

Explanation of Gifts from the Lifeway Spiritual Gifts Survey

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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. Spiritual gift surveys or inventories seek to help disciples of Christ identify their particular gifts. Below are descriptions of the “gifts” used in the *Lifeway Spiritual Gifts Survey*. They seek to be biblical in nature, but may not always be contextually accurate with Scripture. However, they serve as a good guide to help discover what area(s) of ministry in which a person may or may not be gifted.

Leadership—Leadership aids the body by modeling, 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 and equipping 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 possessing and communicating God’s truth. 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 accurately 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, teaching or personal correction or admonition (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 can exhibit itself in public speaking or privately to individuals (Rom. 12:8).

Shepherding—The gift of shepherding shows itself in persons who look out for the spiritual welfare of others. Although elders/bishops/pastors, like shepherds, do care for members of the church, this gift is not limited to the elders who have been commissioned to oversee the spiritual wellbeing of the church (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 is often demonstrated in public preaching, but it is not limited to such. Gifted evangelists seek the lost and take joy in being used by the Lord to bring new members into His body, the church (Eph. 4:11).

Apostleship—Not to be confused with the 12 apostles of Christ or their particular ministry, the church sends “apostles” to plant churches or be what is often called “missionaries.” Apostles look beyond the church 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. Most 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 and comforting 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 are usually good at integrating new members into the body (1 Pet. 4:9).