

# lifetrak

AN ALL-IN ONE BIBLE STUDY RESOURCE FOR OLDER YOUTH LEADERS WITH INTERACTIVE CD-ROM

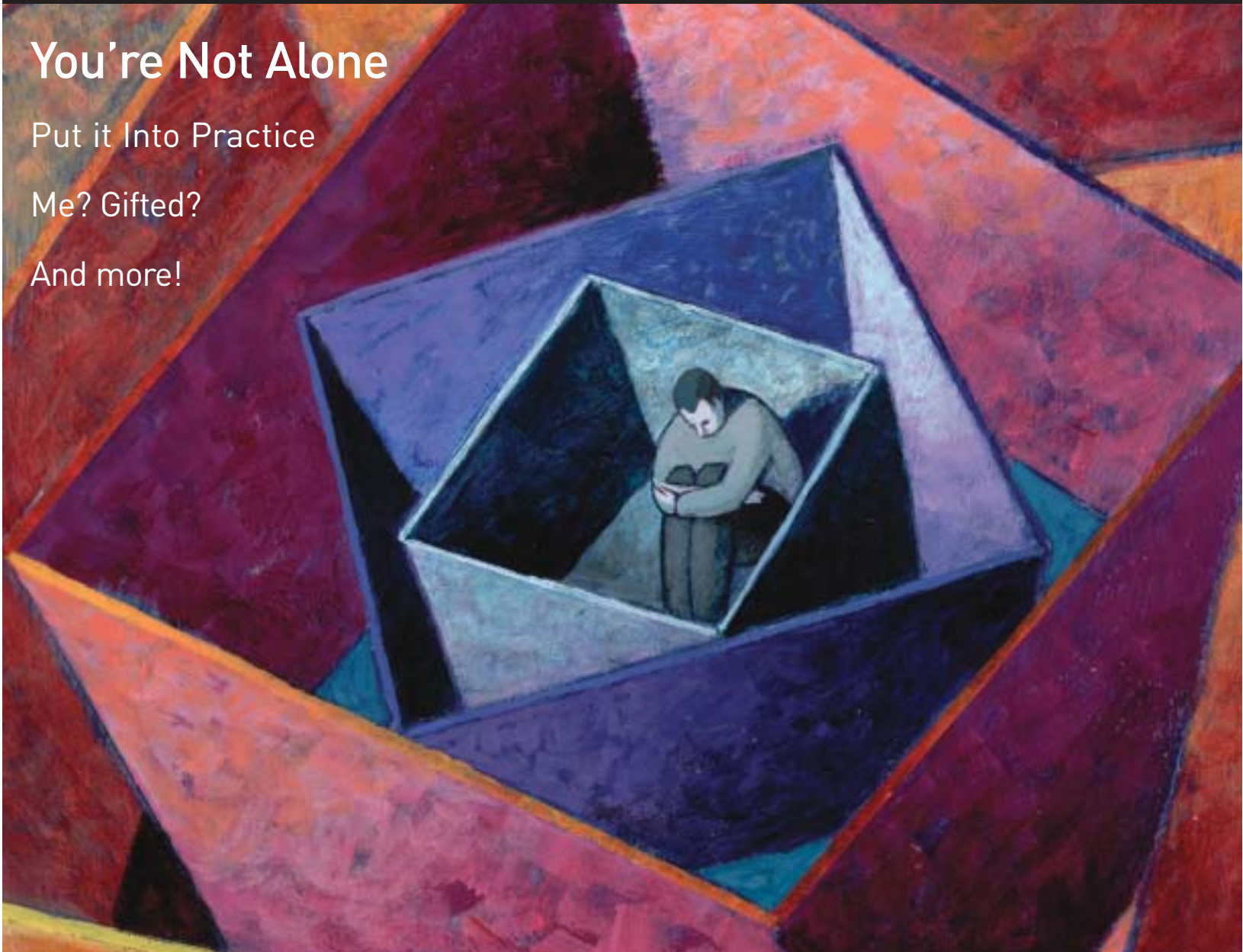
# 5.2

## You're Not Alone

Put it Into Practice

Me? Gifted?

And more!



older youth

# lifetrak contents

## 5.2

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# You've Got a Gift

## OVERVIEW

### LIFE QUESTION:

What are spiritual gifts?

### BIBLICAL TRUTH:

When you become a Christian, God gives you special gifts that enable you to serve Him and others in a powerful and unique way.

### BIBLE PASSAGE:

1 Corinthians 12:1-11,27-28

### KEY VERSE: 1 Corinthians 12:28

### BIBLICAL SETTING:

In the first letter to the Corinthians, Paul told the church that God has given believers spiritual gifts to glorify Him and build up the body of Christ.

### LIFE IMPACT: We will:

- Discover the different gifts God has given believers.
- Distinguish between spiritual gifts and natural talents.
- Examine our own lives to discover how God has gifted us.

## LEADERSHIP MEETING

Suggestions and ideas for a weekly leadership meeting:

### FOCUS ON THE MISSION

Organize a fellowship for the end of the month and invite a group of ministry leaders in your church to speak briefly about different ministry opportunities in which students could possibly use their newfound spiritual gifts.

### FOCUS ON RELATIONSHIPS

Invite teachers to share the spiritual gift(s) they believe God has given them and offer a spiritual gifts inventory to any teacher who is not sure what gift(s) God has given him or her. Affirm the spiritual gifts you have noticed in the teachers in the department and lead them to affirm each other in the same way.

### FOCUS ON BIBLE STUDY

Note that the activities "L.N.I." and "The Gifts" on page 14 can be used during a department time.

Lead teachers to offer definitions for the gifts listed in this week's Scripture passage. Discuss possible responses to students who might offer unique or controversial definitions for certain gifts.



## DEVELOPMENTAL LIFE ISSUE: SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Bible teaches that every believer is supernaturally gifted for service in the body of Christ. When the church grasps this truth and acts on it, effective ministry takes place. Teenagers can be a part of that effective ministry, but they need solid teaching concerning their spiritual gifts. This unit will guide older students to a basic understanding of spiritual gifts and will help them discover ways God has gifted them. It will also encourage them to use their spiritual giftedness in the work and ministry of the church.

This session will focus on five different words in 1 Corinthians 12 that help explain spiritual gifts, and then define each of the gifts listed in this passage of Scripture. This will springboard students into the process of identifying and recognizing their spiritual gifts.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-11,27-28. The following will help you better understand the passage.

### 12:1 KEY WORD #1: SPIRIT

Paul began this section of Scripture by referring to matters of the spirit (spiritual things—specifically spiritual gifts) to identify a shift in topics. Five key words found in the first seven verses help us define the spiritual gifts. The first word, “Spirit,” which identifies the Holy Spirit, is found clearly in verse 4. This word emphasizes the nature and origination of the gifts—God’s Holy Spirit. They have spiritual qualities or characteristics and are exercised under God’s leadership and power. This distinguishes gifts from natural talents or abilities. Natural talents, such as musical ability, are genetically inherited or can be acquired through discipline, patience, and hard work. On the other hand, spiritual gifts are given at one’s spiritual birth and they cannot be effective apart from God.

### 12:2-3 THE PAGAN INFLUENCE

Many believers in the Corinthian church had been involved in pagan religions prior to becoming Christians. The many emotional and bizarre practices of these pagan religions, such as ecstatic speech and hypnotic trances, continued to influence believers in Corinth and caused much confusion among the fellowship.

In verse 3, Paul rebuked the Corinthian believers for allowing someone to say, “Jesus is cursed,” and accepting it as appropriate spiritual behavior. He wanted them to understand the distinct line between the past where they had been led astray to worship powerless deities, and the present reality in which true, powerful worship expressions were prompted by the Holy Spirit.

### 12:4 KEY WORD #2: GIFTS

The second key word used to define spiritual gifts is the actual word “gifts.” It is translated from the same family of Greek words that mean *grace*. The emphasis here is that spiritual gifts are given freely by God to every believer. Spiritual gifts are not earned. Believers can do nothing to deserve or earn their gifts. Spiritual gifts are simply bestowed on the basis of God’s grace and sovereignty.

### 12:5 KEY WORD #3: SERVICE

Because the Corinthian believers valued some of the visible gifts more than others, spiritual pride resulted in some of those who possessed such highly visible gifts. The third key word in this passage speaks directly to this problem. Gifts are meant for humble service in the body of Christ, not for selfish gain or empty glory. The Greek word for “service” used in this verse is *diakonos*, from which we get our word *deacon*, and it simply means *to serve*. Granted, many spiritual gifts are more visible than others and others can see the results of such service. However, each spiritual gift is meant for serving

## RESPONSE QUESTIONS

**Key Word #2: Gifts:**  
How do you feel knowing that your spiritual gifts are an expression of God’s grace?

**Key Word #3: Service:**  
In what ways are you using your spiritual gift(s) to serve God in your church?

# prepare / PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

God and others in His name, regardless of whether or not a person receives any recognition or appreciation for exercising a spiritual gift.

## 12:6: KEY WORD #4: ACTIVE

The fourth key word points to the power behind spiritual gifts. The word “active” refers to God’s action in empowering believers in the use of their spiritual gifts. The Giver of spiritual gift is also the One who empowers the use of those gifts.

Spiritual gifts are bestowed and sustained by God. No matter how talented or naturally skilled someone might be, a spiritual gift cannot be effective when empowered by human power; God must direct and empower believers for service.

## 12:7 KEY WORD #5: MANIFESTATION

As stated earlier, some of the Corinthians were using their spiritual gifts to draw attention to themselves instead of God. Paul, however, made it clear that it was the Holy Spirit who was to be “manifested” to the world. His power and work was to be put on display.

The phrase “to produce what is beneficial” highlights the unselfish service aspect of spiritual gifts. They are not meant for personal gain or glory but for God’s glory and building up the church.

## 12:8 WISDOM AND KNOWLEDGE

In the early church, the gifts of wisdom and knowledge (especially knowledge) sometimes resulted in revelation from God that was written down for other believers to receive. However, since the Bible is complete, divine revelation of this type is no longer needed. In the church today, believers with the spiritual gift of knowledge have the supernatural ability to interpret the Scriptures and bring forth its truths. Those with the spiritual gift of wisdom have the ability to take those truths and apply them to practical Christian living.

## 12:9 GIFT OF FAITH

The gift of faith does not refer to saving faith, which every believer possesses. Rather, a person with the spiritual gift of faith has the supernatural ability to trust God and see the impossible take place. Many people with this gift are prayer warriors because they have such great faith in God’s ability to answer prayer and fulfill His promises.

## 12:9 GIFTS OF HEALING

In its most literal sense, the spiritual gift of healing is the supernatural ability to heal sick people in a miraculous way. We know this gift was present in the early church because the apostles miraculously healed. However, some scholars assert that this was a temporary gift given only to the early church, meaning the gift was present to help authenticate the gospel and establish the church. According to such scholars, once the church had been established, and the New Testament was complete, the gift ceased to exist. Most who contend that this gift is no longer present would assert strongly that God, responding to the prayers of His people, still heals miraculously.

## 12:10 GIFT OF MIRACLES

The gift of miracles is defined as the supernatural ability to do extraordinary things apart from healing. This would refer to a variety of supernatural powers such as the casting out of demons. The gift of miracles is considered by some to be temporary, like the gift of healing.

## 12:10 GIFT OF PROPHECY

Too often prophecy has been linked with “foretelling,” which is the supernatural ability to predict future events. Certainly some of this took place in the early church. More often, however, prophecy refers to “forthtelling,” or the ability to take the truth of God’s Word and apply its standards to the culture of today. There is

**Key Word #5: Manifestation:**  
How does the Holy Spirit direct you in using your spiritual gifts?

**Wisdom and Knowledge:**  
How have you benefitted from people having the gift of knowledge or wisdom?

**Gift of Miracles:**  
Think of some extraordinary things you have seen God accomplish. Thank Him for being an awesome and powerful God.

# prepare / PERSONAL BIBLE STUDY

a strong sense of accountability that goes along with the words of a person with the gift of prophecy.

## 12:10 DISTINGUISHING BETWEEN SPIRITS

The spiritual gift of “distinguishing between spirits” is most often referred to as the gift of discernment. It is the supernatural ability to clearly distinguish between what is true or counterfeit. This gift was critical to the early church since they did not have the New Testament Scriptures to use as a plumb line for a person’s teaching. Thus, the people with this gift would help the church discern the true character of individuals. Today, people with this gift are able to discern whether or not someone is being deceitful, deceptive, or dishonest.

## 12:10-11 GIFT OF LANGUAGES AND INTERPRETATION OF LANGUAGES

In the pagan religions of Paul’s day, the ecstatic experience was considered the highest form of spirituality. This belief crept into the Corinthian church and resulted in the gift of languages, or tongues, being considered a benchmark for spiritual superiority among some of the believers. This caused confusion and disorder in the church, which Paul sought to clear up in chapter 14.

The gift of languages today continues to bring confusion and controversy. There is disagreement about whether the gift of languages means the ability to speak in an unknown “spiritual” language and whether or not this gift is still used today.

It is not at all coincidental that Paul followed his listing of languages with an exhortation to remember the Source of spiritual gifts. Paul’s remarks in verse 11 reminded the Corinthian believers that it is the same Holy Spirit who dispenses spiritual gifts and determines who receives what gift. We are to seek God’s glory, not our own.

## 12:27-28 APOSTLES AND TEACHERS

Paul introduced a second list of gifts by mentioning three gifted offices in the church. “Apostles” were special leaders of the early church. Jesus called 12 men to be apostles; later, Matthias replaced Judas (Matt. 10:2-4; Acts 1:23-26). Paul was added as an apostle (1 Tim. 2:7), and then others such as Barnabas (Acts 14:14) and James (Gal. 1:19) were added.

This early group was not self-perpetuating, nor was there any record in the New Testament of an apostle being replaced. Thus, many people assert that “apostles” referred to a special group of New Testament believers only. Others in defense of modern-day apostles would point to the basic meaning of the word *apostle*, which simply means “one who is sent on a mission.” This could apply to those who are sent as missionaries.

Paul also listed prophets and teachers. In the New Testament, teachers instructed the church in doctrine and Christian principles. They did not give special revelation, but interpreted and taught the revelation to the church. Believers with this gift today continue to function in similar fashion, helping explain the Scripture to others.

## 12:28 HELPS AND MANAGING

The list of gifts concludes with only two gifts not previously mentioned by Paul in this passage. The first is the gift of helps. The person with this spiritual gift serves the church, mostly behind the scenes, in a variety of capacities and responsibilities.

The last spiritual gift Paul mentioned is managing. The Greek word refers to the pilot of a ship who steers the ship through danger. Those in the church with this gift have the supernatural capacity to lead the church to accomplish its mission in the world. This ability to lead and manage is seen in both small and large responsibilities within the church.

**Apostles and Teachers:**  
What godly teachers influenced your life?

How did they impact you?

Stop and ask God to help you be that kind of influence on the students you teach.

**Helps and Managing:**  
How have you been blessed because of someone with the gift of helps or managing?

# encounter / TEACHING PLAN

## L.N.I. (LEGAL NAME INVESTIGATION) (10 MIN.)

As students arrive, instruct them to write their initials on a sheet of colored paper and attach it to a focal wall. Direct them to guess the full names represented by each group of initials on the wall by writing their guesses on a blank sheet of paper. Encourage students to tell the story of how they received their names and what their names mean. Explain that just like our names were uniquely chosen for us when we were born, spiritual gifts are also uniquely chosen for us by God when we are spiritually born. Emphasize that spiritual gifts cannot be earned and that their purpose is to glorify God and build His church.

## SUPPLIES & RESOURCES

### L.N.I.

- Colored paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Paper
- Pencils

### THE GIFTS (Option)

- CD-ROM file "Match Game" (01match)
- Computer with monitor or TV/VCR and CD-ROM
- Candy prizes

### ONLY ONE POSSIBILITY

- Object for display
- Large sheets of paper

### PROVE YOUR THEORY

- \$20 bill

### IT HAPPENED LIKE THIS

- Handout 1a

### THE PRINT IS A MATCH

- Ink pad
- Index cards
- Alcohol wipes

### CRACK THE CODE

- Small posters, or print CD-ROM file "Gifts" (01gifts)
- CD-ROM file "Drawings" (01draw)

### CASE SOLVED

- Handout 1b

### INVENTORY THE EVIDENCE

- CD-ROM file "Gift Inventory" (01inv)

sheet of paper. Briefly discuss their lists and point out that the displayed object can be used to perform many creative functions by itself, but in order to operate as it was intended, it needs to be used in the context of a larger machine for which it was designed.

Lead students to read silently 1 Corinthians 12:7-11 and ask: **What does every gift in this passage have in common?** (*they're all given and empowered by the Holy Spirit*) Point out that spiritual gifts work the same way as the object you displayed earlier. In order for spiritual gifts to fulfill their design, God must empower them.

## PROVE YOUR THEORY (5 MIN.)

Display a \$20.00 bill. Instruct teens to touch it, pass it around, and return it to you. Ask: **How can you prove that this \$20.00 bill isn't a counterfeit?** Call on a student to read aloud 1 Corinthians 12:1-3. Ask: **How did Paul describe the pagan idols?** Explain the concerns of the Corinthian Christians regarding ecstatic speech and the pagan religious practices that surrounded them. Ask: **How can we know if a person demonstrating a spiritual gift is under the control of the Holy Spirit?** (*he or she will proclaim that Jesus is Lord and not curse Him*)

## IT HAPPENED LIKE THIS (10 MIN.)

Distribute copies of **handout 1a** and direct students to complete the activity "The Scene." After five minutes, instruct teens to compare their pictures with the pictures of other students. Ask: **What was the same in each picture? What looked different? Why?** Emphasize the uniqueness of each picture even though each one contained the same basic elements. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 and lead teens to discuss the similarities between the uniqueness of their pictures and this Scripture passage. Lead students to realize that God has uniquely gifted each of them, and that although someone else might have the same spiritual gift that they have, they are meant to

## THE GIFTS (Supplemental Option)

Use the multimedia game presentation "Match Game" (01match) on the CD-ROM to introduce this session. You will need a computer and a monitor or TV/VCR in order to play the game. To play the game, divide students into two teams. Instruct teams to match the definitions of each gift with its specific gift and then match an example of the gift in action with each of the spiritual gifts. Award a small candy prize to the team that correctly matches the most items.

## ONLY ONE POSSIBILITY (10 MIN.)

Lead youth to call out definitions for the term *spiritual gifts* and record their responses on a large sheet of paper. After several minutes, ask: **What is the difference between a spiritual gift and a natural talent or ability?** Explain that our natural talents and abilities can be inherited or acquired/learned through discipline and practice, whereas spiritual gifts can only be effective under God's power and are given by Him when a person becomes a Christian. Explain that spiritual gifts are seen in supernatural expressions. Display an object, such as a car part or a CD-ROM, that cannot operate by itself. Group students into two teams and direct each team to list as many possible uses for this item as they can in one minute on a large

function uniquely in the body of Christ. Ask: **What is the power source for spiritual gifts?**

### **THE PRINT IS A MATCH (Replacement Option)**

Instruct students to use an ink pad to place a thumb print on an index card. (Provide alcohol wipes to remove the ink.) Collect the cards, shuffle, and then redistribute the cards. Lead students to examine their thumb print and trade cards until they have their own thumbprint card. Ask: **How is your thumbprint different from others? How is it the same?** Call on a student to read aloud 1 Corinthians 12:4-6. After the reading, use the questions from “It Happened Like This” to guide a discussion of the passage.

### **CRACK THE CODE (15 MIN.)**

Before class, list each of the spiritual gifts on separate sheets of paper and attach them to a focal wall, leaving space above each poster for an additional, identical poster. You can print these posters from CD-ROM file “Gifts” (01gifts). Call on a student to re-read aloud 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, and 27-28. Group students into small teams and divide the gifts listed on the posters between the teams. Provide markers and a poster for each gift the teams have been assigned. Instruct teams to draw a picture or create a puzzle on each poster that defines one of their

team’s gifts; or use CD-ROM file “Drawings” (01draw). Gather the posters together and give each team’s posters to another team. Direct teams to attach each poster to the focal wall above the name of the gift it represents, then lead teams to explain any puzzling or unclear meanings in their drawings. Using information from “Personal Bible Study” on pp. 11-13, explain any additional characteristics of the gifts that may have been overlooked.

### **CASE SOLVED (10 MIN.)**

Direct students to complete “Follow the Evidence” on **handout 1a** and encourage them to spend time this week in prayer asking God to reveal their spiritual gifts to them. Emphasize the necessity of a personal relationship with Jesus as Savior and Lord in order to be given spiritual gifts. Close in prayer, asking God to reveal the unique ways He has gifted students for ministry. Distribute **handout 1b** as students leave.

### **INVENTORY THE EVIDENCE (Supplemental Option)**

Print and duplicate the spiritual gifts inventory from the CD-ROM (01inv) and provide a copy for each student. Direct students to complete the spiritual gifts inventory during the week to give them a possible idea of their spiritual gifts. Schedule a separate time to evaluate and discuss what the inventories revealed.

### **NOTES:**

## continue / AFTER THE SESSION

- If you don’t use the spiritual gifts inventory in this session, schedule another time to lead students through the inventory and discuss their findings.
- Lead students through *Serving God: Discovering & Using Your Spiritual Gifts* (Nashville: The Sampson Company, 1995).
- If you still have not taken a spiritual gifts inventory or are unsure of your own spiritual gifts, take time now to ask God to help you discover the incredible gifting He has personally and uniquely placed within you.



1 Corinthians 12:1-11,27-28

# You've Got a Gift

## THE SCENE

In the space below, draw a picture of an athlete just after practice. Don't forget to include the sports scene. Where is this person? What activity is illustrated? Who else is there?

## FOLLOW THE EVIDENCE

Answer the following questions honestly. These answers may help direct you to the spiritual gift(s) God has given you.

What things am I good at doing?

What do I like to do?

What are some of my talents and abilities?

What do others tell me I'm good at doing?

Where do I enjoy serving in the church?

What ministry or service projects have I enjoyed being a part of?

If I could spend one day doing anything, what would it be?

in-class handout

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# You've Got a Gift



Read the following Scripture passages.

- 1 Corinthians 12:8-10,28
- Romans 12:6-8
- Ephesians 4:11

List all of the spiritual gifts you find listed in these passages.

Next to each spiritual gift you listed, write a short definition for each gift (you may need to use a Bible dictionary). Next, list at least one person from the Bible who demonstrated the attributes of that gift. If possible, list the names of people in your church who seem to possess each of the spiritual gifts.

If your best friend was given this list of spiritual gifts, which gift(s) would he or she choose to describe you? Why?

Which gift(s) would your parents choose to describe you? Why?

If you have ever completed a Spiritual Gifts Inventory to discover your spiritual gift(s), what did you discover? Which spiritual gifts seem most likely to be seen in your life? (Note: If you have not completed a Spiritual Gifts Inventory, contact your teacher and ask him or her to provide you with a copy of the inventory that accompanies this session.)

Take some time this week to review your answers listed above and those from "Follow the Evidence" on the class handout. Pray, asking God to show you the special gifting He has given to you. Remember, He will reveal your gift(s) to you in His perfect timing. Be patient and don't give up searching as you wait for His answer.

Complete the following statement. After prayer and searching, I believe God has given me the gift(s) of:

Talk with your pastor, youth leader, or Bible study teacher to discover opportunities you might have at church to explore a variety of ministries and service to discover where your spiritual giftedness may lie.

**Life Question:**  
What are spiritual gifts?

**Bible Passage:**  
1 Corinthians 12:1-11,27-28

**Key Verse:**  
1 Corinthians 12:28

**Biblical Truth:**  
When you become a Christian, God gives you special gifts that enable you to serve Him and others in a powerful and unique way.

take-home handout