

DAVID'S MEN

SEEKING THE HEART OF GOD



The Local Church

CHURCH. Just reading this word automatically produces an emotional, intellectual, or physical response. For some of us, this word brings warm memories of fellowship and spiritual growth. For others, it brings feelings of anger and pain. Regardless of our past, we must understand the local church is God's Plan A for spiritual community, fellowship, evangelism, and worship. The word *church* is translated from the Greek word *ekklesia* which is defined as "an assembly" or "called out ones" and focuses on the people gathering, not the physical space where they gather.

As believers, we are all part of the universal Church Paul describes in 1 Corinthians 12:13 - "*For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*" As a member of this body, each of us is called to be part of a *local* church. Many of Paul's New Testament letters were written to members of *local* churches in Galatia, Corinth, Ephesus, Philippi, and Rome. John mentions local congregations in the first few chapters of Revelation as he calls out churches in Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea. In each of these cases the author references specific bodies of believers confined to a single geographical area—their local church.

While attending your local church does not make you a Christian, choosing to not be involved is not an acceptable option for those who belong to the Body of Christ. In recent decades the church has seemingly lost some of its importance in our culture—even with professing Christians. This comes as little surprise in a society busier than ever and less reliant on community. After all, it is much easier to stream church from home or listen to a biblical podcast in the car than attend church each week. However, as members of a local church, it is important we utilize our spiritual gifts to support the body of believers. God has gifted us for the "common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7).

So, what does it mean to be involved with a local body of believers? In Acts 2:42 - 47, Luke describes the early local church and their activities: "*And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers....And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.*" Find a local body of believers who are actively pursuing God in this way and join with them. Fellowship together. Serve together. Meet together. Eat together. Worship together. Do life together while ultimately expanding the Kingdom of God.

When we join a local church, we must remember that church is under Jesus' authority (Ephesians 1:22 - 23). We are often quick to criticize the Bride of Christ due to our personal preferences (e.g., worship style, biblical translation, children's programming), but we must not let our opinions on such issues hinder the primary message of the Gospel. As we focus this month on our individual roles within the local church it is important that we first understand God created the church so that He may be glorified, and we may be sanctified. With this purpose in mind, let us be contributors and not just consumers of the local church...an army, not just an audience!

Imagine a local church whose men are fired up about what God is actively doing in their lives. Where the men come early to serve and volunteer, teach adults and children, generously give their money and time, worship passionately and authentically, and are eager to tell others about the Gospel. These thoughts should excite us, as we have an opportunity to be part of and contribute to such a local gathering of Christ-followers. Such a church becomes a movement impacting families, communities, and the world. BOOM!

Current Month Assignments

- Read *What is a Healthy Church Member?* (Anyabwile) and prepare a book summary to share with the group.
- Complete your *David's Men Year in Review* Summary and email it to your group before this month's meeting. Spend time reflecting on this DM year. There is not a required format for this assignment, but it should include your thoughts on the following items:
 - Which month's topic/focus had the greatest impact on your walk with Christ this year? Why?
 - In what area/spiritual discipline do you believe God is calling you to greater growth and development? What action steps will you take in this area as you move forward?
 - What has been the most valuable/meaningful part of DM for you? Why?
 - Which memory scripture has meant the most to you? Why?
 - How is God leading you with respect to next steps in your faith journey with Him?
- Complete the spiritual gifts assessment attached. Be prepared to share the results at this month's DM meeting.
- Complete the online *2019 DM Year-End Self-Assessment Form*, which can be found here: [2019 DM Year-End Self-Assessment Form](#). This form is similar to what you completed at the start of this DM year. Since we won't collect your email address when you complete this form (to ensure your anonymity), please take note of your responses before you submit the form.
- Memorize this month's verses. Review verses from previous months to ensure they are deeply rooted.
- Man-date: As usual, this would be a great opportunity to practice saying your verses.

Resources:

- Online spiritual gifts assessment: biltmorechurch.com/gifts
- [2019 DM Year-End Self-Assessment Form](#)
- [Why Every Christian Should Belong to a Local Church](#) (a 3-minute video from Pastor Matt Chandler of The Village Church)
- [What is the Church?](#) (an article by Robert Velarde)
- [What is the "Church?"](#) (a brief primer on the universal church and local churches by Justin Taylor)

Memory Verses

Christian Community

Matthew 18:20 - For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.

Hebrews 10:24-25 - And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Bear Fruit

Galatians 5:22-23 - But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

Galatians 6:9-10 - And let us not grow weary of doing good, for in due season we will reap, if we do not give up. So then, as we have opportunity, let us do good to everyone, and especially to those who are of the household of faith.

Matthew 5:16 - In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

+ 1 (for DM veterans)

Ephesians 5:29-30 - For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body.

The Fall 2019 DM Retreat will be held September 13 – 14 at Camp Crestridge (same site as last year's retreat). Mark it on your calendar and be there!

SPIRITUAL GIFTS SURVEY

DIRECTIONS

This is not a test, so there are no wrong answers. The ***Spiritual Gifts Survey*** consists of 80 statements. Some items reflect concrete actions; other items are descriptive traits; and still others are statements of belief.

- Select the one response you feel best characterizes yourself and place that number in the blank provided. Record your answer in the blank beside each item.
- Do not spend too much time on any one item. Remember, it is not a test. Usually your immediate response is best.
- Please give an answer for each item. Do not skip any items.
- Do not ask others how they are answering or how they think you should answer.
- Work at your own pace.

Your response choices are:

- 5—Highly characteristic of me/definitely true for me
4—Most of the time this would describe me/be true for me
3—Frequently characteristic of me/true for me—about 50 percent of the time
2—Occasionally characteristic of me/true for me—about 25 percent of the time
1—Not at all characteristic of me/definitely untrue for me
-

- _____ 1. I have the ability to organize ideas, resources, time, and people effectively.
- _____ 2. I am willing to study and prepare for the task of teaching.
- _____ 3. I am able to relate the truths of God to specific situations.
- _____ 4. I have a God-given ability to help others grow in their faith.
- _____ 5. I possess a special ability to communicate the truth of salvation.
- _____ 6. I have the ability to make critical decisions when necessary.
- _____ 7. I am sensitive to the hurts of people.
- _____ 8. I experience joy in meeting needs through sharing possessions.
- _____ 9. I enjoy studying.
- _____ 10. I have delivered God's message of warning and judgment.
- _____ 11. I am able to sense the true motivation of persons and movements.
- _____ 12. I have a special ability to trust God in difficult situations.
- _____ 13. I have a strong desire to contribute to the establishment of new churches.
- _____ 14. I take action to meet physical and practical needs rather than merely talking about or planning to help.
- _____ 15. I enjoy entertaining guests in my home.
- _____ 16. I can adapt my guidance to fit the maturity of those working with me.
- _____ 17. I can delegate and assign meaningful work.

- _____ 18. I have an ability and desire to teach.
- _____ 19. I am usually able to analyze a situation correctly.
- _____ 20. I have a natural tendency to encourage others.
- _____ 21. I am willing to take the initiative in helping other Christians grow in their faith.
- _____ 22. I have an acute awareness of the emotions of other people, such as loneliness, pain, fear, and anger.
- _____ 23. I am a cheerful giver.
- _____ 24. I spend time digging into facts.
- _____ 25. I feel that I have a message from God to deliver to others.
- _____ 26. I can recognize when a person is genuine/honest.
- _____ 27. I am a person of vision (a clear mental portrait of a preferable future given by God). I am able to communicate vision in such a way that others commit to making the vision a reality.
- _____ 28. I am willing to yield to God's will rather than question and waver.
- _____ 29. I would like to be more active in getting the gospel to people in other lands.
- _____ 30. It makes me happy to do things for people in need.
- _____ 31. I am successful in getting a group to do its work joyfully.
- _____ 32. I am able to make strangers feel at ease.
- _____ 33. I have the ability to plan learning approaches.
- _____ 34. I can identify those who need encouragement.
- _____ 35. I have trained Christians to be more obedient disciples of Christ.
- _____ 36. I am willing to do whatever it takes to see others come to Christ.
- _____ 37. I am attracted to people who are hurting.
- _____ 38. I am a generous giver.
- _____ 39. I am able to discover new truths.
- _____ 40. I have spiritual insights from Scripture concerning issues and people that compel me to speak out.
- _____ 41. I can sense when a person is acting in accord with God's will.
- _____ 42. I can trust in God even when things look dark.
- _____ 43. I can determine where God wants a group to go and help it get there.
- _____ 44. I have a strong desire to take the gospel to places where it has never been heard.
- _____ 45. I enjoy reaching out to new people in my church and community.
- _____ 46. I am sensitive to the needs of people.
- _____ 47. I have been able to make effective and efficient plans for accomplishing the goals of a group.

- _____ 48. I often am consulted when fellow Christians are struggling to make difficult decisions.
- _____ 49. I think about how I can comfort and encourage others in my congregation.
- _____ 50. I am able to give spiritual direction to others.
- _____ 51. I am able to present the gospel to lost persons in such a way that they accept the Lord and His salvation.
- _____ 52. I possess an unusual capacity to understand the feelings of those in distress.
- _____ 53. I have a strong sense of stewardship based on the recognition that God owns all things.
- _____ 54. I have delivered to other persons messages that have come directly from God.
- _____ 55. I can sense when a person is acting under God's leadership.
- _____ 56. I try to be in God's will continually and be available for His use.
- _____ 57. I feel that I should take the gospel to people who have different beliefs from me.
- _____ 58. I have an acute awareness of the physical needs of others.
- _____ 59. I am skilled in setting forth positive and precise steps of action.
- _____ 60. I like to meet visitors at church and make them feel welcome.
- _____ 61. I explain Scripture in such a way that others understand it.
- _____ 62. I can usually see spiritual solutions to problems.
- _____ 63. I welcome opportunities to help people who need comfort, consolation, encouragement, and counseling.
- _____ 64. I feel at ease in sharing Christ with nonbelievers.
- _____ 65. I can influence others to perform to their highest God-given potential.
- _____ 66. I recognize the signs of stress and distress in others.
- _____ 67. I desire to give generously and unpretentiously to worthwhile projects and ministries.
- _____ 68. I can organize facts into meaningful relationships.
- _____ 69. God gives me messages to deliver to His people.
- _____ 70. I am able to sense whether people are being honest when they tell of their religious experiences.
- _____ 71. I enjoy presenting the gospel to persons of other cultures and backgrounds.
- _____ 72. I enjoy doing little things that help people.
- _____ 73. I can give a clear, uncomplicated presentation.
- _____ 74. I have been able to apply biblical truth to the specific needs of my church.
- _____ 75. God has used me to encourage others to live Christlike lives.
- _____ 76. I have sensed the need to help other people become more effective in their ministries.

- _____ 77. I like to talk about Jesus to those who do not know Him.
- _____ 78. I have the ability to make strangers feel comfortable in my home.
- _____ 79. I have a wide range of study resources and know how to secure information.
- _____ 80. I feel assured that a situation will change for the glory of God even when the situation seem impossible.

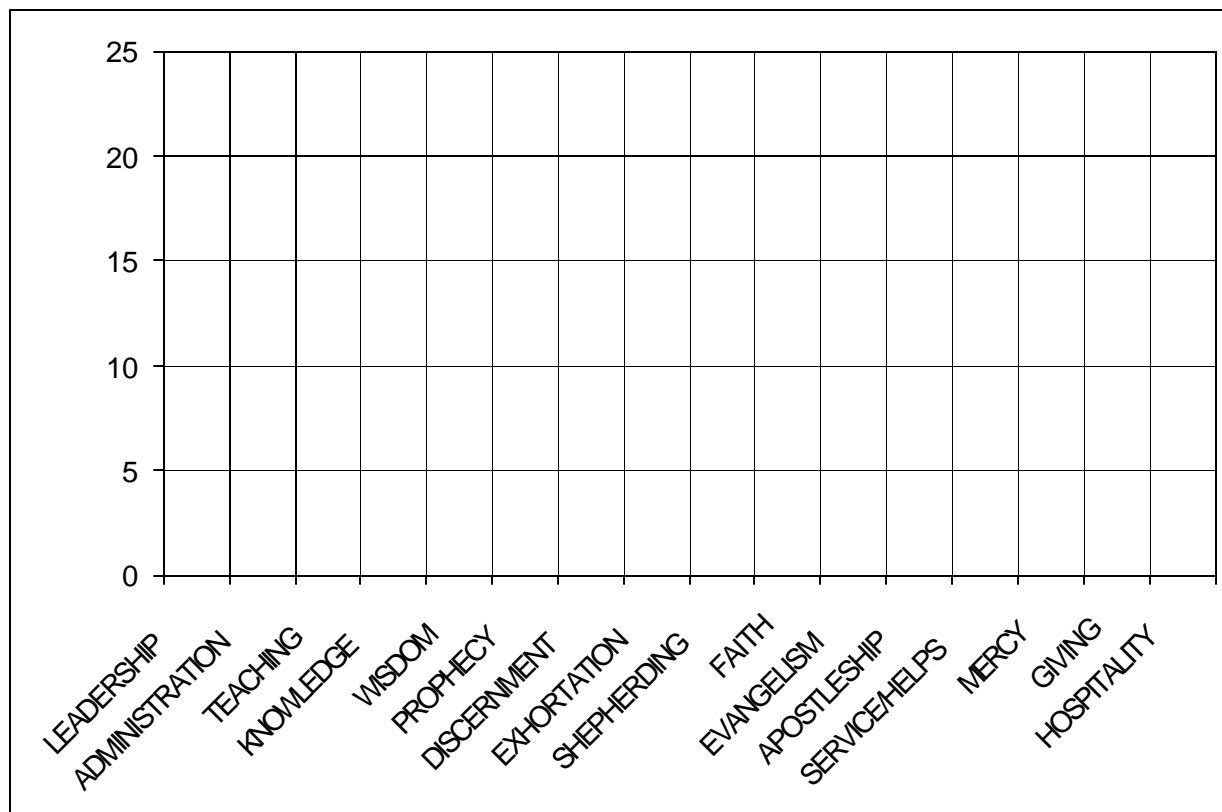
SCORING YOUR SURVEY

Follow these directions to figure your score for each spiritual gift.

- Place in each box your numerical response (1-5) to the item number which is indicated below the box.
- For each gift, add the numbers in the boxes and put the total in the TOTAL box.

LEADERSHIP	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 6		Item 16		Item 27		Item 43		Item 65		TOTAL
ADMINISTRATION	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 1		Item 17		Item 31		Item 47		Item 59		TOTAL
TEACHING	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 2		Item 18		Item 33		Item 61		Item 73		TOTAL
KNOWLEDGE	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 9		Item 24		Item 39		Item 68		Item 79		TOTAL
WISDOM	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 3		Item 19		Item 48		Item 62		Item 74		TOTAL
PROPHECY	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 10		Item 25		Item 40		Item 54		Item 69		TOTAL
DISCERNMENT	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 11		Item 26		Item 41		Item 55		Item 70		TOTAL
EXHORTATION	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 20		Item 34		Item 49		Item 63		Item 75		TOTAL
SHEPHERDING	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 4		Item 21		Item 35		Item 50		Item 76		TOTAL
FAITH	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 12		Item 28		Item 42		Item 56		Item 80		TOTAL
EVANGELISM	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 5		Item 36		Item 51		Item 64		Item 77		TOTAL
APOSTLESHIP	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 13		Item 29		Item 44		Item 57		Item 71		TOTAL
SERVICE/HELPS	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 14		Item 30		Item 46		Item 58		Item 72		TOTAL
MERCY	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 7		Item 22		Item 37		Item 52		Item 66		TOTAL
GIVING	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 8		Item 23		Item 38		Item 53		Item 67		TOTAL
HOSPITALITY	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	+	_____	=	_____
	Item 15		Item 32		Item 45		Item 60		Item 78		TOTAL

GRAPHING YOUR PROFILE



1. For each gift place a mark across the bar at the point that corresponds to your TOTAL for that gift.
2. For each gift shade the bar below the mark that you have drawn.
3. The resultant graph gives a picture of your gifts. Gifts for which the bars are tall are the ones in which you appear to be strongest. Gifts for which the bars are very short are the ones in which you appear not to be strong.

Now that you have completed the survey, thoughtfully answer the following questions.

The gifts I have begun to discover in my life are:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

- After prayer and worship, I am beginning to sense that God wants me to use my spiritual gifts to serve Christ's body by _____.
- I am not sure yet how God wants me to use my gifts to serve others. But I am committed to prayer and worship, seeking wisdom and opportunities to use the gifts I have received from God.

Ask God to help you know how He has gifted you for service and how you can begin to use this gift in ministry to others.