

Responses from the Jewels of Quakerism Internet Survey

7-13-09 to 7-17-09

What are Spiritual Gifts?

Spiritual gifts are aptitudes and abilities related to our spiritual life together that are gifts of God rather than skills developed through our own efforts alone. Spiritual gifts may be developed through faithfulness in their exercise, and are supported by a life lived accountably to God and the faith community. There are several lists of spiritual gifts in Scripture, though since each list is different, it seems clear that all the lists are incomplete and spiritual gifts are more numerous than enumerated.

Lloyd Lee Wilson - Rich Square Monthly Meeting, NCYM(C)

Spiritual gifts are special talents given from God through disciples for building the body of Christ and his kingdom. Paul's first letter to the Corinthians has a lot about them: chapters 12 & 14.

Anonymous

Spiritual Gifts are Grace working in and through us: opportunities received by and in community which are grounded in love and given to the community through the embodiment and acceptance of the Grace working in individuals. They manifest in many forms, certainly those listed by Paul, but also in unusual forms, such as being willing to work through conflict, to not give up on others, to listen deeply, to speak truth clearly in love. They manifest through engagement: with pain, with joy, with compassion, with justice, with hospitality, with discernment, with commitment...

Lu from Rochester, NYYM

Spiritual gifts are abilities imparted to people through a work of the Holy Spirit. Paul listed the abilities to speak wisdom, to speak knowledge, faith, healing, working miracles, prophecy, discerning spirits, speaking in tongues and interpreting tongues. I've not grown up with these gifts, so I'd like to know more about speaking knowledge or wisdom.

I've noticed other spiritual gifts working in the meetings I've been part of. Such things as writing, hospitality or helping others feel comfortable in conversation are useful gifts and recognizable to contemporary Friends.

Jay Thatcher, Corvallis Friends Meeting, North Pacific YM

What are some ways that you experience the movement of Spirit in/with other people?

There is a sense of Presence in words and deeds of other people when the Holy Spirit is active in the moment. That sounds tautological, but that's the way it is...

Lloyd Lee Wilson - Rich Square Monthly Meeting, NCYM(C)

One way is through deep and sacred listening. Another is when a person speaks to my condition in a way that I am not expecting and in a way that opens me more fully to God. Certainly when I experience the fruits and gifts of the Spirit (as named in scripture as well as others), that witnesses to the movement of the Spirit. When what others do and/or say points Godward, that is a manifestation of the movement of the Spirit. Also, when someone remains deeply grounded in God as they do the work they feel called to.

Mary Kay Glazer, Ticonderoga NY Quaker Worship Group

Opening the scriptures - showing me how scriptures say something about who God is and how to live in truth.

Praying with/for me and others.

Showing compassion to the poor and oppressed.

Preaching the gospel.

Anonymous

Groundedness, healing, commitment, compassion, being present, insight, discernment, prophetic vision, inner authority, truth speaking...

Deep connection between individuals that is wordless, felt on the spiritual level.

Lu from Rochester, NYYM

When I'm open and receptive to God I can notice the Spirit nudging (or dragging) me to do things in certain ways and can learn from events or others the truth they have to teach me.

Sometimes I'm only open to understanding the life lessons later, in my reflections on the day. Often this understanding comes as I perceive the mistakes I've made in the situation.

Jay Thatcher, Corvallis Friends Meeting, North Pacific YM

How would you describe what Ministry is?

It seems to me that we all have a spiritual vocation. In that context, Ministry (capital M) is the dedication of of one's time and energy to the exercise and development of that vocation. This includes dedicating one's life to being available for the Ministry, and living one's life so that nothing interferes with that vocation - whether busy-ness or distracting influences and activities. Ministry involves allowing God to equip and enable us to carry out our vocation, and then saying Yes when the opportunity to carry out our vocation presents itself.

Lloyd Lee Wilson - Rich Square Monthly Meeting, NCYM(C)

Ministry is how God/Spirit works through us and others to open us into deeper relationship with God, and with one another in Love/God.

Mary Kay Glazer, Ticonderoga NY Quaker Worship Group

doing god's work; living in Christ, serving any and all of god's people

Anonymous

Being a channel for Spirit to move through us.

Lu from Rochester, NYYM

Ministry is being a channel so God can meet the needs of other people. My sense is that those needs are first in time and importance, followed by the working of the Lord. The actions of the minister are defined by the first two factors.

Jay Thatcher, Corvallis Friends Meeting, North Pacific YM