**TEACHING CLUSTER**

*This cluster is made up of two gifts.*

*(column 1)*

**1.** **THE GIFT OF KNOWLEDGE**

**Definition.**

Knowledge is the Spirit's gift to study and understand God's word and will—so that others are blessed.

**A Woman with the Gift of Knowledge**

* is able to mentally grasp how separate pieces of biblical information fit into the great themes of Scripture
* has a tendency to measure spiritual maturity on the basis of biblical knowledge
* is able to probe to deep levels on Bible topics
* enjoys answering and discussing Bible questions

**Visualize How Your Gift can be Used**

Give Bible studies; help with seminars; write on Bible topics; lay pastor; elder; women's ministries retreats.

**When the Gift is Misused**

The gift is short-circuited when "truth" becomes more important than the Lord Jesus; when knowledge is acquired but not applied or shared.

**2. THE GIFT OF TEACHING**

**Definition.**

Teaching is the Spirit's gift to live the gospel, to make truth plain, and to lead individuals into a closer relationship with Jesus.

**A Woman with the Gift of Teaching**

* cares a great deal about the accuracy of information
* can communicate well on the level of her listeners
* finds that Bible teachings come quickly to mind whenever she deals with a problem
* can foster much participation and interest in presenting a spiritual subject

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Sabbath School leader/teacher (in any division level); Pathfinders; youth activities leader; Women's Ministries retreats; Vacation Bible School leader/teacher; Branch Sabbath School leader/teacher; Bible study leader.

**When the Gift is Misdirected**

Teachers belie their trust when:

* they become impatient with slow learners or those who lack the knowledge of their teachers
* they trust more in the facts than in the compelling power of the Spirit
* they begin to trust so much in their fund of knowledge that they cease to prepare their lessons faithfully

**WORKSHEETS FOR TEACHING CLUSTER**

1. Go through each spiritual gift in the Teaching Cluster.

Help each member to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster

1. Questions for group discussion:

Some Christian teachers attract large and enthusiastic classes in church. Others find their classes soon dwindle and must either be closed or assigned to new teachers. How much of the difference can be attributed to a teacher’s style? How much to their knowledge? How much to their teaching skills? Which of these three is the most important to you as a Bible class member? Why?

Spiritual gifts are given to bless the church. In what ways would people with the gift of knowledge share their knowledge so it could be a blessing?

Could a Christian with the spiritual gift of teaching ever be a failure as a Bible class teacher? Why?

How does one with the gift of knowledge receive the knowledge? Is the gift the ability to study? Is it a gift to be organized in research? Or is it some "sixth sense" that recognizes truth and error? Explain.

It would appear that the gift of knowledge would especially help new believers. But do Christians, who have known the Lord for some time and have studied widely and understand the Bible well, have an equal need for the help of one with the gift of knowledge?

How should church administrators decide on the number of Bible classes, and thus class size, when there is a shortage of qualified teachers?

What purpose does the spiritual gift of knowledge serve? How can it be valuable to Women's Ministries?

**SHEPHERDING/EVANGELIZING CLUSTER**

*This cluster is made up of four gifts.*

*(column 2)*

**1. The Gift of Evangelism**

**Definition.**

Evangelism is the Spirit's gift to share the gospel, to invite people to commit themselves to the Lord, and to unite with the church.

**A Woman with the Gift of Evangelism**

* + is at ease asking people to make a decision for Christ.
  + experiences that others often ask her how to be a Christian.
  + can, through the Holy Spirit, lead people to a commitment to Jesus.
  + often is more interested in the end results of soul winning than in how people are led to decision.

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Personal ministries leader; give Bible studies; lead out in Bible-oriented seminars; church planting in new areas; prison ministry; branch Sabbath School (adult); Women's Ministries retreats; visiting; follow- up media interests.

**When the Gift is Misdirected**

In a desire for decisions, it is possible for Christians to use salesmanship techniques rather than depend on the influence of the Holy Spirit. A person with the gift of evangelism is irresponsible if no plans are made for the nurture of new converts.

**2. The Gift of Shepherding**

**Definition.**

Shepherding is the Spirit's gift to guide, protect, nurture, and feed the members of the church.

**A Woman with the Gift of Shepherding**

* is, or would like to be, spending much of her time nurturing church members rather than in outreach.
* is very concerned with promoting unity in her church and combating any element which threatens the unity.
* enjoys taking "newborn" Christians and seeing them through hardships, fear, or doubts.
* provides a calming, strengthening effect on those around her.

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Church nurture, visitation, single's ministry, Women's Ministries, study-group leader, hospital visitation, counseling, social committee.

**When the Gift is Misdirected**

Ezekiel 34:1-6 contains a scathing rebuke to shepherds of the sixth century B.C. who lived during the Babylonian captivity. According to this passage, shepherds abuse their calling when they:

* feed themselves but not the flock
* fail to care for the wounded sheep
* neglect the lost
* dominate the members (and thus promote dependency)
* fail to search for the wandering

**3. The Gift of Speaking Up For God**

**Definition**

Speaking up for God is the Spirit's gift to give instruction, encouragement, and comfort among the church family.

*(The King James Bible calls this gift "Prophesy." We need to be aware that Paul emphasized that this gift is given to lay people in local congregations and that it is a world apart from the colorful thundering prophets of the Old Testament. Roy Naden calls it "speaking up for God" which is faithful to Paul's definition of teaching, counseling, and comforting.)*

**A Woman with the Gift of Speaking Up for God**

* finds that people are motivated when she speaks
* speaks the truth forthrightly to improve a situation
* is able to apply Scripture to life in a clear, logical, and powerful way
* has the ability to exhort, teach, and console in her speaking

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Lay preacher/evangelist, elder, prison ministry, Women's Ministries, lead out in seminars.

**When the Gift is Misdirected**

The gift ceases to function according to the Bible's definition when those who claim to have this gift:

* speak contrary to the word of God
* claim an authority above the Bible
* disallow the Spirit to speak directly to and through other Christians

**4. The Gift of Cross-Cultural Ministry**

**Definition**

Cross-cultural ministry is the Spirit's gift to share the gospel in another country/or culture, joyfully accepting the major adjustment to a new location and lifestyle.

*(Migration patterns have introduced pockets of ethnicity to many cities. To reach these people with the gospel requires a cross-culture ministry.)*

**A Woman with the Gift of Cross-Cultural Ministry**

* will be happy to live in primitive circumstances as long as she can share the gospel
* feels comfortable with people who are racially and cultural different from herself
* can cope with separation from friends and family in order to share the gospel in another land
* is able to communicate well with people from all walks of life

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used:**

Student missionary committee, visitation committee, refugee aid, inner-city work, cross-culture evangelism, Women's Ministries.

**When the Gift is Misdirected:**

There have been instances in the past where missionaries have confused the gospel with culture and have tried not only to share the good news but to change the indigenous people into replicas of their "home" culture. In the first century A.D., the Jerusalem Council agreed on the inappropriateness of this confusion.

**WORKSHEET FOR SHEPHERDING/EVANGELIZING CLUSTER**

1. Go through each spiritual gift.

Help each member of the group to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster.

2. Questions for group discussion:

Church growth studies suggest that some ten percent of a local congregation will probably have the gift of evangelism. Are you aware that only about one tenth of your congregation is probably involved in outreach that leads people to accept the Lord and become members of the church?

To what degree do you think the nation's largest churches have grown through the ministry of gifted, trained, and expertly organized and motivated lay people with the gift of shepherding? How much growth would you say is due to the influence of a charismatic minister?

What are some methods being used successfully in outreach in your area? How can Women's Ministries become a successful outreach in your church through women with the gift of evangelism?

Is the cross-cultural ministry as necessary today as it was in the early Christian church or in the early days of world missions in the nineteenth century? What reasons could be suggested for indigenous leadership to take over administrative responsibilities and transfer Western missionaries out of foreign lands as quickly as possible? What reasons might caution against moving too fast in this direction?

Which do you see is the greatest need of your congregation?

* occasional visit from a professional evangelist?
* a year-round evangelistic program sponsored by your local church or a group of local churches?
* some combination of the above? Explain.

Is there any evidence that lay people with the gift of shepherding are presently ministering in your local congregation? If so, in what ways? If not, why?

Are there any attitudes that would need to be modified before someone who claims to have the gift of speaking up for God could be accepted to exercise it in your congregation?

**SUPPORTER CLUSTER**

This cluster is made up of five gifts.

(column 3)

**1. The Gift of Hospitality**

**Definition**

Hospitality is the Spirit's gift to reach out to others, especially strangers, in friendship. To provide an open house and a warm welcome for those in need of food and lodging.

**A Woman with the Gift of Hospitality**

* knows that it is more natural for her to meet people's immediate needs than to aid them in planning to meet long-term needs
* enjoys meeting strangers and having them in her home
* knows that people look forward to being part of gatherings in her home
* offers her home to meet the need of someone in need of lodging

Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used.

Hospitality coordinator/team leader, social committee, greeter, deaconess, singles’ ministries, Women's Ministries committee.

When the Gift is Misused

This gift is improperly used when we allow personal spiritual growth to slip because excessive amounts of time are spent being hospitable, or when members of the congregation unduly impose on those gifted with hospitality.

**2. The Gift of Support**

**Definition**

Support is the Spirit's gift to meet another's needs, to identify the unmet needs involved in a task related to God's work and to make use of available resources to meet those needs and help accomplish the desired goals.

**A Woman with the Gift of Support**

* is willing to cheerfully endure personal inconvenience to help meet a need
* would, when positions are assigned, rather help out somewhere else than be the leader
* is willing to use her natural talents (such as music, art, cooking) in any way she can serve the church
* is deeply impressed by texts about serving others and tends to become over-involved because of her convictions

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Deaconess, Women's Ministries, music committee, flower committee, church librarian or tape librarian, audio visual committee, publications/public relations, community service, ingatherer, homeless ministry.

**When the gift is misdirected**

Christians can retreat from the vital nurture of prayer, reading, and meditation claiming they are too busy doing things for the Lord. People in positions of responsibility can take advantage of subordinates by taking the credit for their work.

**3. The Gift of Giving**

**Definition**

Giving is the Spirit's gift to give generously and cheerfully to help those in need.

**A Woman with the Gift of Giving**

* finds that her gifts to others often are answers to specific prayers
* has the ability to make wise investments with the ultimate aim of sharing her gains
* is sensitive to the material needs of others and desire to meet those needs without publicity
* is able to give without expecting something in return and without insisting on determining how the gift is used

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Finance committee, student aid committee, Women's Ministries committee, Community Services board, Ingathering leader, Student Missionary committee.

**When the Gift is Misdirected**

Giving is thoroughly distorted when thought of as a payment for a better understanding with God. Givers should never become critical of others who do not give as generously as themselves. The gift of giving should never be associated with acquiring position or political favor.

**4. The Gift of Compassion**

**Definition**

Compassion is the Spirit's gift to feel genuine empathy to the feelings of others, both Christian and non-Christian, and helpful to their needs.

**A Woman with the Gift of Compassion**

* shares the experiences of people’s inward struggles, because they see her as sympathetic and understanding
* often lack firmness and decisiveness because she is sensitive about offending others
* is moved with compassion toward society's outcasts (such as drunks, mentally retarded)
* only condemns others if they are insensitive to personal needs

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used:**

Community services, student aid committee, poor fund committee, counseling, single mothers ministry, shut ins, prison ministry, the elderly in her church, Women's Ministries.

**When the Gift is Misdirected.**

The gift is misdirected when it is wasted on confident people, when it causes an attitude of superiority on the part of givers, or when it makes receivers think less of themselves.

**5. The Gift of Intercession**

**Definition**

Intercession is the Spirit's gift to devote much time to pray for the specific needs of others.

**A Woman with the Gift of Intercession**

* knows that her prayers are personal and to the point rather than impersonal and vague
* spends much of her prayer time in petition for the need of others
* knows numerous cases where her prayers have led to specific results
* knows that her communication with God involves the everyday details of living as well as the monumental decisions

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used.**

Hospital visitation, church nurture visitation, new project development, Women's Ministries, elder, prayer band leader, follow up media interest.

**When the Gift is Misdirected**

There is always the danger that intercessors:

* will ask for their own will, not God's
* will seek their own glory, not God's
* will demand rather than ask God to act

**WORKSHEET FOR SUPPORTER CLUSTER**

1. Go through each spiritual gift.

Help each member of the group to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster.

2. Questions for group discussion:

In what specific ways could the gift of hospitality become a blessing to your congregation in the area of nurture? In outreach to the community? In Women's Ministries?

Are you convinced that intercession makes a difference? How can you be sure? Do you think it affects the outcome of events if we do not pray for others? Why?

What tasks could be assigned to someone with the gift of support in your congregation to facilitate nurture and/or outreach?

In which ways can the gift of giving be valuable to Women's Ministries?

If no one is exercising the gift of compassion in your congregation, does it mean there is no need for this ministry? Or is it more likely that members have not yet become aware of their giftedness and/or the need? Should church administration get involved in such situations or leave it to the Holy Spirit to lead individuals into personal ministry?

Can you recall any contemporary experience where the gift of intercession made an important difference to the outcome of some situation?

How could the gift of support be facilitated in Women's Ministries?

Is the gift of giving mostly the ability to give donations, or the giving of oneself? Explain.

**COUNSELOR CLUSTER**

This cluster is made up of three gifts.

(column 4)

**1. The Gift of Insight**

**Definition**

Insight is the Spirit's gift to perceive people's needs and to minister effectively to them both for the growth of the person counseled or concerned and for the growth of the church as a whole. To be able to know with assurance whether certain behavior purported to be of God is in reality divine, human, or satanic.

**A Woman with the Gift of Insight**

* is able to assist others in determining spiritual problems
* her focus is on identifying problems rather than creating change
* can effectively choose or nominate church members for positions where they would serve well
* can correctly distinguish a spirit of truth from a spirit of error before that difference is apparent to others

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Elder, nominating committee, lay advisory committee, school board, membership committee.

**When the Gift is Misused**

The gift is inappropriately used when it leads to a perpetual suspicion of others, or when a spirit of superiority develops in the one who claims the gift.

**2. The Gift of Encouragement**

**Definition**

Encouragement is the Spirit's gift to give comfort and motivation, and to inspire people to live according to the Lord's will.

**A Woman with the Gift of Encouragement**

* finds it easy to genuinely comfort someone who is hurting
* can make effective appeals by publicly urging certain courses of action
* helps strengthen positive behavior rather than criticizing negative behavior
* is quick to encourage others

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Hospital visitation, church nurture visitation, prison ministry, Women's Ministries, counseling, ingathering leader, Youth Ministries.

**When the Gift is Misdirected**

This gift is inappropriately used if the counsel creates unhealthy dependencies. It is misuse of the gift to be more concerned with "setting people straight" than with lifting burdens and providing encouragement.

**3. The Gift of Wisdom**

**Definition**

Wisdom is the Spirit's gift to be perceptive, enabling practical counsel that facilitates an individual's growth, and promotes harmony among people. It is to know the mind of the Holy Spirit in such a way as to receive insight into how given knowledge may best be applied to specific needs arising in the Body of Christ.

**A Woman with the Gift of Wisdom**

* knows when to take an uncompromising stand and when to change a position
* can predict with excellent accuracy the long-term results of decisions
* can apply what she learns to practical life situations
* views all of life from a scriptural perspective

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Church board chairman, membership committee, elder, counseling, Women's Ministries, school board member.

**When the Gift is Falsely Claimed**

The givers of advice probably don't have this gift if they are more anxious to speak than to listen. Those not genuinely gifted will lead the church into courses of action that bring conflict and misunderstanding, and will harm the cause of Christ.

**WORKSHEET FOR COUNSELOR CLUSTER**

1. Go through each spiritual gift.

Help each member of the group to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster.

2. Questions for group discussion:

In what specific situations could the gift of wisdom be most beneficial to Women's Ministries? How could women receive the benefit of wise counsel in these situations?

We live in a time when it is commonplace to resort to legal action. Under what circumstances would it be appropriate to have someone with the gift of insight attempt to resolve a difference between two church members?

Can you relate an experience where the exercise of the gift of encouragement brought you a personal blessing?

Can you think of any circumstance when it would be best not to exercise the gift of insight?

How would you compare the reliability of counsel from someone who has the gift of wisdom with the recommendations of a church committee?

How could those with the gift of insight expect to exercise it to bless Women's Ministries?

What questions would be appropriate to ask someone gifted with encouragement? What questions would it be more appropriate to ask a psychologist or psychiatrist?

Is the gift of wisdom static, or does the gift expand with the individual's maturity and experience? How does your answer fit with the concept of a gift?

**LEADERSHIP CLUSTER**

This cluster is made up of three gifts.

(column 5)

**1. The Gift of Leadership**

**Definition**

Leadership is the Spirit's gift to lead a group or congregation in ways that bring growth and harmony.

**A Woman with the Gift of Leadership**

* accepts that people look to her when opinions are being sought
* tends to assume responsibility if no structured leadership exists
* feels confident to lead out in discussions, harmonize various points of view, draw conclusions, and delegate authority
* make sure that there is a good spirit of unity and enthusiasm when she is in charge

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Sabbath School superintendent, chairwoman of various boards and committees, pastor; elder, head deaconess, treasurer, youth ministries leader, Women's Ministries leader.

**When the Gift is Misdirected**

It is a tragedy when political considerations overshadow the Spirit's promoting. Some individuals when appointed to positions of leadership act as if their ideas are the only ones worth considering, and they impose these ideas on others. Leaders should be a little in front of their congregations, but not too far in front.

**2. The Gift of Administration**

**Definition**

Administration is the Spirit's gift to direct large areas of God's work in ways that inspire the members and bring progress and unity.

**A Woman with the Gift of Administration**

* is very conscious of efficiency and order (or lack of efficiency and order) within the church
* is organized in her personal life
* has the ability to see how elements fit into the overall picture and to work logically toward long-range goals
* is able to effectively delegate responsibility

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Church clerk, treasurer, nominating committee, social committee, Women's Ministries committee, church secretary, Sabbath School superintendent, publications/public relations, interest coordinator, committee evangelism chair.

**When the Gift is Misdirected**

Administrators misuse the gift God has given when they:

* become more concerned with power than dialogue
* are more apt to use psychological manipulation than the Spirit’s leading
* are more concerned about the organization than the people who constitute the organization

**3. The Gift of Faith**

**Definition**

Faith is the Spirit's gift to claim the promises of God and move ahead in confidence with plans for His kingdom.

**A Woman with the Gift of Faith**

* relies upon God for all her needs
* is often impatient with methodical, cautious thinking
* is convinced that seemingly impossible tasks can be accomplished
* sees hope in apparently hopeless situations

**Visualize How Your Gift Can Be Used**

Building committee, Women's Ministries committee, project development, nominating committee, school board, evangelism committee.

**When the Gift Is Misdirected**

Not all financial gifts are destined for projects inspired by God. Potential donors need to be sure the fundraiser is carrying out a plan of God and not fulfilling a dream of self-aggrandizement.

**WORKSHEET FOR LEADERSHIP CLUSTER**

1. Go through each special gift.

Help each member of the group to identify herself with one of the gifts in the cluster.

2. Questions for group discussion:

We tend to think that without strong leadership there would be no one to mediate, build, counsel, organize, inspire, and motivate. In other words, we could assume the local church would collapse without strong leadership. How likely is this to happen if other gifts such as faith, wisdom, encouragement, teaching, and shepherding are all present?

How do you relate to a person who claims to have a great idea for God's work (gift of faith), but whose idea the membership in general feels is quite inappropriate?

There seems to be a potential problem in the Bible's call for members to support a church administrator if the administrator rejects the instruction to be a servant. How would the church correct an abuse of this spiritual gift and at the same time maintain unity and harmony?

* Sign a petition to remove the person?
* Write a letter to the responsible board or committee?
* Appoint an experienced assistant administrator?
* Personally approach the one concerned?
* Other?

Considering the severe time demands of today's world is it likely a member can be an effective leader at home, in the business world, and in the church all at the same time?

Can you share an experience where the gift of administration has been a specific blessing to your congregation?

How would you compare the importance of a “goal” established in faith among a small group of believers with few resources, and a "goal" established in faith by a large congregation with many resources at their disposal?