

Spiritual Gifts List & Test

Steve Vaughan, March 2025 - for CCC City Groups.

Many years ago I wrote [this blog](#) for an internal leadership course we were doing, and it links to a spiritual gifts [test](#) to help you discover your gifts. It's not perfect, but it may help people who are unsure what their gifts are and get them going. Do encourage people to read the blog and take the test.

Here is a brief summary of the gifts. 22 are mentioned in 5 NT lists. This is not an exhaustive set of gifts, just the ones we know about.

1 Corinthians 12:8-10 = 9 gifts

- a message of wisdom, a message of knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in different kinds of languages, the interpretation of languages.

1 Corinthians 12:28-30 = 9 gifts, 4 new

- **apostles**, prophets, **teachers**, miracles, healing, **helping**, **guidance**, languages, interpretation

Ephesians 4:11 = 5 gifts, 2 new

- apostles, the prophets, **evangelists**, **pastors**, teachers

1 Peter 4:9-11 = 3 gifts

- **Hospitality**, **Speaking**, **Serving**

Romans 12:6-8 = 7 gifts, 4 new

- prophecy, service, teaching; **encouragement**; **financial giving**, **leadership**, **showing mercy**

Below is a brief summary of what they are, though it's not always exactly clear and there is great variety within them.

1. **The message of wisdom** - the gift to explain the cross (1 Cor 1-2) – either through the preaching of the bible or in 1-2-1 evangelism.
2. **The message of knowledge** – This could to be linked to the gift of prophecy and the gift of understanding mysteries (13.2) and revelation (13.8-9, 12, 14.6) - a supernatural insight into someone else's life. However it could be more generally the God-given ability to read a situation and speak wisely and knowledgeably into it.
3. **Faith** – This is the gift where someone has the type of faith that can move mountains. They believe that God will do something which by worldly wisdom seems impossible - e.g a financial hurdle.
4. **Healing** – this is pretty self explanatory, though please note - this is for examples like the NT (e.g paralysed people, blind people etc)
5. **Miraculous Powers**
 - a. Exorcisms – casting out demons that have taken hold of people
 - b. Nature miracles – a limited supply seems to carry on forever...maybe of food or petrol or something else.
 - c. *Supernatural* energy that God gives people – for example when Elijah was anointed the Holy Spirit to run faster than the chariots in 1 Kings 18.46.
6. **Prophecy*** - this seems to be a very broad term, which can encompass lots of things. Here is a short definition from Wayne Grudem

‘the reception and subsequent transmission of spontaneous, divinely originated revelation... *‘telling something that God has spontaneously brought to mind.’*

However there is evidence to suggest it is broader than this. See this [blog](#) and longer definition from another scholar, Anthony Thieselton

... prophecy, as a gift of the Holy Spirit, combines pastoral insight into the needs of persons, communities, and situations with the ability to address these with a God-given utterance or longer discourse (whether unprompted or prepared with judgment, decision and rational reflection) leading to challenge or comfort, judgment, or consolation, but ultimately building up the addressees ... While the speaker believes that such utterances or discourses come from the Holy Spirit, mistakes can be made, and since believers, including ministers or prophets, remain humanly fallible, claims to prophecy must be weighed and tested.

Additionally, the weekly preaching of the word of God also fits within the prophetic tradition of the scriptures - bringing God's timely word to his people, to hear God's voice for our day.

7. **Ability to distinguish between spirits** - see Matthew 7:21-23 - false prophets and powers. So the gift to discern between the work of the devil or the work of the Holy Spirit.
8. **Gift of languages*** - either
 - (a) An earthly language that God supernaturally gives you to for a reason – e,g Pentecost. (Acts 2)
 - (b) Or a heavenly language (1 Cor 13) – the tongues/languages of angels.
9. **Gift of interpretation of languages** - Whenever God gives a language in a public meeting then there will always come an interpretation. And we should wait for the interpretation.
10. **Apostles** - 2 types of apostles
 - a. the Apostles of Christ were the eye-witnesses of Christ who went and spread the good news in the 1st century (Acts 1 - selection of Matthias)
 - b. There are also Apostles today who are those that pioneer new work, share in the gospel in uncharted territories, plant new churches and give oversight to that work. (Acts 14 - Barnabas)
11. **Teachers** - teach the bible and God's truth
12. **Helps** - you're good at helping, assisting
13. **Guidance/Administration** - organising, leading, administering and guiding things and people
14. **Evangelists** - whether 1-2-1 or in public, they are effective at preaching the gospel to non-believers
15. **Pastors** - shepherding gifts, who care for souls, minds and bodies
16. **Hospitality** - opening up homes, hearts, space and offering food and welcome
17. **Speaking** - can speak effectively for God
18. **Serving** - naturally good at serving

19. **Encouragement** - give courage to others, build them up (Barnabas is said to have this gift)

20. **Financial giving** - generous with their money. Patrons etc.

21. **Leadership** - can steer a ship, can lead a group towards a goal

22. **Showing mercy** - see needs and care for people effectively

More can be said about these 22 gifts but that should give you an overview. And there are more gifts still God wants to give his church.

Remember the bigger principles from 1 Corinthians 12-14

- They're gifts - not rewards
- They point us to Jesus
- They come from the one Spirit
- God gives them - we don't determine what we get
- They're for the building up of the church - for the common good
- We should avoid insecurity and pride
- We should appreciate the diversity and serve one another in love
- The body is about unity in diversity.
- When it comes to the gathered meeting - focus on gifts that are 'intelligible' and build others up and consider the non-believer who is present.
- In the end it's all about love!

Do read commentary by Andrew Wilson (1 Corinthians for everyone), Gordon Fee (NICNT - 1st Corinthians) or Don Carson (showing the Spirit) for more on this.

Also do read Andrew Wilson's [Spirit & Sacrament](#)

City Group Leaders - this paper is available to send onto your groups.

*Longer definitions of prophecy and tongues, with bible references, are given below on, quoted from Steve's talk on Sunday 6th April 2026 from 1 Corinthians 14:1-25

The gift of prophecy**

A timely and unusually applicable word from God spoken to God's people

It most likely incorporates or is linked to **other gifts Paul mentions**

- Word of knowledge (12:8)
- Understanding mysteries (13:2)
- Revelation, knowledge or word of instruction (13:8-9, 13:12, 14:6, 26 & 30)

We'll come to see as we go through the text **that prophecy is**

- A spirit inspired utterance **from God to us**** (14:29-32)
- As with Old Testament Prophets, it is **not normally 'fore-telling'***** about the future (predictive), though it can be (see Acts 11:27).
- As with the Old Testament Prophets - **it is normally 'forth-telling'***** – speaking God's truth into a churches situation and life that is very timely and apt way, and often with usual insight and accuracy.
- **It is always**** for the purpose to strengthening, encouraging, comforting & convicting (14:3 & 14:24)

Here is one scholars shorter definition (**Wayne Grudem****)

'the reception and subsequent transmission of spontaneous, divinely originated revelation... 'telling something that God has spontaneously brought to mind.'

Many commentators, reflecting on the backdrop of OT prophecy think this is too narrow a definition of prophecy – focusing solely on the 'spontaneous' prophecy – and so here is a broader (and longer!) definition by **Anthony Thistleton****

... prophecy, as a gift of the Holy Spirit, combines pastoral insight into the needs of persons, communities, and situations with the ability to address these with a God-given utterance or longer discourse (whether unprompted or prepared with judgment, decision and rational reflection) leading to challenge or comfort, judgment, or consolation, but ultimately building up the addressees ... While the speaker believes that such utterances or discourses come from the Holy Spirit, mistakes can be made, and since believers, including ministers or prophets, remain humanly fallible, claims to prophecy must be weighed and tested.

So... a timely and unusually applicable word from God spoken to God's people

The gift of languages/tongues** can either be

1. **An earthly language**** (see Acts 2:4-12, Acts 10:46 & 19:6) – when The Holy Spirit came on the church on the day of Pentecost we read that there was a **vast crowd in****

⁵ *“Jerusalem of God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven*

⁶ *each one heard their own language being spoken.*

(They said)

⁸ *each of us hears them in our native language?*

¹¹ *declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!’*

The Holy Spirit enabled the 120 believers of the early church to speak at least 15 different languages – 15 different mother tongues are mentioned in Acts 2 – and each tribe and tongue could immediately understand! A special and unique event, reversing the separating consequences of language from the tower of babel (Genesis 11).

However 1 Corinthians 13 also seems to hint that the gift of languages/tongues can also include

2. A heavenly language** (see 1 Corinthians 13:1 and 14:4, 14, 27, 28)

If I speak in the languages/tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love..

Of men – earthly...acts 2

Of angels – heavenly...

In contract to Acts 2, in 1 Corinthians 14 Paul will talk about how speaking and praying in tongues which**

Vs27 – requires the gift of interpretation as it is not naturally understood by other native speakers.

Vs4** - edifies themselves

Vs14 - my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful.

Vs28 - speak to himself and to God.

Something personal, private and devotional, something that bypasses the mind, something that requires interpretation (unlike the day of Pentecost), something between you and God...not an intelligible earthly language... the tongues of angels

So there seems to be two types of gifts of languages – an earthly one, and a heavenly one. One that requires interpretation because it is mainly between you and

God, and one that doesn't because it is understood by the hearers immediately as they hear the praises of God.^[1]

We'll flesh out these definitions next week as we think more about how to use those specific gifts in the church.

^[1] See Andrew Wilson – Spirit & Sacrament, page 110 - footnote