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How do I discover my spiritual gift?

The question about discerning particular spiritual gifts is probably the primary question on many a Christian's mind. However, I want to propose that it is the wrong question. It is the wrong question because [as I have already argued](#), the lists are representative, not exhaustive. Consequently, any spiritual gifts inventory will be limiting.

Another reason this is the wrong question is because once we believe we have found the answer ("I have the gift of _____"), it will limit how, where and when we serve. For example, I may have the gift of teaching (so it has been affirmed by others), but that is not the limits of my service. Can you imagine if we were breaking down after a church-wide meal and other brothers were moving tables and chairs, then they looked at me to assist them, but I said, "Oh, I'm sorry. I'm THE teacher! That's my spiritual gift; I don't do tables and chairs." That would not be Christian; it would not be helpful; and I would not blame the guys throwing a few chairs in my direction.

The Right, Better Question: How can I serve the body?

We tend to get hung up on particular gifts. In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul broadens the categories of gifts under the umbrella the manifestation of the Spirit and argues that we manifest the Spirit when we serve one another in faith and in love ([1 Corinthians 12:7](#); [13:1-3](#)). Therefore, let us serve one another in faith and in love. How?

- 1. First, find out what help the body needs.** What are the biblical needs of any body? There are, of course, word ministry needs (preaching, teaching, etc. – [Ephesians 4:11](#)). There are also serving needs: widows, orphans, elderly, parents, children, single mothers, etc. ([1 Peter 4:10-11](#)). Ask the leadership of your church to find out what specific needs exist.
- 2. Once you see and begin to understand the needs of the body, PRAY!** Pray for the particular needs of the body (Ask the leadership how you can join them in praying for the needs of the body). Pray that the Lord of the harvest would raise up laborers. Pray that the leadership of the body would have wisdom in guiding these ministries. Then, ASK the Lord if He is calling you to serve in one of those areas.
- 3. Ask yourself, "What do I enjoy doing?"** Why do we think that doing the Lord's will has to be miserable? If the Spirit has gifted us, and if we are growing in grace, then we will enjoy serving the Lord and the body with these particular gifts. However, there may be areas of need that you may not be thrilled about (i.e., nursery) but that are important needs. The Lord may also have equipped you with certain capacities (i.e., accounting) that would serve the body well but which you may be reluctant to use because that is what you do all day, every day. Serve the body! Normally, it will be a delight!
- 4. Seek godly counsel – from elders (leaders), mentors, small group leaders, etc.** Mature Christians with whom you spend much time will be observing you and caring for you. They will be a valuable asset in either confirming or denying whether or not you have particular gifts in certain areas. Listen to them wisely.
- 5. Serve! Don't just sit there, do something!** Each of us is gifted for the common good; therefore, let us use our gifts ([1 Peter 4:10-11](#)). We don't have to wait until we have discovered our gifts to serve. Serve the church! As you are serving, you may even discover that you really enjoy it; the leaders in your church may confirm what they see; and you will have discovered one of the areas where the Spirit has equipped you to build up the body in love. Imagine that! You discovered your gift(s) while serving. Don't just sit there, do something! May the Lord deliver us from consumerism!

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