

How Can I Find Out If I Have the Gift of Teaching?

1. Take a spiritual gift inventory

Taking a spiritual gift inventory can help you discover the gift or gifts that God has given to you. There are many available, both commercially and on-line. There are many free resources on line that can be used for this purpose. One word of caution: Spiritual gift inventories are not the final authority. They merely provide clues to your spiritual gift. The main way to find out if you have the gift of teaching is to TEACH. There is no other substitute. Learning about something and doing the same thing requires a whole different set of skills. For example: You can know all the skills about drawing and painting and still not be a good artist.

2. You will have a desire to teach

If you have the gift of teaching, you will usually have a desire to teach. God places in us a desire to use the spiritual gift that He supplies. This does not mean, however, that someone who has the gift of teaching will not get tired, nor always feel like teaching. God requires our service to be done in faithfulness regardless of our feelings. It is very important for the teacher to be under someone else's teaching. Unless you are being fed, it is difficult to keep feeding others. For this reason it is also important for the teacher to be studying the Word of God and to maintain a close walk with God.

3. You will receive ability from God

If you have the gift of teaching, it may or may not be related to your occupation or training that you have received. God gives a special ability to understand and explain scriptures to those who have the gift of teaching. The gift of teaching and the ability God gives may be in differing amounts and for various uses. We should not compare ourselves with others who have this gift.

I Corinthians 4:1-7

¹ Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy. ³ But to me it is a very small thing that I may be examined by you, or by *any* human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. ⁴ For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but the one who examines me is the Lord. ⁵ Therefore do not go on passing judgment before the time, *but wait* until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of *men's* hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

⁶ Now these things, brethren, I have figuratively applied to myself and Apollos for your sakes, so that in us you may learn not to exceed what is written, so that no one of you will become arrogant in behalf of one against the other. ⁷ For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

II Corinthians 10:12

For we are not bold to class or compare ourselves with some of those who commend themselves; but when they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are without understanding.

The gift of teaching will need to be developed and honed. A person with the gift of teaching cannot expect to walk into a classroom and be a master teacher for God. You will grow and learn in your teaching. You will also make mistakes. The important thing is to recognize that any good that comes from your teaching is due to God. He must get the credit.

4. You will have a burden to teach

A burden to teach is slightly different than a desire to teach. A burden for something means that God gives you a feeling that you must do something. An evangelist has a burden for the unsaved, although every believer should feel that to some degree. A person with the gift of teaching will have a burden to teach and make use of the gift. The apostle Paul calls this an obligation in Romans 1:13-15

¹³ I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that often I have planned to come to you (and have been prevented so far) so that I may obtain some fruit among you also, even as among the rest of the Gentiles. ¹⁴ I am under obligation both to Greeks and to barbarians, both to the wise and to the foolish. ¹⁵ So, for my part, I am eager to preach the gospel to you also who are in Rome.

5. You will receive confirmation from other believers

Once in a while, a person who is given the gift of teaching will be told by other believers that they should be a teacher. You should pay attention to this. It may mean nothing or it may be a confirmation from God that you should teach. More often, a person will be asked to teach because there is a lack of teachers in the church. This in itself is not an indication that you have the gift of teaching. In either of these cases, you should commit this to prayer seeking God's will and direction in your life. Many times people initially react negatively and never give this to prayer.

If you are teaching, do not expect to hear people confirm that gift frequently. People are notorious for not encouraging one another as the scriptures urge us to do. If you are teaching children, you may not receive this confirmation much at all. Any confirmation or encouragement from people can be an indication that you have the gift of teaching. No teacher should become discouraged or quit because they are not receiving this confirmation frequently. Conversely, we must be careful of pride and give all the glory to God.

6. You will have peace in knowing you are doing what God has called you and gifted you to do

If you are serving in the way God intends then you will receive peace from God that you are doing what He wants you to do. We must be careful that Satan does not rob us of this God given peace. Teaching is hard work and can be frustrating at times. Satan is hard at work against the church and effective teachers. Teaching can also be a rewarding experience and we know that

regardless of earthly rewards, God will reward us for our faithful service to Him when done with the right attitudes.

7. Try teaching

The best and really only way to know if you have the gift of teaching, is to try teaching. This does not mean that you teach one class one time. It takes more experience than that to discover your gift. As you try teaching, it should become clear to you based on the above criteria.

8. Everything will go well all the time—**NOT**

Some people enter a teaching ministry with the mistaken idea that if you have the gift of teaching everything will run smoothly and you will see much fruit from your ministry. Nothing could be farther from the truth. As a teacher, you will have times when the lesson does not go well, the students (if children) will be rowdy and not paying attention, and you will face periods of discouragement. During these times, you must be faithful and put your trust in God.

I Corinthians 4:1-2

¹ Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. ² In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy. God is the only one that can cause the growth of the individual and the church. A lack of visible fruit in your ministry does not mean that you should not continue it. Noah was a preacher of righteousness for 120 years without one individual who responded. Do not become discouraged! Discouragement is a tool of Satan and is the opposite of faith.

Read I Corinthians 12 and make a list of things the Bible says about spiritual gifts and using them in the true church—the Body of Christ

If you are taking this class for credit, please send your list to WTDdino@juno.com