





## JUST FOR YOU

“I have a gift for you!” Even when printed on a junk mail envelope, these words catch our eye, because a gift says to us, *Someone cares for and thought of me*. A personal gift from God, with your name on it, awaits every Christian believer, and what comes from God is never junk mail. Lesson #5 introduced the vital “gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38), but God’s desire to give doesn’t stop there. Through the Holy Spirit, each follower of Jesus receives “spiritual gifts,” which Paul tells us about in 1 Corinthians 12:1. How do we receive these gifts? How should we use them? And how can we say “Thank you” to the Giver? The Bible explains what every Christian needs to know about spiritual gifts.

## 1 How do we receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?

**Luke 11:13** “If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!”

**Acts 19:5–6** “... They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them ...”

We receive the Holy Spirit in response to sincere prayer when we begin the Christian life. Participating in religious symbols like baptism will not automatically bring about the gift of the Holy Spirit. When Jesus was baptized as an example to us, the Holy Spirit descended upon Him in answer to His prayer. “... Jesus also was baptized; and *while He prayed*, the heaven was opened. And the Holy Spirit descended in bodily form like a dove upon Him ...” (Luke 3:21–22, emphasis supplied).

## 2 Will there be evidence that we have been filled with the Holy Spirit?

**Galatians 5:22–23** “But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control. ...”

**1 John 3:24** “Now he who keeps His commandments abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us.”

**Acts 1:8** “But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

The evidence of the Holy Spirit is not a feeling of spiritual fervor that comes over us. Instead, when we allow the Holy Spirit to influence our thoughts and actions, the evidence will be seen in the daily choices we make to follow the perfect example of Jesus.

- Our characters will change to become like Jesus.
- We will obey God’s Law out of love.
- We will share Jesus with others.

## 3 What do we receive from God when the Holy Spirit is present in our lives?

**1 Corinthians 12:4, 11** “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”

The Holy Spirit distributes the gifts God is eager to give His people. “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights ...” (James 1:17). The spiritual gifts God gives are essential to every Christian. They are real blessings from God that no human can take credit for.

## 4 What is the purpose of the gifts of the Spirit?

**Ephesians 4:11–12** “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”

The Holy Spirit prompts every member in God’s church to use their spiritual gifts—not to benefit themselves, but to benefit the mission of the whole church. “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all” (1 Corinthians 12:7). Spiritual gifts empower God’s church to share the gospel in an organized, united, and loving way. (See Lesson #13 for an introduction to God’s church.)

## 5 Why are the gifts of the Spirit needed in the church?

**2 Corinthians 3:5** “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God.”

**John 15:5** “... ‘He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.’”

We are powerless to accomplish God’s purpose without His strength and His gifts. “... ‘Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,’ says the Lord of hosts” (Zechariah 4:6). God knows our weakness, and He supplies all the strength and ability that is needed by those who minister. So we can confidently say, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me” (Philippians 4:13).



“We are powerless to accomplish God’s purpose without His strength and His gifts.”

## 6 Who receives the gifts of the Spirit?

**1 Corinthians 12:7** “But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one ...”

**1 Corinthians 12:13** “For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.”

**1 Corinthians 12:27** “Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually.”

Without exception, every member of the body of Christ receives the gifts of the Holy Spirit. As regular, ordinary believers, we submit to God and are empowered to serve Him in our unique sphere of influence.

## 7 What are the specific gifts the Holy Spirit gives in the church?

**1 Corinthians 12:8–10** “For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.”

**Ephesians 4:11** “And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers.”

The specific gifts God has placed in the church are:

- **Wisdom** (sharing godly counsel)
- **Knowledge** (explaining the truths of Scripture)
- **Faith** (profound trust in God that encourages others)
- **Healings** (restoring health and wholeness)
- **Miracles** (being used by God to demonstrate His supernatural power)
- **Prophecy** (sharing God’s unaltered messages clearly with believers in the church)
- **Discerning of spirits** (recognizing truth and error, and giving warning)
- **Tongues** (speaking the gospel in a foreign language)
- **Interpretation** (translating the gospel message)
- **Apostleship** (traveling missionaries)
- **Evangelism** (ministry to unbelievers outside the church)
- **Pastors and teachers** (guiding and instructing in the church)

From 1 Corinthians 12:28 we add

- **Helping** (all kinds of service)
- **Administration** (wise leadership and management)





**“God asks for our readiness to dedicate every talent to be used for Him because we love Him ...”**

From Romans 12:6–8 we add

- **Exhorting** (godly preaching that invites a response)
- **Giving** (setting an example of generosity)
- **Mercy** (leading others to forgive and restore as Jesus did)

The use of these gifts in the church overlap and complement each other so that each member supports the whole body as a unified whole. By understanding and using the abilities God gives, every church member fills a vital role in the body of Christ.

## 8 Are the gifts of the Spirit always miraculous and spectacular?

**Exodus 36:2** “Then Moses called ... every gifted artisan in whose heart the Lord had put wisdom, everyone whose heart was stirred, to come and do the work.”

To build His Sanctuary, God gave wisdom to skilled artisans to use the abilities they already possessed. Faithfully employing the talents we have spent hours practicing may not appear to be a miracle, but even our natural and learned skills are God’s gifts. “... And what do you have that you did not receive? Now if you did indeed receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?” (1 Corinthians 4:7). God asks for our readiness to dedicate every talent to be used for Him because we love Him, and because “the Lord has need of it” (Mark 11:3).

## 9 Do all believers receive the same spiritual gifts?

**Romans 12:4** “... We have many members in one body, but all the members do not have the same function.”

**Romans 12:6** “Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is

given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, let us prophesy in proportion to our faith.”

**1 Corinthians 12:29–30** “Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Are all workers of miracles? Do all have gifts of healings? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret?”

God entrusts to each unique believer a one-of-a-kind combination of spiritual gifts. There is no single gift of the Spirit that must be present to confirm someone is a genuine follower of God. Every church member is needed, whether we speak before crowds or our work is seldom noticed. No one is superior or inferior because their God-given abilities are different from someone else’s.

## 10 What does God want us to do with the spiritual gifts He has given us?

**1 Peter 4:10–11** “As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God. If anyone ministers, let him do it as with the ability which God supplies, that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belong the glory and the dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

**1 Corinthians 4:2** “Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful.”

**Romans 12:3** “For I say, through the grace given to me, to everyone who is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think soberly, as God has dealt to each one a measure of faith.”

**Luke 19:12–13** “Therefore He said: ‘A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom and to return. So he called ten of his servants, delivered to them ten minas, and said to them, “Do business till I come.”’”

It is a privilege to use the talents God gives to lead sinners to Jesus. It is not a virtue to claim we have nothing to offer in the ministries of the church. Jesus said, “Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16). Without seeking to be honored, we should improve the talents God gives us. Like Isaiah, our grateful response to God’s love will be, “Here am I! Send me” (Isaiah 6:8). The result of working in unity with God is better than anything we could gain from serving ourselves. “For God is not unjust to forget your work and labor of love which you have shown toward His name, in that you have ministered to the saints ...” (Hebrews 6:10).

## 11 Is there a spiritual gift that has special importance to the mission of God's church?

**1 Corinthians 12:4–6** “There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.”

**1 Corinthians 14:1** “Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy.”

Every ministry task is important because each gift in the body of Christ comes from God. But the *gift of prophecy is of special significance*, because responding to God's clear words of prophecy helps the church to represent His character to the world. “... Prophesying is not for unbelievers but for those who believe” (1 Corinthians 14:22).

**1 Corinthians 13:2** “And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.”

More important than what gifts we have is *how we use them*. With every gift God gives, we need genuine love for others that comes from knowing His love for us. “He who does not love does not know God, for God is love” (1 John 4:8).

## 12 What are the gift of tongues and the gift of interpretation?

**Acts 2:4, 6** “And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And when this sound occurred, the multitude came together, and were confused, because everyone heard them speak in his own language.”

Through the gift of tongues, God enables the gospel to be understood clearly by someone in another human language without an interpreter. The tongues God empowers some to speak are never called “new” or “unknown” languages in the Bible. They are *languages spoken on Earth* by people who need to hear about Jesus (1 Corinthians 14:10–11). In each of the three Bible stories where God gave the gift of tongues (Acts 2, 10, and 19), people who spoke a different language understood what was spoken in their native tongue. The person who speaks in a tongue will always understand and be in control of the gospel message that is spoken, because “the spirits of the prophets are subject to the prophets” (1 Corinthians 14:32).

Without the ability to speak someone's language, we need the gift of interpretation to translate the gospel message (1 Corinthians 12:10). This is why church members who speak the same language do not need

the gift of tongues or the gift of interpretation to share a message from God's Word with each other.

## 13 What is the purpose of speaking in tongues?

**1 Corinthians 14:22–23** “Therefore tongues are for a sign, not to those who believe but to unbelievers .... Therefore if the whole church comes together in one place, and all speak with tongues, and there come in those who are uninformed or unbelievers, will they not say that you are out of your mind?”

The gift of tongues empowers believers to break the language barrier for evangelism. This gift is not for the purpose of talking before people who already believe, but that unbelievers from “every nation, tribe, tongue, and people” (Revelation 14:6) may hear and respond to the gospel message. This fulfills Jesus' worldwide promise in Matthew 24:14: “And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come.”

## 14 What instruction does Paul give about the gift of tongues in the church?

**1 Corinthians 14:33** “For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”

**1 Corinthians 14:40** “Let all things be done decently and in order.”

**1 Corinthians 14:9** “... Unless you utter by the tongue words easy to understand, how will it be known what is spoken? For you will be speaking into the air.”

God's methods are organized, clear, and intelligible. No usefulness comes from incomprehensible speech in God's church. If the message cannot be understood, God's church is not benefited, and the Holy Spirit is not prompting the action.



“The person who speaks in a tongue will always understand and be in control of the gospel message that is spoken ...”

## 15 What are the spiritual gifts of healing?

**Matthew 10:1** “And when He had called His twelve disciples to Him, He gave them power over unclean spirits, to cast them out, and to heal all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease.”

**James 5:14–16** “Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.”

The gifts of healing are God’s simple means to restore the sick to His pattern of wholeness, both physically and spiritually. God is the only healer—“... ‘... For I am the Lord who heals you” (Exodus 15:26). No person has healing power in themselves that they control as they choose. Although, at times, God healed many people through Paul (Acts 28:8–9), there were times God did not give him the gift of healing. He did not heal himself (Galatians 4:13–14), and neither did he heal Timothy (1 Timothy 5:23), Epaphroditus (Philippians 2:25–27), or Trophimus (2 Timothy 4:20). And while God sometimes heals immediately in response to prayer, His gift of healing may also happen slowly as we help the sick to trust God by following His plan of healthy and holy living. God is doing all things for good, even if complete healing happens only when Jesus returns. “Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed—in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed” (1 Corinthians 15:51–52). “Therefore we do not lose heart ...” (2 Corinthians 4:16).

## 16 Will supernatural power prove that someone is filled with the Holy Spirit?

**1 John 4:1** “Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”

**Matthew 24:24** “For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect.”

**2 Thessalonians 2:9–10** “The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.”

Satan works by deception and counterfeits God’s blessings so that they appear genuine. Through supernatural power, Satan can supply mirac-

ulous gifts to people who submit to him, even to people who claim to be part of God’s church. While they may perform convincing miracles and healings, or share eloquent and heartfelt messages, they will twist the truths of Scripture. This is why Paul said, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant” (1 Corinthians 12:1). Instead of mentioning miraculous signs as the proof of his ministry, Paul pointed to the fruit of his relationship with Jesus and his influence that led others to obedience (1 Corinthians 9:1–2). There is only one standard to measure whether an amazing talent or miracle is a spiritual gift from God or a deception from Satan. “To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them” (Isaiah 8:20).

## 17 Will there be a time when the gifts of the Spirit are no longer needed?

**1 Corinthians 13:8** “... But whether there are prophecies, they will fail; whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away.”

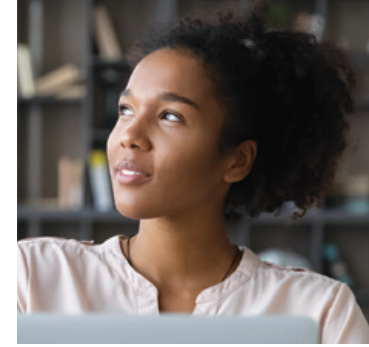
**1 Corinthians 13:10** “But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away.”

God fed the children of Israel with manna as they traveled to the promised land, but when they crossed the Jordan River into Canaan, the manna was no longer supplied and they ate the fruit of that land to which God had led them (Joshua 5:12). When Jesus returns, the gifts He gave us to lead sinners to Him will no longer be needed. Sin will be gone, and we will see Jesus face to face. The limited knowledge of God that now shines through imperfect people will be illuminated by the full knowledge that comes when “God Himself will be with them and be their God” (Revelation 21:3).



“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God ...” 1 John 4:1

# WHAT DOES THIS MEAN FOR MY LIFE TODAY?



**1. What talents do you possess that you can use for God?** Maybe you have used them for selfish purposes in the past, but in what ways can your unique abilities be a blessing to others?

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**2. When enthusiasm takes hold of people in the church, or when miracles are performed, people often wonder if the Holy Spirit is beginning a revival.** The presence of the Holy Spirit always leads people to a renewed resolve to obey God's Law. How should we expect people's lives to be changed in a true Holy Spirit revival?

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**3. Wisdom is a gift every Christian needs.** Paul sought wisdom from the Holy Spirit so that he spoke "not in words which man's wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches ..." (1 Corinthians 2:13). For what decisions and relationships do you need to seek God's gift of wisdom?

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**4. The Holy Spirit is compared to rain pouring down on people who are willing to receive it.** "For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, and My blessing on your offspring" (Isaiah 44:3). Zechariah 10:1 tells us to "Ask the Lord for rain in the time of the latter rain." This is our invitation to ask for the Holy Spirit even more as time goes on. Will you begin to ask God each day to give you the Holy Spirit and show you how you can work for Him?

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**5. Who do you know that needs to hear what you have learned?** "I thought it good to declare the signs and wonders that the Most High God has worked for me" (Daniel 4:2).

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Additional Notes:

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# WHAT IS THE GOOD NEWS FOR ME IN SPIRITUAL GIFTS?



**1. God's gifts are more effective than any human power.** “And God gave Solomon wisdom and exceedingly great understanding, and largeness of heart like the sand on the seashore. Thus Solomon's wisdom excelled the wisdom of all the men of the East and all the wisdom of Egypt” (1 Kings 4:29-30).

**2. God's power is revealed when we know how truly powerless we are.** “And He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness.’ Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Corinthians 12:9).

**3. It is God's strength, not our own, that enables us to do His will.** “Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might” (Ephesians 6:10). “And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:19).

**4. God promises to give us just what we need to obey Him in faith.** “He gives power to the weak, and to those who have no might He increases strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall, but those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint” (Isaiah 40:29–31).

**5. Everyone has the privilege of using their gifts to serve God and bless others.** “Let no one despise your youth, but be an example to the believers in word, in conduct, in love, in spirit, in faith, in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

**6. The gift of wisdom in the Word of God is given to all who will listen and obey.** “My son, if you receive my words, and treasure my commands within you, so that you incline your ear to wisdom, and apply your heart to understanding; yes, if you cry out for discernment, and lift up your voice for understanding, if you seek her as silver, and search for her as for hidden treasures; then you will understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding” (Proverbs 2:1–6).

**7. God cares about people in every culture and desires them to hear the gospel in their native language.** “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

## LESSON SUMMARY

**1. The church and its members are powerless** to fulfill their God-given purpose on their own.

**2. The Holy Spirit distributes unique gifts** to each member in the body of Christ so we may work together with God.

**3. Whether it is a miraculous empowering or a natural ability,** every talent comes from God.

**4. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are given** for the purpose of strengthening the church and proclaiming the gospel.

**5. We must recognize our gifts and use them humbly and faithfully** in God's service every day.

**6. The evidence of the Holy Spirit is not a powerful feeling, miracles, or speaking in tongues.** It is obedience to God, a Christ-like character, and witnessing for Jesus.

**7. Studying the truth in God's Word** will help us recognize Satan's counterfeit signs and wonders.

Additional Notes:

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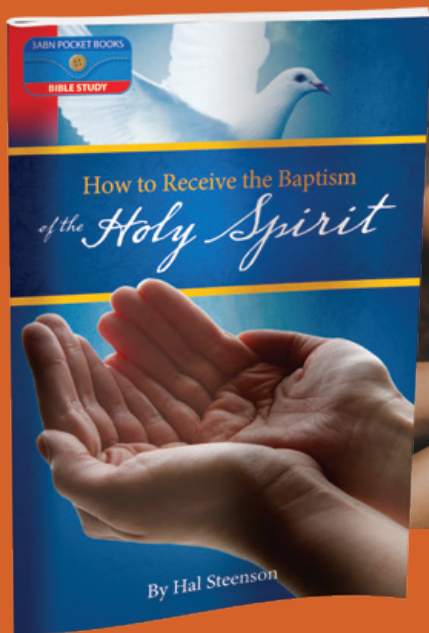
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