



uncommon
be extraordinary

high school group study



jim burns &
doug fields

general editors

spiritual gifts



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how to use the *uncommon* group bible studies

Each *Uncommon* Group Bible Study contains 12 sessions, which are divided into 3 stand-alone units of 4 sessions each. You may choose to teach all 12 sessions consecutively, to use just one unit or to present individual sessions. You know your group, so do what works best for you and your students.

This is your leader's guidebook for teaching your group. Electronic files (in PDF format) of each session's student handouts are available for download at www.gospellight.com/uncommon/. The handouts include the "message," "dig," "reflect" and "meditation" sections of each study, formatted for easy printing. You may print as many copies as you need for your group.

Each session opens with a devotional meditation written for you, the youth leader. As hectic and trying as youth work is much of the time, it's important never to neglect your interior life. Use the devotions to refocus your heart and prepare yourself to share with kids the message that has already taken root in you. Each of the 12 sessions are divided into the following sections:

starter

Young people will stay in your youth group if they feel comfortable and make friends in the group. This section is designed for you and the students to get to know each other better.

dig

Many young people are biblically illiterate. In this section, students will dig into the Word of God and will begin to interact on a personal level with the concepts.

reflect

The conclusion to the study will allow students to reflect on some of the issues presented in the study on a more personal level.

meditation

A closing Scripture for the students to read and reflect on.



unit I

spiritual gifts that demonstrate God's love and presence

In some ways, you might say that Doug and I (Jim) have grown up together. Actually, I'm nine years older, but we've "hung out" since 1977. I had hair in 1977, and Doug was a junior higher in my youth group who was still wondering if girls had "cooties," and his strongest love was baseball. My first remembrance of Doug Fields was that he was a very confident kid in our youth group who had the possibility of being a little obnoxious. I told him as an eighth-grader, "You will either end up in prison or be one of the most incredible youth workers in the twentieth century." Well, he hasn't made it to prison yet, and he is truly one of a handful of youth specialists leading the way into the twenty-first century.

God has truly gifted Doug with several outstanding abilities and talents. It has been one of the joys of my life to watch him be used by God to reach thousands of students and come alongside

thousands of youth workers to make this world a better place. However, what has been perhaps the most exciting part of seeing God's hand in his life is the fact that he has searched out his spiritual gifts and is using them for the glory of God.

Doug came to me more than 10 years ago when we were working together at South Coast Community Church and suggested that we do a series on spiritual gifts for our high school group. He had been learning a great deal about his own spiritual gifts and thought it was time to have us share what we both had been learning with our kids.

He tested the Bible studies at Community Presbyterian Church in Danville, California, and we did a series at South Coast. Today, we would both say that helping students find their spiritual gifts is one of the highlights of our ministries. One such student was Kim Halloway, who came up to me after a session on the gift of hospitality and was so excited to discover that she definitely had been given the gift of hospitality. She realized that she had been using it without knowing it was a spiritual gift and said she would now actively use the gift of hospitality to serve God.

Helping students find their spiritual gifts and then helping them to use those gifts for the glory of God is what this study is all about. The first session is about discovery. In it, you have the opportunity to invite most of your students—probably for the first time—to discover the wonderful world of spiritual gifts. Your students will never be the same as you enlist them in God's army of grace-gifted people who demonstrate God's love and presence through their lives. Our prayer for this first section is that you will be able to develop relationships with your students like we did with each other two decades ago. Just as we've grown in our friendship, spiritual lives and our ministries, we believe you can have the same blessing from God with your students.



session 1

spiritual gifts: are they for everyone?

Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

EPHESIANS 3:20-21

As you begin this exciting new Bible study on spiritual gifts, you may be asking the same question a lot of other youth workers occasionally ask: *Am I really using my spiritual gifts to their fullest potential?* Or you may be wondering about the same thing as the young people in your youth group: *What are spiritual gifts, and has God given me any?*

Our hope and prayer for you as you flip open the pages to these 12 lessons is that you walk away . . .

- **Encouraged:** It's so easy for youth workers to get discouraged by the lack of progress they see in their own

lives and the lives of teenagers. God has gifted you, and He wants you to be encouraged in your ministry through the spiritual gifts He has given you. Be encouraged—God is with you today!

- **Empowered:** The Holy Spirit wants to use you in great ways for His kingdom. That's why you are empowered by the Holy Spirit to use your spiritual gifts to build up the Body of Christ. You are empowered by God!
- **Equipped:** Once you discover your spiritual gifts, it's critical to be equipped to use them in the lives of students and their families. God would never give you a spiritual gift without equipping you first.

Why not take some time to pray about what the Lord will do through this exciting process?

*But our all-wise God has apportioned His gifts as He wills,
and one day He will require from each of us an accounting of our
use of those gifts . . . if you and I really want to be used by our Lord,
it will pay us to ferret out what our particular ability is,
then get busy putting it to use.*

JEANETTE LOCKERBIE

group study guide

spiritual gifts: are they for everyone?

starter

PERSONAL SURVEY: Fill in the following lines below.

Three things that I am good at:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Three things that I am not so good at:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Three things that I would like to try:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Note: You can download this group study guide in 8½" x 11" format at www.gospellight.com/uncommon/spiritual_gifts.zip.

Three things that scare me:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Three things that I would like to get better at:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

Three words that I would use to describe myself:

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

dig

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward.

COLOSSIANS 3:23-24

- 1. What are spiritual gifts? What is their purpose? Write your definition of spiritual gifts below.

Spiritual gifts are an important piece of our personal relationship with Jesus Christ as well as a vital part of how we interact with, support and grow with the Body of Christ. We are all “fearfully and wonderfully made” (Psalm 139:14), uniquely constructed by the Master Craftsman with the perfect set of traits, abilities and talents. These gifts and abilities are not for our own credit, but to bring God glory.

- 2. Spiritual gifts are discussed in four different passages in the New Testament. Read the passage of Scripture listed below and list the various gifts mentioned in that section.

Romans 12:6-8

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____

1 Corinthians 12:4-11;
1 Corinthians 12:28-30

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____
- 6. _____
- 7. _____
- 8. _____
- 9. _____
- 10. _____

Ephesians 4:7-8,11-12

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

1 Peter 4:9-11

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

- 3. Look at the complete list on the previous page. What do you notice about the kinds of spiritual gifts on this list?

They are called *gifts* for two reasons: first because we received them from the Holy Spirit, and second because they are all meant to be used to assist and aid the Body of Christ. We received these spiritual gifts, but we also must learn how to utilize them and give them away.

- 4. Do you think some gifts are more important than others?

- 5. Read Romans 12:6-8. According to this passage, if you have a particular gift, what should you do?

6. First Corinthians 12:1 says, “Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be uninformed” (*RSV*). Continue reading verses 4 to 6. What point does Paul want to make clear about spiritual gifts?

7. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-26. What does Paul’s metaphor in these verses say about the importance of and connection between the various spiritual gifts?

8. Read and summarize 1 Peter 4:10. Explain how your specific gifts are to be used.

9. How do spiritual gifts benefit others and also accomplish God's work?

discovering your gifts

Do you know what spiritual gifts you have? While no single person except Jesus Christ possesses all spiritual gifts, all Christians have at least one spiritual gift. So how do you find out what yours is? Here are some suggestions for discovering what your spiritual gifts may be.

try it

Sometimes the only way to know if God has gifted you in a certain area is to try out the gift. You will never know if you have the gift of teaching unless you try to teach! Look at the list of spiritual gifts and think back over the last few months.

1. What is one gift that you have recently tried out, and how did the experience work out?

2. Again, looking at your list, what is one spiritual gift that you would be interested in trying out during the upcoming week?

3. Brainstorm an opportunity that you could have to put this gift into action.

examine your feelings

Your feelings can be good indicators of where your gifts lie. If you experiment with the gift of teaching and feel extremely uncomfortable and embarrassed, then perhaps you don't have the gift (at this time).

On the other hand, if you were to experiment with the gift of hospitality and find that you enjoy entertaining people, sheltering them and feeding needy neighbors, then you most likely have the gift of hospitality.

1. Do you like being a leader? Do you enjoy helping others? Do you crave knowledge and wisdom? Which of the spiritual gifts do you enjoy doing?

2. Which spiritual gifts are less enjoyable for you?

3. Remember that just because you find something difficult or unpleasant doesn't necessarily mean that you don't have the spiritual gift! Read Exodus 3:7-13. In these verses, God is calling Moses up to be a leader. What is Moses' response?

4. What is God's response?

ask those around you

Often times, God will use other Christians in your life to reveal His will to you. Although it may be difficult for you to see your own gifts, those around you may have a clearer perspective about your gifts and talents.

1. If you feel comfortable, ask some of your friends and peers what spiritual gifts they see exhibited in your life. List those gifts below.

2. Did your friends' and peers' responses surprise you in any way? Why or why not?

look for opportunities

Another way that God can reveal His will to you is through your circumstances. Do opportunities for hospitality keep knocking at your door? Are you continually presented with chances for leadership? God may be providing opportunities for your spiritual gifts to be revealed.

1. In the last few months, which of the following spiritual gifts have you had opportunities to use?

Spiritual Gift	Opportunity
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

2. Did you use those gifts? What happened in the situation when you did?

Remember to be open to the Holy Spirit surprising you with gifts outside of your normal operating range. You may have one set of

gifts at this point in your life, but down the road, those gifts may change according to how the Holy Spirit directs.

using your gifts

So . . . how do you know if you are using your particular spiritual gifts to the glory of God?

evaluate your effectiveness

Occasionally, stop and think about if you are being effective in the role you are in. Ask yourself these three questions:

1. *Am I being effective?*
2. *Am I having a worthwhile impact on the people I am serving?*
3. *Is God using me in this particular area?*

Have you ever been involved in a ministry where you felt ineffective? What do you think was the cause?

There are various reasons why you might not be effective in a particular role. It may be that you were not given that specific spiritual gift, or it may be that you are not giving the task the attention and effort it requires.

expect confirmation from the body of Christ

Often times, God will use other Christians in your life to give you guidance and direction. Fellow believers should be encouraging and discouraging you (with love) in what you do. Listen to them, value their perspective, and then weigh their comments in prayerful consideration.

Who in your life can you trust to provide insight and guidance about your spiritual gifts?

failing to use God's gifts

But what happens if we don't use the spiritual gifts that God has bestowed on us?

we bring displeasure to God

In Matthew 25, Jesus tells the Parable of the Talents in which a man entrusted three of his servants with sums of money. Two of the servants invested the money, earning more than the master had originally given them. When the master returned, he said to each of them, "Well done, good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things" (Matthew 25:21). However, when the third servant came before the master, he said, "I knew you were a hard man . . . so

I was afraid and went out and hid your talent in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you” (vv. 24-25).

Read Matthew 25:26-30. What was the master’s response to the third servant?

Although in this passage, a talent refers to a sum of money—worth more than one thousand dollars in today’s money—our understanding of a talent (a gift or ability) also applies in this parable. God has given us specific talents and abilities that He wants us to use—or we risk losing them.

we let down the body of Christ as a whole

“God has arranged the parts . . . just as he wanted them to be. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it” (1 Corinthians 12:18,26). What are the consequences if we don’t use our gifts?

reflect

1. What would happen to the Body of Christ if everyone had the same gifts?

2. Why is it important to discover your spiritual gifts?

3. What should you do if you have a friend who is not using his or her spiritual gift?

4. What spiritual gifts do you believe you currently have?

I believe that I have the gift of _____ because . . .

I believe that I have the gift of _____ because . . .

I believe that I have the gift of _____ because . . .

5. What spiritual gifts are you fairly certain that you do not possess? List the reasons why you feel you don't have these gifts below.

6. Are you currently using your spiritual gifts? If not, where do you sense God calling you to use your spiritual gifts?

7. How can understanding your own spiritual gifts help you within your family? In your youth group? In your church?

meditation



There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-6

everybody's got a gift

The gifts of the Spirit aren't like the right to vote—you don't have to be at least 18 to exercise them. Although it may be hard for some teens to believe, they are all uniquely gifted by God to make a mark for His kingdom . . . starting now! *Spiritual Gifts*, part of the new *Uncommon* youth curriculum series created by veteran youth minister Jim Burns, includes a youth-friendly spiritual gifts inventory tool that will enable your entire group to discover and begin to use their unique combination of gifts. Twelve sessions of youth-friendly Bible study will help the teens in your group come alive with purpose, excitement and Spirit-focused power! In addition, you can download reproducible student handouts for every session—find out how inside!

This resource is user-friendly, learner-centered and intentionally biblical. I love having a resource like this that I can recommend to youth professionals.

DUFFY ROBBINS

Professor of Youth Ministry, Eastern University, St. Davids, Pennsylvania

I heartily recommend these studies.

RICK WARREN

Author of *The Purpose Driven Life*



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