

Noble Subjects

Redemptive Gifts Test

Over the years we have received a steady stream of e-mails saying that someone had listened to the CDs on the redemptive gifts, weren't quite sure what their gift was and wanted a test to find out for sure.

Alternatively, someone writes that they took "the" test and are excited to know what their gift is now. Meanwhile, everything in their e-mail contradicts what they have announced as their gift.



There are twin issues here - the tests and determining your gift. Let's look at them separately.

First of all, the reason we have not yet released a test is because we cannot achieve the level of accuracy we desire. There are at least a couple dozen redemptive gift tests on the market at present, and at the risk of offending a LOT of people, I am going to go on record as saying that most of them are only about 60% accurate.

The first group where they break down badly is people who have a high exposure to the gifts teaching and are already convinced of their gift, and they are wrong. When someone is deeply vested in a wrong conclusion, they are able to consciously and subconsciously skew the test to get the results they want.

The simple reality is that a huge percentage of all Teachers reject their gift. Most think they are Prophets or Rulers. Many male Mercies have never had the Mercy gift explained in their key of music, so they don't recognize themselves. At least 40% of the people who think they are Prophets are not.

I personally know people in all the categories who reject their gift and erroneously claim one that they are not, simply because they thoroughly dislike someone with the gift they have. They cannot imagine themselves being like "that" person, so they embrace denial. Defiantly!

It is a challenge to design a test that is sufficiently subtle that people who have a deep vested interest in skewing the test, can't.



The second group that gets bad results are those who were deeply wounded early on in life. You have two scenarios here. There are some who were under such a severe Moabite curse that they were never allowed to have an identity. They were told loudly and repeatedly what they needed to be in order to accommodate those around them. When this person is an adult and faces a series of questions about identity, they simply don't know what is inside them. They answer the questions based on what they think (or hope) the other person wants to hear. This certainly skews the results, and it is unhelpful to the person who is already running an identity deficit.



It is this group that makes me hesitate the most with a test. Because they are accustomed to taking someone else's word for who they are, they would have a high probability of buying into the results of a test, unquestioningly. If our test did not accurately capture the original design that is buried under the rubble of their upbringing for all these years, we would simply exacerbate the damage previously done.

Others have successfully rejected the identity that was forced on them, but they are so wounded that the majority of their responses to life are defensive or reactionary, not from their original software. This pain-based group has a hard time expressing who they really are, so a test only reinforces their confusion.

There is a third group that is hard to test, and that is the group that by design or culture is not introspective. There simply is a set of people who are so absorbed in the world out there that they don't really know what goes on inside them. They are on emotional autopilot. That can be a mark of very good emotional health, but it does make for a challenge when we are trying to develop a test which accurately captures a bunch of stuff they don't know exists inside them!

We hope to have a highly accurate test someday. Right now, it just isn't there yet.

In the meantime, what are your options? Ah, there is a great option which works for everyone who is willing to work it. I know it will shock you, but it took me five years to figure out my own gift and ten years to figure out my wife's.

So I developed this tool out of desperation, and it worked. (I am so grateful that there was not a plethora of inaccurate tests available back then!)

Simply put, I tried to BE each of the redemptive gifts to see which one fit the best.

Back then I did not know the gifts well, but I could find someone who was a stereotypic example of each gift. I took those seven people and matched them up to the days of the week then I tried to be the individual that matched the day.



Here is what it looked like. It has been awhile, but I remember that Cory was my example for the Servant. Since Servant is the second of the seven gifts, Cory was my role model for Monday.

At that time I was working in the HVAC industry. My goal was to get inside Cory's head all day Monday and try to act like him. So I would get a call, go to the job and be myself. I looked at their unit, came to a conclusion, got ready to work, then said, "Oh! I am supposed to be Cory today. If Cory were standing here, looking at this exact unit, what would he do that is different than what I was going to do?"

Time and again, I could see how he would think differently about the technical problem, or how he would respond differently to the customer.

So Tuesday was another day, another person, another series of events in which I tried to be someone else.

Each week I would cycle through the seven role models, trying to BE a different gift each day of the week.

First of all, it was an excellent exercise because it forced me to learn all of the gifts very well, and the insights I have gained over those months have stood me in good stead for 20 years. All of us live in community. All of us are surrounded by the other gifts. All of us would do well to understand how they see the world differently than we do, when looking at the same data.

Second, I was able to definitively determine my gift, because it was so easy to be the one person, that one day. No matter whether I was grocery shopping, mowing the lawn, reading a book or being a dad, it was simple to step into that one persona. Each of the other six was a learned discipline which did not resonate with who I really was.

So scars and all, it was a slam dunk who I was by matching my internal world to someone else's redemptive gift. I also knew who I was not!

This process obviously takes a bit more time and effort than taking a test. The payoff, however, is immense in that you not only get the answer about your own gift, but you get highly valuable insight into your community.

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