

Do You Flow in 1 of These 7 Motivational Gifts of the Spirit?

“Having gifts (faculties, talents, qualities) that differ according to the grace given us, let us use them: [He whose gift is] prophecy, [let him prophesy] according to the proportion of his faith; [he whose gift is] practical service, let him give himself to serving; he who teaches, to his teaching; he who exhorts (encourages), to his exhortation; he who contributes, let him do it in simplicity and liberality; he who gives aid and superintends, with zeal and singleness of mind; he who does acts of mercy, with genuine cheerfulness and joyful eagerness” (Rom. 12:6-8, AMP).

Charisma is the Greek word here, the same word used in 1 Peter 4:10. We believe this list is the category of gifts that Peter was referring to when he said we were to employ them to benefit one another. Notice the Romans passage urges us to use them. This verse is like a repetition, an echo of Peter’s statement.

This list of gifts is the focus of this book. These are the gifts we *possess*. These are the gifts that God has built into us and made part of us to be used for the benefit of others and for His glory. Like all the others, they are grace gifts. We do not deserve them. But because God loves us He gives them to us. Since they provide the motivating force for our lives, they have been called motivational gifts. They are the gifts that *shape our personalities*.

Because God has created us with free will, we can choose to use our motivational gifts appropriately, or we can choose to neglect them or even to abuse them. To be able to choose to use these gifts according to the will of God, it is important

to have some understanding of what they are and how they function. That will be our goal in the following pages.

Right now we will just touch on the seven gifts briefly by presenting the seven key words we have chosen to identify the various recipients.

1. *Perceiver*, one who clearly perceives the will of God. We have purposely chosen this word rather than the word "prophet" to avoid confusion, since the same root word is also used in the two other categories of gifts. Also, in today's culture the word "prophet" has rather ominous connotations.
2. *Server*, one who loves to serve others. Another appropriate word is "doer."
3. *Teacher*, one who loves to research and communicate truth. We almost selected the word "researcher," since that motivation is so strong.
4. *Exhorter*, one who loves to encourage others to live a victorious life. These are extremely positive people who can equally well be called "encouragers."
5. *Giver*, one who loves to give time, talent, energy and means to benefit others and advance the Gospel. Another word could be "contributor."
6. *Administrator*, one who loves to organize, lead or direct. Other words could be "facilitator" and "leader."
7. *Compassion person*, one who shows compassion, love and care to those in need. We say "compassion" instead of "mercy" since this word is more comprehensive in today's usage.

It is always important to look at any verses you plan to study in the context of the entire passage. In this case, we will focus briefly on the first five verses of Romans 12, the verses preceding the list of motivational gifts.

"I appeal to you therefore, brethren, and beg of you in view of [all] the mercies of God, to make a decisive dedication of

your bodies [presenting all your members and faculties] as a living sacrifice, holy (devoted, consecrated) and well pleasing to God, which is your reasonable (rational, intelligent) service and spiritual worship.

“Do not be conformed to this world (this age), [fashioned after and adapted to its external, superficial customs], but be transformed (changed) by the [entire] renewal of your mind [by its new ideals and its new attitude] so that you may prove [for yourselves] what is the good and acceptable and perfect will of God, even the thing which is good and acceptable and perfect [in His sight for you].

“For by the grace (unmerited favor of God) given to me I warn everyone among you not to estimate and think of himself more highly than he ought [not to have an exaggerated opinion of his own importance], but to rate his ability with sober judgment, each according to the degree of faith apportioned by God to him.

“For as in one physical body we have many parts (organs, members) and all of these parts do not have the same function or use.

“So we, numerous as we are, are one body in Christ (the Messiah) and individually we are parts one of another [mutually dependent on one another]” (Rom. 12:1-5).

In the first verse Paul, writing the Christians in Rome, states that all believers are to present themselves to God as living sacrifices. It is only by this wholehearted dedication that our motivational gifts can be used as they were intended.

In the second verse we learn that we need to have our minds renewed. How do we do this? By the Word of God. As we prayerfully read and study the Bible, it becomes a living, personalized revelation of God and our minds are cleansed and renewed. The key word “transformation” is the Greek word *metamorphosis*, which we also use to describe the process of a

caterpillar becoming a butterfly. Such is the power of God's Word.

In the third verse we learn that we are to have a right attitude about ourselves—gratefulness and humility rather than conceit, and an objective sense of value rather than self-abasement. And we also learn that each of us has been given a degree of faith that will allow us to operate effectively in our motivational gifts: The *perceiver* has faith that God will answer petitions; the *server* has faith that enables him to complete whatever task is started; the *teacher* has faith that she can ferret out the facts of any matter; the *exhorter* has faith that there is a solution to every problem; the *giver* has faith that God will supply all needs; the *administrator* has faith that any project can be accomplished if the right people are brought together to do it; and the *compassion person* has faith that he can help people work together in love.

In the fourth and fifth verses, we learn that we need to discern the various gifts in the Body of Christ and work together in mutual interdependence.

In this context we can see the importance of using our motivational gifts for the glory of God: This is the only way we will find fulfillment. These gifts—of which we have mostly been unaware—are the motivating forces of our lives, and unless they are channeled properly we cannot help but feel frustrated. But once we discover them, we discover a tremendous potential for happiness.

Don and Katie Fortune have developed and taught the “Discover Your God-Given Gifts” seminar for nearly 30 years, instructing Christians in the U.S. and around the world about their gifts. This article is an excerpt from their book *Discover Your God-Given Gifts*.