

# Contemporary Spiritual Gifts

Gift	Description	References	Examples
<b>SPEAKING GIFTS</b>			
<b>Evangelist</b> εὐαγγελιστής <i>euangelistes</i>  <b>Salvation of souls</b>	<p>An evangelist announces the gospel, the Greek literally meaning ‘a messenger of good’ or ‘good news person’. Such individuals have a God-given ability to reach souls through <i>personal</i> communication or <i>public</i> proclamation. In the early church it was likely evangelists (as well as apostles) that laid the foundations of a pioneer work with a view to establishing local churches. An evangelist has a heart for lost souls, their salvation and subsequent spiritual growth. “<i>The world is his parish, the love of Christ his constraint.</i>”</p> <p>The only named evangelist in Scripture is Philip. Acts 8 describes him preaching “Christ”, “the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ”, “Jesus” and “in all the cities”. An evangelist was often an itinerant missionary. Philip went from Jerusalem to preach in Samaria and was on the road to Gaza when he met the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8.5). Afterwards he came to Azotus (Ashdod), and passing through, he preached the gospel to all the cities until he came to Caesarea (Acts 8.40). By Acts 21, it seems Philip had settled in Caesarea and had a house where Paul and his company lodged (21.8). An evangelist knows the gospel narrative thoroughly and is able to explain it (Acts 8.30, 35, cf. 1 Cor. 15.3-4). Philip was clearly attuned to the voice and leading of the Spirit (Acts 8.26, 29) and had a particular ability to speak to strangers.</p> <p>All should show an interest in reaching souls. Evangelists do not release the rest of the members from responsibility of witnessing to and winning the lost. Timothy was exhorted to “do the work of an evangelist” (2 Tim. 4.5). Though Timothy’s focus was to teach the truth, which was being assailed, he was not to neglect the work of evangelism. Difficulties on the <i>inside</i> were not to distract from gospel work on the outside.</p>	Eph. 4.11 2 Tim. 4.5	<b>Philip</b> Acts 21.8
<b>Teacher</b> <b>Teaching</b> διδάσκαλος <i>didaskalos</i>  <b>Sustenance from Scriptures</b>	<p>The ability to <i>glean</i> from and <i>grasp</i> the revelation of scripture and <i>communicate</i> its truth effectively to listeners. Teaching establishes saints in the truths of the faith, which in turn informs character and conduct. Unlike the prophet, the teacher does not receive <i>direct</i> revelation but gathers it from the now complete word of God. Teaching cannot be undertaken lightly, for teachers will be judged more strictly (Jam. 3.1).</p> <p>Teachers require great diligence to search, arrange, expound, explain and apply Scripture. It is a <i>spiritually</i> and <i>emotionally</i> exhausting activity (1 Tim. 5.17). Teachers should not be like the scribes who propounded a variety of views but never came to any conclusion. Rather, they should teach with authority which rests on the very word of God. Part of the purpose of teaching is to entrust truth to other teachers, and, ultimately, all the saints. In this way, truth and its proper meaning is preserved from generation to generation (2 Tim. 2.2). Generally, teaching is given in a <i>public</i> setting that it might be widely propagated and evaluated by other teachers (or overseers). Evil men creep into houses and teach subversively, but the truth of God never needs subversive practices for its propagation (2 Tim. 2.2; 3.6). There might be the occasional <i>private</i> setting as opportunity arises (Acts 18.26).</p>	1 Cor. 12.28 Rom. 12.7 Eph. 4.11	<b>Christ</b> Matt. 5.2; 7.29 Luke. 20.21 John. 8.28; 18.20  <b>Paul</b> Acts 15.35; 18.11 1 Cor. 4.17 1 Tim. 2.7  <b>Timothy</b> 1 Tim. 4.11; 6.2 2 Tim. 2.2

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	<p>Though not everyone is a teacher, or has the gift of teaching, all believers must be ready and willing to explain the truth they believe (1 Pet. 3.15). Every Christian has the capability of grasping doctrine whether a teacher or not. Older sisters are to “teach” younger sisters, in relation to domestic affairs (Titus 2.4). <i>sophronizo</i> is not the typical word for teaching. It carries the thought of <i>training</i> through correction – to show what sound thinking is. They do this by example, exhibiting behaviour fitting for those who are holy (Titus 2.3).</p> <p>An overseer should be ‘apt to teach’ does not necessarily imply a public platform but describes one who is skilful in explaining truth and feeding the flock. <i>Titus 1.9: Clinging to the faithful word according to the doctrine taught, that he may be able both to encourage with sound teaching and refute gainsayers.</i></p>		
<b>Exhortation</b> <i>paraklēsis</i> <i>παράκλησις</i>  <b>Stirring the spirit</b>	<p>This is a speaking gift. The noun <i>paraklēsis</i> is often translated ‘consolation’, whilst the verb <i>parakaleō</i> can mean to ‘beseech’ (urge). The exhorter, then, offers a word of comfort and encouragement for the heart. He will also implore the saints to action, admonishing the will and conscience. He will always use the word of God as his textbook, for all of scripture is a <i>paraklēsis</i>, that is “<i>an exhortation, admonition or encouragement for the purpose of strengthening and establishing the believer in the faith</i>” (cf. Rom. 15.4; Phil. 2.1; Heb. 12.5; 13.22). Teaching differs from exhortation in that it informs the <i>mind</i> rather than appealing to the heart. Exhortation urges believers to be faithful to the truth of God’s word (Heb. 13.22).</p> <p>An exhorter will seek “<i>to come alongside to help, to strengthen the weak, reassure the wavering, buttress the buffeted, steady the faltering, console the troubled and encourage the halting.</i>” Barnabas means ‘the son of exhortation’ (Acts 4.36). He encouraged Christians at Antioch to remain true to the Lord and new Christians in Galatia to continue in the faith in the face of adversity (11.23, 14.22). Preaching that is <i>all</i> exhortation and devoid of teaching wears thin very quickly – hence no pastor-exhorter!</p>	Rom. 12.8	<b>Barnabas</b> Acts 4.36 Acts 11.23 Acts 14.22  <b>Paul</b> Acts 13.15-16 Acts 14.22
<b>SERVING GIFTS</b>			
<b>Helps</b> <i>antīlēpsis</i> <i>ἀντίληψις</i>  <b>Supporting the struggling</b>	<p>Likely very similar to “ministry” (Rom. 12.7). This gift has a very broad scope and means to <i>aid</i> or <i>assist</i> another in time of need or difficulty. The Greek word literally means to ‘lay hold of’ so as to take a burden from someone else and lay it on oneself (1 Thess. 5.14). Priscilla and Aquila are excellent examples, being Paul’s “helpers in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 16.3-4). They were willing to risk their lives for him.</p> <p>These individuals are peculiarly enabled of the Spirit to perceive and meet the needs of others, enabling them to better engage in the Lord’s work. The Levites were called the “helps of the priests”. Spurgeon says, “<i>They are the sort of brethren who are useful anywhere, who can always stop a gap, and who are only too glad when they find that they can make themselves serviceable to the church of God in any capacity whatever.</i>”</p> <p>We should all seek to help one another, but a person with this gift can meet a specific need more effectively. The corresponding verb implies succouring the weak, tending the sick and helping the needy (Luke 1.54; Acts 20.35).</p>	1 Cor. 12.28	<b>Phebe</b> Rom. 16.1-2  <b>Onesiphorus</b> 2 Tim. 1.16-18  <b>Epaphroditus</b> Phil. 2:25, 30

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<b>Ministry</b> <i>διακονία</i> <i>diakonia</i>  <b>Serving the saints</b>	<p>Likely very similar to “helps” (1 Cor. 12.28). <i>diakonia</i> is a common Greek noun used of general ‘service’ in mundane or spiritual matters. The word can be used of <i>serving others</i> (2 Tim. 4.11); <i>assisting</i> those with <i>material</i> or <i>financial</i> needs (Acts 6.1; 11.29; 2 Cor. 9.1), and <i>hospitality</i>, especially providing lodging or food (Luke 10.40). These individuals are more concerned about serving others than remembering themselves.</p> <p>Those who are so gifted will be “addicted” (devoted) to the service of others, even “spending their lives in service to God’s people” as the household of Stephanas (1 Cor. 16.15, NLT). There must be care, however, that such work does not become so burdensome as to be a distraction from the spiritual priority of communion with Christ (cf. Luke 10.40-42). Beware of the barrenness of a busy life!</p>	Rom. 12.7	<b>Martha</b> Luke 10.40  <b>John Mark</b> Acts 13.5 2 Tim. 4.11  <b>Tychicus</b> Eph. 6.21
<b>Giving</b> <i>metadidōmi</i> <i>μεταδίδωμι</i>  <b>Sacrifice of substance</b>	<p>All believers should give (Eph. 4.28), but not all have the gift of giving. Those who do are particularly enabled to <i>identify</i> and <i>meet</i> the needs of others by sacrificing of their own earthly possessions. They do so with “simplicity”, i.e. generously and without ulterior motive.</p> <p>In Luke 21, the Lord Jesus sat over against the temple treasury. He noted that it cost the rich nothing to give out of their abundance, but the widow gave sacrificially – <i>all</i> that she had. Her simple motivation was love for God, thanksgiving and worship. These are the pure motives of a true giver (2 Cor. 9.6-7). Furthermore, Barnabas sold a prime piece of Mediterranean real-estate to minister to the material needs of brethren in Jerusalem (Acts 4.37).</p> <p>Whilst the gift of giving emphasises the financial, it can also include the giving of time and other resources.</p>	Rom. 12.8	<b>Barnabas</b> Acts 4.37
<b>Showing mercy</b> <i>ἐλεάω</i> <i>eleaō</i>  <b>Succour of sorrowful</b>	<p>The general meaning of <i>eleaō</i> is to have compassion or mercy on a person in unhappy circumstances. This individual can show particular empathy for those in distress (Acts 9.36). Such mercy is glad and prompt (“with cheerfulness”, not grudging. “<i>Those so gifted make compassion and kindness their lifestyle. They do not simply react to emergencies, but continually seek opportunities to show pity for the miserable.</i>” The condition of the object of mercy is not considered, only their welfare and comfort.</p> <p>Dorcas was marked by the gift of mercy (Acts 9.36). There were those who had benefitted from the works of charity (including making clothes) she had done in the name of Christ. This made the ground more fertile for Peter’s preaching and residency (Acts 9.42-43).</p>	Rom. 12.8	<b>Dorcas</b> Acts 9.36  <b>Good Samaritan</b> Luke 10.37
<b>Shepherd</b> <i>ποιμήν</i> <i>poimēn</i>  <b>Shepherding the sheep</b>	<p>The word “pastor” is translated “shepherd” on every other (x17) occasion in the NT. Though one article is used for two plural nouns (shepherds and teachers) in Eph. 4.11, it does not necessarily denote <i>identity</i> (cf. Eph. 2.20). It rather signifies, in this context, distinction but close association between shepherding and teaching. A true <i>shepherd</i> must be able to feed (teach) the flock, but not every <i>teacher</i> is necessarily a shepherd. That the two are complementary is indicated in Eph. 5.29, where Christ “nourishes” the church which is His body by the <i>teacher</i> and “cherishes” (warmth and comfort) the body through the <i>shepherd</i>. Generally, a gifted shepherd would also be identified as an elder or overseer (cp. Acts 20.17, 28).</p>	Eph. 4.11	<b>Christ</b> 1 Pet. 2.25 Heb. 13.20 John 10.11

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	A shepherd <i>feeds, provides, protects and cares</i> for the flock (Acts 20.28). A Christian shepherd is patterned on the Good Shepherd, and therefore knows the sheep, loves them and is willing to <i>sacrifice</i> for them (John 10). He will also strive to preserve their unity (Matt. 9.36). The shepherds in Israel failed (Eze. 34). They should have fed the flock, not themselves. They should have strengthened the weak, healed the sick, bandaged the injured, brought back the strays, and sought the lost to protect them from danger. The flock must not be ruled with force (harshness) and cruelty. All this is a great responsibility. Those of the flock should not therefore be <i>offended</i> (or offensive!) if a shepherd puts a crook around their neck.		
<b>Government</b> <i>kybernēsis</i> <i>κυβέρνησις</i>  <b>Steering the ship</b>	<p>The Greek word means ‘administration’ in the sense of setting and holding the course (of a sailing vessel). The related noun (<i>kybernētēs</i>) refers to a ‘pilot’ (Acts 27.11) and ‘sea captain’ (Rev. 18.17). This individual is therefore Spirit equipped to ‘steer the ship’ or ‘pilot the vessel’. In the LXX the term is connected with wisdom (Prov. 1.5). It is <i>kybernēsis</i> that properly prepares an army for war (24.6). Without it, a nation can fall into ruins (11.14).</p> <p>This gift is therefore the special need of overseers who set the spiritual direction and course of the local church. They <i>steer</i> and <i>organise</i> tending to decency and order in the activities of the assembly. They will identify gift, provide a balanced diet of spiritual nourishment, and organise the resources of the body to mount the strongest possible offensive in spiritual warfare and evangelism.</p>	1 Cor. 12.28	
<b>Rule</b> <i>proistēmi</i> <i>προΐστημι</i>  <b>Superintending the scene</b>	<p>The word “rule” carries the thought of authority and caring leadership. It simply means to ‘stand before’ or ‘superintend’ – to give direction. This person guides the flock by standing before them as an example in personal life, character and spiritual exercise. This must be done with “diligence”, i.e. intense effort and determination.</p> <p>The word is used in relation to the homes of overseers and deacons (1 Tim. 3.4, 12) – “one that ruleth well his own house”. The word ‘well’ means ‘appropriately’, meeting high standards of excellence. There should be a visible order in the home, with children being in “subjection”, a military word which implies ‘lining up in rank’. They are respectful and obey the authority of their parents (Titus 1.6). If the elder cannot effectively lead his own house, he cannot possibly “take care” of the local assembly (1 Tim. 3.5).</p>	Rom. 12.8	<b>James</b> Acts 15.13 Gal. 2.9