

## SPIRITUAL GIFTS

*When you hear the words “spiritual gift,” what do you think of? Often, notions of spiritual gifts tend to be out-of-this-world and full of bad piety. Perhaps because of the influence of M. Night Shyamalan and the like, many tend to associate “spiritual gifts” with the unusual, extraordinary, and bizarre. This is unbiblical. God Himself has given spiritual gifts to His Church to build up His Church. They are not mysterious or weird, but often quite mundane and down-to-earth, taking place everyday and often out of the public eye. The following is a very broad survey of the passages considered the classic gift inventories (Eph 4, 1 Cor 12, Rom 12, and 1 Pet 4). This survey has been modified from a list by Dr. Timothy Witmer of Westminster Theological Seminary.*

Teaching (1 Cor 12:29) is helping people learn the truths of God’s Word.

Speaking (1 Pet 4:10) is articulating God’s truth in a clear, consistent, and compelling way.

Knowledge (1 Cor 12:8, 10) is discerning, with insight, healthy teaching from false teaching.

Encouraging (Rom 12:8) is motivating and counseling others.

Exhorting (Rom 12:8) is knowing and addressing what a person needs to grow in Christ.

Help (1 Cor 12:28) is giving true assistance to others.

Healing (1 Cor 12:28) is facilitating emotional and/or physical healing by ministering to the sick, grieving, aged, and dying.

Serving (Rom 12:7; 1 Pet 4:11) is meeting practical needs effectively and making the gospel visible inside and outside the church through individual deeds of practical love.

Sharing (Rom 12:8) is discerning and refreshing others by giving of yourself.

Mercy (Rom 12:8) is ministering to others through joyful, long-term empathy.

Leadership (Rom 12:8) is uniting others towards a Biblical vision, offering wise and timely spiritual direction and oversight, and enabling stewardship of all spiritual/material resources.

Administration (1 Cor 12:28) is organizing a task and getting it done.

Wisdom (1 Cor 12:8) is problem-solving, especially for personal or group guidance.

Faith (1 Cor 12:9) is not saving faith, but envisioning a goal and pressing toward it.

Hospitality (1 Pet 4:8) is the practical one-anothering that is deed-oriented and addresses a felt-need within the Christian community. It is welcoming each other into one’s heart and home.

Giving/Contributing (Rom 12:8) is the practice of purposeful, radically substantial material giving in Christ's name and of living a simpler lifestyle for the sake of modeling and supporting the work of the kingdom.

Evangelism/witnessing is helping people come to believe in the God of the Bible by answering skeptics, challenging objections, and contextualizing the hope of Christ for people.



*Consider the following practical things you can do to help build the body of Christ (of course, out of love for God and for your fellow believer). This list could on go for several pages:*

Making meals for those in need.

Praying for others in an extended period of time.

Calling others when you don't see them at worship on Sundays.

Offering to teach someone a skill that will be useful to them.

Teaching your children the Bible and pray with them, a little bit every day.

Inviting others to share a meal with your in your home.

Asking a fellow believer how they're doing, and sincerely and patiently listening to their honest answer.

Asking God for wisdom, and then speaking to those who are or might be going astray in their life or belief.

*May Jesus Christ bless our efforts to use the spiritual gifts He has given us to build up His body. Only God gives the growth!*



Grace Reformed Church of Jersey City