

# Spiritual Gifts: *Which Gift?*

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## Which Gift?

As we proceed with understanding and applying our spiritual gifts, I would like to share with you two pitfalls we as Christians could face. These are from a book by Peter Wagner titled *Your Spiritual Gifts Can Help Your Church Grow*.

### Words of Warning

We should beware of two human tendencies when dealing with spiritual gifts:

The first is ...

1. **Gift exaltation.** This is the tendency to exalt a particular gift as the most important gift and, therefore, neglect the rest. This can result in elevating a particular individual who possesses that gift, or in emphasizing the person or the gift *over* the Holy Spirit who gives the gift. We see this in some *personality* ministries.

The second is ...

2. **Gift projection.** This is the tendency to proclaim that everyone must have a particular gift and that all Christians will exhibit a particular gift as proof that they are true Christians (e.g., some Pentecostals believe that all Christians have the gift of tongues).

Here's an interesting fable which illustrates these principles. (See page 102.)

“A group of animals decided to improve their general welfare by starting a school. The curriculum included swimming, running, climbing and flying. The duck, an excellent swimmer, was deficient in other areas, so he majored in climbing, running and flying, much to the detriment of his swimming. The rabbit, a superior runner, was forced to spend so much of his time in other classes that he soon lost much of his famed speed. The squirrel, who had been rated ‘A’ as a climber dropped to a ‘C’ because his instructors spent hours trying to teach him to swim and fly. And the eagle was disciplined for soaring to the tree-top when he had been told to learn how to climb, even though flying was most natural to him.”

So ends the fable.

Sometimes we can expect too much of others, or of ourselves. It's easy to judge others for not doing what we do, or to judge ourselves for not doing what others do. God has blessed us with many diverse spiritual gifts. He expects us to use them for the benefit of His people.

Ephesians 4:11-16 explains why God has given us these spiritual gifts. Here are verse 15 and 16 in the New Living Translation version:

Ephesians 4:15-16

Instead, we will hold to the truth in love, becoming more and more in every way like Christ, who is the head of the body, His church. Under His direction, the whole body is fitted together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

Thank you.