps gift focused on helping to free a person to use their gifts.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Sees what needs to be done in assisting others in specific ministries and desires to DO it.
2. Typically unselfish because of the strong desire to help.
3. Finds great joy in freeing others from responsibilities so that they can share their gifts.
4. Rejoices in the fruitfulness of others.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May have difficulty saying "no" when asked to help, even when they need to say "no."
2. May easily become overextended physically and/or emotionally.
3. May take too much ownership in helping others or in not letting others help.
4. May neglect their own needs and their family's/close friend's needs to help others.

Knowledge/Word of Knowledge

Definition: The supernatural ability to receive and share revealed knowledge which was not otherwise known, or the ability to gather and clarify large quantities of biblical knowledge with unusual spiritual insight.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Have a clear sense of receiving messages from God of things that they did not know naturally.
2. May manifest itself by a sense of supernatural insight coming directly out of prayer.
3. Words, phrases or word pictures may commonly/spontaneously appear in their mind.
4. Some would see this gift as the ability to research and combine large amounts of Biblical knowledge in a short period of time, with phenomenal understanding.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May respond to false or self-initiated impulses.
2. May inappropriately communicate a personal message for someone in a public setting (i.e. should have been shared personally because of the message's content).
3. Pride may grow because of the "great Biblical insights" discerned or messages received.
4. May mistakenly give a personal message to a large group of people, thus creating confusion for many people.

Leadership

Definition: The supernatural ability to provide overall vision for the body of Christ and provide direction for others in such a way that they willingly follow and work together.

Gift Characteristics:

1. If an administrator puts the pieces of music together, then the leader is the conductor of the orchestra, involving each person meaningfully in the "music," the process.
2. Provide vision and direction for the overall process, the "big picture."
3. Shares vision effectively with others and is able to involve many people in completing the task; the primary fruit is that people follow.
4. Will appear in charge, even if not identified as the official leader.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May forget how much they need others to know and carry out the specifics of the vision.
2. May become insensitive to individuals carrying out details of the vision because of focus on the big picture.

3. May become overly dominant or demanding if not sensitive to the Spirit.
4. May become prideful of their position or power.

Mercy

Definition: The supernatural ability to show great empathy and compassion for those who suffer physically, emotionally, or spiritually, and to assist them.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Show sincere kindness and compassion in their lifestyle.
2. Reveal significant "love in action" to those who are hurting, ill, downtrodden.
3. Often are drawn to those who may be outcasts or considered as outsiders.
4. Attempt to relieve the source of people's suffering.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May be too protective of the person(s) for whom they care.
2. May identify too strongly with someone hurting or ill, without realizing it,
3. May base decisions on emotion rather than reason.
4. May have great difficulty saying "no" to need even when they should.

Service

Definition: The supernatural ability to identify unmet needs in the body of Christ and beyond, and to use whatever resources necessary to practically meet those needs. This gift focuses on the acts of service and not the people involved, as with the gift of helps.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Resourceful in meeting needs and offering practical solutions.
2. Love to serve, often without receiving any public affirmation. Doing the task is enough.
3. Will often change their schedule to serve others.
4. Able to see needs arising before others see them.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May neglect responsibilities at home to serve others.
2. May exclude others from helping by their own drive to serve.
3. May over-commit and wear out physically because of their difficulty with saying "no."
4. May find self-esteem needs in "doing" for others rather than accepting themselves for who they are.

Pastoring

Definition: The supernatural ability to care for, feed, and protect the long-term spiritual needs of individuals or groups in the body of Christ.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Able to provide care, spiritual nourishment, and protection for people over an extended period.
2. More person-centered than task-centered.
3. Derive great strength from encouraging and verbally supporting others.
4. Usually counsel and guide many people, whether or not they have had training to do such.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May have a difficult time saying "no" to others, often at the expense of their families/close friends and their own physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being.
2. May be indecisive because of the strong desire to be sensitive to others.
3. May be protective of people and create a situation where people become too dependent on them.

4. May struggle with releasing people to grow beyond their pastoral control -- more so than any other equipping gift.

Prophet

Definition: The supernatural ability to proclaim God's present and future truth in such a way that the hearers are moved to respond.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Can be prophetic in either sense: may challenge people by speaking about a future event, or may speak forthrightly about present situations (foretelling and "forthtelling").
2. Proclaim timely and urgent messages from God with authority, calling people to decision.
3. Fruit may include repentance, strengthening, comfort or encouragement.
4. Role is often to plead the cause of God to His people and/or the world and call out change.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May preach gloom, doom and despair that is not from God.
2. May experience pride and self-centeredness growing out of the authoritative nature of the gift.
3. May communicate inaccurate foretelling when functioning in own strength and not the Spirit's.
4. Can be too blunt.

Teaching

Definition: The supernatural ability to clearly and accurately communicate the truths of the Bible in such a way that people learn.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Have a deep conviction to communicate Biblical truth.
2. Able to powerfully instruct, reprove, correct and train using the Bible.
3. Able to pull scriptural insights together in a clear and insightful way.
4. Communicate truth in such a way that people understand what was conveyed from God's Word.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May appear to have all the answers, leaving little room for discussion.
2. May communicate too much information too quickly for the average learner.
3. May become prideful of their own learning.
4. May be too content-focused with little or no people-focus.

Wisdom/Word of Wisdom

Definition: The supernatural ability to offer pertinent spiritual counsel immediately in situations where such guidance is needed.

Gift Characteristics:

1. Able to apply spiritual knowledge in practical ways.
2. Have a supernatural understanding of situations in which they have no previous knowledge.
3. Offer practical, helpful solutions to problems -- i.e. wise counsel.
4. When such gifted people speak, people learn to listen because of the consistently accurate and wise spiritual counsel offered.

Gift Liabilities:

1. May offer only human wisdom when functioning in their own strength, causing their counsel to be ineffective in the situation.
2. Forcing a personal view on others is a clear violation of this gift.
3. May become prideful when they realize people really listen when they speak.
4. May begin to believe that they are wise in their own eyes.



