

## What Gifts Did You Get for Christmas?

How many of you got what you wanted for Christmas? Did you get something that will last a long time, or was it something that will either wear out or get broken rather quickly? What was the most valuable gift that you have ever gotten for Christmas? All these things are OK, but God tell us that He gives us gifts that are far more important than anything we could buy or make for someone. These are called “**Spiritual Gifts**”. These Spiritual Gifts are very important in the life of a Christian, but they can be confusing and hard to understand. I don’t pretend to know all the answers, but we will look at an overview of these gifts and how they apply to our daily lives. Before we get into the actual scripture, let’s look at what Paul was talking to the Church about, and how that applies to the subject of Spiritual Gifts. Back in 1 Cor. 11, Paul is discussing public worship. The things you do and things you don’t do. So with this in mind, look at 1 Cor, 12:1-7.

1. **Who gets Spiritual Gifts? 1 Cor. 12:7** This entire book is written to the early Christian church and therefore, it is written only to Christians. The first thing to understand about Spiritual Gifts is that you must be a Christian to receive a spiritual gift. God is not going to invest any spiritual gift or spiritual talent to anyone who is not a Christian. It wouldn’t do that person any good anyway. To understand spiritual things, you have to be spiritually minded. And God says that the “natural man is spiritually blind and can not understand spiritual things.” Christ must be in our lives to make us able to understand our Spiritual Gifts. Secondly, with God as our source of strength and the Holy Spirit as our power, we must also be humble in our attitude. **James 2:1** James knew that some of us would become very proud and let ego and self get in the way. Paul warns of the temptation to place one gift over another. Thirdly, we must accept whatever gift that God gives each of us with faith and humility. God has a plan and a part for each of us in His overall plan for life. Each part is important and each is needed to function as God intended.
2. **Why do I need to know what gift I have? 1 Cor. 12:1-3** Paul did not want us to be ignorant or unaware of the benefits nor the responsibilities of our spiritual gift. He reminds us that we were led astray by idols as pagans before we accepted Christ as Lord. He wants us to know who and what we are dealing with when we interact with other Christians. We would also be able to discern those who were false teachers and self-servers, from those who were really called of God.

3. ***How many gifts are there? 1 Cor. 12: 4-6*** God has given many different gifts to many different types of people. The one thing to always remember is that God never makes a mistake by giving a gift to the wrong person. We may feel that way, but it isn't true. God always gives to right gift to the right person, always. The important thing here is that all gifts are from God and therefore, they are all important. There are gifts of ministries and gifts of effects, as well as what we commonly call Spiritual Gifts. These are used by God to *"work all things in all people."* God does work all things together for good to them that are called according to His purpose."
4. ***What is the purpose of our spiritual gift? 1 Cor. 12:7*** God gives us our gift for the "common good." That is the common good of whom? Does that mean only me? Only Christians? Only my family? Look at ***Eph 4:11-13***. Paul says that all Spiritual Gifts are for *"the equipping of the saints for the work of service, and for the building up of the body of Christ."* That is the church. We are to help one another in an area where they are weak and we are strong. And we are to continue to do this until we *"all attain the unity of faith . . . and stature which is the fullness of Christ."* In other words, a very long time.

God gives us our gifts and they are free. We cannot work for them and nothing we do in our own strength will get us more or better gifts. God alone gives out His gifts. We must, however, recognize them and pray that God will use us in a special way in order to develop our gift for His honor and glory.