

## SERVICE

Sometimes called the gift of helps, it is the Spirit-given ability to serve the church in any supporting role, usually practical, though sometimes spiritual in nature. This gift enables a believer to serve joyfully and diligently wherever and whenever required. It can be used, for example, to organize volunteers, assist with church programs, work in the kitchen, raise funds or help in their ministries.

### CHARACTERISTICS

1. An ability to see practical needs and a desire to meet them.
2. A joy in serving when it frees others to do other things.
3. A tendency to disregard personal health and comfort in order to serve others.
4. A special enjoyment in providing for another's physical needs and comforts. An ability to remember likes and dislikes.
5. Responds to appreciation as confirmation that service is necessary and satisfactory.
6. A desire for clear instructions (without time limits); enjoys short-range projects and becomes frustrated with long-range responsibilities.
7. A strong desire to be with others and to engage in a variety of activities, which provides more opportunities to serve.
8. More comfortable doing things that do not require study or spiritual insight.

### CAUTIONS

1. Neglecting home responsibilities to help others because they enjoy the sincere gratefulness from those they help (which they may not get at home).
2. Accepting too many jobs at one time. It is difficult for servers to say "no" to needs. This can wear them out physically, and may result in tension and physical ailment.
3. Being too persistent in giving unrequested help to others.
4. Going around proper authorities in order to get jobs done. The proper channels may look like unnecessary red tape to servers who want to get jobs done as soon as possible. They will even use personal funds they cannot afford to avoid delays.
5. Excluding others from helping, finding it extremely difficult to delegate jobs to others.
6. Interfering with God's discipline by offering help prematurely. For example, meeting the prodigal son's needs in the pig sty may have hindered his repentance and return. *Luke 15:1-11*
7. Becoming hurt when those they help are ungrateful. Servers deeply desire sincere appreciation from those they serve, which can cause them to seek human approval.
8. Getting side-tracked while working on an assignment in order to give a helping hand to another need. This may cause those they are serving to become frustrated because tasks they previously committed to are not completed on schedule.