

MOTIVATIONAL GIFT DEFINITIONS

COMPASSION/MERCY: The gift of Compassion (or mercy) is the capacity to feel and express unusual compassion and sympathy for those in difficult or crisis situations and having the ability to “walk in their shoes” and feel the pain and burdens they are carrying. Those with this gift demonstrate genuine sensitivity to suffering. They are comfortable to serve in unsightly or difficult circumstances and bring love, grace and dignity to those whom they serve.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Has an ability to sense genuine love
Greater vulnerability to deeper and more frequent hurts from lack of love
Tendency to react harshly when intimate friends are rejected
Caring about the emotional state of a person more than the physical state
Often finds spending time with those who are suffering brings joy
Tendency to attract people who are having mental or emotional distress
Wanting to remove the causes of hurts rather than looking for the benefit from them

CAUTIONS OR MISUSES:

Overly sensitive, can be easily hurt by others unintentionally
Can tend to be non-confrontational, not addressing things when necessary
Caring may be misunderstood by the opposite sex
Difficulty accepting a sharp reprimand whether directed personally or toward someone else
Thinking with the heart can lead to indecision
Basing decision on emotions rather than reason
Cutting off fellowship with those who are insensitive to others

WAYS THIS GIFT MIGHT BE USED:

group leader | Frontline team | kids' ministry | prison ministry | homeless ministry |
counseling ministry | hospitality | visitations & follow-ups

BIBLICAL CHARACTERS:

Jesus, Rahab, Boaz, John

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

Luke 10:30-37; James 2:13; Romans 12:6-8

EXHORTATION: The gift of exhortation is also known as the gift of encouragement. Those with this gift are able to impart vision and direction and offer reassurance and affirmation to others in the body. They have a gift for speaking the truth in love and encouraging those who are going through difficult times. Exhorters are like glue in the body of Christ, helping to bring people together and to mold them into the mature, spiritual body that we call the church.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Has an interest in what the Bible says about life and how it can help solve problems
Motivated to urge people to their full spiritual maturity in Christ
Able to discern where a person is spiritually and speak on that level
Often sought out for advice and encouragement
Patient in dealing with those who are hurting and needy
A motivation to bring harmony between diverse groups of people
Encouraging and motivating others often takes place in a face to face context

CAUTIONS OR MISUSES:

Motivating people to get involved without following through on the project/idea themselves
May take away from family time to counsel others
Family and friends can be projects rather than persons
Sharing private illustrations without permission
Sometimes people depend on the exhorter instead of God
Trusting visible results rather than a changed heart
Neglecting emphasis on Biblical doctrine

WAYS THIS GIFT MIGHT BE USED:

Frontline team | kids' ministry | encouraging the pastors and key church leaders | affirming strengths/gifts of others | camp counselor | counseling

BIBLICAL CHARACTERS:

Barnabas, Paul

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

Acts 4:36-37; Acts 9:26-28; The Pauline Epistles

GIVING: Those with the gift of giving are empowered in a sensitive way to detect material or financial needs and to meet those needs with Spirit-inspired generosity. Recipients of help from those with this gift often have a clear sense that God has provided, not man. The body of Christ has its financiers and some of them will surprise you. Sometimes God uses people of great means and sometimes he uses a destitute widow.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Able to discern wise investments in order to have more money available to give away
A desire to give quietly without public notice
Motivated to give as unto the Lord at His promptings, not at man's appeals
Wanting to give gifts which are high quality
An ability to test faithfulness and wisdom by how people handle funds
Tendency to be frugal with finances and content with the basic necessities of life
Sees financial needs which others tend to overlook

CAUTIONS OR MISUSES:

Giving too sparingly to their own family, causing family to resent gifts to others
Listening to unscriptural counsel on money management when not grounded in the Word
Putting pressure on people who have less to give
Failure to recognize that everything proceeds from God, both the power to get wealth as well as the promptings of how and when to give it
Judging those who misuse funds rather than advising them
Controlling people or ministries by gifts or corrupting people by giving too much
Investing in projects because they have measurable outcomes but do not necessarily benefit the lives of people

WAYS THIS GIFT MIGHT BE USED:

Love in Action | financial team | budgeting | business administration | giving to special causes | regularly supporting a missionary or mission

BIBLICAL CHARACTERS:

Matthew, Barnabas

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

Matthew 2:11, 6:1-4, 27:57-60; Luke 5:27-32; Matthew 18:23-35; 1 Kings 17:7-24

LEADERSHIP: The spiritual gift of leadership is found in people who have a clear, significant vision from God and are able to communicate it publicly or privately in a way that influences others to pursue the vision. People with this gift: vision cast, present the “big picture”, model values, take responsibility, and establish goals. Leaders are capable of creating synergy, causing a group to do more together than they could individually.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Others have confidence in a leader’s ability to lead
Often enjoy being the “final voice” or take overall responsibility for direction of a group or organization
Generally thrives when given responsibility
Good networking abilities
Looked up to for input and direction in difficult situations
Tend to operate with a strong sense of destiny
Ability to communicate vision and establish goals that others want to get behind

CAUTIONS OR MISUSES:

May have trouble dealing with opposition
May become calloused due to constant criticism
Ignoring or neglecting family responsibility due to love of work
Not accepting correction or confrontation
Not staying involved in personal accountability, the Word, and prayer
Micromanaging instead of releasing responsibility to others
Not recognizing that relationship credibility takes time and is critical for leadership effectiveness

WAYS THIS GIFT MIGHT BE USED:

group leader | youth/college ministry | creator of a new ministry | lead a serving team

BIBLICAL CHARACTERS:

Moses, Joshua, David, Deborah, Peter, Jesus

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

Exodus 3-4; Joshua; 1 Samuel 16:1-13; Judges 4:1-10; John 21:15-23; Matthew 20:26-28

PROPHECY: Someone who has the gift of prophecy hears what God wants to say to or regarding individuals or a group of people with clarity, creativity, and power. When they speak, the goal is to bring comfort, encouragement, guidance and warning and to reveal sin in a way that leads to repentance and spiritual growth. Prophets have the ability to perceive the needs of others and offer scriptural answers which often fuels the fire of intercession. A person with the gift of prophecy may occupy the office of prophet or may minister without any recognized office or position in the church.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Outspoken; prophets often express thoughts and ideas verbally-especially regarding right and wrong

Amazing ability to sense when someone or something is not what it appears to be

Has a willingness to suffer for doing what is right

Very persuasive in defining what is right and/or wrong

Sees truth that others often fail to see and challenge them to respond.

Openness about faults and failures and honesty about themselves as well as others

Tendency to be impulsive in actions and wholeheartedly involved in whatever is done

CAUTIONS OR MISUSES:

Jumping to conclusions about words, actions, and motives

Judging and exposing a person rather than restoring him or her

Correcting people who are not their responsibility because they often feel responsible for everyone

Tendency to make quick judgments and to speak quickly

Dwelling on the negative rather than the positive

Tendency to be painfully direct when correcting friends

May have a hard time being wrong

WAYS THIS GIFT MIGHT BE USED:

prison ministry | kids' ministry | intercessory prayer team | Frontline team | Bible teaching | speaking | send a note of encouragement

BIBLICAL CHARACTERS:

Jeremiah, Isaiah, Jonah, Samuel, Peter

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

Jeremiah 1:1-10; Jonah; Acts 3:12, 5:3-10, 5:29-42; Mark 8:31-33

SERVING: Someone with the gift of service has the ability to do great and small tasks for the overall good of the body. Servants express the love of Christ by taking care of time-consuming or necessary tasks to free up others to minister more effectively. It is similar to the gift of helps, however, the tasks tend to be focused on the good of the whole, while helps focuses more on an individual's needs. Jesus exemplified the truest and highest form of servant leadership.

CHARACTERISTICS:

A joy of serving to free others up, it's not just a way to keep busy
May disregard personal health and comfort on behalf of others
Hard time saying no; therefore getting involved in too many things
Enjoyment of short range projects and frustration with long-term responsibilities
Knows there is eternal significance in performing mundane tasks and service
A strong desire to be with others, thus providing more serving opportunities
An ability to see practical needs and a desire to meet them

CAUTIONS OR MISUSES:

Neglect of home responsibilities to help others
Accept too many jobs at one time
Wearing themselves out physically
Not good at delegation
Offering premature help which interferes with God's discipline
Hurt by ungratefulness of those who were helped
Getting "side-tracked" while working on an assignment

WAYS THIS GIFT MIGHT BE USED:

Frontline team | media presentation | Vacation Bible School | maintenance | kids' ministry | cooking or serving food | helping with events | cleaning | work projects | office tasks

BIBLICAL CHARACTERS:

Timothy, Deacons in the book of Acts

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

Mark 10:43; Philippians 2:19-23; Acts 6:5; Hebrews 6:10

TEACHING: Teachers have the ability to understand and communicate God's Word clearly to others, thereby, helping to mature and equip the body of Christ. God gives teachers an eye for detail and truth and enables them to clarify the thoughts that thread themselves through the Word of God. Those who walk in a strong teaching gift tend to enjoy learning. A teacher will spend a lot of time in study, research, explanation, and communication of the truth.

CHARACTERISTICS:

Logical and accurate presenter of Truth; able to use a variety of ways to communicate the Word effectively

Strong convictions based on solid research; given to careful study of the Word of God

Has an extensive vocabulary

A need to validate truth and certify statements that have been made by others

A delight in researching and reporting on as many facts on a subject as possible

Enjoys study and research and are good at helping others study the Bible

An alertness to factual details which are not noticed or mentioned by others

CAUTIONS OR MISUSES:

Giving information that lacks practical application

Can neglect application in exchange for information download

Slow to accept views of others; can be skeptical of other teachers

Can become prideful of their knowledge, despising practical wisdom of uneducated people

May be legalistic and dogmatic

Boring listeners with details of research

Dependency on human reasoning rather than the Holy Spirit's teaching

WAYS THIS GIFT MIGHT BE USED:

kids' ministry | group leader | Bible study leader | training new volunteers | curriculum development | mentor | tutor a student | teach a life skill

BIBLICAL CHARACTERS:

Paul, Luke, Timothy

BIBLICAL REFERENCES:

2 Timothy 2:2; 1 Corinthians 12:28



For we are

God's

handiwork

created in Christ Jesus

to do

good works

which God prepared
in advance for us to do.

- Ephesians 2:10