

DISCERNMENT: The ability to know with assurance whether certain behaviour purported to be of God is in reality divine, human, or satanic. The purpose of this gift is to prevent confusion and false teaching from infiltrating the church (Matthew 16:21-23; Acts 5:1-11; Acts 16:16-18; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 John 4:1-6).

FAITH: The ability to discern with extraordinary confidence the Will and purpose of God, and to propel the body of believers into actively claiming the promises of God (Acts 11:22-24; Romans 4: 18-21; 1 Corinthians 12:9; Hebrews 11).

CREATIVE COMMUNICATION: The ability to communicate God's truth through a variety of art forms, e.g. music, drama, parables, painting. (Deuteronomy 3 1:22; 1 Samuel 16:16; 2 Samuel 6:14-15; 1 Chronicles 16; 2 Chronicles 5: 12-13; 34:12; Psalm 150:3-5).

TONGUES: The ability to speak, worship or pray in a language unknown to the speaker. People with this gift may receive a spontaneous message from God which is made known to the body through the gift of Interpretation. (Acts 2:1-13; 1 Corinthians, 12:10, 28-30, 13:1, 14:1-33).

INTERPRETATION: The ability to make known to the Body of Christ the message of one who speaks in tongues. (1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:5, 14:26-28).

MIRACLES: The ability to serve as a human intermediary through whom it pleases God to perform powerful acts that are perceived by observers to have altered the ordinary course of nature (Acts 9:36-42; 19:11-20; 20:7-12; Romans 15:18-19; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28).

CRAFTSMANSHIP: The ability to creatively design and/or construct items to be used for ministry. (Exodus 30:22-25; Exodus 31:3-11; 2 Chronicles 34:9-13; Acts 9:36-39, 18:2-3).

HEALING: The ability to serve as a human intermediary through whom God's healing power is applied to another person's physical or emotional need. The word is actually plural, 'healings', which indicates that different kinds of healings are possible with this gift (e.g. emotional, relational, spiritual, physical). (Acts 3:1-10; 5:12-16; 9:32-35; 28:7-10; 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28).

GIVING: The ability to contribute money and resources to the work of the Lord with liberality and cheerfulness (Mark 12:41-44; Romans 12:8; 2 Corinthians 8:1-7; 2 Corinthians 9:2-8).

MERCY: The ability to feel genuine empathy and compassion for individuals who suffer distressing physical, mental, or emotional problems, and to translate that compassion into cheerfully-done deeds which reflect Christ's love and alleviate the sufferings as well as motivate others to help (Matthew 9:35-36; Mark 9:41; 1 Thessalonians 5:14).

WISDOM: The ability to apply spiritual truth to a specific issue in a specifically relevant fashion, and to make proper choices in difficult situations, based on listening and sufficient information (Acts 6:3,10; 1 Corinthians 2:1-13; 12:8; James 1:5; 2 Peter 3:15).

KNOWLEDGE: The ability to bring truth to the body through a revelation or biblical insight (1 Corinthians 12:8; Mark 2:6-8; John 1:45-50).

ENCOURAGEMENT: The ability to minister words of encouragement, consolation, comfort, and motivation from God's Word to help others complete their tasks and be all that God want them to be (Acts 4:32-37; 14:22; Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 4:13; Hebrews 10:24.25).

TEACHING: The ability to employ a logical, systematic approach to Biblical study with power and conviction, then to communicate that information in a clear, concise way that is relevant to the health and ministry of the Body and its members in such a way that others will learn (Acts 18:24-28; 20:20-21; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-14).

PASTORING/SHEPHERDING: The ability to assume a long-term personal responsibility for the spiritual welfare of a group of Believers with love, care, discipleship, and counselling, moving them to a deeper spiritual connection and maturity with Christ (John 10:1-18; Ephesians 4:11-14; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; 1 Peter 5:1-3).

APOSTLESHIP: The ability to start and oversee the development of new churches or ministry structures. NB While the 'office' of apostle that the original disciples of Jesus held no longer exists, the 'role' of apostle continues today and functions through the spiritual gift of apostleship. (Acts 15:1-2; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Galatians 2:7-10; Ephesians 3:1-9; 4:11-14).

PROPHECY: The ability to reveal truth and proclaim it in a timely and relevant manner for understanding, correction, repentance or edification. There may be immediate or future implications. (Romans 12:6; 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 13:2; 2 Peter 1:19-21).

EVANGELISM: The ability to share and explain the Gospel message with unbelievers in such a way that men, women, boys and girls become Jesus' disciples and responsible members of the body of Christ (Acts 8:5-6; 8:26-40; 14:21; 21:8; Ephesians 4:11-14; 2 Timothy 4:5).

INTERCESSION: The ability to consistently pray on behalf of and for others, seeing frequent and specific results. (Romans 8:26-27; John 17:9-26; Luke 22:41f; Acts 12:12; Colossians 1:9-12; Colossians 4:12-13; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 5:14-16).

When someone becomes a Christian the Holy Spirit of God takes up residence in that person. The Holy Spirit does various jobs. He (NB not 'it') guarantees and assures us of our salvation. He comforts and guides us, enabling God's word in the Bible to come alive in our minds and hearts. He also equips us to play our part in the wider life of the church. He is **God's empowering presence** in the Christian and he gives us spiritual gifts (as the Apostle Paul puts it in Ephesians 4:11): *'to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the Body of Christ may be built up...'* A spiritual gift is different to a 'natural ability' in that a gift is especially empowered by God.

The church in Corinth were getting into a frightful mess because they were using spiritual gifts incorrectly. We see a similar issue in some churches today, but perhaps the greater issue for churches in Britain these days is that the gifts are not being used... and not even being taught about very much! A church works best when all the believers belonging to that church are using their God-given gifts in a loving and prayerful way.

So often in the life of a church, the right people can be doing the wrong job! That is, they are doing a job because years ago the vicar asked them to take on that responsibility even though they were not particularly gifted for it... or because no one else would do it! A healthy, vibrant church however has believers exercising ministries according to their God-given gifts. Yet, it is not just about **gifting**, but also **passion** and **calling**. When I'm pastoring someone who God may be calling to exercise some particular ministry in the life of the church I am seeking to discover five things...

1. If this person is genuinely converted. Do they love Jesus and truly know him as their Lord and Saviour.
2. If this person is seeking to live according to God's word in the Bible - NB none of us are perfect and we daily need God's grace.
3. If God is equipping this person for this ministry with appropriate spiritual **gifts**... even if that gifting may be there only in embryo right now.
4. If God is giving this person **passion** for this ministry... even though they may be a bit nervous about stepping up to that ministry right now!
5. If God is **calling** this person to this particular ministry... which needs to be discerned through prayer and consultation with others in the church, especially the leadership.

When Christ-followers are using their God-given gifts according to passion and calling then their ministries, indeed their lives, are energized and empowered and the Body of Christ is built up. Conversely, when Christ-followers are not using their God-given gifts, or are using them in the wrong way or in the wrong area of ministry in the church, they will be unfulfilled and frustrated.

Deane Parish Church needs to be increasingly a place where all believers are encouraged to use our God-given gifts... and very often it is others who spot gifting in us before we realize it ourselves!

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16-i-15

Discovering the gifts of the Holy Spirit

"Now about Spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be ignorant" (1 Corinthians 12:1)

Spiritual gifts are special abilities distributed by the Holy Spirit to every believer, according to God's design and grace, for the common good of the body of Christ. (Bruce Bugbee in 'What you do best in the body of Christ')

The following definitions of the Spiritual gifts are presented in no particular order and the list is not necessarily exhaustive. The Bible references given either describe the gift or give an example of it being used.

NB Some Christians only recognise the gifts of the Spirit listed by the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31 & Ephesians 4:11-13.

HELPS: The ability to invest the talents one has in the life and ministry of other members of the Body of Christ, enabling them to increase the effectiveness of their own Spiritual Gifts (Mark 15:40-41; Acts 9:36; Romans 16:1-2; 1 Corinthians 12:28).

LEADERSHIP: The ability to set goals in accordance with God's purpose for the future, and to communicate those goals to others in such a way that they voluntarily and harmoniously work together to accomplish those goals for the glory of God (Acts 15:7-11; Romans 12:8; 1 Timothy 5:17 Hebrews; 13:17).

HOSPITALITY: The ability to provide an open house and a warm welcome to those in need of food and lodging (Acts 16:14-15; Romans 12:9-13; 16:23 Hebrews 13:1-2; 1 Peter 4:9).

SERVICE: The ability 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 results (Acts 6:1-7; Romans 12:7; Galatians 6:2; 2 Timothy 1:16-18; Titus 3:14).

ADMINISTRATION: The ability to understand clearly the immediate and long-range goals of a particular unit of the Body of Christ and to devise and execute effective plans for the accomplishment of those goals (Luke 14:28-30; Acts 6:1-7; 1 Corinthians 12:28).

