

WOMEN GIFTED FOR MINISTRY

*HELPING WOMEN FIND THEIR SPIRITUAL GIFT
So They Can Find Ministry For God*

(Contains Spiritual Gift Questionnaire)

By
Ruth and Elmer Towns

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Spiritual Gift Questionnaire:

Take this Spiritual Gift Questionnaire to find your three strongest gifts. This section tells how your gifts mix together and how you can best serve God.

CHAPTER 1

Woman at the Well Won Men to Jesus

The Spiritual Gift of Evangelism

Two ladies in church are as far apart in life-styles and money as they are in pew locations. Betty—with her six obedient children and husband—sits on the second pew near the windows on the left side. They live in a large, old wooden home near downtown. Betty's husband's job in a grocery store doesn't pay enough to afford a better home in a better location. In spite of marginal finances, Betty's children have all the church advantages . . . camp . . . Christian private schooling . . . piano lessons . . . etc. Because her children are polite to adults and obedient to their parents, men in the church contribute to a "Deacon's Fund" for the poor that helps to pay for these advantages.

Betty is a constant soul-winner, talking to people about Jesus, trying to win them to salvation. She keeps tracts near the front door to give to every delivery person. She carries them in her purse to pass out to those waiting at the bus stop with her, or she gives them out to the sales persons when she shops.

Betty does everything possible to win unsaved people to Christ, including placing gospel tracts in Christmas cards, greeting cards and in the envelope when paying bills.

When the pastor gives a gospel invitation at the end of his sermon for people to come forward to receive Christ, Betty usually goes to the counseling room to lead women to Christ.

Betty has a large prayer list of unsaved relatives for whom she prays. She has given out their names in church prayer meetings to get others to pray for them. No one in the church doubts Betty's sincerity as a personal evangelist.

Everyone thinks Betty is a godly lady and sitting in the front of the church keeps Betty in this focus. They admire her evangelistic activities, except when she confronts visitors to the church, asking them if they are saved. Church members feel confrontation evangelism with visitors gives the wrong image of their congregation. They think her blunt approach might keep them from returning again. While the deacons like her evangelistic zeal and they admire her children, they discussed the problem among themselves. Rather than asking her not to meet the visitors, they arranged for Betty and her husband to duplicate audio cassettes of the sermon immediately after the service was over so copies of the sermon could be included in a “hospitality package” that was handed to visitors as they left church. This way, Betty feels she is helping to evangelize and the deacons have solved their problem.

Sitting at the back of the church under the balcony where she doesn't attract attention to herself, Marcy is the opposite of Betty. People who don't know Marcy don't think of her as spiritual because of her stylish clothing, manicured nails, and her Mercedes with vanity license plates, the most expensive car in the church parking lot. Marcy's husband—a tax lawyer—is a deacon who pays for Betty's six children to attend the Christian school in their church.

Marcy has the spiritual gift of evangelism like Betty but expresses it differently. In her devotions, Marcy intercedes for her neighbors to become believers, but she would never give their names out in prayer meeting because if the neighbors knew, they would be offended. When Marcy goes to a neighbor's for coffee, she doesn't preach to them, but she leaves a CD of contemporary Christian music by Steve Green, or a copy of one of the latest best-selling books by Max Lucado.

However, Marcy does witness to her neighbors about Christ. When she invites them to her home, she feels this is her turf, so she has liberty to tell a friend how Jesus Christ is Master of her home and life.

Marcy was converted at the state university when a Bible study was held in her sorority house. She came to believe in Jesus as she asked questions about the Bible text they were studying that evening. The Campus Crusade for Christ workers didn't press Marcy to become a Christian, she just answered questions from the Bible. Finally, when all her questions were answered, Marcy asked,

“Can I become a Christian tonight?”

It was then and there that Marcy prayed to receive Christ. Now when Marcy shares coffee with her neighbors, she uses the same technique to win them to Christ. Marcy leads in a Bible study, answering their questions until her neighbors ask the same question that she asked in the university,

“Can I know Christ this morning?”

There are several families from the neighborhood that Marcy and her husband have led to Christ; their neighbors eventually become members of the church.

Most people in the church don't know about Marcy's evangelistic efforts, and if the congregation were asked who is the best soul-winner in church, they would answer “Betty!” Even though Betty has led many people to Christ on the street corner and in stores, none of them have come into the church. However, those she led to Christ in the counseling room have become members. These two ladies both have the spiritual gift of evangelism, both share their faith and both pray for unsaved people. However, they do it differently and they get different results, and God uses them both according to their circumstances and abilities.

WHAT IS THE GIFT OF EVANGELISM?

The woman with the gift of evangelism (a) has a consuming desire to see lost people believe in Jesus Christ, (b) she will find ways to share her faith, (c) she has discernment when the Holy Spirit is moving a person towards conversion, (d) she has the ability to point people to Christ and (e) the skills to help them receive Christ.

THE GIFT OF EVANGELISM

Where does the spiritual gift of evangelism come from? To answer this question look at the nature of a spiritual gift. “There are certain kinds of abilities or gifts that come from the Holy Spirit. These gifts serve in different ways, that come from the Lord Jesus. When we exercise these gifts, they produce different results, but it is God the Father who is working through these gifts” (I Cor. 12:4-6 Author’s paraphrase). When you are given a spiritual gift, you are given a special ability by God to serve Him in a special way. It is God working through our abilities to accomplish His will. These verses tell us that God is the source of our giftedness and that each of us can serve Him in different ways and will have different outcomes. The woman with the gift of evangelism has a passion to share her faith, while the woman with the gift of teaching wants to communicate Bible knowledge.

Do we all have the same gifts? Not everyone teaches well, and not everyone can play the piano in church. God has given many different gifts to women in the Body, each with their own special ability. Some women sing soprano, others sing alto; we are made differently and we serve differently, each serving in her own special way. Peter tells us, “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace” (I Peter 4:10 NIV). Not all women aggressively push their opinion on other women. Some don’t share recipes, helpful house cleaning hints, nor do they share much about their life. Therefore, they don’t aggressively share their faith with others. They

probably are not strongly gifted in evangelism. But even the ones who don't share Christ have an obligation to witness because Jesus said, "Ye shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). The point is all women are different, so all women will share their faith differently: some more aggressively than others, while some only wait for the unsaved to ask them questions before they share their faith.

You may not be a platform person, but in your own quiet way, you can tell others about Jesus: and that is your ministry. Let God use you, according to the gifts he has given to you.

WEAKNESS OR DANGERS OF GIFT OF EVANGELISM

The woman with this gift: (a) believer everyone should be an evangelist, (b) has a tendency to press for decisions before some are ready to receive Christ, (c) a tendency to be confrontational, rather than relational, (d) becomes result-oriented, rather than people-oriented.

Does every woman have the spiritual giftedness of evangelism? Among men, some are great evangelists such as Billy Graham, while others witness to only a few people in a lifetime. Both have the spiritual gifts, yet express the gifts differently. The same with women. Some women are great soul winners and some have great platform ministries of evangelism, while other women quietly point people to Jesus one at a time. However you express your spiritual gift of evangelism, use it as God has gifted you. "As everyone has received a gift, even so let them minister to one another" (I Cor. 7:7 Author's paraphrase).

How can I grow my gift of evangelism? Some women begin their Christian life very quietly telling other people of Jesus, but they have never led anyone to Christ. Don't be discouraged if you don't see fruit at first. Your ability to share Christ can grow, and the results will increase as you learn how to do it. Paul told the Corinthians, "Earnestly desire the greater gifts" (I Cor. 12:31 NIV). And in the same way, Paul writes to young Timothy,

who needs encouragement, “For this reason I remind you to fan and to flame the gift of God which is in you” (II Tim. 1:6 NIV). This meant that Timothy had certain gifts that were hidden or not used. Paul was telling him to treat his gift like a smoldering fire. Timothy had to fan that small flame of heat so it would become a larger fire. As we know, fire warms, cooks, and is a friendly companion. So fan the flame of your gift of evangelism so that God can use it to bring warmth to others in the Body of Christ.

Every woman has all of the task-oriented spiritual gifts, but the gifts have different passion in women, are expressed differently and get different results.

Why do we say all saved women have all spiritual gifts? First, because the power of the gifts is the Holy Spirit, and all saved women have the Holy Spirit. Second, because God has given the general command to all believers to be evangelists, “Ye shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). God would not give a woman the *responsibility* to share her faith without giving the *ability* to do it. But third, spiritual gifts are given like seeds to be planted, cultivated, and grown to maturity. Some women have weak spiritual passion to evangelize. They are fearful and shy like the seed just planted. They need to grow their ability to share their faith.

THE WOMAN AT THE WELL JOHN 4:

An un-named woman left her town of Sychar in the middle of the day to go to Jacob’s Well because it was her task to fetch water for the house. While most women went for water early in the morning and again at evening—when it was cool—where they enjoyed the company of other women and got caught up on gossip. But this woman came alone during the middle of the day, perhaps because she was ostracized by the other women of the village for her implied immorality. She had been married five times, and was now living with a man, and not married to him. Since the Samaritan religion condemned such practices, this woman

probably felt criticism from other women and came to the well by herself. Arriving at the well, she was startled by a Jewish man sitting on a bench who asked her a very simple

question,

“Please give me something to drink . . .”

April was usually hot, the temperature reaching 90-100 degrees during the last days of April, and because Jesus had already walked a long distance, and He was tired and thirsty.

The woman was surprised because the Jews don't have anything to do with Samaritans, compounded by the fact that men looked down on women, and a Jewish man would not be caught dead talking to a Samaritan woman. She responded,

“Why are you asking me for a drink?”

Jesus didn't directly answer her question, but He captured her attention,

“But if you knew who I am, and the gift of God, you would ask Me for water, and I would give you living water.”

“But you don't have a rope or bucket,” the woman responded. She went on to add, “The well is very deep, there is no way for you to draw living water for me.”

At first the woman was concerned with the natural obstacles of getting water out of the deep well, until she realized Jesus had promised her “living water.” She turned her thoughts to an obvious religious controversy.

“Do you think that You are greater than our forefather Jacob who dug this well? How can you offer water that is better than what Jacob gave to his family and flocks?”

“You will become thirsty after drinking this water,” Jesus answered the woman, “but the water I will give to you will take away all your thirst, you won't have to draw water

again, because my water will be an artesian well of water that will spring up within you, giving you eternal life.”

“Please . . .” the woman begged, “give me living water so that I will never be thirsty again. I won’t have to come to this well and fetch water again.”

Jesus knew the woman because He was God. He knew that her sin would have to be revealed before she would seek salvation. So Jesus told her, “Go call your husband.”

“I don’t have a husband,” the woman answered him.

“You’re right . . .” Jesus answered. “You don’t have a husband now, but you have had five husbands and now you’re not married to the man you’re living with.”

The woman was shocked at this revelation, “You must be a prophet,” she answered. The woman wanted to argue, “So tell me should I worship in Jerusalem where You say is the only place, or can I worship on Mount Gerizim where Samaritans worship?”

“Neither . . .” Jesus answered her. “The time is coming when people will no longer worship in Jerusalem or on this mountain.” In this statement Jesus pointed her to a greater truth. “The time is coming when true worshippers will worship the Father in Spirit and in truth.” Jesus continued to explain, “God is Spirit and they who worship Him must worship Him in Spirit and in truth.”

The woman needed convincing. She knew the Messiah would be greater than the prophets, so she said, “I know that Messiah will come—the One called Christ—He will explain the right religion to us when He comes.”

“I am the Messiah,” Jesus said to her.

At this moment the disciples arrived from town with food for Jesus. They were astonished that He was talking with a woman—a fallen woman—even though they were

talking out in the open where all could see them. The woman left her water jar by the well, and went running back into town telling everyone she met,

“Come and see a man who told me everything that I ever did!” she babbled to everyone. “Can this be the Messiah?”

How did the woman evidence the gift of evangelism? When a woman has the gift of evangelism, she doesn't have to force herself to tell other people about her conversion, most can see it. She doesn't have to force herself to tell other people what changed her. She naturally tells others about what happened to her. Telling others about Jesus is as natural as telling others about a diet, how she lost weight, or about a new way of cooking that made her family happy. Because women like to share, they tell others about Jesus Christ who has changed their life. The woman went everywhere saying, “Come, see a man who told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?” (John 4:29).

What is another evidence that the woman had the gift of evangelism? There is an old saying, “What's in the well, comes up in the bucket.” And we know that “what's in the heart comes out of the mouth.” So it's only natural that this woman whose life was changed by Jesus, wanted other people to have that same transformation. But she did more than share her experience, she convinced others of what she was saying. She convinced others to believe in Jesus as she did. “Many Samaritans of that city believed on Him because of the woman” (John 4:39).

What is the motivation of the person with the gift of evangelism? The woman at the well met Jesus Christ, had her questions answered; and knew in her heart that He was the Messiah. She did not go off to find a lonely spot to pray, nor did she go into the harvest fields about her to gather grain, nor did she continue with her task of fetching water. She

went back to the men of the city—because men knew her better than women—and told them about Jesus. A woman with the gift of evangelism looks for ways to share her faith. “The woman then left her water pot, went her way into the city, and saith unto the men” (John 4:28).

What is the passion of the woman with the gift of evangelism? The woman had a new found gift of evangelism, that enabled her to live outside of herself. This woman who had gone through four marriages lived a self-centered life, and probably could not keep a husband because she was more interested in herself than the husband. But when she met Jesus, she lost her self-centered interest and went to tell others about Jesus.

She didn't tell them about herself, time was too short. She didn't use her wisdom or persuasive ability to motivate others. All she could do was testify of Jesus. “Many of the Samaritans . . . believed on Him for the saying of the woman, which testified, ‘he told me all that I ever did’” (John 4:39).

Too many women try to “win souls” with a special plan such as *The Four Spiritual Laws* or *The Roman Road of Salvation*. While plans are good to follow, and you will probably want to use them in sharing your faith; remember, it is not a special formula to present the gospel that will get others saved.

Some women try to win their friends with persuasive arguments . . . debates . . . or by quoting the right verse at the right time. When the cults come to the front door—usually two—some women try to answer all their questions, and “debate” with these people into salvation.

Some women try to evangelize by pointing out the sins of the person they are trying to win to Jesus. Their whole contention is to get the person under conviction of sin so they will feel "lost" and become a Christian.

However, let us learn from the woman at the well. She had passion--a passion to tell others what Jesus did for her. Her passion motivated her to simply share her testimony. She carried an empty vessel to the well to get some water, but the vessel of her life was filled with Jesus who was the water of life. As she ran back into town living water spilled to others. Her passion made her share who Jesus was and what he has done for her. Today, we call this sharing your testimony with an unsaved person.

WHAT YOUR TESTIMONY SHOULD INCLUDE

1. What you were before conversion.
2. How you received Christ.
3. What happened at your conversion.
4. What Christ means to you now.

What is the main issue when a woman exercises her gift of evangelism? When the woman first met Jesus, she wanted to argue with Him. First, she argued that He did not have the physical bucket or rope. Second, she tried to argue about the right place to worship God. Jesus did not argue with her, He simply told her who He was. What changed her life . . . Jesus Christ! What convinced the people of the city? They came to know Jesus as she did. "Then they said to the woman: 'Now we know because we have heard Him ourselves, not just because of what you told us. He is indeed the Savior of the world'" (John 4:42 LB). The main issue of evangelism is Jesus.

PRACTICAL TAKE AWAYS

Can a lay woman win someone to Christ? You don't have to be in full-time ministry to point other people to Jesus. The Bible is filled with illustrations of people who shared

their faith with others. We have seen the illustration of the woman at the well bringing faith to the men of her village. Philip was the only person in the Bible that was called an evangelist (Acts 6:5, 21:8) yet he originally was a lay person, who later was elevated to be a deacon; finally, he became an evangelist. You don't have to be called an evangelist to tell other people about Jesus. You don't have to be on the church staff, nor elected to a church office; all you have to be is a believer who shares her faith with others.

Is the gift of evangelism public speaking? You don't have to be a public speaker to point others to Jesus Christ. You can invite a friend over for brunch to tell them what Jesus has done for you. This can be a planned moment to share your testimony, or it can be spontaneous at coffee break. On other occasions, when it naturally comes up in a conversation, tell others what Jesus has done for you. Your gift of evangelism can be . . . personally . . . intimately . . . and quietly done.

Should evangelism be tied to a special presentation of the gospel? Some people have taken an evangelism class at church and learned a formula to use in leading people to Christ. This is a wonderful means of learning how to share Jesus Christ. When it's available in your church, take advantage of it. Campus Crusade for Christ has given the *Four Spiritual Laws*, which is a beautiful formula to help lead an unsaved person to Jesus Christ. Also the *Roman Road of Salvation* is an effective plan. Another plan is *Evangelism Explosion* that has an effective formula to lead others to Christ. But go back to the Bible story earlier in this chapter. The woman left the well, and "went her way into the city and said to the men" (John 4:28). She didn't have time to learn a formula. After she met Jesus, she went to tell others what Jesus did for her. Some women will be more comfortable using a formula, others will be more spontaneous. God will use both approaches. But remember, just as a person can't

give the measles if they don't have the measles; so a person can't give the joy of Jesus to others if they've not found inner peace in Him.

What if someone wants to argue? At first the woman at the well wanted to argue with Jesus about where to worship, but Jesus refused to argue with her. He simply pointed her to the truth and told her who He was. Some might argue with you about their ideas or their religion. Two things, you can't argue lost people into the kingdom, but you can love them to Christ. Arguing doesn't work. Second, you don't have to argue. That's not God's plan for evangelism. All you need to do is to tell them about Jesus and what He means to you.

What is the focus of evangelism? You are not responsible for results/ you are only required to be a faithful witness for Christ. You plant the seed, and God will give growth. All you can do is point people to Jesus. The woman gave a very simple invitation, "Come see a man . . ." (John 4:29). Any woman can be a witness that points others to Jesus.

Should I wait to evangelize until my ability gets stronger? There are some women who do not share their faith, wrongly thinking "I don't have the gift of evangelism." Other women use the excuse, "I'm gifted in another area." Don't try to hide behind these excuses, thinking you have another dominant gift that is stronger, or you don't have the gift of evangelism. Many people will have spiritual gifts that are stronger than evangelism, but that is no excuse why they should not share their faith. John Wesley advised young believers to use what faith they had and it would grow stronger. If you use your weak gift of evangelism, it will grow stronger.

Where should I begin? Every person has different strengths in different areas. Look at all your spiritual gifts. Determine which is strongest, and those that are weakest. How your spiritual gifts inter-relate is called your *gift mix*. Learn your unique gift mix. Know

where you are weak, and don't let inability get you discouraged. Do what you are best at, and get strength from doing what you do best.

Know your giftedness.
Know your strength
Do what you do best.
Be faithful in small abilities.

How can I grow my spiritual gift of evangelism? Everyone has the gift of evangelism, so begin with your responsibility and ability. Begin where you are and plan to become better in sharing your faith with other people. Don't hide behind the excuse, "I'm weak in evangelism." When given the opportunity, tell others about Jesus Christ. There are several ways to grow your gift, (1) pray and ask God to increase your courage and knowledge of people, (2) study all gifts (in this book) and you will become stronger in all areas of ministry, (3) take the Spiritual Gift Questionnaire at the back of this book to determine your strongest gifts (then be realistic about your gift of evangelism), (4) plan and seek ways to begin witnessing, begin in a non-confrontational way, (5) make friends with someone with the intent of sharing Jesus with them, (6) do intentional things such as sharing Christian books, cassette messages, praise music, practical magazine articles on facts, and other things that will open up opportunities to share Jesus, (7) after praying for a person, do intentional things to win that person to yourself; such as taking them baked goods, offer to baby sit or some other act of kindness, (8) invite them to church or a Christian meeting with you, (9) ask them to attend your church's function for ladies.

STEPS TO LEAD SOMEONE TO CHRIST

1. Win the person to yourself.
2. Win the person to your church.
3. Win the person to Christ.

BIBLE STUDY

1. Who is the Giver of spiritual gifts?

“There are different kinds of abilities or gifts that come from the Holy Spirit. These gifts serve in different ways, but come from the Lord. When we exercise these gifts they produce different results, but it is God the Father, who is working through these gifts.” (I Cor. 12:4-6 Author's translation).

2. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

“Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace” (I Peter 4:10 NIV).

3. Who has spiritual gifts?

“As everyone has received a gift, even so let them minister to one another” (I Peter 4:10 Author's translation).

4. Can our ability to minister (gifts) grow?

“Earnestly desire the greater gifts” (I Cor 12:31 NIV). “For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you” (II Tim. 1:6 NIV).

1. Can you have a dominant gift?

“Each one has his proper (unique) gift” (I Cor. 7:7 Author's translation).

1. What did she say to her lost friends?

“Many of the Samaritans . . . believed on Him for the saying of the woman, which testified, He told me all that ever I did” (John 4:39).

WHAT SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN YOUR TESTIMONY?

What I was before conversion.
How I received Christ.
What happened at my conversion.
What Christ means to me now.

2. What changed her life?

“The woman said, ‘I know that Messiah cometh, which is called the Christ’” (John 4:25). Notice how Jesus answered, “Jesus saith unto her, ‘I that speak unto thee am He’” (John 4:26).

A. IDEAS TO TAKE AWAY

1. You don’t have to be ordained to point others to Jesus. Philip was the only person called an evangelist in the Bible, he was originally a deacon (6:5; 21:8).

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2. You don't have to be a public speaker to point others to Jesus.
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3. You don't have to be in front of a public meeting.

“Went her way into the city, and saith to the men” (4:28).

4. The woman wanted to argue,

“Our father worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem” (4:20). Jesus answered, “Woman, believe me . . .” (4:21).

5. ????????????????

“Come, see a man . . .” (4:29).

6. What is the greatest belief?

7. Some people don't share their faith because they wrongly say, "I don't have the gift of evangelism." Everyone has all gifts. Why?

- a. Everyone is commanded to witness. Acts 1:8.
- b. A spiritual gift is the Holy Spirit and all believers have Him.

8. Wrong ideas about evangelism keep us from doing it. We wrongly think evangelism is "arm twisting" or a "sales presentation" or "arguing about faith."

9. We all have different strengths in using our spiritual gifts. Some are weak, i.e., 4 or 5, they can talk about Jesus. Some are strong, i.e., 10, they can answer objections to lead people to Christ.
