

# Why Does Your Gift Matter?

It took me five years to figure out my redemptive gift, and longer than that to figure out my wife's. During all of the time that I thought I was something else, I was actually still walking out my gift, although I did not recognize it. Our redemptive gifts are so defining that they operate whether we know about it or not (and whether we like our gift or not!!!!).

This is true even when there is violent rejection of our gift by us or others. At least half the people with the gift of Teaching who I personally know, are in full-blown rejection of their gift, insisting that they are Prophet or Ruler. The Mercy and Giver gifts also seem to experience a significant amount of rejection of their own gift. By contrast, the Servant and Exhorter seem to be the most commonly at home in their design.

So why does it matter? If a Teacher has positioned himself in a slot more suitable for a Ruler and is doing a truly excellent job, while being self-deceived, what difference does it make?

Well, I see two reasons why it matters. The first is because of the sweet spot for growth. Simply put, we get a vastly higher return on investment for growth in the area of our design than outside our design.

Take my story. Because I am a missionary's kid, I had moved 27 times in my first 40 years, often from one continent to another. I can out perform most Rulers when it comes to the logistics of shutting down an entire household and relocating it. However, those are all learned skills.

If I were to take 100 units of time and effort and invest them in getting an MBA so as to strengthen my Ruler skill set, I would probably only come away with 100 units of change.

On the other hand, if I were to take the same 100 units of resources and invest them in studying 10 world-class men and women with the redemptive gift of Prophet to see how they developed new paradigms, I would end up with 1,000 units of change in my life.

So it is perfectly OK to study things related to any of the gifts, but if you want to live strategically, you need to know your gift, so you can unpack it, because you will get the highest amount of transformation in the area of your design.

The second reason that it helps to know your gift, is because of the output of your life. When I have someone working for me in the area of learned skills I again am getting a one for one ROI.



I pay them for eight hours of work, and they give me eight hours of product in return.

On the other hand, when someone is working in the area of their design, I will get far more value for the time they spend there, and they will enjoy the process much more.

So a Ruler gift is certainly capable of answering the phone and doing customer service, but if I had a Servant, Exhorter or Giver on the phone, they would establish a far better connection with the customer, all other things being equal.

To summarize: if you know what your gift is, you can grow much faster than if you don't. And if you know what your gift is, you can make a much larger impact in the community than if you simply work for best available wages.

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From the Quarterdeck, in Anaheim

