



BE THE BODY

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Spiritual Outcome Defined:

Identifies, develops, and deploys one's spiritual gifts for the good of others in and through the body of Christ.

Spiritual Outcome Described:

A brief glance at the headlines, and it's clear, brokenness and pain abound in this world. The normal and natural response to the pain we experience and observe is to wonder what God is doing about it. Much can be said to this question, and essential to Scripture's response is teaching about the *body of Christ*. When Jesus was physically present, he informed and demonstrated to his followers that he came to bring healing, restoration, freedom, and hope (Luke 4:14-30). Or put another way, the very reason he came was to address the brokenness we all experience. When preparing to return to the Father, he made known his intentions to his followers: "*As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.*" (John 20:21). He would be sending them—and ultimately us—out to continue the work he had started. We would be his extension—his body—in a world in need of his healing touch. When writing to the church in Corinth, Paul made clear their unified purpose: "*Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.*" (1 Corinthians 12:27). The "you" in this statement is plural. He is telling the church that

collectively we make up the body of Christ in this world. By working together, we re-present Christ to each other and to the broken world that surrounds us. We are Christ's hands and feet, and we are called and exhorted to continue the good work Christ started when he was here physically. This calls for wisdom and discernment in Christ's followers.

"God has created and designed us with a purpose in mind. We are 'wired' to care about some things more than others. We have been given spiritual gifts to competently accomplish ministry tasks. We have also been designed with a personal style or relating to others and the world around us. We have been given a passion.

-- Bruce Bugbee

Scripture describes spiritual gifts

given by the Spirit that signify the unique contribution we are each empowered to make. No one is asked or expected to be the entire body of Christ. We each have a part to play, and those who follow Christ will seek these gifts from God so they can maximize their impact in a world that desperately needs healing and reconciliation. As is seen throughout Scripture, the practice of uniquely gifting individuals is not entirely new at the time of Christ. Scripture records unique giftings given to God's people throughout history. What is unique, though, is the clarity we now have about God's mission and purpose in this world, and the invitation and expectation we have to fully participate in the hope and restoration God is bringing in and through his people.

Evidence of this Spiritual Outcome in a Person's Life:

- Is aware of one's spiritual gifts.
- Is developing and maturing one's spiritual gifts.
- Knows the strengths and weaknesses associated with one's spiritual gifts.
- Is aware of the spiritual gifts of those with whom they are engaged in the body of Christ.

Guidance

Read each passage multiple times. Then write your observations about the passage and any thoughts you have from the discernment question. What do you notice in the passage, and what does this reveal about your life?

Exodus 31:1-11

Observations:

Discernment Question: How might God have gifted you in ways you perceive as normal (like the craftsmen in this passage) but are not normal for others?



Daniel 1:17-21

Observations:

Discernment Question: Do your areas of giftedness bring about arrogance or humility in your life? How aware are you of the unique dispositions or opportunities God may have given to you that he has not given to others?

Romans 12:3-8

Observations:

Discernment Question: What unique contribution do you make or could you make to what Christ is doing in the world?



1 Corinthians 12

Observations:

Discernment Question: How are you currently partnering with other members of the body of Christ to make a difference in the world? How could you increasingly partner with others moving forward?

Ephesians 4:11-16

Observations:

Discernment Question: What are you currently doing to strengthen and mature the body of Christ? What could you be doing that you are not doing today?



2 Timothy 1:6

Observations:

Discernment Question: What are you currently doing to fan the flame of the gifts God has given you? How are you increasing your effectiveness? What sort of development, training, or experience could you engage to make you more effective in the body of Christ?

1 Peter 4:10-11

Observations:

Discernment Question: How do you lean into God's strength in your service? How might you do so increasingly in a way that will give you greater strength and endurance in your serving?



Next Steps

What are practical next steps you will do from what you have discovered in this survey of Scripture on spiritual gifts? Include insights offered from others in your Life Group that could be applied in your own life as well.

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Memory Verses:

1 Corinthians 12:7 NIV

A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

1 Peter 4:10 NIV

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

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