
Spiritual Gifts

A doctrinal distinctive of The Village Church is continuationism; we believe that all spiritual gifts seen in the New Testament—including those of prophecy, healing, and speaking in tongues—did not cease with the death of the apostles but continue for consistent and well-ordered use in the Church for the purpose of upbuilding the body of Christ. Our practice is guided by and under the authority of the Word of God to be exercised in the manner of humility worthy of our calling as Christ followers.

Prophecy / Words of Knowledge / Words of Wisdom

1 Corinthians 12:8, 10, 28–29; 14:26; Romans 12:6; Ephesians 4:11

([Video](#), [Sermon](#))

Succinctly, prophecy is receiving a revelatory message from the Lord and communicating it. This may be a wise insight that is shared to help one with a wisdom decision. It may be a beneficial supernatural insight into someone's life that leads to increased faith and sometimes inner or outward healing. It may also be a revelation of a future event or a present priority of God for a person or group of people. Based on Acts 2 and 1 Corinthians 14:1, next to serving gifts, prophetic insights and words seem to be the most widely distributed gift in the church body.

Paul commands believers to earnestly and especially desire this gift. It is given to build up the body. It is something verbal, often an insight, picture, word, or Scripture. This is not an Old Testament prophecy (“thus saith the Lord”) but rather a gift given to build up and encourage the church by imparting to a

person a word of courage that the Lord has laid on the heart of a fellow believer. It is to be practiced with great humility. It never stands in contrast to the Scriptures but is a personal touch from the Lord to a person's heart in a given situation where the Lord reveals that He knows, He sees, and He hears them

Service

Romans 12:7

While Paul offers no specific examples, there are certainly many different kinds of service that are supernaturally empowered by the Spirit that make a way for people to hear and receive gospel ministry.

Teaching

1 Corinthians 12:28–29; 14:26; Romans 12:7; Ephesians 4:11

The gift of teaching refers to communicating biblical truth and sound doctrine in a way that is comprehended and bears fruit in the lives of hearers. This seems to be one of the least-given gifts and carries with it weighty additional judgment according to James 3:1. Teaching is a supernatural empowerment to reveal the nature of God in the Trinity and His work in the world as seen in the Scriptures.

Exhortation / Encouragement

Romans 12:8

Exhortation is admonishing that leads people to become all they are meant to become in Christ. This is much more than mere compliments. Supernatural encouragement gives hope in God. People who have this gift are empowered by the Holy Spirit to fill people with hope. Like evangelism, encouragement is commanded. The writer of Hebrews

twice commands believers to encourage one another (Heb. 3:13; 10:25). Those with this gift of exhortation most frequently give hope to others. Those with this gift may also walk in prophetic gifting, as they overlap quite often. This gift was regular in Paul's ministry (Acts 14:22; 16:40; 20:1–2; Col. 2:1–2; 1 Thess. 2:11–12), he wanted Timothy and Titus to pastor with this gift (2 Thess. 3:2; 2 Tim. 4:2; Titus 2:15), and he required church elders to encourage believers with sound instruction (Titus 1:9).

Contributing / Giving

Romans 12:8

The gift of giving refers to sacrificially giving of time, talents, and money to build up the church. All believers are commanded to give, yet Christ considers money the least of our assets (Luke 16:10). Christians are to give cheerfully and without complaint (2 Cor. 9:7–15), but the gift of giving enables one to supernaturally go beyond normal contribution that loves and cares for people while asking nothing in return.

Leading

Romans 12:8

Leading is the ability to create unity, good decisions, and clarity of mission and direction. The New Testament uses the words elder, shepherd, pastor, overseer, and leader interchangeably and often in relation to the gift of leading (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Pet. 5:1–4). All elders are required to lead and shepherd as pastors, but not all leaders and shepherds may hold the office of elder. Those who have the gift of leading but are not elders may lead various ministries and equip the saints in varied ways within the church. Not all those with leading gifts have teaching gifts; this is an important distinction as many times the modern church equates teaching

with leadership. They are quite distinctive gifts. Not all leaders will have a teaching gift, though some will.

Mercy

Romans 12:8

The gift of mercy means showing supernatural compassion to the disenfranchised and marginalized. In this gift is a regular joy in feeding the poor, helping the homeless, and in visiting prisoners. There is in Matthew 25:34–40 a great inheritance for those who ask for, exercise, and practice this gift. It aligns often with the gifts of serving or helping. We want to facilitate the ministry of those with mercy gifts because they especially reflect the heart of Christ to an unbelieving world.

Celibacy

1 Corinthians 7:1–7

Celibacy is the pursuit of a more fulfilling life by staying unmarried. This seems to be one of the rarest of all spiritual gifts.

Faith

1 Corinthians 12:9

Those with the gift of faith labor in prayer for something that is not promised in Scripture and receive it. To put it another way, the gift of faith is supernatural empowerment to believe God when everything looks bleak and dark, to trust God that He will bring about what He has promised even though it seems unlikely by human standards. The gift of faith is supernatural confidence in God. It looks to the present circumstances and sees God's action.

Distinguishing or Discerning of Spirits

1 Corinthians 12:10

Those with the gift of discerning spirits have the ability to sense the deceptive work of the Enemy and his followers. This is a spiritual world. Every situation includes a conglomeration of spiritual power; the gift of discernment is supernatural insight to distinguish where the Spirit of God is working, where an evil spirit may be involved, and how the human spirit participates in the activity. It involves listening to God, listening to Scripture, listening to community, and listening to those entrusted to your care at that moment or over time. This is also a gift given in order to help evaluate prophecies. Jesus promises to give “the Spirit of truth” to the disciples in John 14:17. When God’s Spirit is involved, there is clarity of faith, hope, and love that testifies to Jesus’ lordship (John 15:26; 16:13–14).

Gifts of Healings / Gifts of Miracles

1 Corinthians 12:9–10, 28

([Video](#), [Sermon](#))

Gifts of healings refer to the restoration of physical injury or disease, such as sight, the lame, hearing—divine interventions which are inexplicable if left to natural causes. Jesus sent out His 12 disciples with the authority to proclaim the gospel, heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those with leprosy, and drive out demons (Matt. 10:1, 7–8). He did the same with the 72. There are further examples in “great signs and miracles” in Acts. It is a gift always referred to in the plural (1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30). It seems that some in the Church are gifted to heal specific physical maladies or emotional traumas. This may be reflected in the consistent plural use by Paul. It may also reflect that some healings vary in strength. The Bible often classifies driving out demons

as healing or miraculous (Matt. 15:21–28; Mark 8:38–39; Acts 8:7).

Gifts of miracles are indeed often related to gifts of healings, and miracles too are used in the plural sense as God gives grace to do certain miracles to certain believers. It may also be that some believers have faith for specific miracles. There is an important relationship between gifts of healings and miracles and the gift of faith. Miracles are a clear display of God’s power but must be discerned, like all the gifts, by their effectiveness, validity, and the spiritual fruit they produce.

Tongues

Tongues Speech

1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 30; 14:2, 4–6, 13–14;

Acts 2:4; 8:17–18; 10:46; 19:6

([Sermon](#))

Tongues speech is for praise, prayer to God, or communication via an interpreter—either in languages never studied by the speaker in order to declare the gospel (Acts 2:11) or in coded messages that speak to God or reveal mysteries by the Spirit (1 Cor. 14:2). Paul taught in 1 Corinthians 12:10 that there are “different kinds of tongues.” In any gathering, there must be an interpreter.

Interpretation of Tongues Speech

1 Corinthians 12:10, 30

Interpreters in the gathering are enabled by the Spirit to decode the message given through a tongue or tongues speech. These believers are empowered to understand what is being spoken in a tongue, be it in a human language never studied by them or in a coded heavenly language no one could understand apart from interpretation.

Apostleship

1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11

The original 12 disciples (minus Judas, plus Mathias) who were part of the initial church were apostles. An apostle was “with him” (Mark 3:14–15), that is, they were in the presence of the bodily Jesus and must have “seen Jesus our Lord” (Acts 9:1–9). Suffering is a mark of apostolic ministry, as is the presence of signs and miracles as they proclaim the gospel of Jesus. “We simply cannot think of apostleship apart from the historical apostles. In the New Testament, an apostle is not a spiritual gift but a person who had a divinely given commission and ministry.”¹ We have the testimony in Revelation 14:1–5 and 7:1–18 that prior to the Lord’s return, He will appoint leaders with apostolic power to lead in the last days.

Helps

1 Corinthians 12:28

The gift of helps refers to coming alongside people in the mundane aspects and errands of life. Often the first to volunteer, those with gifts of helps are empowered to be happier giving in effective service rather than receiving.

Administration

1 Corinthians 12:28

The gift of administration involves guidance and bringing order. This gift operates supernaturally to organize and make some sense out of guiding ministries of the church and allowing those with helping, healing,

prophetic, and other gifts to find a way and a place to use them with greater effectiveness.

Evangelism

Ephesians 4:11

The spiritual gift of evangelism is the ability to proclaim the gospel and lead more people to Christ than is normal. All believers are called to desire the gifts and all believers are called to share the gospel with unbelievers. Those who regularly lead people to the Lord have the gift of evangelism.

Pastor-Shepherding

Ephesians 4:11

Pastor-shepherd leaders protect the flock, guide, provide a stellar example of Christlikeness, and exhort the flock by communicating sound biblical truth in action. The synonymous convergence of pastoral, shepherding, and leadership gifts is a fixed understanding in the minds of the Old Testament and New Testament writers. All pastor-shepherds lead in some capacity, as their task can often feel comprehensive in scope and daily changing due to the needs of the flock under their care. Spirit-empowered pastor-shepherd leaders are generalists who tend to desire and excel supernaturally in varied tasks required of the role. The picture of Ezekiel 34:4 shows clearly that faithful pastor-shepherd leaders strengthen the weak, heal the sick, bind up the injured, bring back strays, and search for the lost as healers and counselors in the church. Not all pastor-shepherds have a distinct teaching gift, though some will.

¹ Storms, Sam. *Understanding Spiritual Gifts: A Comprehensive Guide*. 291.

Resources for Further Study

KEY

* denotes a starting point resource; quick, accessible

** denotes a deeper but still accessible resource; more complex

*** denotes a more focused or technical resource: challenging, comprehensive

INTRODUCTION TO GIFTS

*[Indwelt: Understanding The Holy Spirit](#) – Gregg Allison and Matt Chandler, TVC Forum

**[Paul, the Spirit, and the People of God](#) – Gordon D. Fee, book

***[Showing the Spirit: A Theological Exposition of 1 Corinthians 12–14](#) – D.A. Carson, book

***[God's Empowering Presence: The Holy Spirit in the Letters of Paul](#) – Gordon D. Fee, book

**[Why I Am Still Surprised by the Power of the Spirit](#) – Jack Deere, book

***[The Holy Spirit: Theology for the People of God](#) – Gregg Allison & Andreas Kostenberger, book

**[Understanding Spiritual Gifts: A Comprehensive Guide](#) – Sam Storms, book

***[Spirit Hermeneutics: Reading Scripture in Light of Pentecost](#) – Craig S. Keener, book

*[The Beginner's Guide to Spiritual Gifts](#) – Sam Storms, book

**[Practicing the Power](#) – Sam Storms, book

*[Life With the Spirit](#) – Andrew Wilson, TVC sermon

*[Spirit and Sacrament](#) – Andrew Wilson, book

*[Spiritual Gifts](#) – John Piper, sermon

*[Role of the Spirit, Spiritual Gifts as evidence of the Spirit's presence](#) – John Piper, sermon

**[Spirit-Led Leadership](#) – Josh Kouri, video

*[Roundtable on Spiritual Gifts in the Church](#) – Matt Chandler, Josh Patterson, & Andrew Wilson, TVC video

*[Why God Gives Us Spiritual Gifts \(And Why He Doesn't\)](#) – Matt Chandler, TVC video

*[Is It Possible to Abuse Spiritual Gifts?](#) – Matt Chandler, TVC video

*[The Gifts of the Holy Spirit](#) – Matt Chandler, TVC sermon

*[For the Common Good](#) – Matt Chandler, TVC sermon

PROPHECY

*[The Beginner's Guide to the Gift of Prophecy](#) – Jack Deere, book

**[The Gift of Prophecy in the New Testament and Today](#) – Wayne Grudem, book

*[The Gift of Prophecy](#) – Matt Chandler, TVC video

*[What is Prophecy in the New Covenant?](#) – John Piper, video

***[Equipping People for Prophetic Ministry in Corporate Gatherings and in Small Groups](#) – Sam Storms & Matt Palmer, video

**[Prophetic Evangelism](#) – Andy Edwards & Bob Armstrong, video

**[Equipping and Encouraging Your Children in Prophetic Ministry](#) – Krista Meyer & Ashley Owen, video

*[The Gift of Prophecy and the Sufficiency of Scripture](#) – Sam Storms, video

GIFTS OF HEALINGS

**[A Charismatic Theology of Healing: What? When? Where?, Pt. 1](#) – Andrew Wilson, video

**[A Charismatic Theology of Healing: Why? How? Who?, Pt. 2](#) – Andrew Wilson, video

**[Healing in James 5 and Its Application in the 21st Century](#) – Andrew Wilson, video

**[Healing Now and Then: Lessons from the “Healing of the Nations” in Rev. 22:1–5](#) – Andrew Wilson, video

**[Why Wouldn't, Couldn't, Doesn't God Always Heal?](#) – Sam Storms, video

*[What is the Gift of Healing?](#) – John Piper, video

**[What if I'm Not Healed, or, Is it Important that We Learn How to Suffer Well?](#) – Matt Chandler, video

TONGUES, INTERPRETATIONS

*[What is Speaking in Tongues?](#) – John Piper, video

***[The Language of Heaven: Crucial Questions About Speaking in Tongues](#) – Sam Storms, book

**[The Beauty of Spiritual Language](#) – Sam Storms, video

DREAMS, INTERPRETATIONS

**[Dictionary of Biblical Imagery](#) – Longman, Ryken, & Wilhoit, ed., book

**[Dream Interpretation](#) – Cordell Ehrich, video

*[When Muslims Dream of Jesus](#) – Darren Carlson, article

SPIRITUAL WARFARE, THE DEMONIC (DISCERNMENT)

**[Spiritual Warfare in the Storyline of Scripture](#) – William F. Cook & Chuck Lawless, book

*[Demons, Discipleship, and Deliverance](#) – Geoff Ashley, TVC Resource

*[Deliverance](#) – Jon Thompson, book

*[Do You Believe We Should Cast Out Demons Today?](#) – John Piper, video

*[Have You Exorcized a Demon?](#) – John Piper, video

**[Bondage Breaker](#) – Neil T. Anderson, book

**[Victory over the Darkness](#) – Neil T. Anderson, book

**[Spiritual Beings](#) – The Bible Project, video playlist

APOSTLESHIP

**[Is Apostleship a Spiritual Gift?](#) – Sam Storms, article

**[Signs of An Apostle](#) – Sam Storms, article

Descriptions of the spiritual gifts listed in the New Testament are taken from the following resources:

- *TVC sermons and collected TVC Resources, including the TVC Institute Forum with Dr. Gregg Allison, “Understanding the Spirit”*
- *Dr. Sam Storms’ Understanding Spiritual Gifts: A Comprehensive Guide and Dr. Jack Deere’s Why I Am Still Surprised by the Power of the Spirit: Discovering How God Speaks and Heals Today (both books endorsed by TVC’s Lead Pastors and publicly recommended to members of TVC)*
- *“The Gifts of the Holy Spirit,” TVC sermon, which presents an overall view and vision for this doctrinal distinctive in the life of The Village Church*