

Summary Description of Individual Spiritual Gifts – Dr. Ed Kruse

We already know that every Christian has been given a spiritual gift. Your gift indicates the role, function, or particular way in which God has intended you to serve.

Many studies have been done and many books have been written on the subject of spiritual gifts. While there is general agreement, most vary in the listing of the gifts and the specific descriptions that they give of each gift. There is complete agreement, however, that God has given spiritual gifts to every believer, and they are to be used to glorify God, to strengthen and serve others, and to build up the body of Christ. From your scoresheet, look up the spiritual gifts that are your highest, and read their descriptions, uses and cautions.

1. Administration (Planning and Organizing Groups for Christ)

You have a gift for using your faith to set both immediate and long-range goals and put them into a bigger picture. Your gift of working with facts and figures and programs enables others in the body of Christ to plan, organize, and follow through on the goals that glorify God. You bring order. You may like to plan and organize special events. You formulate procedures that implement the vision. Your gift helps others define their spiritual direction. You mobilize others' gifts. Because you use your gift of administration, things come together smoothly in a way that helps everyone in the faith community. They feel good about being in the faith community. They like order. They see the overall plan more clearly and this greatly benefits the body of Christ.

When we exercise our spiritual gifts, a profound awareness of God's grace occurs. We recognize that whomever we are serving also has spiritual gifts of their own that will also glorify God and build up the body of Christ. It follows that exercising of our own spiritual gifts includes seeking the spiritual gifts in others, welcoming them, and bringing the use of those spiritual gifts into the body of Christ.

Every gift and blessing, however, has some risks and dangers if they are neglected, abused or used in excess. For example, you could abuse your gift of administration by trying to control others. Remember that there is always more than one way to implement any plan. There is more than one way to do the planning itself. Your gift of administration is important but there are several cautions. Don't aspire to preach a sermon or suggest an idea for the community when the pastor is on vacation. It is probably obvious to you, but does not go without saying, that it is not wise to try to influence others to do things your way.

As with any spiritual gift, it cannot stand alone, but benefits greatly from other spiritual gifts that are present. You will benefit by teaming up with those who have gifts of Praying, Leadership, Advocacy, Encouragement, Peacemaking and Visioning Faith (1 Corinthians 12:28, Romans 12:8 and Acts 6:1-7).

2. Advocacy (Speaking Up for Others in the Name of Christ)

You have a gift for using your faith to take a stand for justice and mercy for others. Your gift is especially important to those who have no voice or power. You stand up for the oppressed, especially those who lack justice and/or mercy. You get them to have a hearing, a fair shake. This service glorifies God and builds up the body of Christ. Advocacy enhances the God-given dignity of others. It helps them discover the special gifts that were given to them by God that they are no less than any other person in the world. Your gift brings hope to others when you speak for them.

This gift, however, could be abused if it were a conflict of interest when you occupy a position of broader leadership in the Church. You could also abuse this gift in that position by ignoring your gift in the interest of power or popularity.

You will benefit from teaming up with those who have the gifts of Discernment, Praying, Leadership, Voluntary Celibacy, Martyrdom and Communication (Luke 10:25-37 and John 15:11-17).

3. Apostleship (Leadership on a Broader Basis for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to grow churches and oversee their development in a broader ministry of the Gospel, perhaps in a second culture. You enjoy reaching diverse spiritual communities. You are able to identify and mobilize many resources and relationships to develop strategies. You have a long-range vision. Your gift extends the vision of the body of Christ in larger areas to the glory of God.

You will be in the greatest danger of abusing this gift if you think of the Church as a denomination, as “my Church” or “our Church” rather than God’s Church. Your vision has the potential to accomplish great and mighty things for God and the body of Christ. The abuse of this gift can cause great damage if you use this gift in isolation from other members of the body who have gifts that will bless you in your work.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Visioning Faith, Giving, Discernment, Miracles, Evangelism and Exhortation (Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 9:19-23, 12:28, Romans 10:15, Ephesians 4:11, Acts 8:4, 13:2-3 and 22:21).

4. Communication (Listening Actively and Speaking Clearly for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to clarify spiritual and practical messages for others. You disclose yourself openly and effectively. Your gift is important as it helps you develop understanding and insight in the body of Christ and gives glory to God. You even clarify others ideas more satisfactorily for them and the faith community. At the same time, you recognize how the heart of communication is the gift of listening more than it is in speaking.

In fact, it is speaking too much that quickly leads to excess. It is also dangerous to use any anti-grace or anti-gift language. Be cautious about communicating anything negative. You might also be tempted to be too eager to clarify things for others.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Visioning Faith, Wisdom, Praying, Advocacy, Exhortation and Peacemaking (James 3:2-5).

5. Counseling (Guiding Others for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to listen to others effectively. In so doing you help bring order to their lives and guide them in growing skills that relieve their pain, stress, anxiety and discomfort. This benefit helps them to be able to use their gifts more effectively as they, too, glorify God and build the body of Christ. Your gift renews their gifts. Your use of this gift, through the Holy Spirit, makes more of a difference in other people’s lives than you will ever know on this side of eternity.

The gift of counseling can be abused by giving in to the temptation to think that you are right and the other person is wrong. It is far too easy for us to give advice and think that our opinions are wiser than those of others. It is also important to avoid trying to “fix” others. Always remember that other people have the right to make bad decisions.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Praying, Discernment, Wisdom, Exorcism, Encouragement, Peacemaking and Healing (Matthew 5).

6. Craftsmanship (Designing and Making Objects to the Glory of God)

You have the gift of using your faith to design, construct or build things by combining your ideas, mind, thoughts and hands. You also like to maintain things and you notice when something could use upkeep. Your gift is more special than you know because it gives people insights into their relationship with God. It beautifies

and sustains the purpose and function of God's house and wherever your handiwork is used to the glory of God. Your gift is often used in the service of others. As long as you use your gift in order to build up the body of Christ and glorify God, it will do so. Your gift of craftsmanship also may apply to a mechanical aptitude, construction, or engineering. All gifts can build up the body of Christ.

Be cautious not to expect appreciation for what you do. Avoid an unnecessary sense of pride and ownership in what you call the "finished product." By the same token, avoid any sense of rejection when someone else is given an opportunity to exercise this gift even if you can do it better.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Discernment, Giving, Administration, Leadership and Creativity (Numbers 21:4-9, 2 Chronicles 34:9-13, 1 Chronicles 4:14 and Ezekiel 27:4-9).

7. Creativity (Engaging in Writing, Arts or Music to the Glory of God)

This gift may be reflected in you in any number of ways, such as painting, sculpture, lettering, singing or playing instrumental music. It may even be reflected in the imaginative development of new ideas, including but not limited to a different way of doing things or the use of technology. You have the gift of using your faith to design and develop sights and sounds that help people see, hear, feel or touch the very heart of God. This strengthens and builds up the body of Christ and praises to God. Your gift of thoughts and ideas brings meaning to those who hear or read them.

Avoid the tendency to become impatient with others. Others might not notice the high quality of your work, or they may display it less prominently than you felt it deserved.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Leadership, Craftsmanship and Discernment (Exodus 31:3-11, Ezekiel 27:4, 1 Chronicles 4:14, 1 Chronicles 16:42, 2 Chronicles 5:12-13, Nehemiah 12:42, Psalm 45:1, Psalm 150:4-5, Isaiah 38:20, Colossians 3:16, Philippians 3:1, James 5:13 and Jude 3).

8. Discernment (Distinguishing Truth from Error, Determining Motives for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to distinguish truth from error. You distinguish what is authentic from what is inauthentic. This is a priceless gift that often goes unrecognized. You yourself may not have imagined that you have this gift, but you do. You are able to see the underlying spirit and motive behind the words, behavior and actions of others in order to build up the body of Christ and give glory to God. The use of all spiritual gifts help a person see God's will more clearly. Discernment also enables you to tell if a person has a spiritual gift. It helps determine whether a person's motives are healthy or questionable.

It is however, easy for pride to sneak in and create an abuse of your gift. Avoid exercising your gift too frequently. Beware of sticking your nose into other people's business. At the same time, respond courageously whenever someone calls on you for your discernment.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Praying, Visioning Faith, Leadership, Wisdom, Communicating, Exorcism and Teaching (1 Corinthians 12:10, Acts 5:1-11, 16:16-18, Matthew 16:21-23 and 1 John 4:1-6).

9. Miracles (Doing Wonders for God in Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith, through God's power, to serve as a human intermediary for God. By doing so, God works through you to accomplish exceptional interventions in acts of God's power. Your gift brings new meaning in life to others and gives all glory to God and thereby builds up the body of Christ. This gift can be a dramatic and powerful expression of God's power in building up the body of Christ and glorifying God.

This gift in you can bring with it much more risk than some of the other gifts. Your use of this gift is easily misunderstood. Be aware of how you are coming across to others and be sensitive to their reactions and challenges. Avoid any implication that you are doing this. Do not take things personally. Watch out for the temptation to take the credit yourself rather than give the glory to God.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Wisdom, Praying, Evangelism, Apostleship and Healing (1 Corinthians 12:10, 12, 28, Acts 9:36-42, 19:11-20, 28:7-10 and Romans 15:18-19).

10. Encouragement (Expressing Confidence in Others to Build Ministry for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to uplift others to greater faith and confidence. There are few messages that are more appreciated by others than, "You can do it; I believe in you." Through your gift God builds up, helps and heals those who are discouraged and this builds up the entire body of Christ and gives glory to God. It helps the hesitant and those who want to learn. People will have new confidence and strength because of your use of your gift.

Be aware that your encouragement of what others are able to do is specifically because God is in them and empowers them to do everything. Equally important is that every encouragement that you give will only be effective when it is genuine. Be cautious that you avoid every tendency to be patronizing, condescending, trivial or insincere in expressing your appreciation of others. Above all, express confidence in their ability to do the job, with God's help.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Advocacy, Mercy, Craftsmanship, Helping, Peacemaking, Administration, Prophecy and Creativity (Hebrews 10:25, Romans 12:8, 1 Corinthians 15:58 and Acts 14: 21-22).

11. Exorcism (Dispelling Evil Spirits in the Name of Christ)

For some reason this gift appears to be less common than some of the other gifts. Perhaps it only seems so because of the fear and ignorance that is so widespread in the recognition of what the Bible calls "the powers of darkness." You have the gift of using your faith to expel or cast out evil forces in others. Your gift attacks attitudes and spirits that threaten the body of Christ. Rest assured that calling on the name of Jesus Christ releases a power that surpasses all human understanding.

Be cautious to discern sufficiently that the object of your dispelling is clearly an evil spirit rather than physiological or the result of chemicals or irresponsibility. Remember that for a long time both epilepsy and mental illness were wrongly thought to be evil spirits. Avoid practicing or using this gift in a context in which even the successful expulsion of evil will be resented. At the same time, do not be afraid to use your gift as long as you avoid premature conclusions. Beware of feeling superior to others who do not have this gift. Your gift gives glory to God.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Wisdom, Leadership, Evangelism and Apostleship (Matthew 10:1, 12:22-32, 17:14-21, Mark 9:17-29, Luke 9:37-43, Luke 10:12-20, Acts 8:5-8 and 16:16-18).

12. Giving (Sharing Generously Out of Love for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to share your resources generously and joyfully. Your liberal and cheerful example in giving enables others to grow in faith and gives glory to God and builds up the body of Christ. Your generosity and incredible love for giving can make a big difference in spreading the Gospel and building up the body of Christ and glorifying God.

Be cautious not to allow arrogance to enter your heart, nor be distracted from your central motives when you think back on the gift that you exercised. There is also the danger with this gift to give in to the temptation to try to control others with your resources.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Mercy, Counseling, Advocacy, Voluntary Poverty, Voluntary Celibacy and Apostleship (Romans 12:8, Mark 12:41-44, Malachi 3:10, 2 Corinthians 8:1-7 and 9:2-8).

13. Healing (Bringing Health and Wholeness to Others for Christ)

This is another gift that risks the resentment and displeasure of those who do not understand its use. In all fairness, the negative reactions of others have often been stimulated by abuses of this gift for individual recognition and riches. That is, however, no reason to withhold the use of your gift when you discern an opportunity to do so for the right reasons. You have the gift of using your faith to bring health and wholeness to whomever it pleases God to cure, sometimes by exceptional intervention with God's power. Your gift allows others to have extended and fulfilling lives so they can use their gifts. It builds up the body of Christ and gives all glory to God.

This gift can also be abused by taking credit yourself instead of giving glory to God. Remember to always give thanks to God after every healing and give God the glory. You are not a faith healer. God alone heals.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Mercy, Evangelism, Miracles and Counseling (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, Acts 3:1-10, 5:12-16, 9:32-35 and 28:7-10).

14. Helping (Doing Practical Tasks Out of Love for Christ)

This is one of the most important gifts in the body of Christ. You actually invest your gifts in the life and ministry of other members. You prefer not to be in the spotlight. You have the gift of using your faith to do whatever might need to be done in the practical tasks behind the scenes that support the ministries of others who cherish the freedom to use their gifts because of you. Those who have other gifts are dependent upon you and your gift to keep them from becoming frustrated and anxious. Your gift is vital in building up the body of Christ to the glory of God as you relieve others of the tasks that are burdening them.

Avoid any diminishing of the importance of doing things that seem trivial to others but are important to the body of Christ. While you naturally avoid the spotlight, you can be negatively affected by thinking that the gifts of others are more important than your gift of helping. Your gift of helping allows others to use their gifts.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Administration, Serving, Craftsmanship, Voluntary Poverty and Encouragement (1 Corinthians 12:28, 15:58, Mark 15:40-41, Luke 8:2-3, Romans 16:1-2, Mark 2:3-4, Hebrews 13:15 and Acts 9:36).

15. Exhortation (Influencing Others for Christ)

This gift is commonly associated with being a great public speaker. This is hardly the case, and in fact, the ability to speak in public may not even be a gift at all. It all depends upon the reason for exercising the gift. You have the gift of using your faith to challenge others effectively so they often respond. You enable others to use their gifts in greater ways to serve in the body of Christ and give glory of God. Your gift strengthens, reaffirms and reassures others. Using this gift will enable you to make a profound difference in other people's lives.

Avoid all attempts to convince others against their will or to influence others for personal gain. Be cautious about becoming too pushy.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Martyrdom, Mercy, Miracles, Healing, Evangelism, Prophecy, Advocacy, Communication, Visioning Faith, Teaching, Giving, Peacemaking and Encouragement (Romans 12:8, Acts 14:21-22, Hebrews 10:25 and 1 Timothy 4:13).

16. Interpretation of Tongues (Expressing the Meaning of Spiritual Messages for Christ)

This is the only gift that is listed as a prerequisite for another gift to be exercised. Furthermore, the exercise of this gift is far less common in some traditions than others. This does not negate the validity of your gift. You have the gift of using your faith to explain the meaning in the vernacular those messages that are spoken in tongues to the body of Christ. Your gift clarifies the mystery of godliness and builds up the body of Christ as you give all glory to God. Others will listen intently to the spiritual message that God gives to you through your interpretation, which will strengthen your faith and increase their service to the glory of God.

You will only find fulfillment in the exercise of this gift if the focus is completely off of what you are doing and is instead focused on God who is doing the interpretation through you. Do not rejoice in this gift except in the role of a messenger. Acknowledge the mystery of it all. It is God's message that you are conveying, not your ability to interpret. Your gift can be abused, with the slightest evidence of pride in yourself.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gift of Discernment, Wisdom, Praying, Evangelism, Speaking in Tongues and Leadership (1 Corinthians 12:10, 30, 14:13 and 14:26-28).

17. Leadership (Bringing Others Together in Action, Teambuilding for Christ)

The understanding of this gift is very different from the popular and cultural stereotype of leadership. The Spiritual Gift of leadership has no empire-building component. Leadership is not measured by power, position or authority. It is about building teams and building teamwork. You communicate those goals in such a way that others voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish them. You articulate the vision and guide others toward God's goals and this gives direction to the body of Christ. Your gift empowers and equips others, and helps develop future leaders in the body of Christ.

As you develop effective teams in building up the body of Christ and giving glory to God, you must also avoid the illusion that you personally built the team. Just get out of the way and let God's power flow through you.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gift of Serving, Advocacy, Administration, Hospitality, Communication, Helping, Exhortation, Peacemaking, Visioning Faith, Encouragement and Praying (Luke 9:51, Romans 12:8, Hebrews 13:17, Acts 7:10, 15:7-11 and 1 Timothy 5:17).

18. Celibacy (Voluntarily Living Singly for Christ)

While the Bible openly recommends being married if a person has the desire to do so, it also commends highly the gift of refraining from marriage when it is a natural God-given desire. You have the gift of using your faith to remain single and enjoy ministering with the freedom this gives you. You are able to be unmarried without suffering undue sexual temptations. You are more able to live out your other gifts because his gift gives you greater freedom in your mission to build up the body of Christ and give glory to God. Your freedom to serve Christ to a greater degree without being encumbered by family cares will enable you to be available and to use any other gifts you have more effectively.

There are two cautions connected with this gift. First, do not let yourself be affected by the criticism and innuendos of others. Second, do not think more highly of yourself because you have this gift. Avoid the temptation to diminish any importance of boundaries and learn to handle criticism with grace.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Peacemaking, Voluntary Poverty, Serving, Evangelism and Praying (Matthew 19:10-12 and 1 Corinthians 7:7-8).

19. Poverty (Voluntary Subsistence Living for Christ)

While it is not an honor to be rich or poor, you have the ability to see things from a perspective that eludes many. You have the gift of using your faith to separate material values from spiritual priorities and you live with minimum personal requirements. Your gift enables you to witness to the culture, resist peer pressure and build up your fellow members in the body of Christ as you give glory to God. You will set an important example and witness to others of the priorities of God instead of the priorities of the culture.

Avoid seeking to be poor as though it would gain some extra favor or benefit from God, which it does not. At the same time, be totally content with your God-given willingness to live without. Resist self-pity. It neither glorifies God nor builds up the body of Christ.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Martyrdom, Voluntary Celibacy, Praying, Giving and Helping (1 Corinthians 13:1-3, 2 Corinthians 6:10, 8:9, Hebrews 13:5, Acts 2:44-45 and 4:34-37).

20. Martyrdom (Willingness to Die for Christ)

This gift is easily misunderstood because in an imbalanced form may be a form of mental illness rather than giftedness. St. Paul said “for me to live is Christ, to die is gain,” and St. Peter said, “count it a joy to suffer for Christ.” They did not seek suffering but saw it as an opportunity to witness. You have the gift of being faithfully willing to suffer in order to glorify God and build up the body of Christ. You are even willing to die for Christ and to do so with a victorious spirit. Your gift sets an example of suffering to others as it builds up the body of Christ and gives great glory to God. As you exercise this gift you will proclaim in a profound way that your call to discipleship includes sacrifice and in so doing you will be a mentor to all.

On the other hand, beware of any tendency to masochism or self-induced suffering, which is neither glorifying God nor does it build up the body of Christ. At the same time, while you probably do not need to be reminded to do so, do not run from an opportunity to give the greatest gift that one can give either our Lord or others. One can become a martyr for Christ without looking forward to it. Likewise, one can look forward to death without becoming a martyr.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Voluntary Poverty, Voluntary Celibacy, Praying, Giving, Exhortation and Advocacy (1 Corinthians 13:1-3).

21. Peacemaking (Restoring Unity in Groups for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to bring ways of harmony and form unity in groups, especially in those who live in conflict. Through the Holy Spirit, your gift brings opportunity out of crisis, meaning out of emptiness and new life out of chaos. It also builds up the body of Christ and gives glory to the Spirit of God. When you exercise this gift, you make it possible for another individual or group to serve God more fully and with greater joy.

Your caution is to avoid the tendency to make peace at any price or to declare harmony when it does not yet exist. Also beware of premature compromise, glossing over real differences, and surface apologies that are insincere.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Discernment, Counseling, Leadership, Visioning Faith, Administration, Wisdom, Teaching, Advocacy, Showing Hospitality and Communication (Matthew 5:9).

22. Praying (Intercession for Others out of love for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to intercede for others in a regular pattern and for extended periods of time. You do so intentionally and effectively, by the grace of God. You count on and trust in God to answer your prayers in God's time and according to God's will. You see frequent and specific answers. This helps others serve and glorify God and this builds up the body of Christ.

The gift of Intercession can be abused if you imagine that the results come from your efforts instead of from God's grace. Don't slip into expecting quick results or try to "fix" someone. Never give up. Above all, get out of the way with what you want to happen and pray for God's will to be done.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Mercy, Giving, Counseling, Leadership, Advocacy, Miracles, Exorcism and Healing (James 5:14-16, 1 Timothy 2:1-2, Colossians 4:12, Acts 6:4, 12:5, 22:41-44, Ephesians 6:18, Colossians 1:9-12 and 4:12-13).

23. Serving (Enabling Others to Use Their Gifts for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to serve as either a follower or a leader. You see many ways to use your gift. You see things that can be done but are often overlooked by others. Your gift also builds up the body of Christ and gives glory to God by enabling others to use their gifts more effectively. Your gift is a blessing in all areas of ministry, so you will often find opportunities to make a difference in the lives of others.

Be cautious not to serve others for any other reason than out of love. Otherwise you will burn out rather than be energized. Use your gift out of love for Christ to the glory of God.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Leadership, Administration, Praying, Mercy and Helping (Romans 12:7, 14:18-19, 2 Timothy 1:16-18, Titus 3:14, Galatians 6:2, 10 and Acts 6:1-7).

24. Evangelizing (Sharing the Good News of Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to effectively share the love of Jesus. Your gift enables others to discover the beauty of the Gospel and they too will build up the body of Christ and give glory to God. As you use this gift, you will warm people's hearts as you touch their lives in ways beyond human understanding, and you will directly draw them closer to Jesus Christ.

Avoid thinking that someone came to Christ through your effort. The Holy Spirit worked through you.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Counseling, Hospitality, Leadership, Communication, Praying, Visioning Faith and Teaching (Ephesians 4:11-14, 2 Timothy 4:5, Acts 5:42, 8:5-8 and 26-40, 13:42-43, 11:20-21, 14:21 and 21:8).

25. Pastor/Teacher (Shepherding Congregations and Groups for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to guide, care for and responsibly nurture the spiritual welfare of individuals and groups over a long period of time. Your gift counsels, encourages and feeds others with God's Word, and this builds up the body of Christ and gives glory to God.

This gift can be easily abused. All spiritual gifts come with boundaries. A major boundary violation of the Pastor/Teacher gift occurs when one breaks a trust. Such alienation often occurs as a result of an action that lacked integrity. Do not take advantage of the relationships you cultivate.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Encouragement, Prophecy, Counseling, Evangelism, Communication, Teaching, Peacemaking, Helping, Visioning Faith, Praying and Discernment (John 10:1-18, Ephesians 4:11-14, 1Thessalonians 5:12, Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and 1 Peter 5:1-3).

26. Hospitality (Welcoming and Becoming Christ to the Stranger and Outcast)

This one of the most underestimated spiritual gifts. Hospitality is much more than smiling or being friendly or offering food and lodging, though it certainly includes all of that. You have the gift of using your faith to welcome and care for the stranger and those who are hesitant. Your gift enables you to reach out to others with warmth and comfort and dignity, and this builds up the body of Christ to the glory of God. Because you know that every person has value and spiritual gifts of their own, you notice when people are on the fringes of a room, a group or a conversation. You reach out to these people and you initiate an action to bring them into an opportunity to belong. One of your most wonderful qualities as you exercise this gift is your willingness to disclose yourself freely.

Avoid taking on so many hospitality opportunities that you neglect your loved ones. Eliminate all insincerity, glad-handing, or shallow formality. Take your time with people rather than flitting about to be hospitable to the greatest number of people.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Evangelism, Pastor/Teacher, Serving, Mercy, Voluntary Celibacy, Peacemaking and Helping (1 Peter 4:9-10, Matthew. 25, Acts 16:14-15, Hebrews 13:1-2, 3 John 1:5-8, Romans 12:9-13 and 16:23).

27. Mercy (Showing Compassion for the Disadvantaged out of love for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to respond with genuine empathy and compassionately to those who are suffering from mental, physical or emotional issues. You translate your compassion into cheerful giving of yourself in a way that reflects Christ's love. Your gentle words, concern and actions build up the body of Christ and give glory to God as others see the love of Christ through your gift. You may accomplish more behind the scenes than others may with their up front leadership.

Resist the temptations to resent those who lead and the temptation of false humility and self-deprecation. Also avoid the twin dangers of impatience and excessive patience. People who are suffering also benefit from doing what they can for themselves in order to avoid self-pity. If you get out of the way, you will actually increase their God-given dignity by believing in them and their present ministry with whatever ability they have.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Pastor/Teacher, Serving, Healing, Counseling and Encouragement (Romans 12:8, Acts 9:36, 20:28, 1Thessalonians 5:12, Luke 10:33-35 and Ephesians 4:11).

28. Prophecy (Speaking Direct Messages from God)

You have the gift of using your faith to courageously receive and communicate a message from God. You build up the body of Christ and glorify God when you speak such a message for the purpose of correction, repentance or nurture. While at times you risk your popularity and comfort, your gift builds up the body of Christ and gives glory to God.

Resist the fear that accompanies the call to share a message from God that will disturb others.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Wisdom, Pastor/Teacher, Communication, Exhortation, Martyrdom, Visioning Faith and Teaching (1 Corinthians 12: 10, 28, Luke 7:26, Acts 25:32, 21:9-11, Romans 12:6 and Ephesians 4:11-14).

29. Speaking in Tongues (Uttering Spiritual Messages to Build Up the Body of Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith in speaking humanly unintelligible messages of God in a language that neither you nor the audience has ever learned. You use your gift only when you are in the presence of someone who has the gift of interpretation, so that your message is understood, builds up the body of Christ and gives glory to God. When you use this gift, the spiritual messages you utter will lift up your sisters and brothers in the body of Christ to new spiritual awareness.

The abuse of this gift would be to think that you have a higher level of spirituality than others.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Discernment, Interpretation of Tongues, Wisdom, Leadership and Apostleship (1 Corinthians 12: 10, 28, 14:13-19, Acts 2:1-13, 10:44-46, 19:1-7 and Mark 16:17).

30. Wisdom (Sharing Insightful Spiritual Experience or Knowledge with Others for Christ)

You have the gift of knowing the mind of the Holy Spirit. You discern the ideas that are pertinent to the wellbeing of the body of Christ. By using your faith and experience, you give understanding and insight to both individuals and groups. Your discovery, analysis and sharing all enable the body of Christ to be healthy and grow. Your insight helps people apply this knowledge in a way that is best for the specific opportunities they face. Your gift helps others discover concepts that are essential to the body of Christ, and glorifies God. As you communicate your spiritual insights to others, it can make a big impact in the lives of others.

Avoid the expectation that others must follow your guidance.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Prophecy, Pastor/Teacher, Teaching, Visioning Faith and Communication (Matthew 16:17, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16, 12:8, 13:2, Acts 5:1-11, 6:3-10, 2 Corinthians 11:6, James 1:5-6, 2 Peter 3:15-16 and Colossians 2:2-3).

31. Teaching (Communicating Biblical Principles and Meanings to Others for Christ)

You have the gift of using your faith to convey Biblical messages with power to students. You communicate information in a way that is relevant to the health and ministry, and you do so in a way that people learn. You enjoy sharing knowledge and truths from God to others in the body of Christ. Your gift builds up others in faith and life as they learn and grow and give glory to God.

Beware of thinking that whatever you teach is truth, and be open to changing your mind as you put your participants' benefits ahead of your own.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Leadership, Communication, Prophecy, Wisdom, Pastor/Teacher and Evangelism (1 Corinthians 12:28, Romans 12:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:12, Ephesians 4:11-14, Acts 18:24-28 and 20:20-21).

32. Visioning Faith (Courageously Communicating God's Presence in Times of Crisis)

You have the gift of using your faith to stand firm in the face of seemingly impossible odds. You will have no fear in moving ahead even though everything around you seems to be holding you back. You witness extraordinary confidence in knowing God's will and purposes for your life and for the body of Christ, of which you are a member. Your gift gives you so much confidence in God that you reject impediments as only detours. Your courage in the face of crisis will have a marvelous calming influence on others and will enable them to avoid dangerous behavior and also will enable them to give praise to God. Such is the power of your example.

Your gift is especially important in helping your faith community look to the future. It is a way of using your faith to see where the community might go.

The abuse of this gift, however, is to be so presumptuous that you think you hear the voice of God when it is only your opinion.

You will benefit by teaming up with those who have the gifts of Leadership, Administration, Martyrdom, Pastor/Teacher, Evangelism, Prophecy, Discernment, Peacemaking, Wisdom, Giving and Encouragement (1 Corinthians 12:9, Romans 4:18-21, Acts 11:22-24, 27:21-25 and Hebrews 11).

Now that you have surveyed the meanings of many gifts, how do you see giftedness applying to your life? Remember that it is your gifts that make you unique. Praise God for your spiritual gifts. Be assured that the Holy Spirit is with you as you explore and nurture your gifts. Pray that God will lead you to use them to God's glory and for building up of the body of Christ.