

(The following material is taken from Bugbee, Bruce and Cousins, Don, *Network, Revised Participant's Guide*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005. 73-95.)

ADMINISTRATION

Literal Meaning: To pilot or steer a ship

Description: The gift of Administration is the divine enablement to understand what makes an organization function, and the special ability to plan and execute procedures that accomplish the goals of the ministry.

Distinctives:

- Develop strategies or plans to reach identified goals
- Assist ministries to become more effective and efficient
- Create order out of organizational chaos
- Manage or coordinate a variety of responsibilities to accomplish a task
- Organize people, tasks, or events

Traits:

- Thorough
- Objective
- Responsible
- Organized
- Goal-orientated
- Efficient
- Conscientious

References: 1 Cor. 12:28, Acts 6:1-7, Ex. 18:13-26

Cautions:

- Need to be open to adjusting their plans, so that they don't stifle a leader's vision
- Could use people simply to accomplish goals without being concerned for their growth in the process
- Could fail to see God's purposes being fulfilled in the process of meeting a goal

CRAFTSMANSHIP

Literal Meaning: To craft, design, build

Description: The gift of Craftsmanship is the divine enablement to creatively design and/or construct items to be used for ministry.

Distinctives:

- Work with wood, cloth, paints, metal, glass and other raw materials
- Make things that increase the effectiveness of others' ministries
- Enjoy serving with their hands to meet tangible needs
- Work with different kinds of tools and are skilled with their hands

Traits:

- Creative
- Designer
- Handy
- Resourceful
- Practical
- Behind-the-scenes
- Helpful

Cautions:

- Could fail to see that their gift is significant and one that makes a spiritual contribution to the body
- Could use people to get things done instead of helping them grow in the process
- Should remember that the things they produce are just a means to the end and not the end itself.

References: Exodus 31:3; 35:31-35; Acts 9:36-39; 2 Kings 22:5-6

CREATIVE COMMUNICATION

Literal Meaning: To communicate artistically

Description: The gift of Creative Communication is the divine enablement to communicate God's truth through a variety of art forms.

Distinctives:

- Use the arts to communicate God's truth
- Develop and use artistic skills such as drama, writing, art, music, etc.
- Use variety and creativity to captivate people and cause them to consider Christ's message
- Challenge people's perspective of God through various forms of the arts
- Demonstrate fresh ways to express the Lord's ministry and message

Traits:

- Expressive
- Imaginative
- Idea-oriented
- Artistic
- Creative
- Unconventional
- Sensitive

Cautions:

- Need to remember that art is not for art's sake, but it's to glorify God and edify others
- Could find evaluation and constructive criticism difficult to accept
- Might be uncooperative (because of ego, pride or individualism) and need to work at being a team player

References: Psalms 150:3-5; 2 Samuel 6:14-15; Mark 4:2, 33

DISCERNMENT

Literal Meaning: To separate or make a distinction, differentiate

Description: The gift of Discernment is the divine enablement to distinguish between truth and error. It is able to discern the spirits, differentiating between good and evil, right and wrong.

Distinctives:

- Distinguish truth from error, right from wrong, pure motives from impure
- Identify deception in others with accuracy and appropriateness
- Determine whether a word attributed to God is authentic
- Recognize inconsistencies in a teaching, prophetic message or interpretation
- Are able to sense the presence of evil

Traits:

- Perceptive
- Insightful
- Sensitive
- Intuitive
- Decisive
- Challenging
- Truthful

Cautions:

- May struggle with how to express their perceptions, feelings or insights
- Could be harsh when confronting others, instead of speaking the truth in love
- Need to confirm their perceptions before speaking

References: 1 Cor. 12:10, Acts 5:1-4, Matt, 16:21-23

ENCOURAGEMENT

Literal Meaning: To come along side of

Description: The gift of Encouragement is the divine enablement to present truth so as to strengthen, comfort, or urge to action those who are discouraged or wavering in their faith.

Distinctives:

- Come to the side of those who are discouraged to strengthen and reassure them
- Challenge, comfort, or confront others to trust and hope in the promises of God
- Urge others to action by applying biblical truth
- Motivate others to grow
- Emphasize God's promises and to have confidence in his will

Traits:

- Positive
- Motivating
- Challenging
- Affirming
- Reassuring
- Supportive
- Trustworthy

Cautions:

- Can sometimes be overly optimistic, too simplistic or flattering
- Should first take time to understand where others are and what they really need
- May want to just say "positive" things to others and avoid being confrontational when it's needed

References: Rom. 12:8, Acts 11:22-24, Acts 15:30-32

EVANGELISM

Literal Meaning: To bring good news

Description: The gift of Evangelism is the divine enablement to effectively communicate the gospel to unbelievers so they respond in faith and move toward discipleship.

Distinctives:

- Communicate the message of Christ with clarity and conviction
- Seek out opportunities to talk to unbelievers about spiritual matters
- Challenge unbelievers to faith and to become fully devoted followers of Christ
- Adapt their presentation of the gospel to connect with the individual's needs
- Seek opportunities to build relationships with unbelievers

Traits:

- Sincere
- Candid
- Respected
- Influential
- Spiritual
- Confident
- Commitment-orientated

Cautions:

- Need to Remember the Holy Spirit, not guilt, is the motivator in a person's decision for Christ
- Should avoid becoming critical of others by remembering that we are all "witnesses," but we are not all "evangelists"
- Need to listen carefully, because the same approach is not appropriate for everyone

References: Eph. 4:11, Acts 8:26-40, Luke 19:1-10

FAITH

Literal Meaning: To trust, have confidence, believe

Description: The gift of faith is the divine enablement to act on God's promises with confidence and unwavering belief in God's ability to fulfill his purposes.

Distinctives:

- Believe the promises of God and inspire others to do the same
- Act in complete confidence of God's ability to overcome obstacles
- Demonstrate an attitude of trust in God's will and his promises
- Advance the cause of Christ because they go forward when others will not
- Ask God for what is needed and trust him for his provision

Traits:

- Prayerful
- Optimistic
- Trusting
- Assured
- Positive
- Inspiring
- Hopeful

References: 1 Cor. 12:9, 13:2, Heb. 11:1, Rom. 4:18-21

Cautions:

- Need to act on their faith
- Should remember that those who speak with reason and desire to plan do not necessarily lack faith
- Should listen to and consider the counsel of wise and spirit-filled believers

GIVING

Literal Meaning: To give part of, share

Description: The gift of Giving is the divine enablement to contribute money and resources to the work of the Lord with cheerfulness and liberality. Do not ask “How much money do I need to give to God?” but, “How much money do I need to live on?”

Distinctives:

- Manage their finances and limit their lifestyle in order to give as much of their resources as possible
- Support the work of ministry with sacrificial gifts to advance the Kingdom
- Meet tangible needs that enable spiritual growth to occur
- Provide resources, generously and cheerfully, trusting God for His provision
- May have a special ability to make money so that they may use it to further God’s work

Traits:

- Stewardship-orientated
- Responsible
- Resourceful
- Charitable
- Trust in God
- Disciplined

References: Rom. 12:8, 2 Cor. 6:8, Luke 21:1-4

Cautions:

- Need to esteem their gift, remembering that giving money and resources is a spiritual contribution to the body of Christ
- Need to remember the church’s agenda is determined by leaders, not by the giver’s gift
- Need to guard against greed

HELPS

Literal Meaning: To take the place of someone

Description: The gift of Helps is the divine enablement to accomplish practical and necessary tasks which free-up, support, and meet the needs of others.

Distinctives:

- Serve behind the scenes wherever needed to support the gifts and ministries of others
- See the tangible and practical things to be done and enjoy doing them
- Sense God’s purpose and pleasure in meeting everyday responsibilities
- Attach spiritual value to practical service
- Enjoy knowing that they are freeing up others to do what God has called them to do

Traits:

- Available
- Willing
- Helpful
- Reliable
- Loyal
- Dependable
- Whatever-it-takes attitude

References: 1 Cor. 12:28, Rom. 12:7, Acts 6:1-4, Rom. 16:1-2

Cautions:

- Need to esteem their gift, remembering that doing practical deeds is a spiritual contribution to the body of Christ
- Find it difficult to say “no”
- Need to be responsive to the priorities of leadership instead of setting either own agendas

HOSPITALITY

Literal Meaning: To love strangers

Description: The gift of Hospitality is the divine enablement to care for people by providing fellowship, food, and shelter.

Distinctives:

- Provide an environment where people feel valued and cared for
- Meet new people and help them feel welcomed
- Create a safe and comfortable setting where relationships can develop
- Seek ways to connect people together into meaningful relationships
- Set people at ease in unfamiliar surroundings

Traits:

- Friendly
- Gracious
- Inviting
- Trusting
- Caring
- Responsive
- Warm
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Cautions:

- Should avoid viewing their gift as just “entertaining”
- Need to remember to ask God who He wants them to befriend and serve
- Should be careful not to cause stress in their own family when inviting others into their home

References: 1 Peter 4:9-10, Rom. 12:13, Heb. 13:1-2

INTERCESSION

Literal Meaning: To plead on behalf of someone, intercede

Description: The gift of Intercession is the divine enablement to consistently pray on behalf of and for others, seeing frequent and specific results.

Distinctives:

- Feel compelled to earnestly pray on behalf of someone or some cause
- Have a daily awareness of the spiritual battles being waged and pray
- Are convinced God moves in direct response to prayer
- Pray in response to the leading of the spirit, whether they understand it or not
- Exercise authority and power for the protection of others and the equipping of them to serve

Traits:

- Advocate
- Caring
- Sincere
- Peacemaker
- Trustworthy
- Burden-bearer
- Spiritually sensitive

Cautions:

- Should avoid feeling that their gift is not valued, by remembering that interceding for others is their ministry and spiritual contribution to the body of Christ
- Should avoid using prayer as an escape from fulfilling responsibilities
- Need to avoid a “holier than thou” attitude sometimes caused by extended times of prayer and spiritual intimacy with God

References: Rom. 8:26-27, John 17:9-26, 1 Tim. 2:P1-2, Col. 1:9-12, 4:12-13

WORD OF KNOWLEDGE

Literal Meaning: To know

Description: The gift of Knowledge is the divine enablement to bring truth to the body through a revelation or biblical insight.

Distinctives:

- Receive truth which enables them to better serve the body
- Search the scriptures for insight, understanding, and truth
- Have an unusual insight or understanding that serves the church
- Organize information for teaching and practical use
- Gain knowledge which was not attained by natural observation or means

Traits:

- Inquisitive
- Responsive
- Observant
- Insightful
- Reflective
- Studious
- Truthful

Cautions:

- Need to be careful of this gift leading to pride (“knowledge puffs up”)
- Should remember that it’s God message, not theirs, when they give a word of knowledge to the church
- Need to remember with the increasing of knowledge comes the increasing of pain

References: 1 Cor. 12:8, Mark 2:6-8, John 1:45-50

LEADERSHIP

Literal Meaning: To stand before

Description: The gift of Leadership is the divine enablement to cast vision, motivate, and direct people to harmoniously accomplish the purposes of God.

Distinctives:

- Provide direction for God’s people or ministry
- Motivate others to perform to the best of their abilities
- Present the “big picture” for others to see
- Model the values of ministry
- Take responsibility and establish goals

Traits:

- Influential
- Diligent
- Visionary
- Trustworthy
- Persuasive
- Motivating
- Goal-setting

Cautions:

- Should realize their relationship credibility takes time and is critical for leadership effectiveness
- Should remember that servant leadership is the biblical model, the greatest being the servant of all
- Do not need to be in a leadership “position” to use this gift

References: Rom 12:8, Heb. 13:17, Luke 22:25-26

MERCY

Literal Meaning: To have compassion

Description: The gift of Mercy is the divine enablement to cheerfully and practically help those who are suffering or are in need, compassion moved to action.

Distinctives:

- Focus upon alleviating the sources of pain or discomfort in suffering people
- Address the needs of the lonely and forgotten
- Express love, grace, and dignity to those facing hardships and crisis
- Serve in difficult or unsightly circumstances and do so cheerfully
- Concern themselves with individual or social issues that oppress people

Traits:

- Empathetic
- Caring
- Responsive
- Kind
- Compassionate
- Sensitive
- Burden-bearing

Cautions:

- Need to be aware that rescuing people from their pain may be hindering God’s work in them
- Need to guard against feeling “unappreciated,” since some of the people helped will not show or express any appreciation
- Should guard against becoming defensive and angry about the sources of other’s pain

References: Rom 12:8, Matt. 5:7, Mark 10:46-52, Luke 10:25-37

PROPHECY

Literal Meaning: To speak before

Description: The gift of Prophecy is the divine enablement to reveal truth and proclaim it in a timely and relevant manner for understanding, correction, repentance, or edification. There may be immediate or future implications.

Distinctives:

- Expose sin or deception in others for the purpose of reconciliation
- Speak a timely word from God causing conviction, repentance, and edification
- See truth that others often fail to see and challenge them to respond
- Warn of God’s judgment if there is no repentance
- Understand God’s heart and mind through experiences He takes them through

Traits:

- Discerning
- Compelling
- Uncompromising
- Outspoken
- Authoritative
- Convicting
- Confronting

Cautions:

- Need to be aware that listeners may reject the message if not spoken with love and compassion
- Need to avoid pride which can create a demanding or discouraging Spirit that hinders the gift
- Should remember that discernment and scripture must support and agree with each prophecy

References: Rom. 12:6, 1 Cor. 12:10, 28, 13:2, 2 Peter 1:19-21

SHEPHERDING

Literal Meaning: To shepherd a flock

Description: The gift of Shepherding is the divine enablement to nurture, care for, and guide people toward on-going spiritual maturity and becoming like Christ.

Distinctives:

- Take responsibility to nurture the whole person in their walk with God
- Provide guidance and oversight to a group of God's people
- Model with their life what it means to be a fully devoted follower of Jesus
- Establish trust and confidence through long-term relationships
- Lead and protect those within their span of care

Traits:

- Influencing
- Nurturing
- Guiding
- Discipline
- Protective
- Supportive
- Relational

Cautions:

- Should remember that God judges those who neglect or abuse their oversight responsibilities
- Need to be aware that the desire to feed and support others can make it difficult to say "no"
- Should realize that some of those being nurtured will grow beyond the shepherd's own ability and need to be freed to do so

References: Eph. 4:11-12, 1 Peter 5:1-4, John 10:1-18

TEACHING

Literal Meaning: To instruct

Description: The gift of Teaching is the divine enablement to understand, clearly explain, and apply the word of God, causing greater Christ-likeness in the lives of listeners

Distinctives:

- Communicate biblical truth that inspires greater obedience to the word
- Challenge listeners simply and practically with the truths of scripture
- Present the whole counsel of God for maximum life change
- Give attention to detail and accuracy
- Prepare through extended times of study and reflection

Traits:

- Disciplined
- Perceptive
- Teachable
- Authoritative
- Practical
- Analytical
- Articulate

References: Rom. 12:7, 1 Cor. 12:28-29, Acts 18:24-28, 2 Tim. 2:2

Cautions:

- Should avoid pride that may result from their “superior” Biblical knowledge and understanding
- Could become too detailed when teaching and fail to make life application
- Should remember that their spirituality is not measured by how much they know

WISDOM

Literal Meaning: To apply truth practically

Description: The gift of Wisdom is the divine enablement to apply spiritual truth effectively to meet a need in a specific situation.

Distinctives:

- Focus on the unseen consequences in determining the next steps to take
- Receive an understanding of what is necessary to meet the needs of the body
- Provide divinely given solutions in the midst of conflict and confusion
- Hear the Spirit provide direction for God’s best in a given situation
- Apply spiritual truth in specific and practical ways

Traits:

- Sensible
- Insightful
- Practical
- Wise
- Fair
- Experienced
- Common sense

Cautions:

- Could fail to share the wisdom that God has given them
- Need to avoid having others develop a dependence upon them, which may weaken their faith in God
- Need to be patient with others who do not have this gift

References: 1 Cor. 12:8, James 3:13-18, 1 Cor. 2:3-14, Jer. 9:23-24