Spiritual Gifts Defined

Structure from *Fire and Wind* by Stan Jantz (Harvest House 2019)  
Definitions compiled from various sources

**Discerning Gifts: The Power to Know**

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| **GIFT** | **DEFINITION** | **REFERENCE(S)** | **NOTES** |
| Words of  Wisdom | To apply God’s Word/wisdom to a specific situation in such a way as to make spiritual truths relevant and practical. | 1 Corinthians 12:8  Read 1 Cor. 1:18-24, 30-31  Proverbs 9:10 | Greek word s*ophia*  Acts 6:10 – Stephen  1 Kings 4:29 - Solomon |
| Words of  Knowledge | Throughout church history, this gift has often been viewed as a teaching gift and connected with being able to understand scriptural truth. | 1 Corinthians 12:8; 13:2,9,12  See 1 Corinthians 8:2-3 2 Corinthians 10:5 Colossians 1:9-10 | Greek word *gnosis*  Some see this as a supernatural ability to have knowledge of something that would be impossible to know without divine revelation. |
| Discernment | To clearly distinguish truth from error by judging whether the behavior or teaching is from God or Satan. | 1 Corinthians 12:10 | Greek word *diakrino*  Similar to wisdom, by some definitions. |

**Dynamic Gifts: The Power to Do**

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| **GIFT** | **DEFINITION** | **REFERENCE(S)** | **NOTES** |
| Faith | To be confidently convinced of God’s power and promises to accomplish His will and purpose. To believe God for the miraculous. | 1 Corinthians 12:9, 13:2; James 5:15  see Mark 11:22c-23 (Jesus) | Greek word *pistis*  The word “confidence” literally means “with faith” |
| Miracles | To be enabled by God to perform actions which witnesses acknowledge are of supernatural origin. –  “A temporary suspension of the laws that govern this world as we commonly observe them.” – W.A. Criswell | 1 Corinthians 12:10, 28 | Greek word *dunamis* which means “power.” |
| Healing | A means through which God makes people whole physically, emotionally, mentally, or spiritually.  A.B. Simpson wrote this regarding his own healing: “I solemnly accept this truth as part of Thy Word…I take the Lord Jesus as my physical life…I solemnly agree to use this blessing for the glory of God, and the good of others, and to speak of it or minister in connection with it in any way in which God may call me or others may need me in the future.  *---- The Gospel of Healing* (Christian Publications, 1915) pages 162-163. | 1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30  See James 5:14-16  Instances of healing in Acts found in chapters 3,5,8,9, 19 and 28 | In Greek, this word is plural and suggests that different people have different healing gifts.   Some state that a person with the healing gift will not be able to heal at will, but only when God wills. For example: Paul was able to heal many people (Acts 14:10, 16:18, 19:12, 20:9-10), but was apparently unable to heal at other times (Philippians 2:26--27, 1 Timothy 5:23, 2 Timothy 4:20). |

**Discipling Gifts: The Power to Instruct**

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| **GIFT** | **DEFINITION** | **REFERENCE(S)** | **NOTES** |
| Apostleship | Greek apostolos means "a messenger, one sent forth with orders."  Narrow definition: Ones who have seen risen Christ and commissioned by Him.  Broader definition: Some consider the role of a missionary to be fulfilling an apostolic ministry. (see Romans 16:7) | 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11 | Some say this gift/office no longer exists. (Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, page 1031) |
| Pastor/ Shepherd | The gift to shepherd a local congre-gation. Leading, caring for, and spiritually protecting the “flock.” | Ephesians 4:11 | Greek word *poimen* = shepherd  English word “pastor” from Latin *pascere* which means “to feed” |
| Teaching | The ability to understand and then instruct others about the truths found in Scripture. | Romans 12:7,  1 Corinthians 12:8, 28 Ephesians 4:11 | Greek word *didaskolos*  This is Greek word for Hebrew “rabbi” and Aramaic “rabboni” |
| Exhortation  (Encouragement) | To come alongside others with words of consolation, comfort, encouragement, and counsel. | Romans 12:8  see Romans 12:1 | Greek word *parakalon*  In English there is a difference between exhortation and encourage-ment. See Acts 15:32 – translated as encouragement. |
| Evangelism | The gift to proclaim the Gospel to those who have not heard it before or heretofore have been unreceptive. Not just for the famous like Billy Graham. But for anyone with this gift to spread the Good News with fervor and conviction. | Ephesians 4:11  Note the list here: prophets-evangelists-shepherds-teachers | “Evangelizo” often translated as “preaching the gospel” So is this also a gift of preaching? (see notes in prophecy section below) |

**Disposition Gifts: The Power to Serve**

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| **GIFT** | **DEFINITION** | **REFERENCE(S)** | **NOTES** |
| Giving | To share what you have with sacrifice and generosity.  (See story of the widow: Mark 12:41-44) | Romans 12:8;  2 Corinthians 9:6-7 | “God loves a cheerful   giver.” 2 Cor 9:7 |
| Mercy | A gift of unusual sensitivity toward those who are suffering. To feel genuine sympathy and speak words of compassion. | Romans 12:8  See Matthew 18:33 | God had mercy on us –  2 Corinthians 4:1 |
| Serving | A gift to step into action and meet the needs of the church. Often behind the scenes. | Romans 12:7;  1 Corinthians 12:28-30 | Greek word *diakoinia*   (deacon)  Romans – Serving  Corinthians - Helping |
| Leadership/ Administration | God given ability to give direction and motivate others to accomplish goals. | Romans 12:8;  1 Corinthians 12:28 |  |

**Declaring Gifts: The Power to Say**

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| **GIFT** | **DEFINITION** | **REFERENCE(S)** | **NOTES** |
| Prophecy | To be gifted with a message of something that God reveals to the speaker that He wants delivered to His people. But not a “new” revelation to supplant scripture.  Could be a warning, an exhortation, or a revelation under the direction of the Holy Spirit.  A prayer by A.W. Tozer: Lord Jesus, I come to Thee for spiritual preparation. Lay Thy hand upon me. Anoint me with the oil of the New Testament prophet. Forbid that I should become a religious scribe and thus lose my prophetic calling. Save me from the curse that lies dark across the modern clergy, the curse of compromise, of imitation, of professionalism…Lay Thy terror upon me, O God, and drive me to the place of prayer where I may wrestle with principalities and powers and the rulers of the darkness of this world. | Romans 12:6,  1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:1-5, 29-33a; Ephesians 4:11  Warning:  Matthew 7:15 “Beware of false prophets…” | There is a difference between *forthtelling* and *foretelling*. Both can be “prophetic.”  Should be rigorously evaluated and tested by Scripture (see  1 Thessalonians 5:19-21)  Should be used to build up the church  (1 Corinthians 14:3)  Some define this gift as the one a pastor uses when delivering a sermon. But when Paul describes himself as a preacher (1 Tim 2:7 and 2 Tim 1:11) he uses the Greek word “keryx” or “herald” not the word for prophet. |
| Tongues | The gift to speak in a language unknown to the person speaking it so others can hear God’s truth in their language, for the benefit of others. | 1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:1-33a;  Acts 10:44-48 | Greek word *glossa* from which we have the term *glossolalia*  Some define this as a form of prayer. |
| Interpretation of Tongues | To translate the message of someone speaking in an unknown language. | 1 Corinthians 12:10,30 14:5,13,26-28 | Greek word *hermeneia* from which we get the word “hermeneutics” used as an academic term to describe the interpretation of scripture.  Interpretation is necessary if the church is to benefit.  (1 Corinthians 12:7, 13:1, 14:1-25) |