

Spiritual Gifts or Super Powers

1 Corinthians 12:7-11 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

Acts 2:22 “Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know.

Mark 8:11-12 The Pharisees came and began to question Jesus. To test him, they asked him for a sign from heaven. He sighed deeply and said, “Why does this generation ask for a miraculous sign? I tell you the truth, no sign will be given to it.”

Acts 2:17-20 “ ‘In the last days, God says, “I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord.

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Everyone has pretended that they were a superhero.

Who is your favorite superhero?

What kind of super power did they have?

In many places the Bible says that the Holy Spirit gives people special abilities. From 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, what are some of these abilities?

Which do you think is the coolest power? _____

How do you get one of these powers? _____

Why is the gift given (verse 1)? _____

Jesus was a real Superman. What were some of the miracles he did?

In Acts 2:22, what is the reason He did these super things?

What happened when the Pharisees asked for a miracle (Mark 8:11-12)?

There is much controversy among church groups about how spiritual gifts are manifested today. The verses in Mark are frequently used to support those who feel that *miraculous* spiritual gifts are not currently active in the body of believers.

Read Acts 2:17-20. These verses do nothing to end the controversy as both sides claim we are either in the *last days* or we're not.

Spiritual Gift¹: a manifestation of the Holy Spirit enabling one to minister to the needs of Christ's body, the church.

When writing to the church in Corinth Paul sets the focus of spiritual gifts to be that of an aid to preserve our faith until judgment day. In 1 Corinthians 1:7 Paul

1 Corinthians 1:7-8 Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for our Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will keep you strong to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

says that we do not _____ any spiritual gift that we need to keep us strong. That does not mean that we *manifest* every spiritual gift ever mentioned. It means that we have all the spiritual gifts we need to keep our faith strong in our situation.

Matthew 21:21 Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, if you have faith and do not doubt, not only can you do what was done to the fig tree, but also you can say to this mountain, 'Go, throw yourself into the sea,' and it will be done.

Matthew 21:21 indicates that if you just have a strong enough _____ you can do anything. Some will tell you that it's your fault that you can't do anything, that your prayers aren't answered because you lack _____. However, the first verses we read (1 Corinthians 12:7-11) states that faith is a _____ and

1 Corinthians 1:7-8 says we don't lack any _____. There must be another reason we don't see any flying mountains.

Acts 5:12-16 The apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders among the people. And all the believers used to meet together in Solomon's Colonnade. No one else dared join them, even though they were highly regarded by the people. Nevertheless, more and more men and women believed in the Lord and were added to their number. As a result, people brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

The Apostles, in Acts 5:12-16, did many miracles. In view of Acts 2:22, why do you suppose they were able to?

This shows that the Holy Spirit enables people to have special abilities to advance the kingdom of God; to accredit prophets; and preserve faith.

Healings happened spontaneously when Peter's _____
There are no indications that we can learn these abilities or cause them to occur by our beckoning or the power of our prayers.

1 Corinthians 14:1 Follow the way of love and eagerly desire spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy.

What kind of miracles would you like to see? Why?

Have you ever considered it a miracle that anyone believes God or Jesus, or thinks about anyone other than themselves?

In 1 Corinthians 14:1 Paul says the best gift to have is: _____
Being able to bring the gospel message to a perishing world should be our greatest desire. How does it make you feel to know that God wants you to participate in His plan of salvation with Him?

¹ NIV Study Bible notes for 1 Corinthians 1:7

Lesson Plan: Spiritual Gifts or Super Powers

The Goal: The goal of this lesson is to give the kids an accurate overview of spiritual gifts and how the Holy Spirit uses them today.

Pre-Lesson Activity:

Give the Spiritual gifts questionnaire shown on my website. Most kids don't believe that they have any spiritual gifts. Boy are they shocked when they find out they already do. You can see their brains light up with possibilities of serving God and their church with their special gifts.

Leading the lesson: Search on-line for a picture of your favorite superhero to drop into the spaces provided on each page of the lesson plan.

Spend some time in prayer the day before, going over the verses and questions in your mind. Write possible answers on your copy of the worksheet along with additional notes of things you'd like to bring up.

If your group is younger junior-high age encourage them to fill in the blanks with the correct answers and hand in their papers at the end of class. For older kids, especially high-school age, just use the questions as discussion starters.

Have a kid read the first set of verses and then go thru the questions of the matching color. Give them time to answer. Listen to what they say and lead the discussion with additional questions of your own to lead them to the correct answers.

Note: When reading, kids will frequently stumble on words they do not know. Explain the meaning of the words so they can fully grasp the concept of the Bible verse. Sometimes you must restate the passage in your own words for them to get it.

Start out by discussing super powers. Next look at the spiritual gifts listed in the verses. There are 27 spiritual gifts described in the Bible. Some of them are pretty flashy. We look at the reasons these miraculous signs were present in the early church and why they aren't so much now. Philip Yancey, in his book, "Disappointment With God" reminds us that God's goal is to call us in to loving relationship with him. "He created us to love him, but his most impressive displays of miracle -the kind we may secretly long for- do nothing to foster that love."¹

The second page gives Paul's reasoning for the existence of spiritual gifts, that of keeping our faith strong. He also discusses their priority. Explain clearly that these special abilities are gifts. The Holy Spirit decides who gets them and when. It is never your lack of faith or your strength that cause God to act or not.

Summary:

Finally end by considering that it really is a miracle of the working of the Holy Spirit when people accept Christ as their savior. Discuss how their spiritual gift would help the church in it's mission to save the lost. Follow up by looking for ministries within the church where they might begin serving.

Take Prayer Requests

Always ask the kids for prayer requests for the next week. Ask them about their concerns from the previous week.

1 Philip Yancey, Disappointment With God, Harper Collins Publishers, copyright 1988, page 72.