

THE GIFTS and exercising them:

Jesus, THE Gift, displayed and taught ALL of these gifts (except we did not have account of Him speaking or praying in tongues, that was a purpose of the Holy Spirit after His ascension). He is Apostle (Hebrews 3:1), Prophet (Acts 3:22), Evangelist (Matt. 4:23), Pastor (John 10:14), and Teacher (John 3:2).

- **Word of Wisdom**- when you receive a word of guidance for someone or yourself about what they should do in a certain situation. The ability to discern works of the Holy Spirit and apply teaching and actions according to the Word of God. God given strategy or insight, or plans not yet revealed. May be a warning, a confirmation, a call to ministry, or understanding in how to advance His cause. It is not human reasoning, or revelation of the logos Word. It also may be conditional on the part of the hearer. **Examples:** Proverbs, Solomon's judgment between two mothers (1 Kings 3:16-28), Joseph interpreting Pharaoh's dreams (Genesis 41), Daniel interpreting Nebuchadnezzar's dream (Daniel 2), Jesus' response to the Pharisees about paying taxes (Matthew 22:15-22; Mark 12:13-17; Luke 20:20-26), Paul's strategy on Mars Hill (Acts 17:22-34), Noah's preparation for the flood, Abigail's interaction with David (1 Samuel 25), the church preparing for a famine (Acts 11).

John 16:13 *"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."*

- **Word of Knowledge**—Knowledge about something or someone you would not have known any other way but God revealing it. This usually very personal to the person who hears it, meant to build their faith or bring them healing. **Examples:** Jesus and the Samaritan woman (John 4:16-19), Peter and Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5:1-11), Ananias to Saul (Acts 9:10-12), Elisha and Gehazi (2 Kings 5:20-27), Samuel's anointing of David (1 Samuel 16:1-13), II Kings 6:9-11 the warning to the king, finding the lost donkeys (I Samuel 9:3-6, 19-20), Paul's prediction of shipwreck (Acts 27:10, 21-26), Jesus foretells His death and resurrection (Matthew 16:21; Mark 8:31; Luke 9:22, Peter's vision (Acts 10).

A word of knowledge is primarily **informative**. A word of wisdom is more **directional**.

- **Prophecy**—a word about the future or the will of God in a situation, may give or confirm specific instruction to someone concerning God's will for their life, offer encouragement and build faith. A messenger from the Lord. Never contradicts His Word or His character.

Will have an inward witness that agrees with the Word. Must be judged. All may prophesy. Joel 2 and Acts 2 tell us that because of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on us, sons and daughters will prophesy. Sometimes we will prophesy and not know until later we were doing so. Should undergird and confirm what you are hearing from God or seeking God about personally and intimately. NOT a substitute for seeking God yourself!

Joel 2:28-29 ; I Tim. 1:18-20

Prophecy is to be used in our prayer and faith arsenal to fight against enemy resistance in our lives.

- **Prophet**- an office in leadership, authority, and influence in ministry that moves in the prophetic acting as a spokesman for God. May be a man or a woman. Prophets and prophetesses were both mentioned in the Bible. Know gifts and calling sin people. Give guidance, revelation, warning, rebuke, instruction. ***Amos 3:7 Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets.***
- **Faith**—faith needed for a certain situation at a certain time, and this stirs faith in others. Every believer has saving faith, general faith in the Lord.
- **Healings**- specific healing for a specific person for a specific time. Anyone can pray for healing at any time, but sometimes the Holy Spirit moves in specific healing. It is a next level ministry of healing, an assignment to the healing ministry.
- **Working miracles**—certain miracles are worked through someone. A next level ministry assignment marked by miracles.
- **Different kinds of tongues**—ability to speak fluently in another language understood by people who speak that language in order to communicate a message from the Lord to them.
- **Interpretation of tongues**—ability to interpret what the Lord is saying after a message in heavenly tongues.
- **Leadership**: encouraging and helping others to build the kingdom of God
- **Administration**: helping with practical logistics of ministry
- **Teaching**: instructing in truths and doctrines of God's Word
- **Exhortation**: motivating others in God, encourage, to urge strongly, to admonish, to entreat, to call upon personally and plead with someone to take a specific course of action. To admonish means to speak truth to someone in the form of discipline, encouragement, affirmation, commendation, or correction.
- **Evangelism**: one who goes out traveling place to place to teach and preach the Word and call people to salvation, healing, and deliverance in Christ.
- **Apostleship**: motivators, church planters, missionaries, spiritual leaders over pastors and churches.

- **Pastors:** lead over a specific congregation of believers. Tending the sheep. Your local pastor is a gift from Jesus to you the Body!
- **Service/Helps:** helping those in need of practical assistance
- **Mercy:** shows acts of compassion and mercy. A person with this gift is marked by mercy in their interactions with people.
- **Giving:** will give freely and regularly with joy to further His Kingdom
- **Hospitality:** Making people feel welcome, appreciated, and wanted. Providing food and comfort for people in the church.
- **Discerning of spirits**—understanding of what spirit is at work in a certain situation; spirit of man, spirit of the devil, or Spirit of God (I Cor. 2:11-12) . Types of spirits at work in the demonic. To *discern* means to separate or distinguish between, to see and understand the difference. This is not just discernment, it is discerning of SPIRITS. There are three types of doctrines, or words also, with the three types of spirits behind them: The Word of God I Peter 1:23-23, doctrines and traditions of men Col. 2:22, Mark 7:7, Matt. 15:9, or doctrines of demons I Tim. 4:1. There are three types of wisdom: God-- I Cor. 1:30, man --I Cor. 1:20, 2:4-5, and demonic-- which includes the counsel of the ungodly-- Psalm 1:2 and James 3:10-16, Matthew 16:15-23.

James 3:10-16; I Cor. 2:11-12; Ephesians 2:1-3; II Corinthians 11:4; II Timothy 1:7; Malachi 3:16-18; I John 4:1-10

Testing the spirits involves discernment. If any word comes forth that denies that Jesus came in the flesh as the Son of God, died for the sins of humanity and then rose again, then it is in a spirit of antichrist. If it is antagonistic to Jesus, denies Jesus, or demeans Jesus, it is antichrist.

John teaches that the love of God marks a believer. If you are not seeing the love of God in someone, they are in error. Their words will then be tainted.

Jesus said “be wise as serpents and harmless as doves,” (Matthew 10:16). He told this to His disciples when He sent them out to minister. Discernment looks at the intent and motive of something, the fruit of it, and weighs it against the Word and the character of God. Jesus warned us the last days would be marked by deception. We must be able to discern in a person if they are speaking and moving in the spirit of God, the spirit of man, or the spirit of the devil. We must listen to the voice of the Lord, seek Him in prayer, and know His Word to discern.

John 10:25-27; John 10:4-5; I Peter 2:1-22; I Peter 1:16-21

So how do we tell if someone speaking is speaking from God? **Jesus said look at the fruit.** Look at their life and the results of the things they say and teach and do.

Is there evidence of a walk with God? Do you see them loving other people, putting others before themselves? Is there evident faith? Do they believe even when it is hard? Are people healed, saved, delivered in Jesus' name because of their ministry or teaching? Is there growth, and increase to the kingdom of God? Do you see humility or pride? Are they servant-hearted or selfish? Do you see the character of Christ in them? Do they remain in a teachable spirit? Are the things of God taking precedent in their life? Do they live with integrity to the Word of God? Do people ridicule or persecute them for their faith? Do people try to talk bad about them but have unfounded claims? If they prophesy something, does it come to pass? Granted this may take many years in some cases because God often prophesies something far in the future, but not always. The disciples said look at what they profess and see if it matches with the Word of God, the character of God, and the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ. They spoke of what character these false teachers and false prophets would show.

The Word of God says out of the mouth of two or three witnesses a thing is established. Whatever word you hear, if it is from God, He will support it with more than one witness.

Deut. 19:15; Matthew 18:15-16; II Cor. 13:1

As far as discerning what particular demonic spirit is at work, that takes Holy Ghost revelation, and experience. But even the most spiritual and discerning person can not get it right away (Acts 16:16-18). We need to pray and fast and listen to the Lord on what's at work.

As far as the revelatory gifts go: **Ways God speaks:** Individual to the person. God is personal and intimate. You must learn how He talks to you personally. It will not always be the same as someone else. However, everyone will hear Him through His Word, that is constant. It may be in dreams, visions, pictures, impressions, physical or emotional sensations, hearing words in the Spirit or seeing words, hearing an audible voice, in signs or symbols, in metaphors, through other people, in nature, through songs and worship. We must not limit Him. There are examples of all of these in the Word of God. **Ways God does NOT speak:** Through mediums, witchcraft, false prophets and teachers, chanting mantras, burning sage or incense, yoga, the third eye, astral projection, voodoo all sorts of occult or New Age means. Anything contrary to His Word and His character. (See John 1:48, II Kings 6:17, Isaiah 6:1, Acts 7:55-56, Acts 10:3-4, Acts 10:10-11, Genesis 20:3, Numb. 12:6, I Kings 3:5, Daniel 7:2, Matt. 1:20, Acts 2:17, Acts 16:9, I Kings 19:11-13, Isaiah 30:21, Matt. 3:7, Luke 9:28-36, Acts 9:3-7, II Kings 7:6, I Sam. 3:10, Isaiah 6:8, Matt. 27:19).

Exercising the Gifts: If you do not know what gift the Holy Spirit has given you, first take inventory. What do you like to do? What are you good at? What comes easy for you?

Where do you feel comfortable? What have you overcome? What in the Kingdom gets you excited, and you really enjoy? What were you healed or delivered from? What has God shown you, or taught you specially that had the most impact on you? What do you have dreams about? Do you see visions or pictures? Do you hear words in your mind when praying for people? Do you feel impressions when you pray for someone? Look through the list of gifts that we are told about in I Cor. 12 and 4, Romans 12, and Ephesians 4. Even if you feel like none of those are your strong-suit, we all have personal gifts He has given us, and He will show you what it is and how you can use it for His Kingdom. Start serving somehow, and go from there. It will unfold. **Proverbs 16:3** *Commit your works to the Lord, and your thoughts will be established.*

Laying on of hands/transference: I Tim. 4:6-7; I Tim. 4:14 Two things: not to neglect the gifts we are given for ministry by not using them, and that gifts can be prophesied over us and transferred by the laying on of hands and prayer from other Christians in mature leadership. Paul had laid his hands on Timothy in prayer and blessing, much like Moses did with Joshua. ***I Tim 4:12-16. Hebrews 6:1-3.*** The Bible considers laying on of hands a part of the basics of Christian doctrine, along with repentance and baptism. Why does God have His people lay hands on others when they pray for them? It has to do with a point of contact. We are the Body of Jesus in the earth, so we *touch* the Body. Jesus felt *dunamis* power go out of Him when the woman with the issue of blood touched His garment. There was a transfer, made possible by faith and touch. Paul counseled Timothy in ***1 Timothy 5:21-22*** *“Do not lay hands on anyone hastily, nor share in other people's sins; keep yourself pure.”* In context, this is counsel to Timothy as a young pastor concerning ordination of those in ministry. Timothy was to lay hands on people as approval for their call into ministry, but he must make sure their hearts are right with God and they had had a season of testing and approval.

Do not neglect the gift: None of them should be put on a shelf and claim, ‘it’s just not the season.’ Gifts are used for occupying the Kingdom until He comes. That never stops. Don’t bury your talent. **Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 11:29**

Barriers to moving in the gifts: Doubt and unbelief, Self-doubt, unworthiness, misunderstanding of who one is in Christ, Fear. With practice, it becomes easier to navigate those gifts. Gifts can evolve over time. New gifts can be added. We must stir up the gift. How do you do that? Pray for opportunities to use it, then use it. Step out in faith, not fear. If you fumble around at first, there is grace. God just wants a step of faith. We all must learn to crawl or scoot before we stand and walk. It is no different in spiritual matters. We only really believe what we are willing to act upon. **James 2:17-23; Hebrews 5:10-14; I Cor 13:10-12; Romans 12:6; Hebrews 2:3-4; I Thess. 5:19-20; I Peter 4:10.** Gifts of the Spirit are given, and may be given to an immature Christian, but the fruit of the Spirit is grown, and that matures a Christian. Fruit comes from relationship.