A Complete Spiritual Gift List With Definitions

Every *Spiritual Gift* is scripturally defined and explained. [1]

The spiritual gifts listed below are found in three passages: (Romans 12:6-8) (1-Corinthians 12:8-10; 28-30), and (Ephesians 4:11). Scroll down for full definitions of each spiritual gift in the Bible.

1) The Gift of Administration
2) The Gift of Apostleship
3) The Gift of Discernment
4) The Gift of Evangelism
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The Gift of Administration

The Greek word for the spiritual gift of administration is *kubernesis*. This is a unique term that refers to a shipmaster or captain. The literal meaning is *"to steer,"* or "*to rule or govern."* It carries the idea of someone who guides and directs a group of people toward a goal or destination. We see variations of this word in verses like (Acts 27:11) and (Revelation 18:17).

With this gift the Holy Spirit enables certain Christians to organize, direct, and implement plans to lead others in the various ministries of the Church. This gift is closely related to the gift of leadership but is more goal or task oriented and is also more concerned with details and organization. See also (1 Corinthians 12:28) and (Titus 1:4-5).

[1] List sourced from: https://spiritualgiftstest.com/spiritual-gifts/

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The Gift of Apostleship

The spiritual gift of apostleship is **sometimes confused with the office of Apostle**. The office of Apostle was held by a limited number of men chosen by Jesus, including the twelve disciples (Mark 3:13-19) and Paul (Romans 1:1). The requirements for the office of Apostle included being a faithful eyewitness of Jesus' ministry and His resurrection (Acts 1:21-22); (1 Corinthians 9:1) and being called by Jesus Himself (Galatians 1:1). The Apostles were given authority by Jesus to do many different things to establish the church, including writing Scripture and performing miracles (John 14:26), (2 Peter 3:15-16), (2 Corinthians 12:12).

There are no more that hold the office of Apostle today, but the gift of apostleship continues in a different sense. Jesus gave apostles, prophets, evangelists, shepherds and teachers at His ascension (Ephesians 4:7-12), and these represent a distinct category of apostles. They do not have the authority to write Scripture as the original Apostles did. They also have a different purpose in the sense of establishing the church – the foundation has already been set.

The mission for those with the gift of apostleship today is to plant new ministries and churches, go into places where the Gospel is not preached, reach across cultures to establish churches in challenging environments, raise up and develop leaders, call out and lead pastors and shepherds, and much more. They often have many different gifts that allow them to fulfill their ministry. These are leaders of leaders and ministers of ministers. They are influencers. They are typically entrepreneurial and can take risks and perform difficult tasks. Missionaries, church planters, certain Christian scholars and institutional leaders, and those leading multiple ministries or churches often have the gift of apostleship. See also (Ephesians 4:11), (1 Corinthians 12:28), (Acts 1:21-22), (1 Corinthians 9:1).

The Gift of Discernment

The spiritual gift of discernment is also known as the gift of *"discernment of spirits"* or *"distinguishing between spirits."* The Greek word for the gift of discernment is *diakrisis*. The word describes being able to distinguish, discern, judge or appraise a person, statement, situation, or environment. In the New Testament it describes the ability to distinguish between spirits as in (1 Corinthians 12:10), and to discern good and evil as in (Hebrews 5:14).

The Holy Spirit gives the gift of discernment to enable certain Christians to clearly recognize and distinguish between the influence of God, Satan, the world, and the flesh in a given situation. The church needs those with this gift to warn believers in times of danger or keep them from being led astray by false teaching. See also (1 Corinthians 12:10), (Acts 5:3-6), (Acts 5:16:16-18); (1 John 4:1).

The Gift of Evangelism

All Christians are called to evangelize and reach out to the lost with the Gospel (Matthew 28:18-20), but some are given an extra measure of faith and effectiveness in this area. The spiritual gift of evangelism is found in (Ephesians 4:11-12) where Paul says that Jesus "*gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ."* The Greek word for evangelists

is *euaggelistes* which means *"one who brings good news."* This word is only found two other places in the New Testament: (Acts 21:8) and (2 Timothy 4:5).

Evangelists are given the unique ability by the Holy Spirit to clearly and effectively communicate the Gospel of Jesus Christ to others. They are burdened in their hearts for the lost and will go out of their way to share the truth with them. Evangelists are able to overcome the normal fear of rejection and engage non-believers in meaningful conversations about Jesus. Their gift allows them to communicate with all types of people and therefore they receive a greater response to the message of salvation through Jesus Christ. They continually seek out relationships with those who don't know Jesus and are open to the leading of the Holy Spirit to approach different people. They love giving free treasure away for Jesus (2 Corinthians 4:7), and it brings them great joy knowing that the *"feet that bring good news"* are beautiful to those who believe (Isaiah 52:7). See (Ephesians 4:11), (Acts 8:5-12, 26-40, 21:8), (Matthew 28:18-20).

The Gift of Exhortation

The spiritual gift of exhortation is often called the *"gift of encouragement."* The Greek word for this gift is *parakaleo*. It means to beseech, exhort, call upon, to encourage and to strengthen. The primary means of exhortation is to remind the hearer of the powerful and amazing work of God in Christ, particularly in regard to the saving work of Jesus in the atonement. We see Paul commanding Titus to use this gift in (Titus 1:9) and throughout chapter 2, particularly (Titus 2:11-15). He also charges Timothy in (2 Timothy 4:2).

The Spirit of God gives this gift to people in the church to strengthen and encourage those who are wavering in their faith. Those with the gift of exhortation can uplift and motivate others as well as challenge and rebuke them in order to foster spiritual growth and action. The goal of the encourager is to see everyone in the church continually building up the body of Christ and glorifying God. See also (Romans 12:8), (Acts 11:23-24; 14:21-22; 15:32).

The Gift of Faith

The spiritual gift of faith is not to be confused with saving faith. All Christians have been given saving faith (Ephesians 2:8-9), but not all receive this special gift of faith. The word for faith in the New Testament is *pistis*. It carries the notion of confidence, certainty, trust, and assurance in the object of faith. The gift of faith is rooted in one's saving faith in Christ and the trust that comes through a close relationship with the Savior. Those with this gift have a trust and confidence in God that allows them to live boldly for Him and manifest that faith in mighty ways.

In the Bible the gift of faith is often accompanied by great works of faith. In (Acts 3:1-10) we see this gift in action when Peter sees a lame man at the Beautiful Gate and calls on him to stand up and walk in the Name of Jesus. Jesus said even a small amount of this faith could move mountains (Matthew 17:20; 21:21). Paul echoed this truth in (1 Corinthians 13:2).

The Holy Spirit distributes this gift to some in the church to encourage and build up the church in her confidence in God. Those with the gift of faith trust that God is sovereign and He is good. They take Him at His Word and put the full weight of their lives in His hands. They expect God to move and are not surprised when He answers a prayer or performs a miracle. See also

(1 Corinthians 12:9), (Hebrews 11:1-40).

The Gift of Giving

The Greek word for the spiritual gift of giving is *metadidomi.* It simply means "*to impart"* or "*to give."* However, this word is accompanied in (Romans 12:8) by another descriptive word: *haplotes*. This word tells us much more about the kind of giving that is associated with this gift. The word *Haplotes* means *"sincerely, generously and without pretense or hypocrisy."*

The Holy Spirit imparts this gift to some in the church to meet the various needs of the church and its ministries, missionaries, or of people who do not have the means to provide fully for themselves. The goal is to encourage and provide, giving all credit to God's love and provision. Those with this gift love to share with others the overflow of blessings God has given them. They are typically very hospitable and will seek out ways and opportunities to help others. They are also excellent stewards and will often adjust their lifestyles in order to give more to the spread of the Gospel and the care of the needy. They are grateful when someone shares a need with them and are always joyful when they can meet that need. See (Romans 12:8, 13), (2 Corinthians 8:1-5; 9:6-15); (Acts 4:32-37), (Galatians 4:15), (Philippians 4:10-18).

The Gift of Healing

The spiritual gift of healing found in (1 Corinthians 12:9) is plural in the Greek. *Charismata iamaton* is literally translated *"gifts of healings."* This spiritual gift is closely related to the gifts of faith and miracles. All spiritual gifts are to be exercised in faith, but gifts of healings involve a special measure of it. This gift is interesting in that there is no guarantee that a person will always be able to heal anyone he or she desires. It is subject to the sovereign will of God, as all spiritual gifts are.

The Disciples were given authority to heal and cast out demons, but they were not always successful. The Apostle Paul could not heal himself and was told that God's grace was sufficient to carry him through his infirmity without removing it from him (2 Corinthians 12:7-10). This gift is given at various times and places to reveal the God of heaven to the sick and tormented. If healing is not granted, then we can conclude that God has greater plans for letting the person go through the illness or infirmity.

The spiritual gift of healing is an intimate one as it reveals the heart and compassion of God. Jesus is the Great Healer and Physician and during His ministry on earth He healed countless people and cast out demons (Matthew 4:23-24; 8:16; 9:35), (Mark 1:34). Healings reveal that God is near to His people, and He cares about their sufferings. Healings are meant to draw people to God through His Son Jesus Christ. God wants those healed to respond in faith with thanksgiving and love as the leper did in (Luke 17:15-19), and as the demon-possessed man did in (Mark 5:18-20). By God's grace, physical healing should lead to spiritual healing (faith in Jesus) and eternal life with Him in heaven.

Those who have this gift are compassionate toward the sick and pray over them regularly. They have great faith and trust that God can and will heal some and are not deterred when He chooses not to. They are motivated knowing that God's revealed power will draw people to faith in Jesus. Their ultimate concern is the spiritual well-being of those being healed and their relationship

with Jesus. They yearn for the day that there will be no more pain and suffering, and sin will no longer wreak havoc on the people of God. See (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30), (James 5:13-16).

The Gift of Interpretation

The spiritual gift of interpretation of tongues is found alongside the gift of speaking in tongues in (1 Corinthians 12:10). The Greek word for interpretation is *hermeneia* and simply means to interpret, explain, or expound some message that cannot be understood in a natural way. Thus, this spiritual gift is the supernatural ability to understand and explain messages uttered in an unknown language.

This is a revelatory gift, meaning that God *"reveals"* the meaning of the words or message being spoken and allows the interpreter to communicate its meaning to those who need to hear it. When this happens in the church two things happen: the church is edified, and God is glorified.

The spiritual gift of interpretation is given by the Holy Spirit to certain individuals to reveal messages spoken in an unknown tongue to God for the building up of the church. Like the gift of prophecy, tongues that are interpreted have the effect of encouraging and blessing the church to love and serve God more deeply and effectively. See also (1 Corinthians 12:10, 30; 14:1-28).

The Gift of Knowledge

The spiritual gift of knowledge is also known as the *"word of knowledge"* or "*utterance of knowledge."* The Greek word for this gift is *Gnosis* and it simply means knowledge and understanding. The Scriptural emphasis in (1 Corinthians 12:8) is on the ability to speak this knowledge to others in each situation. In the opening passages of 1 Corinthians, Paul spoke of knowledge and recognized that the highest form of knowledge among men is the Gospel of Jesus Christ (i.e. the testimony about Christ, cf. 1 Corinthians 1:4-7). What we can conclude then is the gift of knowledge is an understanding of the things in this world and in our lives that is founded in the Gospel and rooted in the Scriptures. This gift is closely related to the gift of wisdom which is alluded to by Paul in (1 Corinthians 1:18-31).

The Holy Spirit gives this spiritual gift to some believers to bring about understanding and to inform the church or individual believers. The person with this gift is usually well-versed in the Scriptures and often has much committed to memory. They can retain the truth and communicate it effectively at the appropriate times. The gift of knowledge allows a believer to relate the Scriptures, and particularly the Gospel of Jesus Christ, to all aspects of life in this world. They can see how it connects to every situation and circumstance and how the reality and truth of the Gospel is to inform every decision a Christian makes. See also (1 Corinthians 12:8); (Romans 15:14); (2 Corinthians 2:14).

The Gift of Leadership

The spiritual gift of leadership is closely related to the gift of administration and, interestingly, the spiritual gift of pastor/shepherd. The Greek word for the spiritual gift of leadership is *proistemi.* This word means to lead, to assist, to protect and to care for others. The spiritual gift of leadership is found in (Romans 12:8) sandwiched between the gifts of giving and of mercy. It is placed there intentionally to show that it is a gift associated with caring for others. This is what

connects it to the gift of pastor/shepherd, and what differentiates it from the gift of administration. It is more people oriented than task oriented in its application. This is not to say those with the gift of administration do not care for people, of course they do, but those with the spiritual gift of leadership focus on people and relationships more directly.

The word *proistemi* is connected to caring for people in other passages as well. In (1 Thessalonians 5:12-13) Paul says to "*respect those who labor among you and are over (proistemi) you in the Lord and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love because of their work."* The labor and work of those who were leading the believers in Thessalonica was that of tirelessly caring for their souls. Paul also connects leadership to caring for others when he asks, "If someone does not know how to manage (*proistemi)* his own household, how will he care for God's church?" (1 Timothy 3:5).

The Holy Spirit gives the spiritual gift of leadership to some in the church to care for God's people and lead them into deeper relationship with Christ and each other. They base their success on how well they help others succeed and grow in their spiritual walk with Jesus. They are able to accomplish many different tasks and objectives as they lead, but they will always lead relationally and with a deep concern for the well-being of others. They are *"visionary"* and less concerned with mundane details than those with the spiritual gift of administration. Many are entrepreneurial and willing to take risks to see the kingdom of God advanced through the church. They will go to great lengths to protect those under their care and are well-equipped to lead through crisis situations. See also (Romans 12:8); (1 Thessalonians 5:12); (1 Timothy 3:4-5, 12; 5:17).

The Gift of Mercy

All Christians are called to be merciful because God has been merciful to us (Matthew 18:33); (Ephesians 2:4-6). The Greek word for the spiritual gift of mercy is *eleeo*. It means to be patient and compassionate toward those who are suffering or afflicted. The concern for the physical as well as spiritual need of those who are hurting is covered by the gift of mercy. Those with this gift have great empathy for others in their trials and sufferings. They can come alongside people over extended periods of time and see them through their healing process. They are truly and literally the hands and feet of God to the afflicted.

The Holy Spirit gives the spiritual gift of mercy to some in the church to love and assist those who are suffering and walk with them until The Lord allows their burden to be lifted. The gift of mercy is founded in God's mercy towards us as sinners and is consistently expressed with measurable compassion. Those with this gift can *"weep with those who weep"* (Romans 12:15) and *"bear one another's burdens"* (Galatians 6:2). They are sensitive to the feelings and circumstances of others and can quickly discern when someone is not doing well. They are typically good listeners and feel the need to simply "*be there"* for others. See (Romans 12:8), (Matthew 5:7); (Luke 10:30-37); (James 3:17); (Jude 22-23).

The Gift of Miracles

The spiritual gift of miracles is described in Scripture much like the gift of healing. It is found in (1 Corinthians 12:10) and the Greek phrase *energemata dynameon* literally translates "*workings of powers."* The double plural most likely means that these gifts were diverse and were not

permanently available at the will of the gifted believer but instead were bestowed at various times and circumstances. Thus, the gifts are subject to the divine will of God and His purposes and are not decided by the one who performs the miraculous works.

We know that Jesus performed many miracles in His earthly ministry, even more than those recorded in Scripture (John 20:30-31), (Acts 2:22). The Apostles regularly performed miracles of all kinds including casting out demons, healings, raising people from the dead, striking people dead, causing blindness, and much more (Acts 2:43; 3:1-10; 5:1-16; 9:36-43; 13:4-12; 19:11 12). Other believers performed miracles as well, including Stephen (Acts 6:8) and Phillip (Acts 8:4-8).

Miracles were given by God to the church to reveal the presence and glory of God among His people and to create a sense of awe and wonder and Godly fear. Though there were many enemies of the church, often the result of miracles being performed was more people coming to faith in Jesus and glorifying God, as well as greater faith and boldness within the church (Acts 4:29-31; 9:35, 42).

Those with the spiritual gift of miracles often have a heightened sensitivity to the presence and power of God through His Holy Spirit. They have a special measure of faith and desire for God to reveal Himself and draw many to faith in His Son Jesus Christ. They take care not to draw attention to themselves or have a following of people but are constantly pointing others to Jesus. Those with this gift understand that God is Sovereign and He can work when and how He desires, but they make sure they are available and listening to the prompting of the Holy Spirit. This gift is often accompanied by prayer and strong petition by these individuals for God to reveal His glory to people. They do not claim power themselves but always give credit and glory to God for His mighty works. Often God will deliberately humble them to keep them relying on His grace and pointing to His Son, rather than miracles. See also (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28-29); (Acts 1:8); (Galatians 3:5).

The Gift of Pastor/Shepherd

The spiritual gift of pastor or pastor/shepherd is one that carries many different responsibilities. This gift is closely related to the spiritual gifts of leadership and teaching. The Greek word for pastor is *poimen* and simply means shepherd or overseer.

In the Biblical context, shepherds had several different responsibilities to their sheep and ultimately, to the owner of the sheep. They kept a lookout for predators and protected the sheep from attackers. They cared for wounded and sick sheep, nursing them back to health. They rescued them if they became lost or trapped. They spent enormous amounts of time with them guiding them to he places of nourishment and rest. The result was a trust and relationship that kept the sheep following the shepherd. The sheep were attuned to the shepherd's voice to the point that even if they were temporarily mixed with another herd, at the call of the shepherd they would separate and follow him.

Pastors are called shepherds because their calling and gifting are much like those who care for sheep. They are called and gifted to care for the spiritual well-being of a local body of God's people. Pastors are first and foremost servants. They are servants of God and servants of His

bride, the church. They are given a mixture of abilities by grace that allows them to serve the needs of an entire community.

The goal of the pastor is to reveal the glory of God in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit to a people who need God's grace for life. The primary way the pastor will do this is by teaching the Word of God to the church. The gift of pastor is directly linked to the gift of teaching in Ephesians 4:11 and elsewhere. In fact, this gift could be called the gift of pastor-teacher. The ability to teach the Scriptures is also one of the many requirements of being an overseer (1 Timothy 3:1-7); (Titus 1:6-9). By teaching the Scriptures to the church, the pastor feeds the *"sheep"* of God.

The Holy Spirit gives the spiritual gift of pastor to some in the church to humbly teach them, guide them, protect them, and to lead them in the mission that God has for His church, namely the Great Commission. The pastor loves the Gospel of Jesus Christ and puts it at the center of his life and ministry. Pastors do not seek fame or recognition for themselves, but they are placed in a position of authority by the Holy Spirit. The role of a pastor is one of humility and service as he is reminded daily of his overwhelming need of God's grace for the task at hand. See also (Ephesians 4:11); (Jeremiah 3:15); (Acts 20:28); (John 10:11-18).

The Gift of Prophecy

The spiritual gift of prophecy is an extraordinary and unique gift. Paul says in (1 Corinthians 14:1) to *"Pursue love, and earnestly desire the spiritual gifts, especially that you may prophesy."* This gift is a blessing to the church and should not be quenched or despised (1 Thessalonians 5:20). Those who have the gift of prophecy differ from the Old Testament Prophets who spoke the authoritative Word of God directly. Their words were recorded as Scripture as they proclaimed, *"Thus says The Lord,"* whereas the messages from those with the spiritual gift of prophecy must be tested (1 Corinthians 14:29-33); (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21); (1 John 4:1-3). In the New Testament the Apostles, not the prophets, took over the role of Scriptural proclamation from the Old Testament Prophets.

The Greek word for the gift of prophecy is *propheteia* which is the ability to receive a divinely inspired message and deliver it to others in the church. These messages can take the form of exhortation, correction, disclosure of secret sins, prediction of future events, comfort, inspiration, or other revelations given to equip and edify the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 14:3-4, 24-25). Again, they do not constitute the authoritative Word of God but are the human interpretation of the revelation that was received. They are spoken in human words through a human mind which is why they must be tested against the Scriptures (1 Thessalonians 5:20-21).

The Holy Spirit gives the gift of prophecy to some believers to make God's heart known and to edify the church. This gift is for the benefit of both believers and unbelievers and is a sign that God is truly among His church (1 Corinthians 14:22-25). Those with this gift are sensitive to both the prompting of the Holy Spirit and the needs of the church body. They should be humble and continually study the Scriptures to test these revelations before speaking to them. When they do speak, they should allow and even expect others to weigh what is said against the Scriptures and interpret the message accordingly. In this way the church may be continually built up

together in unity (1 Corinthians 14:4, 26). See also (Romans 12:6), (1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:1-5), (Ephesians 4:11-12), (1 Peter 4:10-11).

The Gift of Service

The spiritual gift of service, or ministering, covers a wide range of activities in its application. There are two Greek words for this gift. The first one, found in (Romans 12:7), is *diakonia*. The basic meaning of this word is *"to wait tables,"* but it is most often translated in the Bible as *"ministry."* It refers to any act of service done in genuine love for the edification of the community. The word *antilepsis* is translated *"helping"* and is found in (1 Corinthians 12:28). It has a similar meaning: to help or aid in love within the community.

The Holy Spirit endows some believers with this gift to fill the many gaps of ministry and meet the needs of the church as it fulfills the Great Commission. The goal is to energize the church and free up others to use their gifts to the fullest. The result is the continued edification of the church and the added ability to see beyond its own needs and reach out into the community.

We see people with this gift in passages like (Acts 6:1-7), (1 Corinthians 16:15-16), and many others. Those with the gift of service are committed to the spread of the Gospel. They serve in ways that benefit others with different gifts and ministries that are more public. They have a heart devoted to Jesus and a desire to follow His command and example in (Matthew 20:25-28) (cf. Mark 10:42-45). Those with this gift do not seek recognition or a position in the *"spotlight,"* they just love to help out. They are content with serving in the background knowing that their contribution will bless the church, display the love of Christ to the world, and bring glory to God. See also (Romans 12:7), (1 Corinthians 12:4-7; 28), (Acts 20:35); (2 Timothy 4:11); (Revelation 2:19).

The Gift of Teaching

The spiritual gift of teaching is one that carries a heavy responsibility in the church. In fact, (James 3:1) warns, *"Not many of you should become teachers, my brothers, for you know that we who teach will be judged with greater strictness."* Like every believer, teachers are to be stewards of every word that comes out of their mouths. But the greater responsibility to which they are called is to be stewards of the Word of God to His people. Teachers have been entrusted with the task of effectively communicating what the Bible says, what it means, and how we as followers of Jesus Christ are to apply it to our lives here and now.

The Greek word for those with the spiritual gift of teaching is *didaskalos.* From the root of this word we get our English word, *"didactic."* The word *didasko* means to teach, instruct, instill doctrine, explain, and expound. Those with the spiritual gift of teaching love to study the Word of God for extended periods of time. They consume the Scriptures as food for their hearts, souls and minds with the expressed purpose of knowing Him and then making Him known to others. They want to know what God has revealed of Himself and what He requires of us as people created in His image. They take great joy and satisfaction in seeing others learn and apply the truth of God's Word to their lives. They love to see how the Gospel is woven throughout the Scriptures and how it glorifies and magnifies Jesus Christ in the hearts and lives of those who love Him by grace.

The Holy Spirit gives certain people the spiritual gift of teaching so that they would help the church fulfill her ministry as *"a pillar and buttress of the truth"* (1 Timothy 3:15). Without this gift, the church would quickly fall into error and sin. Teachers are there to make sure that doesn't happen. They hate when Scripture is abused and used out of context or with ill intent. They love the truth and speak the truth in love. They will never hide or withhold it. On the contrary, they desire to follow in the footsteps of Jesus who taught in the synagogues and in the Temple as well as anywhere the people were gathered. They are called to demonstrate God's love while revealing His truth to the world without fear. The effect of their ministry is the upholding of God's Word and the growth and maturity of His Bride until the day of His return. See also (Ephesians 4:11); (1 Corinthians 12:28); (Romans 12:7); (James 3:1).

The Gift of Tongues

The spiritual gift of tongues is more accurately called the gift of languages. The Greek word for tongues is *glossa,* or *glossolalia*, which literally means *"tongue."* When it is used in the New Testament addressing the subject of spiritual gifts it carries the contextual meaning of *"languages."* Speaking in tongues is the utterance of prayer or of a message glorifying God, typically spoken to God (1 Corinthians 14:2), in a language that is unknown to the one speaking it.

To properly understand this gift, we need to begin with a brief history of language in humans. In the garden mankind had one language and was in direct communication with God, having perfect communion with Him. Unfortunately, this relationship changed at the fall when Adam sinned against God and he and Eve were cursed and banished from Eden along with their descendants. Mankind continued to have one language up until (Genesis 11) where God confused their language and people were dispersed throughout the earth. He did this because they had united in one language and conspired to build a tower at Babel. Their intention was to *"make a name"* for themselves and thus replace God in their hearts. Pride is the birthplace of sin and regrettably fallen man has decided to use every advantage, including language, to usurp God's authority and place himself upon a throne which is not rightfully his.

After God confused their language and scattered them across the earth, He chose one people with one language to bring Him glory and draw mankind back to Himself. Abram, later called Abraham, was the one through whom God promised to bless *"all the nations."* Eventually, through the nation of Israel, the Hebrew language would be used to communicate God's Word to the nations. However, the rest of the world did not speak or understand this language and for the most part continued to remain ignorant of God's plan of redemption.

Fast forward to Pentecost and the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on the people of God. Here we see a glimpse of God's reversal of the curse of divided languages. In (Acts 2) people from all over the world hear God's people proclaiming His mighty works in their own languages. This is the beginning of the redemption of language for its intended purpose: to glorify God and draw all people to Himself.

In heaven an innumerable group from every nation, tribe, people and tongue will join together to praise God with one language. See (Revelation 7:9-12). This is where tongues will cease as mentioned in (1 Corinthians 13:8-10). The intention of the spiritual gift of tongues is to glorify

God now, but also to prepare ourselves as His church to glorify Him forever in heaven. The gift however is only partial, in that it is not given to all believers, and in the context of the church requires an interpreter for it to be edifying.

There is much more to be said about the spiritual gift of tongues, but we will summarize a few points here:

- Not every believer receives this gift. The gift of tongues is not a requirement or a necessary sign of salvation. See (1 Corinthians 12:30).
- Tongues can be human languages such as those heard in (Acts 2) but often may be languages no one understands. See (1 Corinthians 14:2).
- Tongues are not *"ecstatic speech"* but are always orderly and are able to be controlled by the one speaking. See (1 Corinthians 14:27-28, 33, 39-40).
- No tongues should be spoken in the church gathering without interpretation. See (1 Corinthians 14:27-28).
- Tongues should not be forbidden. See (1 Corinthians 14:39).

The Holy Spirit gives some believers the spiritual gift of tongues to glorify God and, with the help of an interpreter, to edify the church. This gift is dealt with extensively in the Scriptures and its use should not be discouraged. That said, it should be used properly with pure motives and intentions, of course in the power and prompting of the Holy Spirit. See also (1 Corinthians 12:10, 30, 14:4, 39), (Acts 2:4), (Acts 19:6).

The Gift of Wisdom

The spiritual gift of wisdom, like the gift of knowledge, is also referred to as the *"word of wisdom"* or *"utterance of wisdom."* The Greek word for wisdom is *sophia* and it refers to the intimate understanding of God's Word and His commandments which results in holy and upright living. In the context of (1 Corinthians 12:8), it means to speak to the life of an individual or to a specific situation with great understanding and a righteous perspective, with the goal of guiding others toward a life of holiness and worship.

Several Scriptures reveal the true beauty and fruit of wisdom. (Psalm 111:10) says: *"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; all those who practice it have a good understanding. His praise endures forever!"* Wisdom begins with the fear of the LORD. It begins with knowing who God is and who we are in comparison to Him. That leads to understanding and then to practicing righteousness. A life of wisdom ultimately results in the praise of God.

(James 3:17) says *"the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, open to reason, full of mercy and good fruits, impartial and sincere."* This is undoubtedly a work of the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer. The highest wisdom is found in the cross of Christ, which is "*folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God."* (1 Corinthians 1:18).

A Complete Spiritual Gift List With Definitions

The Holy Spirit gives some the spiritual gift of wisdom to not only impart the truth and understanding to believers, but to invoke a response of holiness and worship lived out in the world and amongst God's people. Wisdom doesn't end with knowledge but is expressed in transformed hearts and lives.

Those with the gift of wisdom have a deep understanding of the holiness of God and the lack of holiness in their own hearts. They can recognize this in others as well and have the compassion and boldness to share that truth with them. They can take from their own life experiences and share what God has taught them through those things. They can easily recognize where a decision or action may lead and can warn against those that may be harmful or unfruitful. They can often see through the confusion of a situation and can give direction that would help an individual or group obtain a God-glorifying goal. The church needs those with the spiritual gift of wisdom to guide her through uncertain or difficult times. See also (1 Corinthians 1:17-31, 2:1-16, 12:8); (Colossians 1:9-10, 2:1-3); (James 3:13-18).