

The Gifts of the Holy Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:4, 7-11

Defining the word "gift"

There are nine different words translated "gift" in the Bible. The one used in the above text is the Greek word **charisma** *khar'-is-mah* (Strong's Greek Number 5486), it occurs 17 times in the Bible. On 15 occasions in the KJV it is translated – **gift**, twice it is translated **free gift**.

Charisma *khar'-is-mah* is grace made definite, specific, effective, available in a certain form or operation in the life of a believer.

Table 1. Contrasts between ministry and spiritual gifts

Ministry Gift Ephesians 4:8 & 11	Spiritual Gift Rom 12:6; 1 Cor 12:8 -10 & 30; 1 Tim 4:14
The believer is the gift	The believer has the gift
Every aspect of the believer's life makes up the gift, i.e. whole life centres around the gift	A brief manifestation of the gift occurs in the believer's life
Character is involved	Character is not involved

The Holy Spirit has 9 gifts and 9 fruit.

Gifts are received unconditionally, instantly (Christmas tree). Romans 11:29

Fruit come by a process of cultivation, growth and maturing (fruit tree). Galatians 5:22 – 23.

Table 2. The gifts of the Holy Spirit in three categories (1 Corinthians 12:8 – 10)

Revelation	Power	Vocal
Word of wisdom	Faith	Prophecy
Word of knowledge	Working of miracles	Kinds of tongues
Discerning of spirits	Gifts of healings	Interpretation of tongues

Important facts about the Gifts of the Holy Spirit

1. They are gifts; they cannot be earned or worked for;
2. In 1 Corinthians 12: 7 & 11 Paul says they are available to "each one", i.e., to all believers;
3. Paul describes these gifts using a key word, "**manifestation**", an open revelation to the senses (something that can be perceived by the 5 senses); 1 Corinthians 12:7
4. The gifts are supernatural.

The purpose for which the Gifts of the Holy Spirit are made available to us by God

1. The gifts make room for God's sovereignty;
2. The gifts lift us above the realm of our natural abilities;
3. The gifts confirm our testimony of Jesus Christ - 1 Corinthians 1:4 – 8;
4. The gifts are one of the primary ways believers contribute to the common good of the Body of Christ - 1 Corinthians 14:26.

The church will be adorned with and exercising the gifts when the Lord Jesus returns

1 Corinthians 1:4-7, I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Jesus Christ; ⁵ that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, ⁶ even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: ⁷ **So that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ:**

The Word of Wisdom

The Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge are different.
Wisdom is directive; knowledge is informative.

The purpose of wisdom is to give us direction. Ecclesiastes 10:10, "but wisdom *is* profitable to direct". Wisdom and knowledge are often interdependent. Proverbs 15:2, "The tongue of the wise uses knowledge rightly".

An illustration from Acts 15

A council of all the leaders of the church held in Jerusalem to find a solution to a very difficult problem. **Were gentile converts to the Christian faith required to be circumcised and come under the Law of Moses?**

In Acts 15:19 & 20 a very simple and clear '*Word of Wisdom*' was spoken by James. All that should be required of gentile Christians that they abstain from four things: idols, fornication, food strangled and food with blood in it. That word had a profound impact on the subsequent history of the church. The results were:

1. The mind of God was revealed to them at that vital turning point in church history;
2. It produced complete harmony amongst God's people.

"It seemed good" - see Acts 15: 22, 25 & 28. The church had complete unity that was essential for the progress of God's work.

The Word of Knowledge

Knowledge gives us the facts; wisdom tells us what to do about the facts.

Acts 4:34 & 35; **Acts 5: 1 – 11**. The Story of Ananias and Sapphira:

1. Peter received his knowledge directly from the Holy Spirit;
2. The results were dramatic and powerful.
 - a. It kept the church pure and honest.
 - b. It brought conviction on the unbelievers.

Distinguishing or Discerning of Spirits

DEFINITION: The ability to recognise, identify and distinguish between various kinds of spirits that confront us.

The purposes of this gift:

1. To lift the veil that covers the unseen spiritual world;
2. To enable us to see as God sees. Go below the outward appearance and see the heart - 1 Samuel 16:7;
3. To protect us from deception – sometimes Satan appears as an angel of light – 2 Corinthians 11:14;
4. To enable us to diagnose problems.

Table 3. Examples of Discerning Spirits

The Spirit of God	John 1:32
Angels	John 1:51; Acts 27:23
Demons (unclean spirits)	Acts 16:16 - 18
The Human Spirit	John 1:47

The gifts of the Spirit are not a luxury, but a necessity to overcome wickedness and tests that the church will face in the last days.