

Naistyön jaoston teemapäivä

10.6.2017

Materiaalipaketti - osa 2 “Spiritual Gifts”

Kirjoittaja Birthe Kendel



Toimittanut pääkonferenssin naistyön jaosto
Kansainvälinen adventtikirkko

Sisältö

About the Author (Kirjoittajasta - englanniksi)	3
Seminar: My Spiritual Gifts (Armolahjaseminaari - englanniksi)	4
Spiritual Gifts Inventory (Armolahjatesti - englanniksi)	14

About the Author (Kirjoittajasta - englanniksi)

“Spiritual Gifts” (seminar)

Birthe Kendel was born and raised in Denmark, and lives there once again. She and her husband, Ole, have made their home in St Alban's, England, where Birthe led out in Women's Ministries and Children's Ministries across Western Europe, the Baltic States, Finland, and the Scandinavian countries and portions of the Middle East and North Africa. The Kendels have also served in Pakistan.

Birthe is the mother of two daughters who won her heart while she and Ole were missionaries in Africa. She couldn't think of leaving them behind so she and her husband adopted them, and these girls have been such a joy!

Birthe is a very creative person, who has made all sorts of interesting devices to teach the love of Jesus to little children, and at the same time she developed Women's Ministries programs for the many different countries of her far-reaching territory.

In her ministry to women, Birthe has helped many discover their spiritual gifts and ways to serve Jesus that they never dreamed possible. In this seminar she shares her program with you—so that you will share it with others.

Seminar: My Spiritual Gifts (Armolahjaseminaari - englanniksi)

“My Spiritual Gifts: How They Can Be Developed, Identified, and Used”

By Birthe Kendel

INTRODUCTION

Imagine that you are visiting a friend you haven't seen for many, many years. You have kept in contact with her through letters and little gifts, but this time you finally have an opportunity to visit her in her own home. The two of you meet at the airport and give each other a long hug. On the way home in the car you talk and try to catch up with all the latest news, and finally the car stops outside her house. As you walk through the front door, you look around. You have tried to imagine how her house is decorated, but now you see it for the first time. You go through to the living room and the kitchen, glance into the bedrooms, and admire her good taste. As you look around, you begin to notice that none of the little gifts you have sent her are seen anywhere: the silver frame you sent for her wedding; the pillow you embroidered for her birthday—none of the gifts you so carefully selected and sent her over the years are displayed, and you are too hurt to ask.

When you finally come into the spare bedroom to unpack your suitcases, you notice a cabinet with glass doors next to the wardrobe where you are to hang your clothes. On the shelves are all the parcels you have sent, still wrapped in brown paper. The address was right. They had all arrived safely, but your friend had not cared enough about your gifts to even open them, let alone use them. How would you feel? Hurt, disappointed, unloved? What can your friend do in this situation to convince you of her love for you and of the high value she places on your friendship?

God is the giver of many gifts. Some are designed to meet our daily needs and to make our lives happier and more fulfilling. Just think of the gifts of family, friendship, freedom, food, and clothes. Each gift reflects His deep love and concern for our happiness. They are gifts we have received, opened, enjoyed, and thanked Him for. But is it possible that God also has given us gifts that we have treated with indifference? Gifts we have stacked carelessly on the shelf of our lives—unopened? Have we received Spiritual Gifts that we have never bothered to unwrap, much less develop? Or maybe we have unwrapped them but didn't know what to do with them, and they ended up on a shelf in the spare room?

The Spiritual Gifts differ from God's other gifts to us in that we are still the receivers but no longer the benefactors. They are given to us for the purpose of our ministering to others. When the apostle Paul wrote his first letter to the church in Corinth and mentioned the Spiritual Gifts, he mentioned them in connection with a body.

Eddie Gibbs expands on that thought and writes:

The church is more than an organization; it is an organism. Paul is fond of describing the church as the “body of Christ.” The Lord is its head, and we are the organs and limbs, linked through one another to Him. It is through His body, the church (you and me), that Christ continues His seeking, serving, saving work.ⁱ

The gifts were given to the first Christians so they could nurture and build up the church rather than for personal use. They were given so the church could be strong and grow in a healthy way. It is important that we understand the wider ministry of the Holy Spirit before we study the gifts.

Roy Naden puts it this way:

To focus just on the giftedness is like looking at one facet of a diamond and missing the beauty of the gem."ⁱⁱ

THE FOURFOLD MINISTRY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Let's look at the fourfold ministry of the Holy Spirit:

1. The Holy Spirit brings us assurance of our personal salvation.
2. He brings assurance that each one of us is special, and He allows us to develop healthy self-esteem.
3. He brings us assurance that we can bear fruit, and He motivates us in personal growth.
4. He gives us special gifts to be used in our personal ministry.

1. The Holy Spirit brings us assurance of our personal salvation.

This is a very important part of His ministry. It is only when we know that we have the forgiveness of sins that we can begin to experience "wholeness." Satan will do everything he can to try to take this assurance away from us. I have found, and I am sure you have too, that when I try to put my sins behind me, Satan digs them up and brings them to me again. He doesn't want me to forget. He doesn't want me to have this assurance of forgiveness. Some time ago my husband and I visited a Christian Exhibition and saw some T-Shirts with a slogan we have never forgotten. It said: "When Satan reminds you of your past, remind him of his future." God wants us to have the assurance of our salvation no matter what has happened in our past. So the first ministry of the Holy Spirit is to help us hold on to that assurance, and He does it by helping us to focus our complete attention on Jesus at all times.

2. The Holy Spirit brings assurance that each one of us is special, and He allows us to develop healthy self-esteem.

Have you ever heard Christians comparing themselves and others to worms or other less attractive things? I have. It is almost as if some Christians are unable to understand and appreciate the love of God if they don't at the same time remind themselves of their own unworthiness. This is a misunderstanding. If we have to destroy our own self-worth in order to feel "humble" and "holy," we are suffering from a man-made righteousness syndrome. Thesba Johnson observes that to see ourselves as of little or no value is "a psychotic twist of the gospel." It is important that we understand that there is a great difference between understanding our sinfulness and destroying our self-worth. Our value to God is not diminished by how far we have fallen. Because we are part of His human family we are always special to Him. Our worth in God's eyes is not based on our past; it is based on our potential. It is not based on the person we are, but on the person we can become.

A director of a suicide prevention clinic once said that all people who commit suicide have feelings of "helplessness, hopelessness, and worthlessness." In other words, they suffer

from low self-esteem. How can we for a moment believe that this is the way God wants us to see ourselves? It ought to be the very opposite. Because of our value to God we should live with confidence, not helplessness; optimism, not hopelessness; and with a sense of value, not worthlessness. All these positive factors are the elements of a healthy self-esteem, and this is what the Holy Spirit wants to produce in our lives.

3. The Holy Spirit brings us assurance that we can bear fruit, and He motivates us in personal growth.

The test as to whether or not we are being responsive to the Spirit's influence is the daily growth of the Fruit of the Spirit in our lives. "The connection between the fruit and root is obvious, not only in nature but also in spiritual things. The aspects of the fruit of the Spirit listed by Paul could just as easily be listed as characteristics of the nature of God. God, in his self-revelation to Moses, used many aspects of the fruit of the Spirit to describe himself. "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin."ⁱⁱⁱ Christian behavior prompted by the Spirit is similar to divine behavior, and Christian character bears marked similarities to the character of God."^{iv}

We must not confuse the Fruit of the Spirit with the Gifts of the Spirit. An easy way to keep the two apart is to remember that the Fruit of the Spirit helps define what a Christian is. The Gifts of the Spirit help define what a Christian does. When we read 1 Corinthians 13:8, we see other differences between the two. The Gifts of the Spirit are temporal. They will one day cease to exist, but the Fruit of the Spirit is eternal. The Fruit is God-oriented, the Gifts are task-oriented.

To begin to go deeper into the Fruit of the Spirit would take up too much time for this seminar. But before we leave the fruit completely I would like you to notice one thing. If you read 1 Corinthians chapters 12, 13, and 14, you will see that the Corinthians were so eager to have the Spiritual Gifts, and especially the gift of speaking in tongues, that the importance of the gifts grew out of proportion and completely overshadowed the Fruit of the Spirit. That was a misunderstanding on their part, and when we read chapter 13, we see how Paul tried to get their priorities straight by reminding them that even if they had all the Spiritual Gifts, but did not have the fruit of the spirit in their lives—in other words, love—then in God's eyes it amounted to nothing. Gifts without the Fruit are like car tires without air—the ingredients are all there, but they are worthless.

So the third ministry of the Holy Spirit is to assure us that we can bear fruit. When we respond positively to the voice of the Holy Spirit in our lives, it is inevitable that our character will come to reflect the character of God. This brings us to the fourth ministry of the Holy Spirit.

4. The Holy Spirit gives us special gifts to be used in our personal ministry.

One afternoon, when I was reading, my oldest daughter walked into the living room. Being a bookworm herself, she looked at the title of the book in my hand and said: "*Spiritual Gifts*— Mm . . . You got any of those?" It was actually a very valid question, for quite unknowingly she had touched upon an important issue. How can we be sure that we have a Spiritual Gift and not just a natural talent? We are told that only Christians have Spiritual

Gifts, and the reason for that is that only those who have the Holy Spirit in their lives can receive gifts from the Spirit (Romans 8:9; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11). We are also told that every Christian receives at least one spiritual gift, and that some Christians will receive more than one. But how can we identify a Spiritual Gift and distinguish it from a natural talent?

A natural talent may be something we are born with, like the ability to sing, or it may be something we have developed through the years, such as playing a musical instrument. Our natural talents are useful, but they deal primarily with the surface of life. They do not touch on the important issue of our relationship to God. We can develop a natural talent without growing spiritually.

Spiritual Gifts differ from natural talents in two important aspects. First: in the motivation. The motivation for Spiritual Gifts is based on our love for God and our love for others. Second: they have different goals. The goal for a person with a spiritual gift is to lead others to Christ and to build up the body of Christ. We cannot develop a Spiritual Gift without growing spiritually.

Let me give an example. A person with a natural talent for teaching will be able to impart knowledge to her students and do it in an interesting way, so the knowledge is understood and applied. She will understand how the children's preferred learning styles and personalities affect the way they learn, how to vary her teaching methods, and use her knowledge to help each child grow intellectually. We say that she has a natural talent for teaching. A teacher with a Spiritual Gift of teaching, as well as a natural talent of teaching, will do the same, but with the help, and under the influence of, the Holy Spirit she will be able to take her student one step further. She will be able to help the child apply the knowledge to her life and use it to grow spiritually. Only a person with a spiritual gift of teaching will be able to help a student grow spiritually.

Rick Yohn differentiates between a natural talent and a spiritual gift this way:

"Natural talents are the abilities we receive by birth and the natural man (or woman) is dependent upon himself to discover, develop and use his talent. The spiritual gift is given the moment we accept Christ, and the Christian can call on the Holy Spirit to reveal what gift he possesses, to discipline him in developing the gift, and to empower him in using the gift."^v (1 Corinthians 2:4, 5; Philippians 4:13; 2 Timothy 1:7).

We can say "the natural talent is potentially a spiritual gift. At the same time, we must recognize that the gifts given to us by the Holy Spirit do not necessarily relate to our natural talents. The Holy Spirit not only is active in our birth, but also works in new ways at our new birth and throughout our years of Christian service."^{vi}

Another thing we have to be able to do is to differentiate between our Spiritual Gifts and our Christian role. When we begin to study the Spiritual Gifts, it becomes obvious that many of the gifts describe activities that are expected from all Christians. Let me give you an example of the difference between a spiritual gift and a Christian role. God has asked all of us to pray. It is a privilege we have, but it is also part of our Christian role. That doesn't indicate that we all have received the spiritual gift of prayer. A woman with the spiritual gift of prayer has a special ability to pray for extended periods of time on a regular basis for the

specific needs of others, and she will often see that specific answers to her intercessory prayers have also been the answers to other people's prayers.

As Christians we have also been asked to show hospitality. Again, that doesn't indicate that we all have received the spiritual gift of hospitality. Having visitors home for dinner or putting someone up for the night are all included in our Christian role. A woman with the spiritual gift of hospitality has been given a special gift that enables her in a special way to reach out to others and make friends, to provide an open home and a warm welcome for those who need food and a place to stay. She also sees that her church is a welcoming place. Her motivation is based on love for God and love for her fellow being. So as we use our Spiritual Gifts and develop them, we also have to be ready to fulfil any Christian role when there is a need.

When we read 1 Corinthians 12 we see how richly God blessed the church in Corinth with Spiritual Gifts, and for good reasons. First, we can assume that none of the first-century Christian churches had a full set of the Old Testament scrolls because they were very scarce, and they didn't have the New Testament either. Second, they didn't have very many leaders and those they had were inexperienced. Both of these were an enormous deficit to the church and God compensated with rich giftedness.

So, looking back, it is easy to understand why the first century churches needed Spiritual Gifts. But what about the churches of the twenty-first century, and the women living in the twenty-first century? Is the Holy Spirit still giving gifts, and do we need them? Are the gifts out of date or do they fit into our busy lifestyles? The answer to both questions is a resounding "Yes." We do need them and they do fit into our lifestyles. We need them because God also has a permanent reason for giving us Spiritual Gifts. The permanent reason is to equip every church to minister to the needs of others, both within the church through nurture, and in the community through interaction. Those needs—to nurture and to evangelize—will be present until Christ returns.

Let us look at the three most relevant questions for us today concerning the Spiritual Gifts:

- What is a spiritual gift?
- When do we receive our gifts of ministry?
- How do we identify them?

What is a Spiritual Gift?

One of the best definitions is this: "Spiritual Gifts are supernatural abilities given to Christians by the Holy Spirit so they can minister to others both through nurture and outreach."

Pastor John MacArthur puts it this way:

"No local congregation will be what it should be, what Jesus prayed that it should be, what the Holy Spirit gifted it and empowered it to be, until it understands Spiritual Gifts." ^{vii}

I would like to rephrase his statement and say that:

"No woman in any church will be what she should be, what Jesus prayed that she should be, what the Holy Spirit gifted and empowered her to be, until she understands her Spiritual gift or gifts."

In Ephesians 4 we read that each one of us has received a special gift... (v.7), and that the Holy Spirit did this to prepare all God's people for the work of Christian service in order to build up the body of Christ (v.12).

We can receive more than one gift, but all the gifts we receive are for ministering to others. The Holy Spirit does not give us Spiritual Gifts for the purpose of serving our own ego, but to serve God and one another. When we become aware of our spiritual gift or gifts, we can begin our personal ministry with confidence, because we know that we have been equipped to do something personal and special for God. It is important that we do not misunderstand the word "equipped." To be equipped does not mean that our gifts are handed over to us fully developed. It only means that we are fully equipped to begin to use our gift. We are stewards of our Spiritual Gifts and therefore responsible for their development. We will never reach a point when we can say that we have exhausted the possibilities of our development.

A favorite quotation about our personal development comes from Ellen White in the book *Education*.

"He [she] who with a sincere and teachable spirit studies God's word, seeking to comprehend its truth, will be brought in touch with its Author and except by his [her] own choice, there is no limit to the possibilities of his [her] development."^{viii}

Modern research tells us that 50% of our intelligence is formed before the age of four and 80% before the age of seven. But God says something different. He says that if we stay close to Him, and depend on His guidance and wisdom, there is no limit to the possibilities of our development.

When do we receive our gift of ministry?

When we read Matthew 10, we see that the disciples received many gifts when they first accepted Christ—gifts of healing, gifts to drive out evil spirits, gifts to perform miracles. In other words, the disciples were gifted at the time of their new birth. But we also read in Acts 2, that they received further gifts a few years later at Pentecost—speaking in tongues. The same is true today. When we become part of the Body of Christ, when we become converted, each one of us receives at least one Spiritual Gift. There is no conversion taking place without the Holy Spirit at the same time giving that person a spiritual gift. The one cannot happen without the other. At the same time, we must be aware that the Holy Spirit can bestow additional gifts at any time to meet particular needs for His work and to His glory.

How do we identify our gift(s)?

Our last and maybe most important question. Pray about it. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you find and develop your gift.

1. Involve yourself in many different ministries. Hardly anyone discovers all her gifts at the beginning of her Christian experience. Sometimes it requires a special set of

circumstances to bring our gifts to light. It is important that we are willing to work in new areas. Our spiritual gift can only be confirmed in the actual setting where it is put to use.

After we have had considerable experience we can ask ourselves the following questions:

- What types of ministry did I enjoy most?
 - In what types of ministry did I see positive results?
 - What spiritual abilities do others see in me?
 - Which ministry have I been asked to do again and again?
 - What types of ministry blend with my God-given temperament?
 - Which of my regular daily activities could have a spiritual application (e.g., teaching, helping, administration)?^{ix}
3. We can get a push in the right direction by using a Spiritual Gift Inventory. I have seen several different inventories and almost all of them are made to help us to find a specific gift(s). But all inventories have a weakness. If we do not answer the questions very carefully, we may be lead to one specific spiritual gift we may not have and miss the one we do have. I have chosen to use Roy Naden's inventory.^x By answering twenty questions we can discover in which of the five basic areas we have the greatest probability of giftedness. By using this test, we are lead to a cluster of gifts. Each cluster is made up of 2-5 different gifts that are closely related to one another and often overlap one another, and within that area we will be able to identify our specific gift.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY

[Presenter: Hand out inventory. Ask the participants to do the following.]

- Read through the 20 statements and answer them as truthfully as you can. Consider your responses from two perspectives:
 - The degree to which the statements have been true or false in your life.
 - What you believe your responses would have been had you had the opportunity to be involved in the activities described.
- Try not to have too many 3's. If you have too many you will not get a true picture.
- After answering all the statements, write the number circled for each statement in the appropriate squares.
- Total the five columns.
- The column with the highest score represents the area of probable giftedness.

WORK GROUPS

[Presenter: Divide the participants into smaller groups according to their highest score. Everyone who has scored highest on no. 1-The Teaching Cluster-form a group. Everyone who has scored highest on no. 2-The Shepherding\Evangelizing Cluster-form a group, etc. Give each participant a Gift Description plus a Worksheet.]

Gift Descriptions and Worksheets: (Handouts)

1. Teaching Cluster
2. Shepherding\Evangelizing Cluster
3. Supporter Cluster
4. Counselor Cluster
5. Leadership Cluster

Group Work Activity (30-40 minutes)

(To be done within separated groups. Have each group choose a leader or have facilitators designated ahead of time. Give her all of the material for that group's cluster.)

- The leader should give a Spiritual Gift Description to each member of the group.
- Go through each spiritual gift. Help each member of the group to identify herself with one or more of the gifts in the cluster.
- Discuss the questions on the worksheet.
- When time is up form one group again.

DEVELOPING OUR GIFTS

Once we know our gift, we should focus on it. We can ask God to open doors or show us places where we can serve and where our gift can develop. We can attend seminars relevant to our gift. We can search for mentors with whom we can work and learn. I said earlier that the Spiritual Gifts are given to us for the purpose of ministering to others, and that is true. But my personal experience has also been that we discover there are positive things that happen to us personally as a result of developing and using our gifts.

1. It gives a sense of worth and purpose to know that God has a unique contribution for us to make.
2. Because all the gifts/ministries are equally important there is no room for competition.
3. It downplays feelings of guilt.
4. We will be more enthusiastic and less frustrated and discouraged because we are serving in an area where we are gifted rather than struggling where we are not.

It gives a sense of worth and purpose to know that God has a unique contribution for us to make. Our spiritual gift can help us develop a healthy self-esteem and an assurance that we are needed—a basic human need. We all need to feel that we are important to our church family and that our contribution is necessary for the growth of the whole church.

Rick Yohn has an interesting statement. He writes:

"I don't believe that the sole reason for non-involvement is lack of commitment. Many Christians are convinced that they have nothing to offer."^{xi}

God has, through our spiritual gifts, given each one of us a personal identity. We are all gifted women with a divine mission in which we can feel confident that we have something

unique to offer, not because we think so, but because God tells us that it is so. To me it is such a relief to know that I do not have to measure up to some other person's standards. All I need to concentrate on is measuring up to God's plan for my life.

Because all the gifts/ministries are equally important there is no competition.

We are all stewards of our spiritual gifts. Some of us have received a one-talent spiritual gift. Others may have received a two-talent or a five-talent spiritual gift. The size of our gift or the nature of our gift is not important. What is important is that we use it and develop it. The Holy Spirit does not give gifts to produce competition. The gifts are given for the common good of the church and to produce unity in the church.

It downplays feelings of guilt. It is so easy to look at other women in the church, noticing their hospitality, the many hours they use in visiting the sick every week, the brilliant way they arrange the flowers and teach a Sabbath school lesson, and then begin to feel guilty and inadequate because we are not like them. But God has never asked us to be like everyone else. Assume, for example, that God did not give you a Spiritual Gift that enabled you to write. You have never written any books and you never will, but you don't have to feel miserable or guilty because you haven't written a book. You can be happy that God has given that gift to other men and women and that you can benefit from their gifts. When we recognize our own gift and use it, we can be happy for the gifts we see in others without any feelings of guilt.

We will be more enthusiastic and less frustrated and discouraged because we are serving in an area where we are gifted rather than struggling where we are not. God has never asked us to do things for which we do not have the ability or spiritual gift. The following story from the Springfield, Oregon, public school's newsletter illustrates the point.

“Once upon a time, the animals decided they should do something meaningful to meet the problems of the new world. So they organized a school. They adopted an activity curriculum of running, climbing, swimming, and flying. To make it easier to administer the curriculum, all the animals took all the subjects. The duck was excellent in swimming; in fact, better than his instructor. But he made only passing grades in flying, and was very poor in running. Since he was slow in running, he had to drop swimming and stay after school to practice running. This caused his web feet to be badly worn, so that he was only average in swimming. But average was quite acceptable, so nobody worried about that—except the duck.

“The rabbit started at the top of his class in running, but developed a nervous twitch in his leg muscles because of so much make-up work in swimming. The squirrel was excellent in climbing, but he encountered constant frustration in flying class because his teacher made him start from the ground up instead of from the treetop down. He developed ‘Charlie horses’ from overexertion, and so only got a C in climbing and a D in running. The eagle was a problem child and was severely disciplined for being a non-conformist. In climbing classes, he beat all the others to the top of the tree, but insisted on using his own way to get there....”

The obvious moral of the story is a simple one—each creature has its own set of capabilities in which it will naturally excel—unless it is expected or forced to fill a mold that doesn't fit. When that happens, frustration, discouragement, and even guilt bring overall mediocrity or complete defeat. A duck is a duck—and only a duck. It is built to swim, not to run, and certainly not to climb. A squirrel is a squirrel—and only that.

To move it out of its forte—climbing—and then expect it to swim or fly, will drive a squirrel “nuts.” Eagles are beautiful creatures in the air, but not in a foot race. The rabbit will win every time unless, of course, the eagle gets hungry.

“All of us have our gifts that God has given us so that we might function in a certain way. If we do that as members of His body, we are every bit as vital as any other part. What is important is that we work harmoniously together like the member of the body for the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom.”^{xii}

Knowing and using our gifts makes a difference in our attitudes toward our ministry as well as the results. I am thankful to God for my spiritual gifts and I am enjoying developing them and using them. Our personalities are not unknown to the Holy Spirit, and I believe that He, in His wisdom, matches our Spiritual Gifts with our personalities because He wants us to enjoy our gifts and enjoy our ministries.

To fully understand the work of the Holy Spirit and to rightly understand Spiritual Gifts is not done in a couple of hours. I hope that this introduction has left you with a desire to go home and study this for yourselves and search for new ways you can develop your gifts and strengthen your ministry. You may forget most of the details we have discussed, but even if you do, never forget that. . .

“No woman in any church will be what she should be, what Jesus prayed that she should be, what the Holy Spirit gifted her and empowered her to be, until she understands her spiritual gifts and makes a commitment to use her gifts to build up the church of God.”

Spiritual Gifts Inventory (Armolahjatesti - englanniksi)

SPIRITUAL GIFTS INVENTORY

20 Statements on Spiritual Gifts

If a statement for you is:

Always false, or does not apply, circle 1

Often false, circle 2

Occasionally true and occasionally false, circle 3

Often true, circle 4

Always true, circle 5

False True

A.	I really enjoy teaching	1	2	3	4	5
B.	I like asking people to give their hearts to Jesus	1	2	3	4	5
C.	When I meet people who need “a helping hand” I help them	1	2	3	4	5
D.	When I counsel people who are troubled, I sense they feel comforted	1	2	3	4	5
E.	When I am the teacher I don’t shrink from making the tough decisions	1	2	3	4	5
F.	I enjoy studying in preparation to teach (for example a Bible class at church)	1	2	3	4	5
G.	When I know someone needs spiritual help, I arrange for them to get to church	1	2	3	4	5
H.	When I meet people in need, I spontaneously try to help them	1	2	3	4	5
I.	When I counsel people, I can predict the results of their options	1	2	3	4	5
J.	When I lead out, I don’t hesitate to delegate responsibility	1	2	3	4	5
K.	When I teach a class, the members tell me I make the Bible plain	1	2	3	4	5
L.	When I work with people who need to make a decision for Jesus, I spend much time praying for them	1	2	3	4	5
M.	I go out of my way to help the handicapped	1	2	3	4	5
N.	When I counsel people I can help them identify their options	1	2	3	4	5
O.	I bring order to complex organizational problems	1	2	3	4	5

- P. When I teach, the members of the class tell me they feel drawn closer to Jesus 1 2 3 4 5
- Q. Because I'm always looking for people to lead to Jesus, I try to make visitors at church feel welcome 1 2 3 4 5
- R. I give generously to people who can't provide for themselves 1 2 3 4 5
- S. When people seek my counsel, I can discover the reason for their problems 1 2 3 4 5
- T. When I'm a leader, I consider integrity more important than popularity 1 2 3 4 5

INSTRUCTION FOR COMPLETION

Each square is identified with a letter from A through to T. In the 'A' square write the number you circled for statement A (i.e. write 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5). In the 'B' square, write the number you circled for the B statement. Continue until you have placed a number in each square. See example below.

Example:

A 5	B 4	C 3	D 4	E 2
--------	--------	--------	--------	--------

Now total the five columns. The total scores will be between 4 and 20. The column with the highest score represents the area of your probable giftedness.

A	B	C	D	E
F	G	H	I	J
K	L	M	N	O
P	Q	R	S	T
TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL	TOTAL
Teaching ¹	Shepherding/ Evangelizing ²	Supporter ³	Counselor ⁴	Leadership ⁵

TEACHING CLUSTER

*This cluster is made up of two gifts.
(column 1)*

1. THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE

Definition.

Knowledge is the Spirit's gift to study and understand God's word and will—so that others are blessed.

A Woman with the Gift of Knowledge

- is able to mentally grasp how separate pieces of biblical information fit into the great themes of Scripture
- has a tendency to measure spiritual maturity on the basis of biblical knowledge
- is able to probe to deep levels on Bible topics
- enjoys answering and discussing Bible questions

Visualize How Your Gift can be Used

Give Bible studies; help with seminars; write on Bible topics; lay pastor; elder; women's ministries retreats.

When the Gift is Misused

The gift is short-circuited when "truth" becomes more important than the Lord Jesus; when knowledge is acquired but not applied or shared.

2. THE GIFT OF TEACHING

Definition.

Teaching is the Spirit's gift to live the gospel, to make truth plain, and to lead individuals into a closer relationship with Jesus.

A Woman with the Gift of Teaching

- cares a great deal about the accuracy of information
- can communicate well on the level of her listeners
- finds that Bible teachings come quickly to mind whenever she deals with a problem
- can foster much participation and interest in presenting a spiritual subject

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Sabbath School leader/teacher (in any division level); Pathfinders; youth activities leader; Women's Ministries retreats; Vacation Bible School leader/teacher; Branch Sabbath School leader/teacher; Bible study leader.

When the Gift is Misdirected

Teachers belie their trust when:

- they become impatient with slow learners or those who lack the knowledge of their teachers
- they trust more in the facts than in the compelling power of the Spirit
- they begin to trust so much in their fund of knowledge that they cease to prepare their lessons faithfully

WORKSHEETS FOR TEACHING CLUSTER—1

1. Go through each spiritual gift in the Teaching Cluster. Help each member to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster
2. Questions for group discussion:

Some Christian teachers attract large and enthusiastic classes in church. Others find their classes soon dwindle and must either be closed or assigned to new teachers. How much of the difference can be attributed to a teacher's style? How much to their knowledge? How much to their teaching skills? Which of these three is the most important to you as a Bible class member? Why?

Spiritual gifts are given to bless the church. In what ways would people with the gift of knowledge share their knowledge so it could be a blessing?

Could a Christian with the spiritual gift of teaching ever be a failure as a Bible class teacher? Why?

How does one with the gift of knowledge receive the knowledge? Is the gift the ability to study? Is it a gift to be organized in research? Or is it some "sixth sense" that recognizes truth and error? Explain.

It would appear that the gift of knowledge would especially help new believers. But do Christians, who have known the Lord for some time and have studied widely and understand the Bible well, have an equal need for the help of one with the gift of knowledge?

How should church administrators decide on the number of Bible classes, and thus class size, when there is a shortage of qualified teachers?

What purpose does the spiritual gift of knowledge serve? How can it be valuable to Women's Ministries?

SHEPHERDING/EVANGELIZING CLUSTER

*This cluster is made up of four gifts.
(column 2)*

1. The Gift of Evangelism

Definition.

Evangelism is the Spirit's gift to share the gospel, to invite people to commit themselves to the Lord, and to unite with the church.

A Woman with the Gift of Evangelism

- is at ease asking people to make a decision for Christ.
- experiences that others often ask her how to be a Christian.
- can, through the Holy Spirit, lead people to a commitment to Jesus.
- often is more interested in the end results of soul winning than in how people are led to decision.

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Personal ministries leader; give Bible studies; lead out in Bible-oriented seminars; church planting in new areas; prison ministry; branch Sabbath School (adult); Women's Ministries retreats; visiting; follow-up media interests.

When the Gift is Misdirected

In a desire for decisions, it is possible for Christians to use salesmanship techniques rather than depend on the influence of the Holy Spirit. A person with the gift of evangelism is irresponsible if no plans are made for the nurture of new converts.

2. The Gift of Shepherding

Definition.

Shepherding is the Spirit's gift to guide, protect, nurture, and feed the members of the church.

A Woman with the Gift of Shepherding

- is, or would like to be, spending much of her time nurturing church members rather than in outreach.
- is very concerned with promoting unity in her church and combating any element which threatens the unity.
- enjoys taking "newborn" Christians and seeing them through hardships, fear, or doubts.
- provides a calming, strengthening effect on those around her.

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Church nurture, visitation, single's ministry, Women's Ministries, study-group leader, hospital visitation, counseling, social committee.

When the Gift is Misdirected

Ezekiel 34:1-6 contains a scathing rebuke to shepherds of the sixth century B.C. who lived during the Babylonian captivity. According to this passage, shepherds abuse their calling when they:

- feed themselves but not the flock
- fail to care for the wounded sheep
- neglect the lost
- dominate the members (and thus promote dependency)
- fail to search for the wandering

3. The Gift of Speaking Up for God

Definition

Speaking up for God is the Spirit's gift to give instruction, encouragement, and comfort among the church family.

(The King James Bible calls this gift "Prophecy." We need to be aware that Paul emphasized that this gift is given to lay people in local congregations and that it is a world apart from the colorful thundering prophets of the Old Testament. Roy Naden calls it "speaking up for God" which is faithful to Paul's definition of teaching, counseling, and comforting.)

A Woman with the Gift of Speaking Up for God

- finds that people are motivated when she speaks
- speaks the truth forthrightly to improve a situation
- is able to apply Scripture to life in a clear, logical, and powerful way
- has the ability to exhort, teach, and console in her speaking

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Lay preacher/evangelist, elder, prison ministry, Women's Ministries, lead out in seminars.

When the Gift is Misdirected

The gift ceases to function according to the Bible's definition when those who claim to have this gift:

- speak contrary to the word of God
- claim an authority above the Bible
- disallow the Spirit to speak directly to and through other Christians

4. The Gift of Cross-Cultural Ministry

Definition

Cross-cultural ministry is the Spirit's gift to share the gospel in another country/or culture, joyfully accepting the major adjustment to a new location and lifestyle.

(Migration patterns have introduced pockets of ethnicity to many cities. To reach these people with the gospel requires a cross-culture ministry.)

A Woman with the Gift of Cross-Cultural Ministry

- will be happy to live in primitive circumstances as long as she can share the gospel
- feels comfortable with people who are racially and cultural different from herself
- can cope with separation from friends and family in order to share the gospel in another land
- is able to communicate well with people from all walks of life

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used:

Student missionary committee, visitation committee, refugee aid, inner-city work, cross-culture evangelism, Women's Ministries.

When the Gift is Misdirected:

There have been instances in the past where missionaries have confused the gospel with culture and have tried not only to share the good news but to change the indigenous people into replicas of their "home" culture. In the first century A.D., the Jerusalem Council agreed on the inappropriateness of this confusion.

WORKSHEET FOR SHEPHERDING/EVANGELIZING CLUSTER—2

1. Go through each spiritual gift. Help each member of the group to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster.
2. Questions for group discussion:

Church growth studies suggest that some ten percent of a local congregation will probably have the gift of evangelism. Are you aware that only about one tenth of your congregation is probably involved in outreach that leads people to accept the Lord and become members of the church?

To what degree do you think the nation's largest churches have grown through the ministry of gifted, trained, and expertly organized and motivated lay people with the gift of shepherding? How much growth would you say is due to the influence of a charismatic minister?

What are some methods being used successfully in outreach in your area? How can Women's Ministries become a successful outreach in your church through women with the gift of evangelism?

Is the cross-cultural ministry as necessary today as it was in the early Christian church or in the early days of world missions in the nineteenth century? What reasons could be suggested for indigenous leadership to take over administrative responsibilities and transfer Western missionaries out of foreign lands as quickly as possible? What reasons might caution against moving too fast in this direction?

Which do you see is the greatest need of your congregation?

- occasional visit from a professional evangelist?
- a year-round evangelistic program sponsored by your local church or a group of local churches?
- some combination of the above? Explain.

Is there any evidence that lay people with the gift of shepherding are presently ministering in your local congregation? If so, in what ways? If not, why?

Are there any attitudes that would need to be modified before someone who claims to have the gift of speaking up for God could be accepted to exercise it in your congregation?

SUPPORTER CLUSTER

This cluster is made up of five gifts.
(column 3)

1. The Gift of Hospitality

Definition

Hospitality is the Spirit's gift to reach out to others, especially strangers, in friendship. To provide an open house and a warm welcome for those in need of food and lodging.

A Woman with the Gift of Hospitality

- knows that it is more natural for her to meet people's immediate needs than to aid them in planning to meet long-term needs
- enjoys meeting strangers and having them in her home
- knows that people look forward to being part of gatherings in her home
- offers her home to meet the need of someone in need of lodging

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used.

Hospitality coordinator/team leader, social committee, greeter, deaconess, singles' ministries, Women's Ministries committee.

When the Gift is Misused

This gift is improperly used when we allow personal spiritual growth to slip because excessive amounts of time are spent being hospitable, or when members of the congregation unduly impose on those gifted with hospitality.

2. The Gift of Support

Definition

Support is the Spirit's gift to meet another's needs, to identify the unmet needs involved in a task related to God's work and to make use of available resources to meet those needs and help accomplish the desired goals.

A Woman with the Gift of Support

- is willing to cheerfully endure personal inconvenience to help meet a need
- would, when positions are assigned, rather help out somewhere else than be the leader
- is willing to use her natural talents (such as music, art, cooking) in any way she can serve the church
- is deeply impressed by texts about serving others and tends to become over-involved because of her convictions

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Deaconess, Women's Ministries, music committee, flower committee, church librarian or tape librarian, audio visual committee, publications/public relations, community service, ingatherer, homeless ministry.

When the gift is misdirected

Christians can retreat from the vital nurture of prayer, reading, and meditation claiming they are too busy doing things for the Lord. People in positions of responsibility can take advantage of subordinates by taking the credit for their work.

3. The Gift of Giving

Definition

Giving is the Spirit's gift to give generously and cheerfully to help those in need.

A Woman with the Gift of Giving

- finds that her gifts to others often are answers to specific prayers
- has the ability to make wise investments with the ultimate aim of sharing her gains
- is sensitive to the material needs of others and desire to meet those needs without publicity
- is able to give without expecting something in return and without insisting on determining how the gift is used

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Finance committee, student aid committee, Women's Ministries committee, Community Services board, Ingathering leader, Student Missionary committee.

When the Gift is Misdirected

Giving is thoroughly distorted when thought of as a payment for a better understanding with God. Givers should never become critical of others who do not give as generously as themselves. The gift of giving should never be associated with acquiring position or political favor.

4. The Gift of Compassion

Definition

Compassion is the Spirit's gift to feel genuine empathy to the feelings of others, both Christian and non-Christian, and helpful to their needs.

A Woman with the Gift of Compassion

- shares the experiences of people's inward struggles, because they see her as sympathetic and understanding
- often lack firmness and decisiveness because she is sensitive about offending others
- is moved with compassion toward society's outcasts (such as drunks, mentally retarded)
- only condemns others if they are insensitive to personal needs

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used:

Community services, student aid committee, poor fund committee, counseling, single mothers ministry, shut ins, prison ministry, the elderly in her church, Women's Ministries.

When the Gift is Misdirected.

The gift is misdirected when it is wasted on confident people, when it causes an attitude of superiority on the part of givers, or when it makes receivers think less of themselves.

5. The Gift of Intercession**Definition**

Intercession is the Spirit's gift to devote much time to pray for the specific needs of others.

A Woman with the Gift of Intercession

- knows that her prayers are personal and to the point rather than impersonal and vague
- spends much of her prayer time in petition for the need of others
- knows numerous cases where her prayers have led to specific results
- knows that her communication with God involves the everyday details of living as well as the monumental decisions

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used.

Hospital visitation, church nurture visitation, new project development, Women's Ministries, elder, prayer band leader, follow up media interest.

When the Gift is Misdirected

There is always the danger that intercessors:

- will ask for their own will, not God's
- will seek their own glory, not God's
- will demand rather than ask God to act

WORKSHEET FOR SUPPORTER CLUSTER—3

1. Go through each spiritual gift. Help each member of the group to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster.

2. Questions for group discussion:

In what specific ways could the gift of hospitality become a blessing to your congregation in the area of nurture? In outreach to the community? In Women's Ministries?

Are you convinced that intercession makes a difference? How can you be sure? Do you think it affects the outcome of events if we do not pray for others? Why?

What tasks could be assigned to someone with the gift of support in your congregation to facilitate nurture and/or outreach?

In which ways can the gift of giving be valuable to Women's Ministries?

If no one is exercising the gift of compassion in your congregation, does it mean there is no need for this ministry? Or is it more likely that members have not yet become aware of their giftedness and/or the need? Should church administration get involved in such situations or leave it to the Holy Spirit to lead individuals into personal ministry?

Can you recall any contemporary experience where the gift of intercession made an important difference to the outcome of some situation?

How could the gift of support be facilitated in Women's Ministries?

Is the gift of giving mostly the ability to give donations, or the giving of oneself? Explain.

COUNSELOR CLUSTER

This cluster is made up of three gifts.
(column 4)

1. The Gift of Insight

Definition

Insight is the Spirit's gift to perceive people's needs and to minister effectively to them both for the growth of the person counseled or concerned and for the growth of the church as a whole. To be able to know with assurance whether certain behavior purported to be of God is in reality divine, human, or satanic.

A Woman with the Gift of Insight

- is able to assist others in determining spiritual problems
- her focus is on identifying problems rather than creating change
- can effectively choose or nominate church members for positions where they would serve well
- can correctly distinguish a spirit of truth from a spirit of error before that difference is apparent to others

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Elder, nominating committee, lay advisory committee, school board, membership committee.

When the Gift is Misused

The gift is inappropriately used when it leads to a perpetual suspicion of others, or when a spirit of superiority develops in the one who claims the gift.

2. The Gift of Encouragement

Definition

Encouragement is the Spirit's gift to give comfort and motivation, and to inspire people to live according to the Lord's will.

A Woman with the Gift of Encouragement

- finds it easy to genuinely comfort someone who is hurting
- can make effective appeals by publicly urging certain courses of action
- helps strengthen positive behavior rather than criticizing negative behavior
- is quick to encourage others

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Hospital visitation, church nurture visitation, prison ministry, Women's Ministries, counseling, ingathering leader, Youth Ministries.

When the Gift is Misdirected

This gift is inappropriately used if the counsel creates unhealthy dependencies. It is misuse of the gift to be more concerned with "setting people straight" than with lifting burdens and providing encouragement.

3. The Gift of Wisdom

Definition

Wisdom is the Spirit's gift to be perceptive, enabling practical counsel that facilitates an individual's growth, and promotes harmony among people. It is to know the mind of the Holy Spirit in such a way as to receive insight into how given knowledge may best be applied to specific needs arising in the Body of Christ.

A Woman with the Gift of Wisdom

- knows when to take an uncompromising stand and when to change a position
- can predict with excellent accuracy the long-term results of decisions
- can apply what she learns to practical life situations
- views all of life from a scriptural perspective

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Church board chairman, membership committee, elder, counseling, Women's Ministries, school board member.

When the Gift is Falsely Claimed

The givers of advice probably don't have this gift if they are more anxious to speak than to listen. Those not genuinely gifted will lead the church into courses of action that bring conflict and misunderstanding, and will harm the cause of Christ.

WORKSHEET FOR COUNSELOR CLUSTER—4

1. Go through each spiritual gift. Help each member of the group to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster.

2. Questions for group discussion:

In what specific situations could the gift of wisdom be most beneficial to Women's Ministries? How could women receive the benefit of wise counsel in these situations?

We live in a time when it is commonplace to resort to legal action. Under what circumstances would it be appropriate to have someone with the gift of insight attempt to resolve a difference between two church members?

Can you relate an experience where the exercise of the gift of encouragement brought you a personal blessing?

Can you think of any circumstance when it would be best not to exercise the gift of insight?

How would you compare the reliability of counsel from someone who has the gift of wisdom with the recommendations of a church committee?

How could those with the gift of insight expect to exercise it to bless Women's Ministries?

What questions would be appropriate to ask someone gifted with encouragement? What questions would it be more appropriate to ask a psychologist or psychiatrist?

Is the gift of wisdom static, or does the gift expand with the individual's maturity and experience? How does your answer fit with the concept of a gift?

LEADERSHIP CLUSTER

This cluster is made up of three gifts.
(column 5)

1. The Gift of Leadership

Definition

Leadership is the Spirit's gift to lead a group or congregation in ways that bring growth and harmony.

A Woman with the Gift of Leadership

- accepts that people look to her when opinions are being sought
- tends to assume responsibility if no structured leadership exists
- feels confident to lead out in discussions, harmonize various points of view, draw conclusions, and delegate authority
- make sure that there is a good spirit of unity and enthusiasm when she is in charge

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Sabbath School superintendent, chairwoman of various boards and committees, pastor; elder, head deaconess, treasurer, youth ministries leader, Women's Ministries leader.

When the Gift is Misdirected

It is a tragedy when political considerations overshadow the Spirit's promoting. Some individuals when appointed to positions of leadership act as if their ideas are the only ones worth considering, and they impose these ideas on others. Leaders should be a little in front of their congregations, but not too far in front.

2. The Gift of Administration

Definition

Administration is the Spirit's gift to direct large areas of God's work in ways that inspire the members and bring progress and unity.

A Woman with the Gift of Administration

- is very conscious of efficiency and order (or lack of efficiency and order) within the church
- is organized in her personal life
- has the ability to see how elements fit into the overall picture and to work logically toward long-range goals
- is able to effectively delegate responsibility

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Church clerk, treasurer, nominating committee, social committee, Women's Ministries committee, church secretary, Sabbath School superintendent, publications/public relations, interest coordinator, committee evangelism chair.

When the Gift is Misdirected

Administrators misuse the gift God has given when they:

- become more concerned with power than dialogue
- are more apt to use psychological manipulation than the Spirit's leading
- are more concerned about the organization than the people who constitute the organization

3. The Gift of Faith

Definition

Faith is the Spirit's gift to claim the promises of God and move ahead in confidence with plans for His kingdom.

A Woman with the Gift of Faith

- relies upon God for all her needs
- is often impatient with methodical, cautious thinking
- is convinced that seemingly impossible tasks can be accomplished
- sees hope in apparently hopeless situations

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used

Building committee, Women's Ministries committee, project development, nominating committee, school board, evangelism committee.

When the Gift Is Misdirected

Not all financial gifts are destined for projects inspired by God. Potential donors need to be sure the fundraiser is carrying out a plan of God and not fulfilling a dream of self-aggrandizement.

WORKSHEET FOR LEADERSHIP CLUSTER—5

1. Go through each special gift.
Help each member of the group to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster.
2. Questions for group discussion:

We tend to think that without strong leadership there would be no one to mediate, build, counsel, organize, inspire, and motivate. In other words, we could assume the local church would collapse without strong leadership. How likely is this to happen if other gifts such as faith, wisdom, encouragement, teaching, and shepherding are all present?

How do you relate to a person who claims to have a great idea for God's work (gift of faith), but whose idea the membership in general feels is quite inappropriate?

There seems to be a potential problem in the Bible's call for members to support a church administrator if the administrator rejects the instruction to be a servant. How would the church correct an abuse of this spiritual gift and at the same time maintain unity and harmony?

- Sign a petition to remove the person?
- Write a letter to the responsible board or committee?
- Appoint an experienced assistant administrator?
- Personally approach the one concerned?
- Other?

Considering the severe time demands of today's world is it likely a member can be an effective leader at home, in the business world, and in the church all at the same time?

Can you share an experience where the gift of administration has been a specific blessing to your congregation?

How would you compare the importance of a "goal" established in faith among a small group of believers with few resources, and a "goal" established in faith by a large congregation with many resources at their disposal?

Endnotes

“My Spiritual Gifts: How They Can Be Developed, Identified, and Used” Seminar by Birthe Kendal

ⁱ Eddie Gibbs, *Body Building Exercises for the Local Church* (Falcon Books, 1979).

ⁱⁱ Roy C. Naden, *Your Spiritual Gifts: Making the great discovery* (Berrien Springs, MI: Instructional Product Development, 1989).

ⁱⁱⁱ Exodus 34:6, 7, NIV.

^{iv} Stuart Briscoe, *The Fruit of the Spirit* (OM Publishing, 1993), 5. **Also**, *The Fruit of the Spirit: Cultivating Christlike character, Fisherman Bible study guides* (Shaw Books, 2000).

^v Rick Yohn, *Discover Your Spiritual Gift and Use It* (Tyndale House Publishers, 1974). **Also** (Heritage Builders Inc., 2011).

^{vi} Gibbs, *Body Building Exercises for the Local Church*, pp. 66, 67.

^{vii} John D. MacArthur, *The Church, the Body of Christ* (Zondervan Publishing House, 1973).

^{viii} Ellen G. White, *Education* (Review & Herald), p. 125.

^{ix} Carol Porter and Mike Hamel, *Women's Ministries Handbook: A comprehensive guide to reaching, teaching, and training women in the local church* (Victor Books, 1992), p. 36.

^x Naden, *Your Spiritual Gifts, Making the great discovery*.

^{xi} Yohn, *Discover Your Spiritual Gift and Use It*.

^{xii} Sakae Kubo, *The God of Relationships: How the gospel helps us reach across barriers such as race, culture, and gender* (Hagerstown, MD: Review & Herald Publishing Association, 1993), pp. 111, 112.