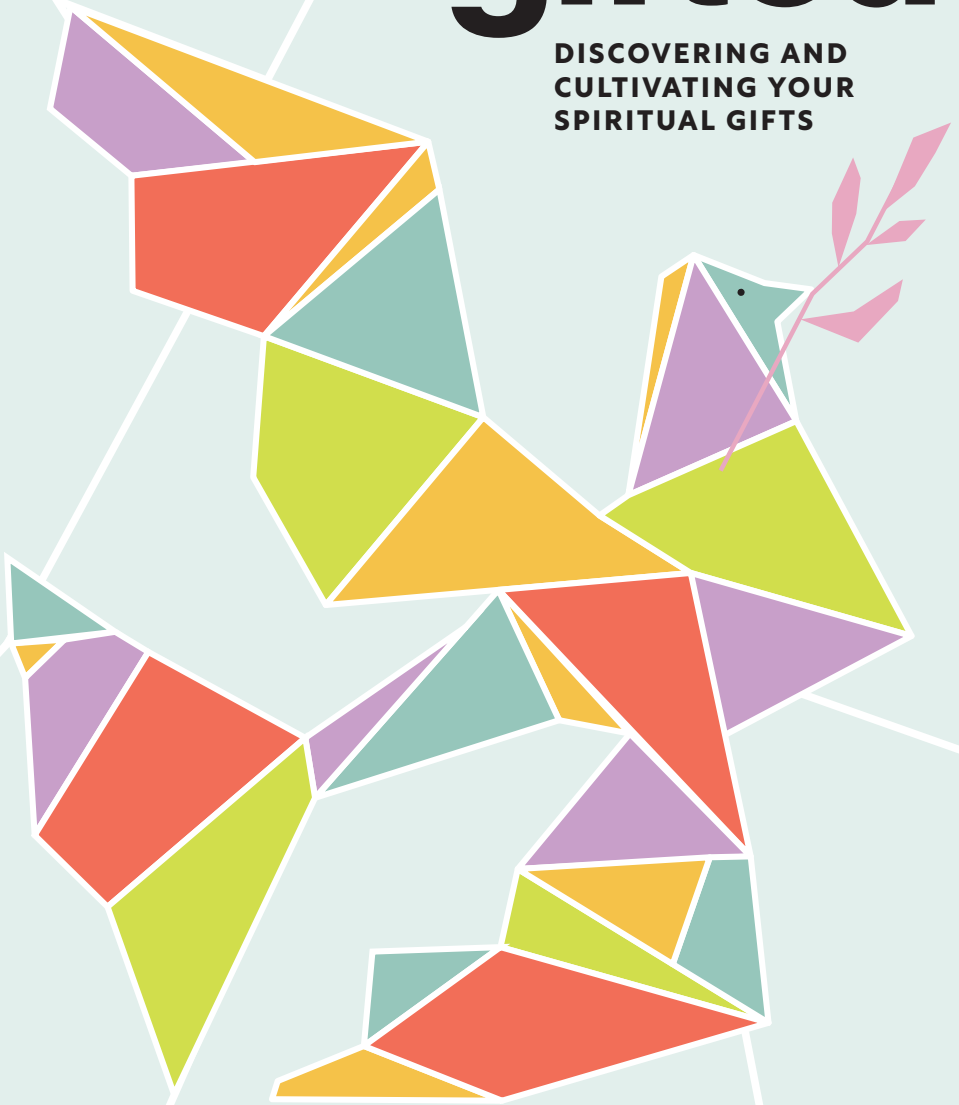


# gifted

DISCOVERING AND  
CULTIVATING YOUR  
SPIRITUAL GIFTS



LIFEWAY STUDENTS

# gifted

DISCOVERING AND  
CULTIVATING YOUR  
SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Lifeway Press®  
Brentwood, Tennessee

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ISBN 978-1-4300-8359-7

Item 005845747

Dewey Decimal Classification Number: 248

Subject Heading: RELIGION / Christian Living / Spiritual Growth

Printed in the United States of America

Student Ministry Publishing

Lifeway Resources

200 Powell Place, Suite 100

Brentwood, TN 37027

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# INTRO

When I hear the word “gifted,” I usually think of two things. The first is from my childhood. When I was a kid, there was a program at my school for the “gifted” students. Only the brightest students, the ones who had shown the most ability and potential to excel academically, got to be in the program. I always wanted to be in that program!

The second is from my teenage years, when I discovered the X-Men comics and cartoons. The X-Men are humans who have “mutant” abilities. A man named Professor Xavier finds them as children and teenagers and brings them together at a school for “gifted youngsters.” There, they become a team and learn how to use their amazing abilities to fight evil and defend the world.

Many Christians take one or both of these perspectives on giftedness into the church. They mistakenly think that the only believers who are “gifted” are those with the most personality, ability, or intelligence or that only certain believers have gifts. This couldn’t be further from the truth. Every believer is gifted!

This book will help you learn about your giftedness. You will learn about the God who has given you these gifts, what they are, what they are for, why they are important, and how you can use them. If you’ve placed your faith in Jesus as Lord, you are gifted. Keep reading to learn more.

## ABOUT LIFEWAY STUDENTS



Only God and His Word bring about true heart transformation. Because of this, it is our top priority to ensure our resources are rooted in the truth of Scripture. Our desire is to create trustworthy resources that help fuel ministry.

*Gifted: Discovering and Cultivating Your Spiritual Gifts* was written by Kyle Wiltshire. Kyle is a writer and editor with Lifeway Students, and he lives with his wife, Joni, and three children, Noah, Micah, and Lilly, in Hendersonville, Tennessee.



# HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book includes five sessions, each covering an important aspect of spiritual gifts. Each session explores Scripture that will help students answer essential questions about spiritual gifts.

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## GROUP TIME

Each session starts with a section called “Let’s Begin.” Here you’ll find questions and illustrations to help begin discussion. There are also Icebreaker options for each session in the Group Guide at the back of the book.

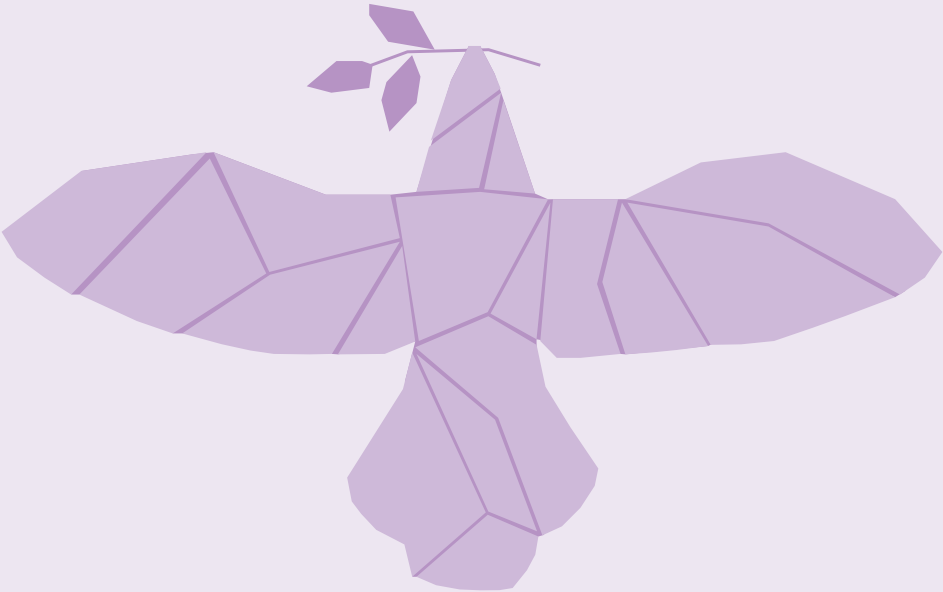
The rest of each session will explore key questions and aspects of spiritual gifts and how they impact the lives of students.

## KEEP GOING

There are four days of devotions at the end of each session to help students continue to learn and grow.

## GROUP GUIDE

Both individuals and groups can use this book to learn about spiritual gifts. See page 66 for tips on leading this study with a group.



SESSION  
**01**

# WHO IS THE HOLY SPIRIT?

God is three Persons in one. We call this aspect of God “the Trinity,” and it’s one of the most amazing mysteries of the Christian faith. One of the three Persons of the Trinity is the Holy Spirit, and in this chapter, we will explore who the Holy Spirit is and how He works in your life. You cannot understand spiritual gifts without understanding who the Holy Spirit is.



# group time

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## LET'S BEGIN

Have you ever visited a museum? It's possible you hear the word "museum" and the first thing you think is "BO-RING!" Sometimes that can be true, but not always. Recently my family and I visited Washington D. C. and went to the National Archives. While we were there, we saw copies of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights. It was quite amazing to see these items that are so important to our country with my own eyes! They are so old that it's hard to see the ink on the paper.

Maybe you've visited a museum you thought was cool, or maybe you've seen some ancient artifacts at some point. It's pretty amazing to see a piece of history.

**What is the oldest thing you have ever seen? Where did you see it?**

**Do you find it interesting to see things that are very old? Why or why not?**

Think about this: everything we've ever seen on earth had a start date, no matter how new or old it is. That means that at some point, it didn't exist. There is only One who is eternal, only One who has no start date.

## THE ONE WITH NO BEGINNING

You've probably already guessed it, but God is the only One who has no beginning or end. He has always been—no one created God. In fact, the opposite is true. It is God who created everyone and everything else.

## Read Genesis 1:1-2.

In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness covered the surface of the watery depths, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

**What are three interesting things you find in these verses?**

1.

2.

3.

Here we see that not only did God create the heavens (the universe) and the earth, but His Spirit was also there, hovering over the surface of what He had just created. In fact, in Colossians 1:16-17, we learn that Jesus was present at creation as well. This means all three Persons of the Trinity were there, active and involved at the beginning of everything.

**Why is it important that God the Father, God the Son (Jesus), and God the Holy Spirit all worked together in the creation of the world and everything that exists?**

This is important because it reveals the unity found within God. There is no division. There is not one Person of the Trinity who is greater than the other. God—all three Persons—created the world and everything in it. This is helpful to know because it informs our understanding of who the Holy Spirit is as we learn more about Him.

## THE ROLE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Even though all three Persons of the Trinity are totally unified, they have different roles. This means they accomplish different tasks and work in different ways. The

work of the Holy Spirit is different from the work of the Father and different from the work of the Son.

Read John 16:7-15.

“Nevertheless, I am telling you the truth. It is for your benefit that I go away, because if I don’t go away the Counselor will not come to you. If I go, I will send him to you. When he comes, he will convict the world about sin, righteousness, and judgment: About sin, because they do not believe in me; about righteousness, because I am going to the Father and you will no longer see me; and about judgment, because the ruler of this world has been judged.

“I still have many things to tell you, but you can’t bear them now. When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth. For he will not speak on his own, but he will speak whatever he hears. He will also declare to you what is to come. He will glorify me, because he will take from what is mine and declare it to you. Everything the Father has is mine. This is why I told you that he takes from what is mine and will declare it to you.”

In these verses, Jesus is speaking to His disciples. It was just hours before He would be betrayed, falsely accused, crucified, and killed. He wanted to help the disciples know that even though He was going away, Someone else would come and be with them. They would not be alone.

**According to these verses, what are three different things the Holy Spirit does?**

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

This explanation of the roles of the Holy Spirit doesn't reveal everything He does, but it helps us know some of the basics. Let's highlight three important elements of the work of the Holy Spirit.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT IS OUR COUNSELOR

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A *counselor* is someone who advises you and helps you know what to do in certain situations.

**Who has been a good counselor to you? What makes someone a good counselor?**

The Holy Spirit wants us to make good choices. He helps us know what we should do, which direction to take, and how to live in a way that shows others we belong to God. The Spirit's counsel is always for His glory and our good: when we do what He says, God is shown to be awesome, and we are helped too.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT CONVICTS

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To *convict* means to declare that someone is guilty of an offense. In a spiritual sense, when the Holy Spirit convicts us, it means that we know inside that we've done something wrong.

**What does it feel like when the Holy Spirit convicts you?**

To feel conviction from the Holy Spirit might be painful, but ultimately it's a good thing. It's His way of helping us to turn away from what we've done wrong, to seek God's forgiveness, and to end the cycle of returning to that same sin again and again.

The Holy Spirit also convicts those who aren't believers, empowering them to turn their hearts from their sin through repentance and to place their faith in Jesus, receiving new life and purpose.

## THE HOLY SPIRIT GUIDES IN TRUTH

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If we only listened to ourselves and let our feelings guide us to what we think is true, we would never find what is actually true. We would always bend the “truth” to fit what we want and what we think is best for us. This means there is no such thing as “your truth” or “my truth” when it comes to God's Word. His truth doesn't change, no matter how we feel about it.

**When has the Holy Spirit guided you in the truth, changing your mind from a wrongly held belief to a right one?**

Thankfully, the Holy Spirit helps us know what is true. He shapes our hearts and leads us to live in truth (see John 17:17). Believing Him and following the truth He leads us to is for our good. We know this because He loves us and has proven His love in Jesus's life, death, and resurrection (see Rom. 5:8).

## THE HOLY SPIRIT LIVES WITHIN US

Here's why Jesus said it was for our benefit that He was returning to heaven and not staying on earth (see John 16:7)—His leaving meant the Holy Spirit would come.

Read Acts 2:1-4.

When the day of Pentecost had arrived, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like that of a violent rushing wind came from heaven, and it filled the whole house where they were staying. They saw tongues like flames of fire that separated and rested on each one of them. Then they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues, as the Spirit enabled them.

This is the story of the arrival of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, fifty days after Jesus rose from the grave. Prior to this, the Holy Spirit didn't come to stay in the lives of believers. He would empower someone for a specific task or time, but He wouldn't remain. After Pentecost, the Spirit came to live in the hearts of believers forever.

### What are some signs that the Holy Spirit lives within someone?

As we saw in Acts 2, when the Holy Spirit came upon the believers, they were empowered with gifts. In this specific instance, they were given the ability to speak in different languages. And on that day, it so happened that thousands of Jews from all over the known world had gathered in Jerusalem to observe Pentecost, all speaking different languages. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, each person heard the gospel in his or her own language (see Acts 2:6). On that day, three thousand people repented of their sins and were baptized—and the church was born.

This is the heart of this book: the Holy Spirit is the One who comes to live inside you when you place your faith in Jesus. When He does, He gives you at least one spiritual gift that can be used to glorify God and build up the church. This means that if you are a believer, you are gifted!

### How does it make you feel to know that the Holy Spirit has gifted you to serve God?

CLOSE IN PRAYER.

*Thank You, God, for sending Your Spirit to live within me. As You counsel, convict, and guide me into truth, help me to listen to You and obey You. As I learn about the gifts You have given me, help me to use them for Your glory and to build up Your church. Amen.*

**Keep going and growing in your knowledge and understanding of the Holy Spirit by completing the next four days of devotions.**

Day 1 will give you the opportunity to go further into the Word of God. Today let's spend some time deepening our understanding of who the Holy Spirit is and what He wants to do in us.

Read Galatians 5:22–23.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. The law is not against such things.

**The word “fruit” is singular in this passage, not plural. Why does this matter?**

If we are not strong in one of these areas, we don't get to dismiss it as “not my thing.” We must be growing in all nine of these areas. That is why these are the “fruit” of the Spirit, not “fruits.”

**Which of these qualities of the fruit of the Spirit is most difficult for you? What needs to happen in your heart to let the Spirit grow you in that area?**

As the Holy Spirit grows us in these areas, our character is shaped, Jesus becomes more evident in our lives, and God is glorified. The Holy Spirit doesn't just give us gifts—He transforms us and grows us in love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.

Lord, help me to allow Your Spirit to grow love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control in me so that I can become who You want me to be. Amen.

## KEEP GOING

## Day 2

Psalm 119:11 says, “I have treasured your word in my heart so that I may not sin against you.” Day 2 will focus on treasuring God’s Word by giving you different ways to memorize Scripture.

### Read 1 John 4:4.

You are from God, little children, and you have conquered them, because the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world.

This verse is a great reminder that the Holy Spirit who lives in you is greater than the enemy. Memorizing this verse can help you fight temptation by reminding you who the Holy Spirit is and how He can help you defeat sin.

Use the following technique to memorize 1 John 4:4. Read the verse several times. Then try to remember it with only the first letter in each word revealed as a hint.

Y \_ a \_ f \_ \_ G \_ , l \_ \_ \_ c \_ \_ \_ , a \_ y \_ h \_ \_  
c \_ \_ \_ \_ t \_ \_ , b \_ \_ \_ \_ t \_ \_ o \_ \_ w \_ \_ i \_ i \_ y \_ i \_  
g \_ \_ \_ t \_ \_ t \_ \_ o \_ \_ w \_ \_ i \_ i \_ t \_ \_ w \_ \_ . 1 John 4:4

Repeat this process until you can fill in the blanks without help. Then try it again without using the first letters as a hint.

\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ , \_ \_ \_ \_ \_ , \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ , \_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_  
\_ \_ \_ \_ \_ . 1 John 4:4

Once you have the verse memorized, write it on a note card. As you memorize more verses, your stack of note cards will grow. Review them frequently. Memorizing Scripture will help you treasure God’s Word in your heart.

CLOSE IN PRAYER.



Day 3 will focus on prayer—an important practice for growing your relationship with God.

**Read Hebrews 4:16.**

Therefore, let us approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in time of need.

In this verse, the writer helps us understand that because of Jesus, we can speak freely to God and boldly approach Him with everything on our hearts. Spend the next few minutes praying, using the PRAY acronym below. Feel free to write your prayers in a journal, or just let the words, descriptions, and suggested verses below guide you as you pray silently.

**PAUSE:** Don't rush. Examine your heart and see if there is anything you need to confess as you begin your time of prayer. Listen for the Spirit as He prompts your heart (see Ps. 139:23-24).

**REJOICE:** Give praise and thanks to God for who He is and for all He has done (see Ps. 100).

**ASK:** Bring your requests to God, both you own needs and the needs of others (see Phil. 4:7).

**YIELD:** Submit yourself, your desires, and your will to God. Give Him control of your life (see Luke 22:42).

**CLOSE YOUR TIME OF PRAYER.**

God, I am so grateful that You allow me to come into Your presence and speak with You. Help me to listen to You and obey You. Your will be done in me. Amen.

On Day 4, you will have options. You can spend time silently reflecting on what you've learned this week, journaling, or doing something that reveals the truth of what God has taught you.

**Read James 1:22-25.**

But be doers of the word and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. Because if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like someone looking at his own face in a mirror. For he looks at himself, goes away, and immediately forgets what kind of person he was. But the one who looks intently into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres in it, and is not a forgetful hearer but a doer who works—this person will be blessed in what he does.

**REFLECT:** What have you learned about the Holy Spirit this week? How can you be a doer of the Word this week, with the help of the Holy Spirit?

**JOURNAL:** Using a notebook or journal, write about who the Holy Spirit is. How is He counseling you, convicting you, and guiding you in truth?

**GO AND DO:** Have you been ignoring the Holy Spirit's prompting to do something specific? If so, don't put it off. Be obedient to Him in faith and with confidence. Otherwise, spend some time praying specifically about how you can walk closer in step with the Spirit (see Gal. 5:25).

**CLOSE IN PRAYER.**

Spirit, guide me. Change me. Make me more like Jesus every day. Help me not to try in my own strength to walk faithfully with You but to let You work and move through me. Amen.