

# Seven Motivational Gifts

## A New Life of Spirit Led Ministry to Others

These should be of particular interest to everyone, since each of us has been given at least one. Oddly enough, it's not always obvious to us what our unique gift is. Perhaps the Lord enjoys playing Hide and Seek more than we might imagine! Here's a clue: usually you will find them "hidden in plain sight," since people often live out of their gift before they catch on to what it is. Intrigued? See if you can spot your own.

**Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness. Romans 12:6-8**

## Supernaturally Natural

These seven gifts are called motivational gifts because they provide the inner focus that inspires us to get into the game of serving humanity in our own particular way. We have an inner drive or motivation that causes us to notice certain areas of need in the church or the world and then keeps us looking for ways of meeting that need. All of this happens to match our gift so "naturally" that we may never stop to question or examine it. We might wonder, "Why doesn't everyone feel this way?" and be genuinely surprised that they don't.

Having one of these gifts doesn't mean that we are going to be great at it automatically. They have to be cultivated like anything else in life. And they won't work very well if we aren't in balance with the Lord (more on that later).

Nevertheless, the sense of inner compelling is so consistent and so intimately tied into our own desires that it practically guarantees that we will develop real skills to go along with the gift. If we don't, it won't be for lack of effort, since the gift keeps pointing us at the same target over and over again. This inner motivation is nothing less than God at work within us "for his good pleasure."



**Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure. Philippians 2:12-13 ESV**

This means that there will be joy in it, because God is working in us to make us willing (desirous) of doing what He is also enabling us to do. It "pleases" the Lord to work through us



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and He is very good about passing His feelings on to us. This doesn't mean that we can't ever burn out the inner flame. We can. It feels so good operating out of our gift that exhausting ourselves is a danger that has to be guarded against. However, the Lord always stands ready to renew and refresh us. If we allow Him to do that—wonder of wonders—the former desires have a way of springing right back to life! This inner drive comes from His holy fire to burn brightly within us in this particular way and that flame can never be quenched.

**For God's gifts and His call are irrevocable. [He never withdraws them when once they are given, and He does not change His mind about those to whom He gives His grace or to whom He sends His call.] Romans 11:29 AMP**

## Primary and Secondary

As you look over the list you may notice right away the gift that is your primary motivation. If you can't spot it, others who know you well probably can. The Holy Spirit has been cultivating these inner motivations in us since childhood in terms of general orientation. Conversion and the entrance of the Holy Spirit within us may bring new aspects and abilities out to the forefront, as well as unveil for us new applications within the Christian community. For instance, someone gifted as a teacher may have been growing happily in that area all their life, but conversion will likely bring whole new levels of purpose and initiate a brand-new desire to teach spiritual truths.

Some confusion may arise over just how many gifts you have. Paul gives us little to go on beyond the mere recounting of the list. There is nothing here to limit these to one per person. You could conceivably have several primary gifts and rotate through times of being more focused on one rather than the other. Nevertheless, the common pattern is for a person to have a single primary gift with one or more secondary gifts that complement and enhance its operation. In this way the Lord provides a natural sense of cohesion and wholeness to our inner focus and motivation. We aren't as likely to be pulled in three directions at once! Even so, all of us can (and probably should) cultivate each of these gifts to some degree.

## Flesh Verses Spirit

Since these gifts are the Holy Spirit working within us, we might suppose that our gift(s) will always work for good in our life and for the good of those we seek to serve. Not so! It is too much to be hoped that these inner workings of the Lord cannot be subverted by the enemy. Spiritual darkness loves to turn even good things against us. As mentioned earlier, if we don't stay in balance these gifts of His won't operate properly. The key to staying balanced is living with Jesus at the center and with ourselves surrendered and submitted to His leadership. He hasn't given us gifts and callings so that we can go charging off on our own!

As with anything in this new life in Christ, our actual trust in the Lord determines practically everything else. If you want to serve Him and others, if you want your gift(s) to be operating at peak performance, then you will want to learn to guard your heart so that the peace of Christ rules within you. There is no clearer indication that we are yielded to His leadership than the peace He gives us when we are trusting Him and doing things His way. With that peace in place the motivational gifts positively hum! It is truly amazing, even breathtaking to be flowing in these gifts. This is what it means to be led by the Spirit.



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We can, however, fall back into being oppressed by the flesh. It is easy and “natural” to fall out of the Spirit and into the flesh, even when we are trying to serve the Lord. Because the flesh is our fallen nature, falling into it almost feels normal. The absence of the peace of Christ should alert us that something has gone wrong. That wrongness will inevitably show up by distorting the gifts we cherish and enjoy, turning service into something onerous, rather than delightful. In the following brief descriptions note how being in “the flesh” can distort the gift. Note also the wonderful purpose the gift can serve when we are in the Spirit.

**For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.** Ephesians 2:10 ESV

## The Seven Motivational Gifts

Because it is possible for believers to receive the indwelling Spirit, but never seek or receive the baptism in the Spirit, there will be differences in the way these gifts operate in those who are not Holy Spirit baptized. Remember, the Early Church that Paul shepherded was almost entirely composed of people who had received the baptism in the Spirit. Hence, he would have had in his mind the way these gifts look in the lives of people who know Jesus by faith and are also anointed with the Spirit’s power.

### 1) Prophesying

"If prophecy, in proportion to our faith."

People with this gift usually know it and are eager to cultivate it, because it can bring with it enhanced opportunities to experience the supernatural workings of the Holy Spirit. Prophets have a burning heart for receiving specific words or visions from God which will bring clarity to individuals or churches. Clarity comes by calling people to repentance, pointing out their sin; or through sharing visions, restoring lost spiritual sight. If those with the gift of prophecy have not yet received the baptism in the Spirit, their emphasis will be more on the Word of God, than specific words *from* God. If in the flesh, people with this gift may lose the New Testament tone of grace, becoming hard and judgmental.

### 2) Serving

"If service, in our serving."

The Amplified Bible calls this “practical service.” That’s the proper note. The person with this gift is always noticing things of a practical nature that will help an individual or the church, and then throwing themselves into the fray to get the job done. It’s been said that love is an active verb; certainly, these are the ones who put feet to their prayers. That is if they haven’t slipped into the flesh. The danger here is leaping, before praying, and thereby taking the lead away from the Lord. This can lead to misguided efforts, feeling unappreciated or burn out, if left to the flesh. Pastors always appreciate the gift of service (not necessarily that of prophesy!) and they can and should help these good-hearted workers learn the ways of wisdom. If this is your gift, try to remember that seeing a need isn’t always a call of God—it may be a call to prayer instead.



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### 3) Teaching

"The one who teaches, in his teaching."

A teacher's focus is different than a prophet's in that their concern is more for the whole counsel of the Word of God with a willingness to leave the individual's response to conscience. Prophets are more inclined to "zero in" on specifics and seek to close the deal. In our day a great line is drawn between preaching and teaching, but not in the Bible. Jesus' "preaching" was called teaching and so was that of the apostles—it's one of the main things they were known for. Teachers with an anointing will teach truth in order to elicit the saving transformation they know that particular truth can bring. Teachers in the flesh are focused upon getting the "head knowledge" right.

### 4) Exhorting

"The one who exhorts, in his exhortation."

Exhortation is better known to us as encouragement, a word which means to give courage to the hearts of others. Exhorters are always looking for opportunities to do that. Who is cast down? Who needs building up? How can their spirits be lifted higher? Where a teacher wants to help you learn truths you don't know yet, an exhorter wants to help you believe what you already know. Watch how this plays out with different preaching styles: some preachers are teachers at heart; others are exhorters. Some of the best exhorters don't have a public ministry. They just "naturally" lift the mood of individuals wherever they go. Watch out for one in the flesh, however, if you don't want to find out what the "gift of discouragement" looks like in operation.

### 5) Giving

"The one who contributes, in generosity."

The Lord evidently calls some people to gather wealth, so that through them, He can bless others and the church. It's a tough job, but someone has to do it. The thing about these folks is their absence of greed and the evident delight they have in giving money or material help away. They usually seem consciously aware that their calling is to be a channel of blessing and they genuinely want to keep the river flowing. If they fall into the flesh, all bets are off: they may amass wealth for themselves alone, or seek a show of recognition for what they do give away.

### 6) Leading

"The one who leads, with zeal."

This gift of administration includes the ability to supervise others, cast vision, assemble a team and chart a course all with unflagging "zeal" or diligence. If this is your gift, then know that the rest of us are grateful you have it! We need your energetic devotion to duty or things would really fall apart. We thank God for your integrity and willingness to sacrifice ordinary pleasures for the sake of the cause. Just please don't "lord" it over us, bossing us around! Jesus said that our leaders would be servants to us and those with this gift truly are—whenever they are in the Spirit. Otherwise...



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## 7) Caring

"The one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness."

Last, but not least, is the heart of the Body of Christ. People blessed with a mercy gift have hearts as big and warm as your mama's stove. They notice the hurting people among us and launch into prayer, then press in to draw them out. They care less about how you got into trouble, than how to get you out. Unlike teachers and prophets, they don't want to know if you are learning from the experience; they want you free of the pain. These are people you can trust with your heart. Unfortunately, when in the flesh, their own heart can take them down, if they don't learn how to cast every care and all that pain on the Lord.

Put it all together and you have a vision for the Body of Christ as a mighty warrior, able to tend its own wounds and refresh its own vision when all the parts are working together as designed. Discover your gift, learn how to walk in the Spirit with it, and find your place in the Body!

## More to Explore

**9 Manifestation Gifts** Jesus never intended for His church to be powerless or penniless. Just as the tithe is the Lord's provision for material supply, so the baptism in the Spirit is His provision for supernatural supply. Neither is forced on anyone, but when believers come into obedience, watch out! The "windows of heaven" open wide! Through the baptism in the Spirit, Jesus pours out gifts that will manifest as signs and wonders for the sake of ministry to someone He wants to bless.

**Doing Ministry** There's nothing like doing the thing, especially when what we are doing is something we can be sure that Jesus is doing right along with us! The real Minister, the true Servant, is there on the inside wanting to get out into that hurting, lost world through us His chosen vessels. The secret to kingdom success is letting Him do ministry through you. Practice His presence as you learn "The Care of Souls," "The Art of Listening," "The Heart of a Servant," and "How to Give Talks and Lead Ministry."

## Free Downloads

[pdf Preparing for Ministry \(30-page eBook\) \(272 KB\)](#)

## Scriptures on Ministry

So we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ (the Messiah) and individually we are parts one of another [mutually dependent on one another]. Having gifts (faculties, talents, qualities) that differ according to the grace given us, let us use them: [He whose gift is] **prophecy**, [let him



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prophecy] according to the proportion of his faith; [He whose gift is] **practical service**, let him give himself to serving; he who **teaches**, to his teaching; He who **exhorts** (encourages), to his exhortation; he who **contributes**, let him do it in simplicity and liberality; he who gives aid and **superintends**, with zeal and singleness of mind; he who does **acts of mercy**, with genuine cheerfulness and joyful eagerness. [Let your] love be sincere (a real thing); hate what is evil [loathe all ungodliness, turn in horror from wickedness], but hold fast to that which is good.  
Romans 12:5-9 AMP

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For over a decade Steve Evans and [Healing Streams](#) have been helping people recover inner peace and freedom through the free eCourse for healing, [Matters of the Heart](#). Through Forerunners4Him he has been showing how we can be saved for heaven and teaching the way to live a Spirit-filled life on earth. Go now to receive a completely free primer, [Getting to Heaven](#) and/or an introduction to [Living in the Spirit](#) at our website.



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