



GRACE WAS GIVEN

DEFINING, DEVELOPING, DEPLOYING

DREW DUKES

This material is a companion guide to a spiritual gifts sermon series intended to help the members and attenders of Center Point Church discover how God has uniquely equipped them for ministry service. This manual is a compilation of resources in addition to Pastor Drew Dukes' writing. These resources include Lifeway's Spiritual Gifts assessment and information found at www.lifeway.com/en/articles/women-leadership-spiritual-gifts-growth-service. The "Life Inventory" exercises are adapted from material from the Spiritual Formation department of Dallas Theological Seminary.

The exercises in this material are intended to be shared within the context of a Connect Group (small group) setting. If you're interested in joining a Connect Group at Center Point, go to cpclex.org/connectgroup.

Additionally, this material was developed for ongoing use in discipleship. If you're interested in additional discipleship resources, including one specifically regarding the Holy Spirit, go to www.cpclex.org/discipleship. At that link you can also fill out a discipleship interest form to begin your discipleship journey.

You can also locate information about Connect Group, discipleship, and other Center Point events and ministries on the CPC App on your iPhone or Android device.

Grace Was Given

A Study of Spiritual Gifts

PART 1: DEFINING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

"But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift."
Ephesians 4:7

The Holy Spirit has gifted every single Christian with unique and specific spiritual gifts. These can coincide with how God designed us regarding our personality and can run parallel to our natural God given talents as well. Sometimes, our spiritual gifts run seemingly counter to our natural tendencies, which is what makes the compilation of the Church so fascinating. We all have a special gift set determined by God's grace to build up the Body of Christ in the context of the local church. The Bible has 3 primary passages that highlight the lists of spiritual gifts. As a compilation, we have an entire list of how the Spirit has imparted gifts to the Church in order that they may utilize them and grow in Christ-like maturity.

WHY SO MANY SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

Spiritual gifts are divinely given tools to every person who has trusted in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Just like toolboxes are full of different instruments designed to help construct and build, so the Spirit has given individual Christians a unique set of skills used to build up the Body of Christ.

For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many are one body, so it is with Christ. - 1
Corinthians 12:12

For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of one another... - Romans 12:4-5

These gifts are designated to every individual according to the grace of God. We didn't create or shape these gifts within our own power, they are simply a result of God's assigned measure to us by His good pleasure.

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.
- Romans 12:3

But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ’s gift. - Ephesians 4:7

All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. - 1 Corinthians 12:11

But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as He chose. - 1 Corinthians 12:18

Why do you think the analogy of a “body” is often used in Scripture regarding spiritual gifts?

How does the fact that spiritual gifts come from God encourage you in the employment of your gift(s)?

As Paul discussed in 1 Corinthians 12, a properly functioning Body requires a variety of gifts. If everyone had mercy but no one had discernment, the Church would not be set up well for stewardship success.

WHAT ARE THEIR PRIMARY FUNCTIONS?

The main purpose of spiritual gifts is to build up the Body of Christ toward maturity and His own likeness. As each individual member works for the good of the Body, demonstrating their gift(s) under the knowledge that it has a specific and unique function, the glory of Christ is on display and the health of the Body is exponential.

...for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God...we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love. Ephesians 4:12-16

Restate the benefits of exercising spiritual gifts in your own words from this passage.

In the same way that the Body is built up into Christlike maturity in the exercising of the gifts, the adverse effect is also true. When individual gifts are neglected, abused, or missing within the context of the local church, there is a degree of suffering that accompanies.

But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. – 1 Corinthians 12:24b-26

Paul spoke to a very fractured and divided church in Corinth, so no doubt this particular letter was intended to bring biblical clarity to cultural issues as well as encourage church unity.

Above any of the functional purposes, the glory of God is the most primary purpose in the exercising of spiritual gifts. Since God has given us these gifts by the Spirit and through the victory of Christ Jesus, His namesake is why we practice the gifts.

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another...in order that God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. - 1 Peter 4:10-11

WHAT ARE NOT THEIR PRIMARY FUNCTIONS?

As 1st Corinthians 12 ends and spills over into Paul’s continued thought process, we see that he lays down the foundation as to how spiritual gifts are motivated and how they should be expressed. There may have

been some dissension among the church regarding who had the ‘more honorable gifts’, and Paul wanted to squash any divisiveness by reminding the church of the operation in which the spiritual gifts are demonstrated.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:1–3. How might spiritual gifting be abused?

As a summary of chapter 13, Paul says: “Look, all the gifts are great, but they have little to no merit if they are exercised outside of love. If you prophesy, have knowledge, move mountains in faith, and sacrifice all that you have without love as the root motive, it is worthless.” Christians should absolutely keep this in mind as we continue to use our gifts.

It's no surprise that some aren't content being an appendix or a pinky finger in the Body of Christ. They both have a specific function but aren't as prominent or visibly noticeable. No matter your gifts, there are a five very important things to consider:

- 1. Your gifts are a result of God’s design and purpose.
- 2. Your gifts are special and individual yet are meant to be used corporately.
- 3. All parts are meant to work together for the good of the entire Body. We all have the same goal.
- 4. It is not right to be covetous of other people’s gifts and/or downplay our own.
- 5. God’s glory is what is at stake in using our gifts, not our own recognition.

Which of these five principles provide the most helpful reminder/rebuke for you?

WHAT ARE THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

When you take a comprehensive look at the scriptures, you'll find these spiritual gifts listed: (taken from Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11; and 1 Peter 4:9-11)

Leadership	Administration
Teaching	Knowledge
Wisdom	Prophecy
Discernment	Exhortation
Shepherding	Faith
Evangelism	Apostleship
Service/Helps	Mercy
Giving	Hospitality

To help aid you in discovering your spiritual gifts, we've included a spiritual gift inventory created by Lifeway. As you work through the Lifeway Spiritual Gift Inventory and discover/reacquaint yourself with your personal spiritual gifts, you'll find more definition and clarity as to what these gifts are. It's no secret that there is a multiplicity of gifts, and with that a varying range of how/where these gifts are demonstrated. Keep in mind the 5 reminders about spiritual gifts as you dig deeper into discovering your own.

Additionally, you are more than your gifting. God often uses people with the same gift in very different ways based on several other factors and circumstances. When it comes to discovering the best way to employ spiritual gifting, we've discovered two important truths: first, it's better to take a holistic approach to spiritual gifts, and second, discerning spiritual gifting is best practiced in the context of community. This resource is designed to help you consider your spiritual gifts in light of your whole person—your personal history, context, personality, etc. Likewise, as you work through your spiritual gift results and life inventory exercises, we want you to share what you're learning with your Connect Group. Your group will be able to affirm or challenge what God is teaching you to refine how you exercise your gifts.

As you work through this resource, let glory and praise roll up toward heaven with thankfulness that God has seen fit to equip each of us in a specific way. Be humble and grateful for His providential imparting of these gifts. Seek, as often as you can, to demonstrate these gifts within the context of the local church for the express purposes listed above.

PRACTICAL APPLICATION

1. What is the value of understanding your spiritual giftedness?

2. In what ways do the verses shared in this study challenge/encourage you as you consider the ways God has gifted other believers?

3. What is God asking of me now that I have a better biblical and practical understanding of spiritual gifts? What is my next step?

HOMEWORK: LIFE INVENTORY INTRODUCTION

Spiritual Gift assessments are very useful tools to begin discovering how God has specially gifted you to build up the Body of Christ through service. However, you are not *only* your gift. Through a series of exercises, we want to help you discover how God has uniquely positioned you to serve the Body of Christ. These exercises culminate in a presentation of your “Life Inventory.”

First, it is helpful to do a Spiritual Gift assessment. While many exist, Lifeway offers a free resource to help you discern your Spiritual Gifting. After taking the assessment, use the questions below to reflect on your results.

In addition to learning your Spiritual Gift(s), the next exercise seeks to help you consider and process your personal history with the Stars & Scars Timeline. Things like when and where you were born, your family dynamics, events from your past, your educational background all play a role in making you the person you are today. Your personal history isn’t designed to help you discover what you can and can’t do. Rather, reviewing and evaluating your personal history in the Starts & Scars Timeline is designed to help you discover several things including your ministry passion as well as possible pitfalls.

In addition to your personal history, it’s helpful to understand your personality. It’s great to do any assessment or inventory you have access to in order to discover more about yourself and how you operate. To the degree that any of the written descriptions can help you understand yourself, these things are helpful. Often, in the context of the other “Life Inventory” exercises, they can provide a helpful resource to understand what ministry opportunities should be pursued and what should be avoided.

Finally, it’s time to put together your “Life Inventory.” Your “Life Inventory” is a presentation where you curate all of the information that you’ve gained so far along with some additional considerations. You will share this presentation with your Connect Group and possibly your discipler/disciples in order to allow them to speak into it. Your “Life Inventory” isn’t just a presentation, it’s a snapshot of a process in which God is working. Those who know you best, who share in your Christian values, who possess biblically-saturated wisdom should be offered the opportunity to speak into what you’ve learned. You may need to start now preparing your heart to receive this wisdom.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SURVEY

DIRECTIONS

This is not a test, so there are no wrong answers. The ***Spiritual Gifts Survey*** consists of 80 statements. Some items reflect concrete actions; other items are descriptive traits; and still others are statements of belief.

- Select the one response you feel best characterizes yourself and place that number in the blank provided. Record your answer in the blank beside each item.
- Do not spend too much time on any one item. Remember, it is not a test. Usually your immediate response is best.
- Please give an answer for each item. Do not skip any items.
- Do not ask others how they are answering or how they think you should answer.
- Work at your own pace.

Your response choices are:

- 5—Highly characteristic of me/definitely true for me
 - 4—Most of the time this would describe me/be true for me
 - 3—Frequently characteristic of me/true for me—about 50 percent of the time
 - 2—Occasionally characteristic of me/true for me—about 25 percent of the time
 - 1—Not at all characteristic of me/definitely untrue for me
-

- _____ 1. I have the ability to organize ideas, resources, time, and people effectively.
- _____ 2. I am willing to study and prepare for the task of teaching.
- _____ 3. I am able to relate the truths of God to specific situations.
- _____ 4. I have a God-given ability to help others grow in their faith.
- _____ 5. I possess a special ability to communicate the truth of salvation.
- _____ 6. I have the ability to make critical decisions when necessary.
- _____ 7. I am sensitive to the hurts of people.
- _____ 8. I experience joy in meeting needs through sharing possessions.
- _____ 9. I enjoy studying.
- _____ 10. I have delivered God's message of warning and judgment.
- _____ 11. I am able to sense the true motivation of persons and movements.
- _____ 12. I have a special ability to trust God in difficult situations.
- _____ 13. I have a strong desire to contribute to the establishment of new churches.
- _____ 14. I take action to meet physical and practical needs rather than merely talking about or planning to help.

- _____ 15. I enjoy entertaining guests in my home.
- _____ 16. I can adapt my guidance to fit the maturity of those working with me.
- _____ 17. I can delegate and assign meaningful work.
- _____ 18. I have an ability and desire to teach.
- _____ 19. I am usually able to analyze a situation correctly.
- _____ 20. I have a natural tendency to encourage others.
- _____ 21. I am willing to take the initiative in helping other Christians grow in their faith.
- _____ 22. I have an acute awareness of the emotions of other people, such as loneliness, pain, fear, and anger.
- _____ 23. I am a cheerful giver.
- _____ 24. I spend time digging into facts.
- _____ 25. I feel that I have a message from God to deliver to others.
- _____ 26. I can recognize when a person is genuine/honest.
- _____ 27. I am a person of vision (a clear mental portrait of a preferable future given by God). I am able to communicate vision in such a way that others commit to making the vision a reality.
- _____ 28. I am willing to yield to God's will rather than question and waver.
- _____ 29. I would like to be more active in getting the gospel to people in other lands.
- _____ 30. It makes me happy to do things for people in need.
- _____ 31. I am successful in getting a group to do its work joyfully.
- _____ 32. I am able to make strangers feel at ease.
- _____ 33. I have the ability to plan learning approaches.
- _____ 34. I can identify those who need encouragement.
- _____ 35. I have trained Christians to be more obedient disciples of Christ.
- _____ 36. I am willing to do whatever it takes to see others come to Christ.
- _____ 37. I am attracted to people who are hurting.
- _____ 38. I am a generous giver.
- _____ 39. I am able to discover new truths.
- _____ 40. I have spiritual insights from Scripture concerning issues and people that compel me to speak out.
- _____ 41. I can sense when a person is acting in accord with God's will.
- _____ 42. I can trust in God even when things look dark.
- _____ 43. I can determine where God wants a group to go and help it get there.
- _____ 44. I have a strong desire to take the gospel to places where it has never been heard.
- _____ 45. I enjoy reaching out to new people in my church and community.

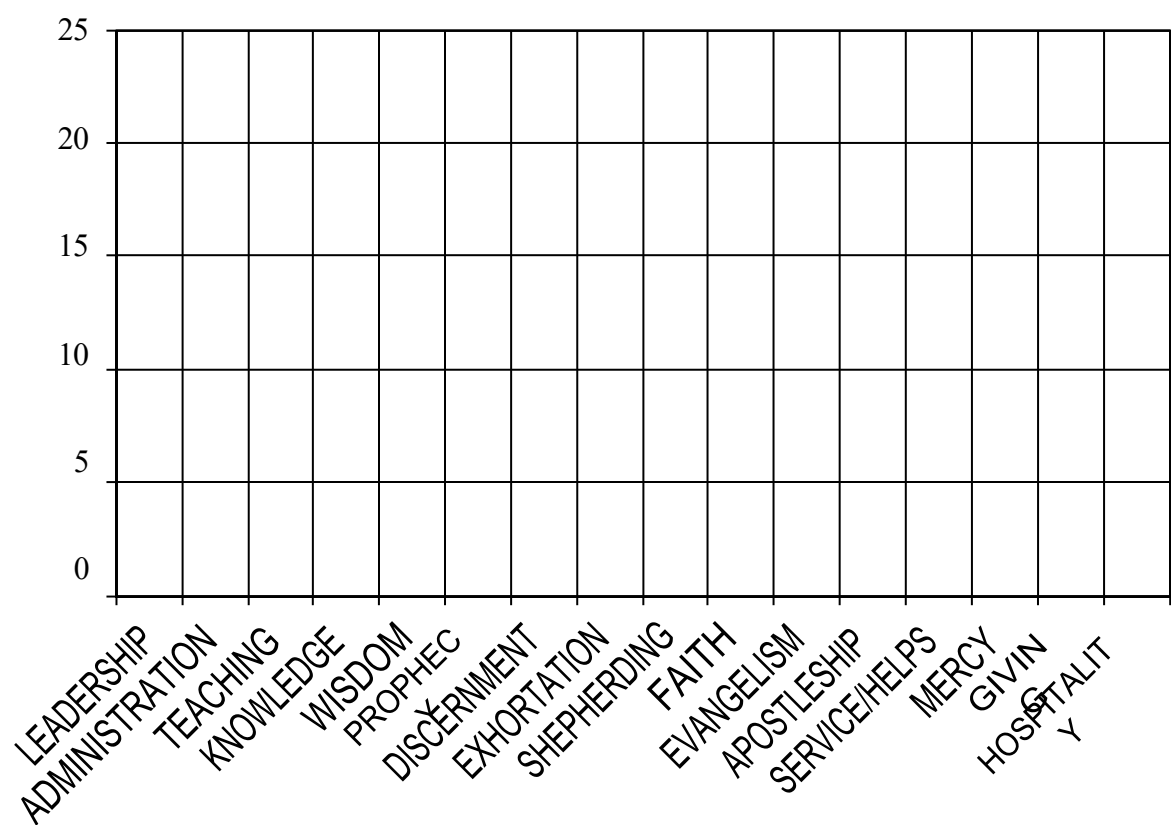
- _____ 46. I am sensitive to the needs of people.
- _____ 47. I have been able to make effective and efficient plans for accomplishing the goals of a group.
- _____ 48. I often am consulted when fellow Christians are struggling to make difficult decisions.
- _____ 49. I think about how I can comfort and encourage others in my congregation.
- _____ 50. I am able to give spiritual direction to others.
- _____ 51. I am able to present the gospel to lost persons in such a way that they accept the Lord and His salvation.
- _____ 52. I possess an unusual capacity to understand the feelings of those in distress.
- _____ 53. I have a strong sense of stewardship based on the recognition that God owns all things.
- _____ 54. I have delivered to other persons messages that have come directly from God.
- _____ 55. I can sense when a person is acting under God's leadership.
- _____ 56. I try to be in God's will continually and be available for His use.
- _____ 57. I feel that I should take the gospel to people who have different beliefs from me.
- _____ 58. I have an acute awareness of the physical needs of others.
- _____ 59. I am skilled in setting forth positive and precise steps of action.
- _____ 60. I like to meet visitors at church and make them feel welcome.
- _____ 61. I explain Scripture in such a way that others understand it.
- _____ 62. I can usually see spiritual solutions to problems.
- _____ 63. I welcome opportunities to help people who need comfort, consolation, encouragement, and counseling.
- _____ 64. I feel at ease in sharing Christ with nonbelievers.
- _____ 65. I can influence others to perform to their highest God-given potential.
- _____ 66. I recognize the signs of stress and distress in others.
- _____ 67. I desire to give generously and unpretentiously to worthwhile projects and ministries.
- _____ 68. I can organize facts into meaningful relationships.
- _____ 69. God gives me messages to deliver to His people.
- _____ 70. I am able to sense whether people are being honest when they tell of their religious experiences.
- _____ 71. I enjoy presenting the gospel to persons of other cultures and backgrounds.
- _____ 72. I enjoy doing little things that help people.
- _____ 73. I can give a clear, uncomplicated presentation.

74. I have been able to apply biblical truth to the specific needs of my church.
75. God has used me to encourage others to live Christlike lives.
76. I have sensed the need to help other people become more effective in their ministries.
77. I like to talk about Jesus to those who do not know Him.
78. I have the ability to make strangers feel comfortable in my home.
79. I have a wide range of study resources and know how to secure information.
80. I feel assured that a situation will change for the glory of God even when the situation seem impossible.

SCORING YOUR SURVEY

1. Place in each box your numerical response (1-5) to the item number which is indicated below the box.
2. For each gift, add the numbers in the boxes and put the total in the TOTAL box.

LEADERSHIP	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 6	Item 16	Item 27	Item 43	Item 65	TOTAL
ADMINISTRATION	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 1	Item 17	Item 31	Item 47	Item 59	TOTAL
TEACHING	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 2	Item 18	Item 33	Item 61	Item 73	TOTAL
KNOWLEDGE	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 9	Item 24	Item 39	Item 68	Item 79	TOTAL
WISDOM	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 3	Item 19	Item 48	Item 62	Item 74	TOTAL
PROPHECY	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 10	Item 25	Item 40	Item 54	Item 69	TOTAL
DISCERNMENT	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 11	Item 26	Item 41	Item 55	Item 70	TOTAL
EXHORTATION	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 20	Item 34	Item 49	Item 63	Item 75	TOTAL
SHEPHERDING	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 4	Item 21	Item 35	Item 50	Item 76	TOTAL
FAITH	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 12	Item 28	Item 42	Item 56	Item 80	TOTAL
EVANGELISM	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 5	Item 36	Item 51	Item 64	Item 77	TOTAL
APOSTLESHIP	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 13	Item 29	Item 44	Item 57	Item 71	TOTAL
SERVICE/HELPS	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 14	Item 30	Item 46	Item 58	Item 72	TOTAL
MERCY	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 7	Item 22	Item 37	Item 52	Item 66	TOTAL
GIVING	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 8	Item 23	Item 38	Item 53	Item 67	TOTAL
HOSPITALITY	+	+	+	+	=	
	Item 15	Item 32	Item 45	Item 60	Item 78	TOTAL



1. For each gift place a mark across the bar at the point that corresponds to your TOTAL for that gift.
2. For each gift shade the bar below the mark that you have drawn.
3. The resultant graph gives a picture of your gifts. Gifts for which the bars are tall are the ones in which you appear to be strongest. Gifts for which the bars are very short are the ones in which you appear not to be strong.

Discover Your Spiritual Gifts!

Gene Wilkes

Ken Hemphill defines a spiritual gift as “an individual manifestation of grace from the Father that enables you to serve Him and thus play a vital role in His plan for the redemption of the world.”ⁱ Peter Wagner defines a spiritual gift as “a special attribute given by the Holy Spirit to every member of the Body of Christ according to God’s grace for use within the context of the Body.”ⁱⁱ I like to use this definition:

A spiritual gift is an expression of the Holy Spirit in the life of believers which empowers them to serve the body of Christ, the church.

Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30; Ephesians 4:11; and 1 Peter 4:9-11 contain representative lists of gifts and roles God has given to the church. A definition of these gifts follows.ⁱⁱⁱ

Leadership - Leadership aids the body by leading and directing members to accomplish the goals and purposes of the church. Leadership motivates people to work together in unity toward common goals (Rom. 12:8).

Administration - Persons with the gift of administration lead the body by steering others to remain on task. Administration enables the body to organize according to God-given purposes and long-term goals (1 Cor. 12:28).

Teaching - Teaching is instructing members in the truths and doctrines of God's Word for the purposes of building up, unifying, and maturing the body (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7; Eph. 4:11).

Knowledge - The gift of knowledge manifests itself in teaching and training in discipleship. It is the God-given ability to learn, know, and explain the precious truths of God's Word. A word of knowledge is a Spirit-revealed truth (1 Cor. 12:28).

Wisdom - Wisdom is the gift that discerns the work of the Holy Spirit in the body and applies His teachings and actions to the needs of the body (1 Cor. 12:28).

Prophecy - The gift of prophecy is proclaiming the Word of God boldly. This builds up the body and leads to conviction of sin. Prophecy manifests itself in preaching and teaching (1 Cor. 12:10; Rom. 12:6).

Discernment - Discernment aids the body by recognizing the true intentions of those within or related to the body. Discernment tests the message and actions of others for the protection and well-being of the body (1 Cor. 12:10).

Exhortation - Possessors of this gift encourage members to be involved in and enthusiastic about the work of the Lord. Members with this gift are good counselors and motivate others to service. Exhortation exhibits itself in preaching, teaching, and ministry (Rom. 12:8).

Shepherding - The gift of shepherding is manifested in persons who look out for the spiritual welfare of others. Although pastors, like shepherds, do care for members of the church, this gift is not limited to a pastor or staff member (Eph. 4:11).

Faith - Faith trusts God to work beyond the human capabilities of the people. Believers with this gift encourage others to trust in God in the face of apparently insurmountable odds (1 Cor. 12:9).

Evangelism - God gifts his church with evangelists to lead others to Christ effectively and enthusiastically. This gift builds up the body by adding new members to its fellowship (Eph. 4:11).

Apostleship - The church sends apostles from the body to plant churches or be missionaries. Apostles motivate the body to look beyond its walls in order to carry out the Great Commission (1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11).

Service/Helps - Those with the gift of service/helps recognize practical needs in the body and joyfully give assistance to meeting those needs. Christians with this gift do not mind working behind the scenes (1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7).

Mercy - Cheerful acts of compassion characterize those with the gift of mercy. Persons with this gift aid the body by empathizing with hurting members. They keep the body healthy and unified by keeping others aware of the needs within the church (Rom. 12:8).

Giving - Members with the gift of giving give freely and joyfully to the work and mission of the body. Cheerfulness and liberality are characteristics of individuals with this gift (Rom. 12:8).

Hospitality - Those with this gift have the ability to make visitors, guests, and strangers feel at ease. They often use their home to entertain guests. Persons with this gift integrate new members into the body (1 Pet. 4:9).

God has gifted you with an expression of His Holy Spirit to support His vision and mission of the church. It is a worldwide vision to reach all people with the gospel of Christ. As a servant leader, God desires that you know how He has gifted you. This will lead you to where He would have you serve as part of His vision and mission for the church.

Gene Wilkes is pastor of Legacy Church, Plano, Texas. This article was adapted from Jesus on Leadership: Developing Servant Leaders, by Gene Wilkes (LifeWay Christian Resources 1998).

ⁱ Ken Hemphill, *Serving God: Discovering and Using Your Spiritual Gifts Workbook* (Dallas: The Sampson Company, 1995), 22.

ⁱⁱ *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow* by C. Peter Wagner, Copyright © 1979, Regal Books, Ventura, CA 93003. Used by permission, 42.

ⁱⁱⁱ These definitions exclude the “sign gifts” because of some confusion that accompanies these gifts and because they are difficult to fit into ministries within a typical church’s ministry base.

Now that you have completed the survey, thoughtfully answer the following questions.

The gifts I have begun to discover in my life are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

INVENTORY EXERCISE 1: LIFEWAY SPIRITUAL GIFT ASSESSMENT

After taking the assessment reflect on the following questions:

1. Are the results what you expected? Why or why not?
2. How have you served in the past in areas that utilized these gifts for the building up of God's Church?
3. How have you served in the past in areas that failed to utilize or abused these gifts?

4. How have these gifts been affirmed by Christian community through past service?

Grace Was Given

A Study of Spiritual Gifts

PART 2: DEVELOPING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

*Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us,
let us use them...*

Romans 12:6a

THEOLOGY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS—CHRISTUS VICTOR

As we've already studied, each Christian has been imparted spiritual gifts by the Holy Spirit. While this is an amazing thought, it can often be a cold and meaningless consideration without some vivid biblical imagery to make the importance of it come alive to us. One of the most exciting passages in scripture is one of the most overlooked or misunderstood passages in scripture, so let's take some time to bring more clarity and understanding to it so that it might sink into our hearts deeper just how much the gospel impacts our spiritual gifts.

Ephesians 4:7-8: But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."

It is easy to quickly skim past this passage as we look to get more understanding into the actual gift list in verses 11-16. In reality, verses 7 and 8 are the meatiest part of this text and give an incredible amount of insight as to why Paul wants to the Church at Ephesus to know and use their gifts. Let's take a few minutes and gain some context behind these verses, because in it we find the motivation for using our spiritual gifts.

In the Old Testament days when a king would go to war with a nation and conquer that territory, they would make it a habit of bringing back the captives of that land and all the spoils of war. Once they returned to their city, a parade would be thrown and the city streets would be flooded with rejoicing citizens. As the procession went on, the enemy spoils (all their gold, silver, precious items) that were taken by the king would then be distributed to the citizens as a celebration over the enemy.

Can you picture it? A king and his men, not keeping for themselves what they won, but rather giving it away freely to a people who didn't

lift a hand in battle simply because they were citizens of that country and pledged allegiance to that king.

This is the picture Paul is painting here: Jesus is that king. We are those citizens. Sin, death, and hell are the conquered enemies. The spoils of war are the spiritual gifts. Do you see it yet?

Christ’s cross was the battleground in which he engaged the supernatural enemies. The empty tomb is Christ’s definitive war cry of victory as he put death to death, silenced the sting of sin, and made a way for humanity to be reconciled back to God—Christus Victor (Latin: Christ the Victor). Jesus ascended on high (Ephesians 4:8), leading a host of captives (those of us freed from bondage and slavery to sin), giving gifts to men. Spiritual gifts. Like the precious metals snatched by the king’s army and given away to the citizens of the city, so Jesus snatched these spiritual gifts for us through His death and resurrection and has paraded through the streets, freely giving them away as a final proof of his victory.

That should change the way we see our spiritual gifts. God wasn’t obligated to give them to us and we didn’t do anything to deserve them. They are given to us because Christ died to give them to us. They are spoils of a heavenly war.

In what ways does the exercise of spiritual gifts continue to proclaim (or fail to proclaim) Christ’s victory?

HOW DOES THE GOSPEL APPLY TO OUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS?

Let’s dwell on that for just a moment and consider the glory of the gospel, not just for salvation, but also for sanctification.

- God created us in His image to love and obey Him in right fellowship. (Genesis 1:27)
- We broke that fellowship with God through our sin, and death is now our deserved payment/wage. (Romans 3:23)
- No manner of good works can fix what our sin has broken (Ephesians 2:8, Galatians 3:13)

- Jesus Christ was sent from heaven as THE agent of rescue from our sin. (John 3:16)
- Jesus Christ lived a perfect life, died a substitutionary death in our place, was buried in a tomb, and was raised from the dead on the third day. (1 Peter 3:18)
- If we confess our sin, repent of our desire to break God’s law, and believe in our hearts that Jesus was crucified and raised, we will be saved (1 John 1:9, Acts 17:30, Romans 10:9-10, 13)

Jesus died to save you from your sin, offer eternal life and forgiveness, and to empower you with gifts that He has purchased through His sacrificial death. It should be our life aim to surrender to the Lordship of Jesus in everything. If someone were to ask, “why do I need to use my gifts?”, the answer is simple: “because Jesus died for it!” Just like Christ died to justify us, sanctify us, adopt us, redeem us, and secure us, He also died to impart gifts to us.

Briefly state your personal testimony of when you came into a relationship with God through Jesus?

How should the cost of spiritual gifts encourage a believer’s exercise of them?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND LORDSHIP

Christianity is about Lordship. Lordship simply means surrender to the will and purposes of God in all things. Paul not only said we should believe in our heart that God raised Christ from the dead (thereby securing our spiritual gifts), but also that we confess with our mouth that Jesus is Lord (acknowledging our desire to use these gifts). Many

people seek to live in submission to God in their relationships, finances, career, family, spiritual decisions, and so on. These are great examples of Lordship because it means everything belongs to Jesus and we will both steward and utilize it all for the good of His Kingdom and for His glory. The same applies to spiritual gifts.

To be direct: any negligence or abuse of our spiritual gifts is an outright offense to the death of Christ. Some might view spiritual gifts like the Christmas gift someone got you that you don't like but you feel bad returning to the store. It either sits in the box in a closet, on a shelf, or in a drawer. You have it but honestly don't have any intention to use it. This is not pleasing to the Lord.

Lordship says, "All to Jesus I surrender", including your gifts that were intentionally and graciously given to you as a result of Jesus' work. Consider some of these verses and the implication they give toward understanding that everything about us belongs to Jesus Christ:

*For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as **Lord**, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. - 2 Corinthians 4:5*

*... because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is **Lord** and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. - Romans 10:9*

*Thomas answered him, "My **Lord** and my God!" - John 20:28*

*Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made him both **Lord** and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified. - Acts 2:36*

*Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is **Lord**" except in the Holy Spirit. - 1 Corinthians 12:3*

Do you understand the full weight of Christ's work and what it accomplished? Let's consider once again the eternal impact of His death and resurrection.

- It has paid the price for the forgiveness of our sin. (1 John 2:2)
- It has put us back in right relationship with God. (Romans 5:1)
- It has given us a borrowed (imputed) righteousness that is not of our own. (2 Cor. 5:21)

- It has changed us from the inside out (2 Corinthians 5:17)
- It has allowed us to become sons and daughters of God. (Romans 8:16-17)
- It has secured our eternal redemption. (John 10:28)
- It has filled us with the Holy Spirit. (Ephesians 1:13-14)

If we have indeed been raised with Christ as a new creation, this means there has been a holistic change in our lives that goes beyond just our spiritual gifts. Our thoughts, desires, and actions change as we submit ourselves to the Lordship of Jesus.

What area(s) of your life do you struggle to truthfully say, “All to Jesus I surrender”?

How does the listing of what Christ accomplished for us enable us to trust him in our surrender to his Lordship?

LIFE INVENTORY EXERCISE 2: STARS & SCARS TIMELINE

Starting from birth to present, write down the timeline of your life listing various events that took place—you can add any events that you like even as insignificant as it may seem. If possible, seek solitude in a place of peace and quiet for this portion as it requires a great deal of reflection and brainstorming. The more effort you give this step the greater the reward.

Once you have the events of your life on paper, you will then begin the process of laying them out on the timeline of your life, not just horizontally, in the sequence that the events took place, but also vertically. What you're producing has been called a "Stars & Scars Timeline" outlined by Dr. Ramesh Richard in his book *Soul Vision*. The goal is to proportion the events of your life rating their relative impact on your life. From your perspective right now, how good or bad was the event? If it was really good, like graduating high school, it may be fairly high above your timeline to indicate it was a "star" event in your life. It probably isn't as high as the birth of a child, but higher than the first run you scored in little league. The higher it is above the line indicates how impactful that "star" was on your life.

Conversely, your "scars" go below your timeline to indicate the negative impact. For instance, my parents (Tyler) divorced when I was five—a monumental "scar" in my life. That event, recorded as, "parents' divorce," was recorded near the bottom of the page on my timeline because almost nothing has impacted my life as much. In fact, in doing this exercise while in seminary was the first time I discovered how impactful that event truly was. I'm not mad at my parents and hold no bitterness, it's just an event of my life that altered the trajectory in a hugely significant way, which is why it was rated so far away from my timeline.

Once the timeline is complete, you will want to take a moment to reflect on what you see. Specifically, you'll seek to reflect on God's Authorship regarding the events of your life. His mighty hand is often hard to see in the flow of life, but as we look back, it becomes clearer. For instance, if my parents' hadn't been divorced, I would not have been involved in the youth group where I was saved. I may not have pursued a college education (as much of my family did not) where God called me into full-time ministry, etc. This isn't to deny God's

sovereignty, but it does shed light on the circumstances and path used to get you to this moment in time.

Finally, examine the highest highs and lowest lows of your life. In your highest “stars” you will discover what drives you as well as your defects, desires, and direction. Because we’re evaluating from our perspective now, we might rightly ask the question, “Does my favorable outlook on these things align with God’s heart?” If these events are the highlights of your life so far, what is it that makes them so great? What themes exist that may indicate something about your heart or where you find value—be it achievements, awards, recognition, relationships, etc.? For myself, many “stars” are related to relationships. Part of my “drive” is to see people experience the kind of mutually encouraging connections I’ve had in periods of my life. Also, as you reflect on your “scars,” you’re likely to discover your ministry opportunities—your passions, priorities, and pulpits. Your “scars” will often provide the greatest motivation to address the areas of holy discontent. A good question to ask yourself is, “What needs or causes do you feel most passion about?” I would guess that the answer is most likely sourced in your “scars.” It may have to do with your “stars,” but most often people want to spare others from the deep hurts they’ve experienced. For example, I often describe my investment in others as “reshaping family trees.” If you listen to Dave Ramsey, you know where I get the phrase, but I’m talking spiritually, not financially. There is a direct line from my story to the ministry passion I feel to see men lead their home, love their wives, and disciple their kids.

Star-Scar Timeline

- 1. Divide the line into convenient period segments starting from birth to present age; perhaps by time (5 or 10 year periods), or by something else (like schooling).
- 2. Above the line write out your “stars,” highlights in your life. Additionally, rank the star by placing it higher or lower above the line. Example: your first child may be up near this text, whereas a gold star for good behavior in first grade may be down near your timeline.
- 3. Use the following chart for help in creating and evaluating your timeline. It may be useful to help brainstorm life events, when they happened as well as the vertical impact. Use the “Life Divisions” section to clarify the segments of your life. Give each segment a “Title.” Brainstorm “Formative Events.” Then process “God’s Authorship” and how he used those events in your life.

Great

Stars

Good

Bad

Scars

Terrible



Life Divisions						
Title						
Formative Events						
God’s Authorship <i>What was God doing in these situations? How did He use them in your life?</i>						

Processing your Stars and Scars

1. From your current perspective, how might your stars list reveal your drives, defects, desires, or direction?

2. How might your scars provide a ministry opportunity (Passions, Priority, Pulpits)?

Grace Was Given
A Study of Spiritual Gifts

PART 3: DISPLAYING SPIRITUAL GIFTS

PUBLIC DISPLAY

Now that we have both a working definition of the gifts and the motive as to why we should use them, let's turn our attention to consider just how they are displayed within the church.

"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in a house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven." – Matthew 5:14-16

Jesus is directly referring to our salvation in him and our effort to make public our profession of the light, but the same principle applies to spiritual gifts. Remember, Jesus died to impart you with gifts, so any negligence undermines the price He paid for you to have it. No spiritual gift was meant to be hidden or only used in the privacy of one's own home. They were given publicly (Ephesians 4;7-8) and are meant to be demonstrated publicly.

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. – Ephesians 2:10

Do you see Lordship and demonstration in this verse? God hasn't designed us to have gifts that go untapped or underutilized. He has prepared gifts and works beforehand, that we might walk in them. This phrase lends itself to an ongoing activity as it says "walk" in them. This Greek term is in the ongoing tense, meaning continuous movement. Our gifts should be constantly 'walked' (used) because that is what God prepared for us.

Unpack the statement, "your faith is personal, not private." How does this relate to the public nature of spiritual gifts?

DIVING DEEPER INTO THE BODY ANALOGY

First Corinthians 12 is probably the fullest description of what the church is supposed to look like. The human body was (and still is in our culture) an object of worship. With so much Greek influence, athletics were a top tier desire in Paul's day, and many people put a ton of work into the conditioning and strengthening of their bodies for the pursuit of performance and show. Though the Church is to worship Christ and none other, Paul still leverages cultural trends in order to drive home a spiritual point.

The local and global Church can be likened to a human body. Ten finger and toes, eyes, a mouth, hands and feet; a normal and healthy body has a multiplicity of these functional parts. Except for the pairs (eyes, ears, hands, feet), each body part serves its own function and purpose. Some amazing people can use their feet like hands (and vice versa), but most people utilize the parts to work as they were designed.

Here's what Paul says: *For the body does not consist of one member but many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, "because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as He chose. If all were a single member, where would be body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.* – 1 Corinthians 12:14-20

Every person has a place. Not everyone should teach. Some have faith as their gift. Some are hospitable. Many parts collaborating makes the Body function beautifully and effectively as one.

All gifts are valuable. We have merit in the body even if we don't have a desired gift or specific skill set that someone else might possess. Going back to previous studies, we should use our gifts, no matter what they are as a response to God's grace in giving them and Christ's death in obtaining them.

Why is envying the gift of others so damaging to the Body of Christ?

WHAT ABOUT THE MIRACULOUS/SUPERNATURAL GIFTS?

The Bible does mention some of the supernatural gifts that can be a hot button conversation. Gifts like tongues, prophecy, and healing are three that have seemingly divided the Church for a long time with no real solution on the horizon. What should we do with these gifts in regarding to teaching and understanding at Center Point Church? Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- 1. **Understanding “Tongues.”** At Pentecost in the book of Acts, “tongues” is meant to represent human language in its different forms more than a supernatural or unknown language.

“...we hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.” - Acts 2:11

Though there appears to be a presence of the supernatural language evidenced in the New Testament, especially in 1 Corinthians 12–14 (hence the need for an interpreter), the uncertainty of whether this gift was temporary or if it continues is at the root of an ongoing (sometimes passionate) conversation.

There are 3 primary views of speaking in tongues: *Cessationism*, *Continuationism*, and *“Open but Cautious.”*

Cessationism says this gift has ceased altogether and is no longer in practice in any form or context.

Continuationism says it is still just as prominent and profitable today as it was in the first century and should be utilized in a multiplicity of contexts.

The *“Open but Cautious”* view says that although there may be times in which God interacts with us in this way, the church does not practice speaking in tongues because of the importance of order in worship and because of the prominence of the proclamation of the Scriptures through preaching. It’s not that the gift has been eliminated

altogether, but that its frequency and use within the context of a local church worship service has lessened.

2. **Prophecy.** The Lifeway Spiritual Gift Inventory describes the gift of prophecy as “proclaiming the Word of God boldly. This builds up the body and leads to conviction of sin. Prophecy manifests itself in preaching and teaching.” (1 Cor. 12:10; Rom. 12:6).

This definition speaks more of boldness in preaching the Bible rather than hearing from and speaking on behalf of a personal message from God. This definition is far from the more charismatic definition of prophecy that would deem prophesy as a fresh word of instruction from the Lord apart from the revelation of His Word. The primary way in which God speaks to us today is through His Word, and although it is certainly possible for God to prompt or compel us in some way, the main way God reveals His will or instructions to us is by the vehicle of the scriptures.

3. **Healing.** Both Jesus and those with apostolic authority performed miracles of healing, but as the New Testament progressed, we see far less examples of this gift in visible demonstration. God has all power and authority to heal and certainly does, yet so much of the healing movement has been exposed as fraudulent and the minister of such gifts proven to be false. This has no effect on God’s will and ability to heal, but one should take caution when believing they possess the gift of supernatural healing and around others who claim the same message.

TYING THIS ALL TOGETHER

Generally, our staff holds to the “Open but Cautious” view concerning miraculous gifts, specifically healing and tongues. There does not seem to be sufficient biblical evidence to support a view that these miraculous gifts ended at the close of the New Testament or with the death of the Apostles. However, it also seems that we should not consider miraculous gifts normative. Even in Acts, miraculous signs were dispersed over years and locations usually for the purposes of evangelism.

Anyone claiming to a prophetic word apart from what God has already revealed through the Canon of Scripture, especially when it goes beyond what has been revealed, should not supersede that which has been revealed. Warnings in Scripture for prophets who’s utterances do not come true are severe (Dt. 18:20–22). God’s Word is sufficient.

Prophecy properly understood is the proclamation of God's revealed truth to current events or circumstances (*forthtelling rather than foretelling*).

God has the ability to move in miraculous ways even today. In fact, we have all heard stories of God's actions from trusted first-hand sources that often break our theological framework. While not normative, God can and does work in miraculous ways. We often pray, rightly, for God to move miraculously—especially in the case of healing—praying “*Thy will be done.*”

Although much more could be said, one of the main takeaways from this section on displaying spiritual gifts is the context by which we employ them, which is in serving the body. As Paul already stated in Romans 12:6, if we have gifts, let us use them! The body analogy is Paul's megaphone cry to use the gifts God has given you because they entire body needs you to. It won't function the same if you don't.

Ideally, we want to help you find a place of service that fits your gifts. However, finding a perfect fit may not currently be possible in your local church because of the size, demographic, or other factors. In that case, serve somewhere there is a need until your heart grows fond towards it or until the right fit becomes clear and available. Often, discerning your exact gifting is done through serving in a variety of contexts and narrowing you best service over time. Likewise, the local church is often like a family, the dishes need to get done regardless of someone having the gift of doing dishes. Don't wait to serve until you find perfection—your church needs you now. God is at work and you can be a part of what He is doing! The last thing we should do with our gifts is nothing, the first is honor it by serving the resurrection of Jesus with it in the community and context of the local church.

LIFE INVENTORY EXERCISE 3:
PERSONALITY

Use the space below to share the results of any assessments you’ve taken in the past as well as any insights that you found to be true/beneficial. Suggested assessments may include Myers/Briggs, DISC, Enneagram, SCOPE, Strength Finders, Working Genius, etc.

LIFE INVENTORY:

What do you do when planning a trip or vacation? You aren't simply concerned with where you're going or how to get there, many other considerations are necessary. What do I have? What do I need to get? Is there anything I need to address before I leave?

In utilizing our spiritual gifts well, we must first consider that we're each on a journey through life. Therefore, like your considerations for vacation, we need to "inventory" several aspects of our life to discover, not only the best activation of our gifts, but also factors such as timing & location.

Using presentation software, detail the following "Life Inventory" components in a way that you can share them with others in approximately 10 minutes. For example, your personal history may have revealed a great deal, however, you'll only have time to share 2–3 events and how God used them.

You've already compiled much of the information you will share through the previous exercises. However, you'll need to consider several components we've not yet discussed as you prepare your presentation.

1. **Personal History:** Share your SCARS & STARS results with a focus on what you learned through this experience. From our Scars and Stars we often find the things in ministry about which we are most passionate.
2. **Personality/Strengths Testing Result:** You don't have to have an exhaustive list, but share some of your findings that you think really describes how you're hard wired. Additionally, it is good to include your educational background and those things for which you have been specially trained and skilled.
3. **Spiritual Gifts:** Based on your study of God's Word and ministry experience, what gifts has God given you through his Holy Spirit?
4. **Values:** What Christian values do you most seek in your life (*See list of Christian Values below*)? While all the values are good, select approximately 2 that rise above the rest as being important to you.
5. **Ministry Priorities:** Determine what priorities must be included in your ministry based on how you're wired. Do you need task-oriented projects or people-oriented projects? Do you prefer clear structure or are you adaptable and independent? What things need to be true of the context in which you

serve? It may be useful to consider your work and the things you like or don't like to help determine these priorities.

6. **Potential Hazards:** C.S. Lewis wrote the *Screwtape Letters*, about the things that could most easily derail believers. While we don't need a vice list or airing of dirty laundry, it is helpful to acknowledge those sins that might trip us up in the future. Resources like *Search for Significance*, *Counterfeit Gods*, or even Matt Chandler's message *Surface and Source Idols* can be helpful in considering hazards.
7. **Current Opportunities and Obligations:** What are you doing now? What training and skills are you applying in your life? What obligations do you possess that need consideration while pursuing leadership? If you have not desire or skill in sports, you're probably not heading to an athletic ministry. Likewise, if you have a family, children, or aging parents, that's an important consideration for most ministry aspirations.
8. **Future Direction:** Based on your skills, gifting, and abilities, is there something more that you believe God might be calling you to do in service to the Church? Is there something for which you need to plan or prepare?
9. **Group Review:** After sharing, allow those in your community to ask questions about what you shared. They may be able to offer valuable insight into various aspects of your "Life Inventory." Additionally, seeks wisdom as to how you might deploy your unique skills, gifts, and passions to ministry service.

VALUES:

1. **Authenticity**—willingly sharing your honest thoughts, feelings, successes, and failures without pretense or selfish motives.
2. **Chastity**—maintaining sexual purity in thought, words, and deeds and preserving appropriate boundaries with members of the opposite sex.
3. **Compassion**—sharing in another's suffering through both empathetic feeling and a willingness to act on their behalf.
4. **Courage**—facing opposition, confronting wrongdoing, and remaining steadfast in the face of difficulty with confidence and inner fortitude.
5. **Even-temperedness**—controlling anger and maintaining a calm demeanor in the face of difficult circumstances.
6. **Faithfulness**—remaining loyal and steadfast in your commitments to people, to tasks, and to the Lord.
7. **Generosity**—giving to others liberally and willingly in order to meet their needs using the resources that God has entrusted to you.

8. **Gentleness**—treating others with sensitivity, reacting to them with mercy and tenderness rather than anger and aggression.
9. **Honesty**—tactfully speaking to truth regardless of the personal repercussions.
10. **Humility**—showing deference to others while maintaining an appropriate perspective on yourself.
11. **Joy**—maintaining inner contentment despite the surrounding circumstances.
12. **Kindness**—acting in a friendly, gracious, and generous manner often involving a willingness to course burden or inconvenience to oneself for the good of other people.
13. **Loyalty**—displaying constant devotion in relationships.
14. **Patience**—possessing and demonstrating a quiet resolve to endure inconvenience or distress and to peacefully await resolution.
15. **Peace**—pursuing and promoting wholeness, harmony, and reconciliation.
16. **Perseverance**—relentlessly striving toward a goal or vision with optimism despite having to endure hardship.
17. **Self-control**—allowing the Spirit of God to control our actions and attitudes in ways that cause us to restrain our natural tendencies to carry out the desires of the flesh.
18. **Self-sacrifice**—displaying a willingness to set aside oneself for the sake of others in ways that are personally costly.