



## WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

Jay McSwain, the creator of one of the most widely used spiritual gift assessments in the United States is using the word “uselessness” in describing spiritual gift assessments? Let me explain. After 15 years in working with thousands of churches and organizations across the country and outside the United States, I have come to many conclusions. One giant conclusion is spiritual gift assessments ALONE may possibly have done more harm to helping people discover their spiritual gifts than they have benefited people in discovering their spiritual gifts. Even more important they may have even hindered people in discovering what God created them to do in ministry (Ephesians 2:10). You might ask why would make such a bold assumption that spiritual gift assessments have been harmful in helping people discover their purpose in Kingdom work. Again, let me explain.

For years churches have encouraged (usually with a sermon series about spiritual gifts) their members to take a spiritual gift assessment so “we can help you find a place to serve within our church.” The problem is countless individuals have taken spiritual gift assessments believing that they would definitely discover their spiritual gifts based on the assessment AND their church would help them find a place of service based on their spiritual gift assessment scores. Sadly, many churches made a commitment that was not fulfilled either by the church or the spiritual gift assessment in helping people discover where to serve. I have spoken with hundreds if not thousands of people who have been disappointed in their church regarding the commitment to help them discover their spiritual gifts. Not only have many been disappointed, but often disillusioned about the value of any spiritual gift assessment in helping them to not only discover their spiritual gifts, but more importantly learn how and where to use them in ministry.



**▼ THE PLACE FOR SPIRITUAL GIFT ASSESSMENTS**

With all of the above said there is a place (no pun intended) for spiritual gift assessments. The place for spiritual gift assessments is at the beginning of the discovery process in learning how and where God desires to use you based on how He has created and gifted you. This year I have come up with what I am calling the human analogy to show the proper place to use spiritual gift assessments along with other assessments like personality, abilities, etc. Spiritual Gift Assessments are the skeleton for helping people discover their specific gifts based on the assessment and the teachings from Scripture.

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## **PRINCIPLES TO DISCOVERING YOUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

At PLACE Ministries we believe there are eight principles for a Christian who desires to discover their spiritual gifts.

### **THE PRINCIPLES ARE:**

- 1. Believe you have a spiritual gift –1 Corinthians 12:7**
- 2. Ask God to reveal your spiritual gifts –James 1:5**
- 3. Get involved in ministry –1 Corinthians 12**
- 4. Teaching by other Christians –Colossians 3:16 –this is where the value of spiritual gifts assessments, books on spiritual gifts, messages, or spiritual gift study guides come into play in helping a Christian discover their spiritual gifts.**
- 5. Evaluate your effectiveness –John 15:8**
- 6. Expect confirmation from the body –Galatians 2:9**
- 7. Examine your feelings –Psalm 37:4**
- 8. Examine your motives –Proverbs 16:2**

There is a common element in principles 5-8 (evaluate your effectiveness, expect confirmation, and examine your feelings and motives). The common element is you must get involved in ministry (principle three) to evaluate, expect, and examine. There is no spiritual gifts assessment that will replace getting involved in ministry in discovering your spiritual gifts.

### **A THREE STEP PROCESS:**



Spiritual Gift Assessments are useful when they are used in the beginning of the discovery process and not an end in themselves. They are not useful when they

are the ONLY way a person attempts to discover their spiritual gifts. I passionately hope that if you or your church or organization have or are just using a spiritual gift assessment you will consider adding to the assessment the teaching principles behind the assessment along with coaching that is powerful in helping people find their PLACE in life and ministry.

If you have used our Spiritual Gift Assessment or any other spiritual gift assessment without the teaching and coaching components involved in the past, we hope you would consider adding these powerful components of teaching and coaching in helping yourself and helping others connect in meaningful ministry. If you are using the three step process of personal discover through our PLACE assessments or whatever assessments you use, along with teaching and coaching, we encourage you to keep on keeping on in helping every believer become a minister. PLACE Ministries and myself would welcome the opportunity to serve you and your church or organization in the days ahead. Also, if you read through the entire article and just the heading thanks for hearing me out.

**Serving Him Together,**

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jay".

**Jay**  
***Founder & President of PLACE Ministries***