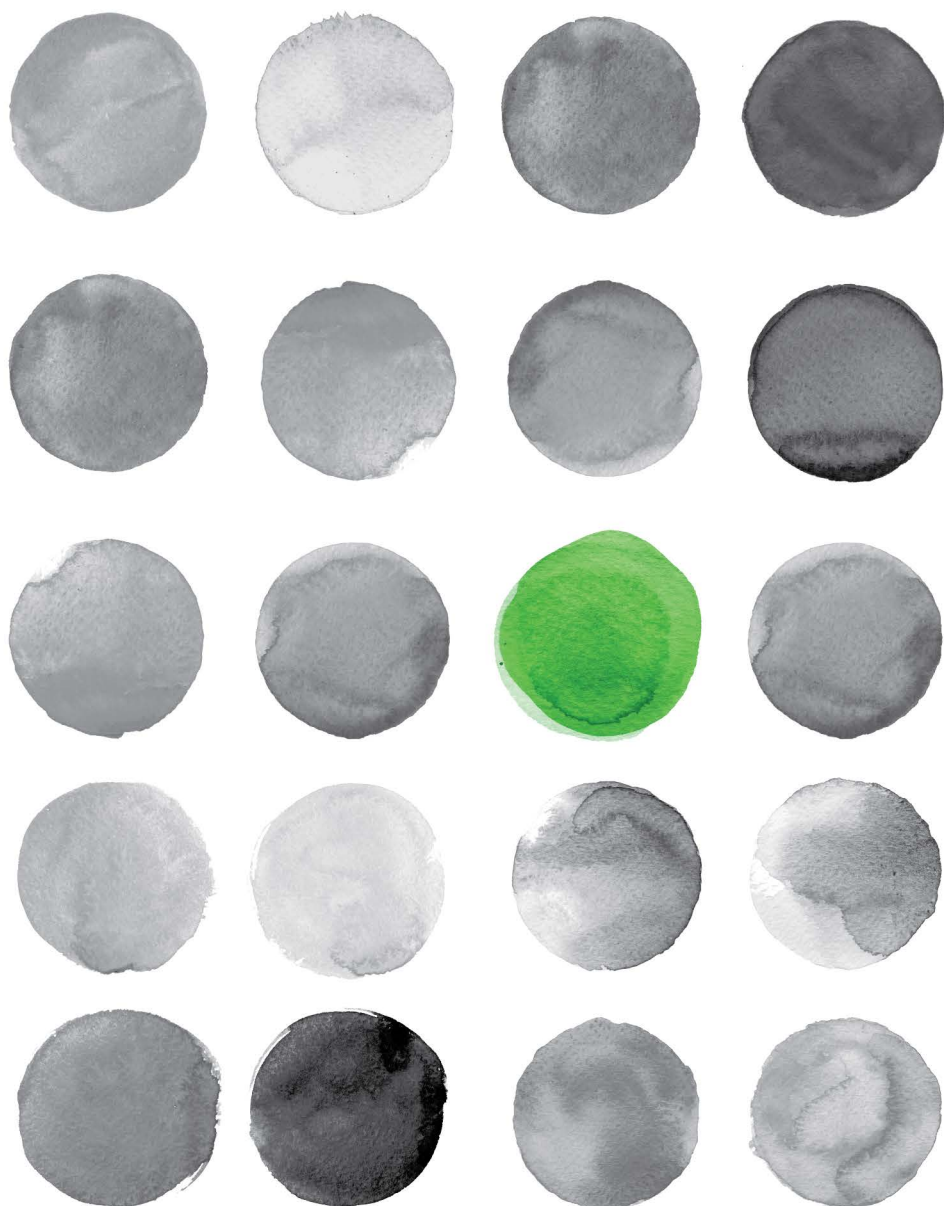




Spiritual Gifts

Discovering God's purpose for you



NAC-USA
DEVELOPMENT
INSTITUTE



Spiritual Gifts

Discovering God's purpose for you



The purpose of this Spiritual Gift small group series is to:

- Provide tools for us to discover and utilize our Spiritual Gifts.
- Equip us in working together to fulfill God's calling.
- Promote spiritual health, growth, and maturity.

This Spiritual Gifts small group series is designed to promote the following ongoing benefits:

- Finding your place in the Body of Christ.
- Aligning yourself to the purposes and good works that God has planned and prepared for you.
- New opportunities for Christian sharing, fellowship, and joy in serving others.
- A source of new joy, enthusiasm, ideas, and talent into your life and into your congregation.
- A new culture of shared congregational leadership based upon collaboration, inspiration, and respect for diversity.
- A sharing of congregational responsibilities, allowing members and ministers to focus on areas of passion and giftedness.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DESCRIPTIONS

ADMINISTRATION: The gift of Administration is the divine enablement to understand what makes the Church of Christ function and the special ability to plan and execute procedures that accomplish the goals of the ministry. Individuals with the gift of Administration contribute organization.

APOSTLESHIP: The gift of Apostleship is the divine enablement to oversee the development of new serving opportunities and initiatives with spiritual clarity. In its simplest form, individuals with the gift of Apostleship have a missionary or pioneering spirit and contribute development. The gift of Apostleship is different and distinct from the ordained ministry of an Apostle. A man bearing the Apostle ministry may or may not be prominent in the gift of Apostleship.

CRAFTSMANSHIP: The gift of Craftsmanship is the divine enablement to use skill and creativity to design or build items to be used for the purpose of serving the Lord. Individuals with the gift of Craftsmanship contribute labor.

CREATIVE COMMUNICATION: The gift of Creative Communication is the divine enablement to communicate God's truth through a variety of art forms. Individuals with the gift of Creative Communication contribute artistry.

DISCERNMENT: The gift of Discernment is the divine enablement to differentiate between good and evil, right and wrong, and distinguish the spirit of truth from the spirit of error. Individuals with the gift of Discernment contribute truth.

ENCOURAGEMENT: The gift of Encouragement is the divine enablement to come to the side of others, comforting and strengthening those who are discouraged or struggling. Those with the gift of Encouragement remind believers of the promises of God and exhort them to renew their relationship with Christ. Individuals with the gift of Encouragement contribute affirmation.

EVANGELISM: The gift of Evangelism is the divine enablement to effectively communicate the gospel to unbelievers so they respond in faith and move toward discipleship in Christ. Individuals with the gift of Evangelism contribute testimony. The gift of Evangelism is different and distinct from the ordained ministry of an Evangelist. A man bearing the Evangelist ministry may or may not be prominent in the gift of Evangelism.

FAITH: The gift of Faith is the divine enablement to live with untiring certainty in God's desire and ability to fulfill His promises. Individuals with the gift of Faith contribute confidence.

GIVING: The gift of Giving is the divine enablement to be charitable with money or resources without tying conditions or demands to generosity. Individuals with the gift of Giving contribute resources.

HELPS: The gift of Helps is the divine enablement to joyfully lend support and meet the needs of others, often through hands-on activities. Individuals with the gift of Helps contribute support.

HOSPITALITY: The gift of Hospitality is the divine enablement to deliver both natural care and soul care for people by providing fellowship, food, and shelter. The gift of Hospitality is needed to fulfill our Vision statement, "...a church where people feel at home." Individuals with the gift of Hospitality contribute comfort.

INTERCESSION: The gift of Intercession is the divine enablement to have an awareness of the needs of others and put the gift into action by praying on their behalf. Individuals with the gift of Intercession contribute prayer.

KNOWLEDGE: The gift of Knowledge is the divine enablement that requires wisdom to pursue and realize biblical insights and to clarify these revelations for others. Individuals with the gift of Knowledge contribute understanding.

LEADERSHIP: The gift of Leadership is the divine enablement to clearly cast a vision, direct, and motivate people to work together toward a common goal. Those with this gift lead to Christ, not themselves. Individuals with the gift of Leadership contribute direction.

MERCY: The gift of Mercy is the divine enablement to perceive suffering and demonstrate compassion, thereby bringing help, relief, and comfort to those in need. Individuals with the gift of Mercy contribute dignity.

SHEPHERDING: The gift of Shepherding is the divine enablement to nurture, care for, and guide people toward ongoing spiritual maturity and becoming like Christ. Individuals with the gift of Shepherding contribute guidance.

TEACHING: The gift of Teaching is the divine enablement to comprehend, clearly communicate, and help others apply God's Word to their lives, bringing about spiritual maturity. Individuals with the gift of Teaching contribute enlightenment.

WISDOM: The gift of Wisdom is the divine enablement to practically and effectively apply a spiritual truth to meet a need in a specific situation. Believers with the gift of Wisdom contribute perspective.

Other gifts can be found in the Bible, such as tongues and interpretation, that are not covered in this small group series.



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Introduction

What to expect from this Small Group Experience

INTRODUCTION

What to expect...

This small group series is designed as an introduction to spiritual gifts and was created to help us better understand who God has made us to be and how we personally fit into His plan of salvation. It contains eight sessions, each uniquely intended to help us be more introspective and better understand God's special purpose for each of us. It is designed with a focus on our individual spiritual gifts (our strongest capabilities), helping us to be more Christ-like and to increase our spiritual health.

Spiritual gifts are gifts from God that are revealed when we accept and engage the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is the source of all spiritual gifts. Therefore, when we are sealed with the Holy Spirit, the potential is there for any or all of the spiritual gifts to emerge throughout our lives as God allows. Engaging these gifts is necessary for the development and preparation of the bride of Christ. God gives us a unique set of abilities for the noble task to bring glory to Him, to make our personal contribution to edify (build up) the Body of Christ, and to help us mature in the image of Christ. Using Jesus as our example, we look to transform our nature by exemplifying the gifts of the Spirit. The use of our spiritual gifts measures our spiritual maturity. By consciously developing and exercising our spiritual gifts, we promote maturity within the Body of Christ. Recognition and consistent use of these gifts help us toward spiritual transformation in all areas of our lives: our families, our congregations, our communities, and even our professions. We hope that you will look at this discussion series as a personal challenge as you take an enlightening journey of self-discovery.

This small group series is designed to provide a deeper understanding of the eighteen most commonly-occurring spiritual gifts. We will establish a practical and biblical basis for the gifts we discuss. This small group series is organized into eight sessions, each session running approximately seventy-five to ninety minutes in length. It's important that each session allows enough time for the participants to thoroughly discuss and internalize the principles introduced. It's equally important that each participant is able to consistently attend each of the eight sessions, as the material in this series is cumulative with each new session building upon the principles introduced in previous sessions. Additional preparation prior to each meeting is essential. Several sessions require assessments to be completed individually. The results of each assessment then become

the basis of the information covered in that session and are fundamental in future sessions. Additional reading and completion of exercises prior to discussions will assist in gaining a deeper understanding. The readings are also designed to provide us with a basis of understanding that will prove valuable in attaining livelier and more insightful small group discussions each time.

Material for each session is broken into four categories:

1. **Session material** (video, script, and accompanying questions)
2. **Groundwork** (assessments and materials that challenge us and create relevance)
3. **Going Deeper** (supplemental information and worksheets to prompt deeper thoughts and help us better understand the principles)
4. **Spiritual Gift Worksheets** (SG Worksheets)

Session material – Each video contains a core principle which becomes the basis of that session’s material. Please read the session or watch the video, and review the questions in advance, so that you may contribute to the discussions in each session. During your group discussion, it may make sense to watch the video again as a refresher.

Groundwork – These include assessments, exercises, and/or additional explanations which allow us to discover God’s design within us personally. Some of this material may be introspective or provide a deeper understanding of the information covered in the video.

Going Deeper – These materials are designed to provide practical steps to help us organize and understand the session’s material. These documents are both hands-on and introspective in nature. These documents are designed to prepare us for discussions in upcoming sessions, even if they are not specifically covered with the group.

Spiritual Gift Worksheets – God equips all of us uniquely. Each of us tend to relate better with some spiritual gifts than we do with others. To fully understand the spiritual gifts given to each of us by God, it is necessary to be attentive to all of the spiritual gifts, as each of them are given for the edification of the Body of Christ. We can increase in our admiration of God's gifts by seeking the following:

- ***Awareness*** of all of the spiritual gifts

By discussing each gift in depth, we are able to recognize them in others and see how they benefit all of us. We can learn by listening to one another's perspectives and experiences with each gift.

- ***Appreciation*** of others' spiritual gifts

Whether or not we relate to a gift personally, being able to affirm and being thankful for each of the gifts provides insight into how the Body of Christ works together. It also helps us see the goodness and purpose that God has given to each person, and in turn, we can be grateful for them and for what they contribute.

- ***Development*** of our most prominent spiritual gifts

As we identify our primary gifts, it will be beneficial to think about what the different stages of maturity and growth of this gift may look like. Each person can understand the gifts they possess by delving deeper into the traits, characteristics, and cautions related to each gift. Growth and development occur as we actively utilize our gifts, which ultimately will lead to fruitfulness.

Most sessions will contain a short discussion on two or three spiritual gifts. Biblical examples have been used to characterize and provide examples of these spiritual gifts to promote understanding. A two-part worksheet is provided for each gift and will be discussed. The first part of the worksheet includes an expanded gift description for further understanding of the gift. The second part of the worksheet contains questions to both prepare you and provide guidance for each discussion.

Jesus invested many hours of teaching and conversation with His disciples in small, intimate, and informal settings. In these settings, He equipped them for a life of discipleship. Today, we are all encouraged to view our lives as a journey of discipleship. We have been called by Jesus Christ Himself. We have started as listeners and then believers. However, He desires to equip us further for His service so that we may take up His cause, to edify His Body, "the Church," and inspire new disciples.

As mentioned, some preparation at home prior to each session will be necessary. Prayer is also a necessary and vital part of preparation, specifically before working through an assessment. Although some sessions may require a little more preparation than others, on average you should plan approximately one hour for the following:

Approximately 20 Minutes to review the session material and questions

Approximately 20 Minutes to complete the Groundwork and review the Going Deeper materials

Approximately 20 Minutes to review the Spiritual Gifts worksheets and complete the questions

= Approximately 60 Minutes total preparation time for each session

NOTE: Because of the length of preparation time necessary for each session, we would recommend planning a session every other week to give ample time for the participants to prepare.



INTRODUCTION

What Spiritual Gifts are not...

Spiritual gifts are gifts from God that are revealed when we accept and engage the Holy Spirit.

Now concerning spiritual gifts, I do not want you to be ignorant.
1 Corinthians 12:1

Spiritual gifts cannot be used effectively when there is confusion surrounding what they are and how God intends them to be expressed. Knowing what your spiritual gifts are and how God intended them to function within the church is crucial for you, the church, and the world. It usually takes more than reading about spiritual gifts to identify them. Ongoing prayer, study, experience, and reflection will provide the additional insights you need to avoid confusion and to serve according to your giftedness.

1. Spiritual gifts are not natural talents or abilities.

NATURAL TALENTS

Given at physical birth
God-given to all people

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Given at spiritual birth
God-given to believers

Sometimes a talent can be transformed by the Holy Spirit.
Manager **into** Leadership or Administration
Singer **into** Creative Communication
Carpenter **into** Craftsmanship

Both natural talents and spiritual gifts need to be identified and developed!

Your spiritual gifts are your primary ministry contribution to the Body of Christ. Your talents may or may not be a contributing factor...In order to determine whether or not there is a relationship between a natural talent and a spiritual gift, ask yourself, "Does my natural ability regularly glorify God and edify others in the church?"

2. Spiritual gifts are not the Fruit of the Spirit.

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
Galatians 5:22-23

FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

“BEING” qualities –
inward characteristics of the
believer’s heart

Attitudes

Results of a healthy walk with
God

Necessary for effective ministry

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

“DOING” qualities –
task-oriented functions that
God has called and equipped
each believer to perform.

Aptitudes

Abilities given by the
Holy Spirit

Necessary for effective ministry

The fruit of the Spirit is a natural by-product of an abiding and obedient relationship with Jesus Christ. Obedience and submission to Christ will, over time, transform our selfish and sinful hearts to produce yielded hearts that evidence authentic fruit...God is not as much concerned with what we do as He is with the spirit in which we serve...to maximize our ministry and life potential, we need to express both the fruit and the gifts. What are the gifts without love? What is love without the expression of gifts? Which wing of the airplane is most important? Both are essential for a successful flight.

3. Spiritual gifts are not church roles.

MINISTRY OR ROLE	SPIRITUAL GIFTS
Pastor/Minister	Teaching, Apostleship, Leadership, Shepherding
Sunday school Teacher	Encouragement, Hospitality, Shepherding, Teaching
Indicates general role	Indicate specific functions

Ministry titles indicate organizational positions; spiritual gifts indicate ministry contributions. When we confuse gifts with titles, we can create inappropriate expectations of those serving in various positions. Knowing your spiritual gifts will indicate how you will most effectively function within whatever organizational position you are [serving].



4. Spiritual gifts are not Christian disciplines.

(Solitude, silence, reading and meditating on Scripture, praying, fasting, giving, worship, etc.)

CHRISTIAN DISCIPLINES

All should be practiced in a believer's life

Builds up, strengthens, enables growth in the individual believer

Some of the many ways we receive grace

Everyone should exercise disciplines

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

A few will be practiced in a believer's life

Builds up, strengthens, enables growth in the Body of Christ.

The specific, God-given ways we are to extend grace

Everyone should express their Spiritual Gifts

The disciplines are significant habits that enable believers to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. Each of us should be developing habits that keep us spiritually and relationally healthy. These disciplines are activities evidenced in some measure in the life of every fully devoted follower of Jesus Christ. Spiritual disciplines strengthen the individual; spiritual gifts strengthen others...Disciplines essentially put believers in positions of submission to worship the majesty of God, hear the voice of God, discern the will of God, receive the power of God, and be nurtured in the love of God in order to extend the grace of God.

The material in this section was adapted from
Bruce Bugbee, *What You Do Best in the Body of Christ*, 2005.

A black and white photograph of a hand pointing to a line of text in a book. The text is upside down and reads: "CANNOT then be more than with an eye". The hand is positioned on the right side of the frame, with the index finger pointing towards the text. The background is blurred, showing other pages of the book.

Session 1

What are Spiritual Gifts?

SESSION 1

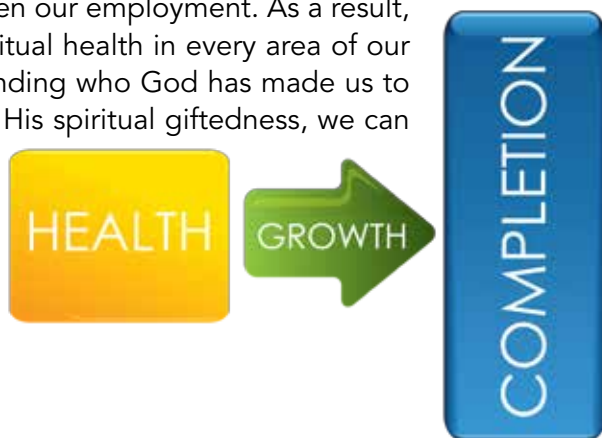
What are Spiritual Gifts?

Discovering our spiritual gifts is a process aimed at understanding how God has designed us and what He expects of us. It is about discovering “who we are” and understanding our place within the body of Christ. It is a tool to support spiritual health, growth, and maturity. Through this process, we better understand how and where He wants each of us to engage our spiritual gifts in His salvation plan while preparing for Christ’s return. Through this process we are encouraged to:

- Discover our God-given calling to help one another
- Increase our joy in the Lord
- Edify the body of Christ by working with our spiritual gifts

Beginning with Spiritual Health

We begin with the pursuit of spiritual health. Spiritual health can also be understood as spiritual wholeness, which gives us the foundation for a good relationship with Jesus Christ. We invest in our spiritual health when we cultivate a relationship with God that deepens our knowledge of Him and ourselves. Our NAC USA “Stepping Forward” plan illustrates spiritual health as the first of three steps toward completion. Recognizing and using our spiritual gifts are an integral part of the first step – becoming and remaining spiritually healthy. As with most aspects of our faith, our spiritual health, as well as our spiritual gifts, are not only concepts for church, but are to be utilized in every part of our life. More specifically, our spiritual life is not limited solely to our congregations, but also includes our families, our communities, and even our employment. As a result, we want to strive for spiritual health in every area of our lives. By better understanding who God has made us to be and how we embody His spiritual giftedness, we can live a life more conscious of His grace, full of His love, and pleasing in His sight, being alive with His promise.



For us to journey to health, growth, and ultimately to the completion of our mission, our preparation for the return of Jesus Christ, you and I must be transformed by Him. We must be changed! This is one of the great lessons of the gospel. Embedded within the good news of salvation is the story of everyday people who Jesus called into a closer relationship with Him. Their journey was one of discipleship. They started as listeners, which is somewhat passive, but under His mentorship, they transitioned to believers, and then to followers, and ultimately, to disciples who were both willing and able to take up His cause. Jesus not only inspired them, He equipped them.

Each One, Helping One Another

Today God wants each of us to also function in a healthy, sustainable way. Fundamentally, for us to be healthy, each soul depends on pastoral care that provides teaching, comfort, and support. The early apostolic congregations were communal. They ministered to each other and thereby, built up (or edified) the Body of Christ under the direction of the Holy Spirit and the guidance of the apostles. Today, we are seeking to promote this same activity. It is not something new; rather, it is a return to the way that the first apostolic members actually functioned. Each member was considered a valuable part of the Body of Christ, and the congregation depended on each other for encouragement and strength (Romans 16:1-16).

It is beautiful when one can say that the congregation is a single work of ministry: each one helps the other; everyone is involved; and no one is on the fringes. – Chief Apostle W. Leber

Ministering to one another is a precedent for us today, born directly out of the Gospel of Christ. Our spiritual gifts are a tool for strengthening individual souls, while at the same time building, leading, and directing healthy, sustainable congregations. Everyone recognizes and contributes their spiritual gifts for the benefit of all. However, this requires each one to possess a knowledge based upon personal discovery: What are my God given gifts? What has God called me to do? What are my passions? What experiences has God engineered in my life that have shaped my ability to serve others? How do I best integrate these factors into my life? And how

can we help integrate these factors into our congregation while leading a balanced life? This is a deeper understanding than volunteerism and requires us to be students of the Gospel.

When the consistent use of our spiritual gifts becomes an integral part of us, our gifts will help us to develop personally as well as to cultivate a culture that is based upon the Gospel of Christ. A culture based on the Gospel of Christ means that we want to live like Christ, and for those in leadership roles, to lead like Christ. It is a place where we can all engage our God-given gifts and talents to serve one another and our community in the love of Christ. Each of us has the opportunity to show Christ that we value His Church by engaging in intentional community and by sharing our life and spiritual journey with others through fellowship (Acts 2:42- 47, 1 John 1:3, 1 Corinthians 12:25-27).

The work of God is a work of ministry...This not only applies to the ministers or those who have particular tasks in God's work. This includes all brothers and sisters. This obliges the ministers to see to it that no one feels excluded. – Chief Apostle W. Leber

Increasing Our Joy in the Lord

The word “joy” is associated with laughter, pleasure, happy thoughts, and joyous events. Yet, upon reflection, joy originates out of various sources. “Joy in Christ” could never simply be a result of our circumstances. It is not something that is found only when we are happy and content. Our joy in Christ should exist every day and in all situations of life. What is your source of joy? The Chief Apostle tells us that joy can be found when we engage the gifts that God has given us.

*God will continue to care for us as a kind and good Father...He will also grant us the gifts and powers we need for our daily lives. If we engage these gifts in the mind and spirit of the gospel, they will serve to our own joy as well as to the joy of our loved ones.
– Chief Apostle J. Schneider*



SESSION 1

Questions for discussion

1. Why has God gifted all believers with spiritual gifts?
2. If you are fully engaging your gifts, how could that affect others?
3. How can the consistent use of your spiritual gifts help you develop personally?
4. From the parable of the talents, those who exercised their talents were later told, "Enter the joy of the Lord." In what ways might our spiritual health be connected to joy?

Please take a moment to summarize the Parable of the Talents together (Matthew 25:14-30 - printed on the next page).

1. What does this parable teach you?
2. How do we keep ourselves from becoming like the servant who buried his talent, neglecting what the Master gave to him?

Chief Apostle Schneider stated:

We know the parable of the talents.... all is given to us by our Heavenly Father that He wants us to work with. He wants us to use our strength and energy and maybe even our money for God's work, and to commit ourselves to it, to help our neighbor and the work of God. Then God can bless us and one day we will hear: "Enter into the joy of your lord."

GROUNDWORK

The Parable of the Talents

Please take a moment to read and be prepared to discuss the following Bible passage:

The Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30)

"For the kingdom of heaven is like a man traveling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey. Then he who had received the five talents went and traded with them, and made another five talents. And likewise he who had received two gained two more also. But he who had received one went and dug in the ground, and hid his lord's money. After a long time the lord of those servants came and settled accounts with them.

"So he who had received five talents came and brought five other talents, saying, 'Lord, you delivered to me five talents; look, I have gained five more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.' He also who had received two talents came and said, 'Lord, you delivered to me two talents; look, I have gained two more talents besides them.' His lord said to him, 'Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.'

"Then he who had received the one talent came and said, 'Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground. Look, there you have what is yours.'

"But his lord answered and said to him, 'You wicked and lazy servant, you knew that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. So you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest. Therefore, take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents.

'For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'"

[illegible]

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Faith

Pistis (Greek): conviction of truth, belief, fidelity

What is the spiritual gift of Faith?

The gift of Faith is the divine enablement to live with untiring certainty in God's desire and ability to fulfill His promises. Individuals with the gift of Faith contribute confidence.

Characteristics:

Assured, Believing, Committed, Confident, Convicted, Dedicated, Devoted, Firm Persuader, Hopeful, Inspiring, Loyal, Optimistic, Positive, Prayerful, Reliant, Steady, Trusting

How does the gift of Faith manifest itself?

Those with the gift of Faith live boldly and place the full weight of their lives in God's hands. They are rooted in a close relationship with God and have absolute confidence in His will, trusting that He has a plan for their lives. Those with the gift of Faith are keenly aware of the spiritual, along with the natural. This enables them to inspire others in belief that God plays an active role in their lives through answered prayers. They build up the church in its confidence, advancing the cause of Christ.

What do people with the gift of Faith need to be aware of?

Those with the gift of Faith must exercise patience for new believers or those struggling with doubt. They should also be mindful that there are situations where their faith can be misplaced. Planning and organizing should never be viewed as a lack of faith. Faith alone is not sufficient; those with this gift must be ready to act upon it. Apostle James warns that faith without works is dead (James 2: 20).

Biblical Example: Abraham

Abraham is the first example we will use to describe and better understand the spiritual gift of Faith. He is often referred to as the Father of Faith. In the Bible, we find a number of prominent accounts of Abraham's faith. The first is when God asked him to leave his country, not knowing where he was going, to a land that God would only later show him. The second account of Abraham's faith is when God promised him a son, and furthermore, promised that he would be the father of great nations. Abraham's great faith is also exemplified when God asked him to sacrifice his long-awaited son, Isaac.

Bible References

Matthew 8:5-13, Matthew 15:21-28, Luke 1:26-38, Acts 11:22-24, Romans 4:18-21, 1 Corinthians 12:7-9

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > *I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Teaching

Didáskalia (Greek): to instruct or bring understanding

What is the spiritual gift of Teaching?

The gift of Teaching is the divine enablement to comprehend, clearly communicate, and help others apply God's Word to their lives, bringing about spiritual maturity. Individuals with the gift of Teaching contribute enlightenment.

Characteristics:

Analytical, Articulate, Authoritative, Clarifying, Comprehensive, Demonstrating, Detailed, Disciplined, Enlightening, Explaining, Instilling, Perceptive, Practical, Reflective, Revealing, Systematic, Teachable

How does the gift of Teaching manifest itself?

Spiritual Teachers have a thirst for knowledge, always looking to understand God's Work at a deeper level. They excel at explaining complex ideas to others and effectively communicate across all ages and depths of understanding. For Teachers, opening the eyes of others is a joy, not a burden. Teachers are able to keep the attention of those they instruct and inspire others to fulfill their calling. Teachers are inspired by the Spirit and must have an understanding of the gospel, as well as the church's current doctrine and catechism.

What do people with the gift of Teaching need to be aware of?

The ability of Teachers to understand complex ideas does not stem from their own superiority, but comes as a divine gift from God's grace. Teachers must not become so detailed that they fail to translate their knowledge into life application. They should avoid pride, remembering that spirituality is not measured by knowledge. Teachers must draw their students to Christ and not to themselves.

Biblical Example: Philip

Acts 8 gives us two examples of Philip using the gift of teaching. First, we see him in the city of Samaria, teaching and speaking about the Messiah. Even Simon, a sorcerer, comes to believe after being enlightened by Philip's teachings. Then in verse 26, we come to the story of Philip and the eunuch. Philip is walking alongside the chariot when the eunuch asks Philip to explain the Book of Isaiah to him. Philip explains Isaiah through the lens of the gospel, bringing relevance to this ancient text and leading the eunuch to understanding and even to becoming baptized.

Bible References

Romans 12:6-7, 1 Corinthians 12:28-29, Acts 8:4-40, Acts 18: 24-28, Acts 20:20-21, 2 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 2:2

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > *I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.



Session 2

A Calling to Use our Gifts

SESSION 2

A Calling to Use our Gifts

Apostle Paul exhorted the congregation in Ephesus to “walk worthy of [their] calling” (Ephesians 4:1-16). Our Chief Apostle Leber once pointed out, “God calls us to love Him. He calls us to have fellowship with Him, and He calls us to His service. The entire plan of salvation is a single call of God’s love!” Today we are also called: called to use our spiritual gifts with the purpose of bringing glory to God and edifying others (Romans 15:7).

The Bible is full of wonderful examples of ordinary people called to do extraordinary things. But Peter also pointed out that even in his day, although many were called, only some heeded this call and they made their calling sure (2 Peter 1:10). Today, just as then, God calls upon His children to carry out soul-changing deeds. Have you heard His call? If so, how have you responded?

Not everyone in the Bible was eager to fulfill their calling. In Moses we find a man uncertain about his ability to do what God asked of him. As he encountered God at the burning bush, Moses was called to do something extraordinary: lead the Israelite slaves out of Egypt. He recognized that calling, but how did he respond? Did Moses immediately rise up and accept God’s plan? No! Instead, Moses protested to God four separate times, citing his own inadequacies. What Moses initially failed to realize was that God wasn’t asking him to accomplish anything on his own – he was God’s servant and God was with him every step of the way. At times, we may feel like Moses, ill-prepared to accept God’s calling and serve in the manner He has asked us to do. Yet He never calls us to accomplish anything on our own – He is our Heavenly Father and is with us every moment of every day. Ultimately, Moses answered God’s calling and led the Israelites out of captivity. Along the way, we see evidence of God’s provision in miraculous ways.

Know that when God calls you, He doesn’t call you to undertake anything on your own. Just as He used Moses in spite of his weaknesses, He strengthens us when we choose to answer His call! Today, God may not speak with us through a burning bush; however, He calls each of us for His purpose. God gives each of us spiritual gifts so we can make our unique contribution in the Body of Christ. Do we recognize and understand our unique calling? And exactly what is it that He expects us to contribute?

It is God's love that calls us, and it is our love and admiration for Him that motivates each of us to answer these questions. Out of a longing to fulfill His desires, we become inspired to discover new ways to please Him and reciprocate His love. Stimulated by the desire to share fellowship with Him at the earliest moment, we open ourselves and respond to His call. Unquestionably, our call now becomes our commission.

And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose.
– Romans 8:28

We Respond to His Call

Today we can respond to God's call by:

- Discovering, developing, and engaging our spiritual gifts (Ephesians 4:11-16)
- Edifying the Body of Christ by acknowledging and appreciating the gifts of others (1 Corinthians 12:4-27)
- Showing our love for Jesus by helping family, congregation, community, and those in need (Luke 10:30-37, Matthew 25:35-40, Mark 9:35)
- Directly serving Jesus Christ (Romans 14:17-19)

The New Testament portrays the church as a body. In Ephesians, we read that "the effectual working, by which every part does its share, causes growth and increase unto the edifying of itself in love" (Ephesians 4:16). Each of us has a place of purpose in edifying the entire body. When we, as members, choose not to make our contribution, it can be likened to the body where atrophy has set in. Here, one member of the body may be required to accommodate for another. Over time, the outcome may impede health, growth, and development, affecting the whole quality of life for the whole body. We therefore align ourselves and our activity to Christ and His teaching.

Peter admonished the congregations to use their gifts: "As each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold

grace of God..." (1 Peter 4:10-11). The term "steward" depicts a person responsible for managing the property of another. God is the owner of all gifts and He entrusts us with them for the benefit of His people. Everything is by God's grace. Our responsibility is to manage "all things" to His glory. Since it is our God-given responsibility to utilize and develop the gifts He provides, it is important that we continuously evaluate our progress toward completion: "...till we all come into the unity of faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13).

To better understand our calling, it is necessary to be prayerful and introspective:

- Introspection reveals new understandings of ourselves.
- Personal reflection helps us to understand our strengths and where we can grow.
- Introspection with the Holy Spirit is understanding ourselves from God's perspective.
- Honest discussions help us to reflect, learn, and grow into deeper realizations.
- Part of introspection is also discussing our gifts and passions with other believers because we often find that people see things in us that we simply do not see in ourselves.

God designed and created each of us with a purpose in mind:

- We have been given spiritual gifts to competently make our contribution to the Body of Christ.
- We have been designed with a personal approach which helps us relate to and communicate with others and the world around us.
- We have each been given passions to fuel our motivation and provide us with energy.

We are resolved to edify the Body of Christ. As each believer engages their spiritual gifts for the glory of God and the edification of others, the congregation will be filled with greater joy, appropriate commitments, and energized service.

As we progress along our journey, let us ponder a few questions central to this initiative:

- What is my calling?
- How is my calling integrated into the larger Body of Christ?
- What are my God-given spiritual gifts?
- How will I develop my gifts to best serve others?

As we take this journey of introspection, self-responsibility, and discovery, let us honestly examine our conviction and resolution to help Him edify the Body of Christ. Through prayer, reflection, and earnestly seeking His will, He will reveal new ways to draw us closer, increase our joy, and strengthen us. Finally, when we have made an honest effort to seek His desires, He will help us to fulfill the great commandment: to love God above all, and our neighbor as ourselves.

GROUNDWORK

Spiritual Gifts Assessment

Spiritual Gift Assessment Instructions

- Respond to each statement on the *Spiritual Gift Assessment*, presented on the pages that follow. Use the following scale to record how frequently each statement is true of you:

4 = Almost always, consistently
3 = Often, somewhat consistently
2 = Infrequently, seldom
1 = Almost never, rarely
- Using the scale above, write your numerical response to each statement in the space provided next to each item.
- Important:** Answer according to who you are at this point in your life, not who you would like to be or think you ought to be. How true is each statement of you? What has been your recent experience? To what degree do these statements reflect your usual tendencies? Please be authentic and pray that your responses are prompted by the Holy Spirit.

SPIRITUAL GIFT ASSESSMENT

	<i>Record your rating here (1-4)</i>
1. I enjoy handling the details and logistics for coordinating an event.	_____
2. I would enjoy being involved in founding a new congregation.	_____
3. I enjoy working with my hands.	_____
4. I find joy in expressing outward praise and worship to God.	_____
5. I can recognize a person's character based upon first impressions.	_____

-
6. Comforting and strengthening others is something I do well. _____
 7. I am not afraid to talk about God with others. _____
 8. My faith guides my everyday actions. _____
 9. Contributing money or resources is a critical component of my Christian life. _____
 10. I am content to work behind the scenes to make something a success. _____
 11. I find joy in providing for others. _____
 12. I feel impulses to pray for friends or loved ones. _____
 13. I am inspired to speak with others to help explain the Bible and God's teaching. _____
 14. In groups, people seem to look to me for leadership or direction. _____
 15. I am willing to support others, no matter what the situation may be. _____
 16. I enjoy providing guidance and support to a small group of people. _____
 17. I find joy in mentoring others using God's word. _____
 18. I am sought out by others for spiritual counsel or advice on personal matters. _____
 19. I adapt well to changed plans and quickly develop a new course of action. _____
 20. I am able to create enthusiasm for new spiritual initiatives so that things get implemented. _____
 21. I enjoy building, creating, or making things. _____
 22. I enjoy finding new and imaginative ways to share different perspectives with others. _____
 23. I readily perceive others' intentions or where they are coming from. _____

GROUNDWORK

Spiritual Gifts Assessment

- 24. I recognize the potential in others and strive to inspire them in their daily walk with Christ. _____
- 25. I find joy in professing my faith. _____
- 26. I am confident of God's presence and guidance in my life. _____
- 27. Giving out of my resources is my expression of love and thanks to God. _____
- 28. I am happy to complete small, unseen tasks that need doing. _____
- 29. I quickly respond to the needs of others when they require comfort and care. _____
- 30. I have felt called by the Holy Spirit to pray for a stranger in need. _____
- 31. I rely on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to direct my conversations and enlighten others about God's will. _____
- 32. I am able to see the big picture and get others excited about it. _____
- 33. I do not shy away from others' suffering. _____
- 34. I enjoy helping and gently restoring wandering believers in their relationship with God. _____
- 35. I would enjoy leading a small group in my congregation, such as a Sunday School or Bible Study class. _____
- 36. I am able to make complex or confusing spiritual situations simple for others to understand. _____
- 37. Coordinating details for spiritual, family, or life events is something I do well. _____
- 38. I enjoy starting groups, clubs, or interest circles. _____
- 39. I am able to express my creativity by making things with my hands. _____
- 40. I enjoy touching souls through musical or artistic expression. _____
- 41. I notice when others are not being honest or telling the whole story. _____

-
42. I find it easy to listen, sympathize, and reassure others in order to renew them. _____
43. I am effective at applying the Gospel message so that it connects with an individual's needs. _____
44. I am able to pray with conviction, knowing that God is listening. _____
45. I enjoy giving financially to the church, knowing I am giving to God. _____
46. I enjoy being involved, in whatever role I am asked to perform. _____
47. I enjoy inviting people to my home to share meals and fellowship together. _____
48. Recognizing when someone is in spiritual turmoil is something I do well. _____
49. Finding real world examples for God's teachings is something I do well. _____
50. I find it easy to inspire others to action. _____
51. I find it easy to express sympathy or comfort to others. _____
52. I care deeply about the emotional, relational, and spiritual welfare of others. _____
53. I enjoy providing new insights or perspectives to others related to God's word or teachings. _____
54. I observe situations and see God's hand at work. _____
55. I recognize others' skills or talents and what they can bring to the group. _____
56. It is enlivening to do new things to build the work of God. _____
57. I enjoy designing new objects or crafts to fit a specific need. _____
58. It is easy for me to think outside of the box when finding ways to communicate with others. _____
59. I quickly recognize right from wrong as it relates to God's word. _____

GROUNDWORK

Spiritual Gifts Assessment

- 60. I enjoy helping others discover new ways to express their talents and find ways to grow in them. _____
- 61. I find time to speak to others about divine services. _____
- 62. I trust completely in God's will. _____
- 63. I enjoy sharing what I have with others. _____
- 64. I actively look for opportunities to help in the congregation. _____
- 65. I enjoy bringing people together to strengthen our faith in the Lord. _____
- 66. I am happy when I can bear the burden and support others who are struggling in their faith. _____
- 67. I delight in sharing clarifications and explanations of the Gospel and how others might apply it in their lives. _____
- 68. I motivate others to strive toward their potential. _____
- 69. I quickly recognize distress, concern, or suffering in others. _____
- 70. I have compassion for wandering souls, desiring to guide and protect them. _____
- 71. I can instruct others in ways that motivate them to study and want to learn more. _____
- 72. I help others safely navigate difficult situations by applying or explaining divine insight. _____
- 73. I enjoy being in charge of creating a plan for an event or congregational initiative. _____
- 74. I find it easy to connect with those I do not know or who are different from me. _____
- 75. I get a sense of fulfillment when I see a final product I made from raw materials. _____
- 76. I enjoy using my imagination and creativity to bring new meaning to others. _____
- 77. I understand situations quickly and am able to act intuitively in accordance with God's will. _____

-
78. I help others remain strong in their faith when they are experiencing spiritual challenges. _____
79. I enjoy telling people about experiences of faith. _____
80. I know that God will fulfill His promises. _____
81. I do not expect anything in return when I give to the church or others. _____
82. I find spiritual significance in doing practical tasks. _____
83. I find it easy to make new people feel that they belong. _____
84. I am confident in what the Lord has done for me, and what He can do for others. _____
85. I easily find the right way to convey God's message to others so that they can relate to it. _____
86. I am willing to take charge in order to achieve a goal. _____
87. I can look beyond a person's problems or disabilities to see a life that matters to God. _____
88. I find it easy to gently counsel or guide others using God's word when they are indecisive. _____
89. I am able to understand complex concepts and how to explain them to others. _____
90. I quickly recognize divine truth in even the most complex situations. _____
91. I do not like leaving questions unanswered or waiting too long to respond to others' inquiries. _____
92. I am sensitive to cultural differences and understand others' perspectives. _____
93. I can envision an end product and quickly figure out how to build or fix something to meet that vision. _____
94. I consider myself able to connect with others through art. _____
95. People have told me that my insight was helpful or accurate. _____

GROUNDWORK

Spiritual Gifts Assessment

- 96. I give hope to others through God's word and Christ's promises for our lives. _____
- 97. I look for opportunities to give testimony about my faith to others. _____
- 98. In times of trials or important decisions, my first reaction is to draw closer to God. _____
- 99. I intentionally set aside money to give to the church. _____
- 100. I don't want recognition for my efforts; I am happy to help. _____
- 101. I find myself keeping the peace or providing comfort at every opportunity. _____
- 102. I am sincere in remembering others when I pray. _____
- 103. I want to learn all that I can about God's word to be able to share that knowledge with others. _____
- 104. I am able to recognize and encourage the use of gifts and abilities in others. _____
- 105. I do not feel it is an imposition to support someone I know is in need. _____
- 106. I am willing to care for others and faithfully provide ongoing support. _____
- 107. I effectively communicate ideas to others of different ages or different abilities of understanding. _____
- 108. I can help others apply scriptural truth in practical ways. _____
- 109. I find it easy to translate a vision or goal into specific actions to achieve it. _____
- 110. I am comfortable stepping out of my comfort zone and am confident God will see me through. _____
- 111. I find joy in making or building things for others. _____
- 112. It is natural for me to express myself in artistic ways (e.g., poetry, music, art, crafts). _____

-
113. I can see aspects or outcomes of a situation that others cannot. _____
114. I reassure and encourage others who are making difficult decisions in their lives. _____
115. I am willing to answer questions of faith from anyone who is interested. _____
116. I am able to inspire others to trust in God by living my faith. _____
117. I give more than a tithe so that God's work can be accomplished. _____
118. Others know they can rely on me to be available to assist. _____
119. It makes me happy to reach out to others so they do not feel alone. _____
120. I feel compelled to follow through when others ask me to pray for them. _____
121. I am confident the Holy Spirit provides me insight as I speak with others about God's salvation plan. _____
122. I make earnest efforts to emulate the leadership of Christ. _____
123. When someone I know is suffering, it is easy for me to show them compassion. _____
124. I believe even small efforts to patiently nurture others can have long-term effects on someone's faith. _____
125. I am able to provide instruction and keep the attention of others, resulting in their growth. _____
126. It's easy for me to use stories or experiences to help others see God's perspective. _____

GROUNDWORK

Spiritual Gifts Assessment

Spiritual Gifts Assessment Score Sheet

For each statement, transfer your results into the corresponding boxes below.																	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36
37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54
55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72
73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108
109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126
Add up each column and record the total above each letter.																	
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R

Spiritual Gift Assessment Key:

- A = Administration
 B = Apostleship
 C = Craftsmanship
 D = Creative Communication
 E = Discernment
 F = Encouragement
- G = Evangelism
 H = Faith
 I = Giving
 J = Helps
 K = Hospitality
 L = Intercession
- M = Knowledge
 N = Leadership
 O = Mercy
 P = Shepherding
 Q = Teaching
 R = Wisdom

Using the chart, write the total and the gift that corresponds to your three highest scores:

	LETTER	TOTAL	SPiritual Gift
1. First highest:	_____	_____ = _____	
2. Second highest:	_____	_____ = _____	
3. Third highest:	_____	_____ = _____	

If you have a tie between 3 and 4, pick the gift you relate to the most.

Now, rank order the remaining gifts in descending order below.

	LETTER	TOTAL	SPiritual Gift
4.	_____	_____ = _____	
5.	_____	_____ = _____	
6.	_____	_____ = _____	
7.	_____	_____ = _____	
8.	_____	_____ = _____	
9.	_____	_____ = _____	
10.	_____	_____ = _____	
11.	_____	_____ = _____	
12.	_____	_____ = _____	
13.	_____	_____ = _____	
14.	_____	_____ = _____	
15.	_____	_____ = _____	
16.	_____	_____ = _____	
17.	_____	_____ = _____	
18.	_____	_____ = _____	

SESSION 2

Questions for discussion

1. How did you feel about the assessment? What surprised you about the results? Did you feel affirmed in what you knew about yourself?
2. Moses was one of the great leaders of God's people. As we heard in the video, Moses protested the call of God four times before accepting. Why can it be a struggle to accept God's calling?
3. Describe a time when you felt a calling to do something you didn't feel equipped to do.
4. How do you begin to answer God's calling for your life? What would your first steps be?
5. Everyone has a purpose in the congregation. How is the congregation affected if one individual does not do their part? Ten individuals?

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features approximately 28 evenly spaced horizontal green lines across the entire page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The background is plain white, and there are no margins, text, or other markings present.

SESSION 2

Questions for discussion

In identifying the person God created you to be, consider the following account: A family moved from the Mediterranean-like climate of southern California to the four seasons of the Midwest. After living only a short time in the new area, they built a new home.

While in the Midwest, I discovered that there really are four seasons. Following the snowy winter came spring showers, and it was time to landscape our new home. I went to the nursery and bought trees, shrubs, and flowers. The lawn was planted and the yard was set.

While most of my plants did really well, some died. I went back to the nursery and got more. I planted them. They died too. One afternoon I was in the yard explaining to my neighbor (actually complaining about) how frustrated I was with my plants. I showed him how some of them were doing really well while others kept dying.

He made a brilliant observation. He said, "These plants won't grow here!" (At that point, I figured he must be a college graduate. He was able, so graphically, to articulate the obvious.)

I said, "Really?"

He went on to explain. "These plants require direct sunlight. Have you ever noticed that the sun never shines within three feet of the north side of your house? They should be placed where they can get the sunlight they need to grow."

It was so simple. Yet someone had to explain to me how God had made each plant with different requirements. A plant needing direct sun will perish or flourish, depending on the amount of sun it receives. Another plant, requiring shade, will have its potential destroyed in direct sunlight. When I understood what the plants needed, it was not difficult to find an appropriate place for them.

So, the "bad" plants I had purchased were not really bad at all. They were simply planted in the wrong place. In short, I had learned two important and related gardening lessons: First, know what a plant needs to flourish. Second, place it in the appropriate environment.

- Bruce Bugbee, *What You Do Best in the Body of Christ*, 2005

After reading this story, consider these two perspectives:

1. God has equipped you for a certain purpose and if you do not feel that your giftedness fits where you are “planted,” you may be in the wrong place.
 - a. How have you been equipped to serve in the place you are planted?
 - b. If you feel that you are planted in the wrong place, how can you discover where you should be planted?
2. A second perspective could be that God has a purpose for you, wherever you are.
 - a. Do you believe that God has a purpose for you everywhere you go? How do you come to understand that purpose?

b. Pray on the following:

What do You want me to do here?

What is Your purpose for me today?

*Open my eyes to the people that You put in my path today
and let me see what You want my response to be.*

GOING DEEPER

My Spiritual Gifts

My Spiritual Gifts:



are my capabilities
and proficiencies



This is **WHAT** I contribute best
in the Body of Christ

Quick Facts about Spiritual Gifts

- You may have more than three (3) spiritual gifts
- Our focus is on the top three (3) gifts
- Your top spiritual gifts will likely change over time
- Re-Evaluation is important when seasons of life change
- Re-Evaluation can also occur at the end of a 'term' or project, or if you aren't experiencing fulfillment

- These are the things you are good at
- Others can trust your activity when you are capable and proficient
- These are your areas of fruitfulness
- These are areas of focus to improve and grow in
- Focusing your efforts with your top spiritual gifts will bring you fulfillment

- These are your contributions to edify the Body of Christ
- Your contribution will typically utilize your top three (3) gifts
- Leaders can help to find ways for each member to contribute
- Your contribution helps others

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Knowledge

Gnôsis (Greek): understanding, moral intelligence of the faith

What is the spiritual gift of Knowledge?

The gift of Knowledge is the divine enablement that requires wisdom to pursue and realize biblical insights and to clarify these revelations for others. Individuals with the gift of Knowledge contribute understanding.

Characteristics:

Diligent, Informed, Inquisitive, Insightful, Intelligent, Learned, Observant, Reflective, Responsive, Sincere, Spiritually Sensitive, Studious, Truthful, Wise

How does the gift of Knowledge manifest itself?

Those blessed with the gift of Knowledge find it easy to apply modern examples to biblical teachings. They analyze information efficiently and illuminate these understandings, allowing others to apply them practically in their lives. Purposeful in their study, they read and reflect on Scripture, organizing information for teaching and practical use. However, not all of their knowledge is gained by natural observation or means, but can be inspired by the Holy Spirit. Their unique spiritual insights can be used as a tool to bridge the spiritual with the concerns of others. Sharing the gift of Knowledge is a great help unto teachers.

What do people with the gift of Knowledge need to be aware of?

Knowledge is not an end unto itself, but reaches its ultimate expression when shared with others. Those with the gift of Knowledge should be wary of becoming prideful, as knowledge puffs up (1 Corinthians 8:1). Remember that this gift is not a result of human intelligence and cannot be attained by study alone, but is revealed by God for the purpose of understanding Him, His Word, and His kingdom.

Biblical Examples: Paul

Being a Roman citizen, Paul was learned and also had privileges wherever he went. After experiencing the revelation of the Lord Jesus, Paul proclaimed Jesus Christ as Savior and taught the gospel. Though Paul was not present when Jesus walked amongst His disciples, he gained knowledge through the Holy Spirit and continued to teach and exhort others to believe in Jesus Christ and be baptized.

Bible References

Acts 8:26-40, Romans 15:14, 1 Corinthians 12:7-8, 2 Corinthians 11:6, Colossians 2:1-4

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > *I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Helps

Antílêpsis (Greek): to provide relief, aid, or help

What is the spiritual gift of Helps?

The gift of Helps is the divine enablement to joyfully lend support and meet the needs of others, often through hands-on activities. Individuals with the gift of Helps contribute support.

Characteristics:

Aiding, Attending, Assisting, Available, Dependable, Helpful, Humility, Loyal, Practical, Providing, Reliable, Serving, Whatever-it-takes Attitude, Willing

How does the gift of Helps manifest itself?

Those who help have the ability to see missing pieces or gaps and fill them inconspicuously. Those with the gift of Helps gain enjoyment from serving others. Helpers not only see tasks that need to be done, but apply spiritual significance to those tasks, recognizing the value of freeing others up to focus on their giftedness. They often work behind-the-scenes, finding joy in doing the work that others might view as burdensome or particularly mundane. Helps is a gift where people contribute in often small, yet significant, ways so that activities and events can proceed to the glory of God seamlessly.

What do people with the gift of Helps need to be aware of?

Helpers need to be aware that their contributions may not be noticed or widely appreciated. They must be able to draw joy from the knowledge they are working for God, and not for man. Those with the gift of Helps should be careful not to be judgmental of others who need to be asked to help. Helpers are cautioned to be responsive to the priorities of leadership, instead of setting their own agenda. Being prone to over-extending themselves, those who help may be taken advantage of, so they must know when to say “no” or they risk burning out.

Biblical Example: Ruth

Since both Ruth and Naomi had become widows and had no sons to provide for them, Ruth took it upon herself, with a willing heart, to provide for her mother-in-law and herself by gleaning fields. As gleaning, collecting the bits of grain which are left after a crop is harvested, is a very tedious task, Ruth exhibited a “whatever-it-takes” attitude. She proved to be very loyal and dependable.

Bible References

Luke 22:24-27, 1 Corinthians 12:28, Romans 12:6-7, Acts 6:1-7, Acts 9:36, Romans 16:1-2, Philippians 4:2-3

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > I strongly relate to it
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Discernment Diakrisis (Greek): to distinguish, discern, judge or appraise

What is the spiritual gift of Discernment?

The gift of Discernment is the divine enablement to differentiate between good and evil, right and wrong, and distinguish the spirit of truth from the spirit of error. Individuals with the gift of Discernment contribute truth.

Characteristics:

Awareness, Challenging, Decisive, Insightful, Intuitive, Keenness, Perceptive, Recognize Authenticity, Spiritually Sensitive, Truthful, Wisdom

How does the gift of Discernment manifest itself?

Individuals with the gift of Discernment have an especially strong internal barometer allowing them to sense purity and sincerity, as well as impure motives, inconsistencies, and deception. Such believers can determine authenticity and intuitively recognize the source of influences. They are perceptive and may see dangers that others do not notice. Discerners can use their gift to help other believers recognize and devote themselves to truth.

What do people with the gift of Discernment need to be aware of?

Those with the gift of Discernment must be careful not to come across as judgmental. They should not criticize, but rather, speak the truth in love and humility. It is important to remember that discerners must not remain silent, as the gift has been given from God to help people find their way.

Biblical Example: Daniel

When King Nebuchadnezzar conquered Jerusalem, he brought some of the Israelites into his service, and among them was Daniel. They were assigned a daily allotment of royal food and wine, but Daniel resolved not to take of it, either because the meat was some food forbidden by Jewish law (like pork) or because accepting the king's food and drink was the first step toward depending on his gifts and favors. Even though he could've claimed that "everyone else was doing it" or that he had no choice, Daniel displayed the gift of discernment and knew what was right and true in the eyes of God. Though he only ate vegetables and drank water, he was healthier and better nourished than those that ate the royal food, and found favor with one of the king's guards. You can read this story in the book of Daniel, chapter 1.

Bible References

1 Corinthians 12:10, Philippians 1:9-10, 1 Thessalonians 5:20-22, 1 John 4:1-6

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > I strongly relate to it
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.



Session 3

Growing in our Spiritual Gifts

SESSION 3

Growing in our Spiritual Gifts

Spiritual growth is the second step in our “Stepping Forward” plan. We can begin to grow in our spiritual gifts when we engage them in a healthy way. The foundation for healthy engagement includes a more complete understanding of both our surroundings and our spiritual capabilities. So, it benefits us to examine our environment and current circumstances from time to time. More specifically, by better understanding the current condition of our spiritual health and happiness, we can determine if we may need to make modifications for ourselves. Appropriate positive adjustments help to ensure ongoing health and happiness, and prepare the way for future growth. Along the way, we can also experience greater fulfillment in the development of our faith. As Jesus illustrated in the Parable of the Talents, God is the master who blesses. When we do our part to become true stewards of our spiritual gifts and engage them in healthy ways, He will bless us and assist us in future growth.

Spiritual Gifts – Our Capabilities and Proficiencies

Our spiritual gifts help define our role in the Body of Christ; they identify our area of competency. However, we may, at times, find ourselves outside our area of giftedness. Imagine being a participant in the following story:

Animal School

Once upon a time, some animals decided to organize a school. They adopted a curriculum of running, climbing, swimming, and flying. All animals took each of the subjects. The duck was excellent in swimming, even better than his instructor, but made only passing grades in flying and running. Being a slow runner, he decided to stay after school and even dropped swimming in order to practice running. He worked so diligently that his webbed feet became badly worn, resulting in an average grade in swimming. But average was acceptable, so nobody worried about that, except the duck. The rabbit started “top of the class” in running, but pulled a leg muscle during challenging swimming exercises. The squirrel was excellent in climbing but became frustrated in flying when his teacher made him start from the ground up instead of the tree top down. He developed a charlie horse from over-exertion and received poor grades in climbing and running. The eagle was a problem child. In climbing,

he beat the others to the top of the tree, but he insisted on using his own way to get there. The prairie dog dropped out of school, because the administration would not add digging and burrowing to the curriculum.

Most animals passed, but they did not excel. Many of them were miserable because they could not focus in areas of their talents. One of the animals even left the school because no-one offered an opportunity for their giftedness.

Measurements of Spiritual Growth

Until Jesus returns, we continually evaluate ourselves in our faith journey. Whatever we do in the Body of Christ, we want to be spiritually healthy and develop in our maturity. The following two measurements will help us determine if we are healthy and in a condition for growth:

1. **FULFILLMENT** – Fulfillment is satisfaction and happiness as a result of fully developing our gifts and character; the achievement of something desired and/or promised.
2. **FRUITFULNESS** – Fruitfulness is bearing fruit or growing in abundance; producing desired results.

Reviewing the following points on a periodic basis may help you to determine if you currently serve and use your gifts in a way that is optimal at this time in your life:

Evaluating Spiritual Fulfillment & Fruitfulness – Conditions for Growth:

- If you are currently fulfilled, you are likely in a healthy place. If you are NOT fulfilled:
 - o You may be gaining needed experience for a future calling.
 - o You may be engaged based on your own ideas or opinions, rather than by God's will.

-
- If you are currently fruitful, you are likely in a healthy place. If you are NOT fruitful:
 - There is likely a better place for you to serve than where you are currently.
 - If you are neither fulfilled nor fruitful:
 - You have not yet found your calling to serve and are likely not in a healthy place. This is spiritually unhealthy and future efforts could be in jeopardy. Consider taking the following steps:
 - Increase your prayers.
 - Seek Him and trust more in Him.
 - Follow His pathway and timeframe, while maintaining pure motives.
 - If you are both fulfilled and fruitful:
 - Your station in life is currently sustainable.
 - You are ideally positioned for growth at this time.

Periodic re-evaluation promotes ongoing fulfillment and fruitfulness, creating conditions for sustained growth.

[Source: Don Cousins & Bruce Bugbee, adapted from Experiencing Leadershift Together, 2008]

However, before we all race to find new roles in our congregations and lives based on our newly discovered spiritual gifts, it is important to consider whether we have truly applied our giftedness to the roles in which we currently find ourselves. Some gifts certainly align well with specific roles. We've already discussed the spiritual gifts of Teaching and Knowledge. While it is easy to see how those might enable one to be a fulfilled and fruitful Sunday school teacher. Do all Sunday school teachers need to have these spiritual gifts to find fulfillment and fruitfulness?

GROUNDWORK

Peer Observation Assessment

Your facilitator will provide you with printouts of this assessment.

PEER OBSERVATIONS

My name is: _____

These are my observations of: _____

Dear Friend,

I'm seeking to better understand how God has equipped me to serve others. Please provide feedback about what I do best and how I relate to others. Please return the assessment as soon as you have completed it. Thanks!

- Answer according to what seems true of the person most of the time, not what you would like them to be or think they should be.
- If you have seen this person involved and serving in a ministry, then describe your observations in that context.

To what degree do these statements reflect this person's tendencies and behaviors?

		Consistently / Definitely True	Most of the Time / Usually True	Some of the Time / Once in a While	Don't Know / Haven't Observed
A	Organizes tasks, people, or events that advance an opportunity or a cause; develops and implements effective strategies; plans and executes procedures.	3	2	1	0
B	Oversees development of new opportunities and initiatives; demonstrates a missionary and pioneering spirit; is culturally sensitive; builds up and develops others as leaders.	3	2	1	0
C	Uses skill or creativity to design or build; produces value or potential through workmanship; is resourceful and handy.	3	2	1	0
D	Provides meaningful expression through artistic talent; communicates creatively and imaginatively; develops and shares creative, innovative ideas.	3	2	1	0
E	Differentiates between good and evil, right and wrong; distinguishes intent, motive, or influence intuitively; perceives authenticity in others.	3	2	1	0
F	Encourages and reassures others; comforts and strengthens those who are discouraged and struggling; inspires and provides support.	3	2	1	0
G	Enthusiastically shares the Gospel and their faith; exhibits passion for instilling a belief in God in others.	3	2	1	0
H	Believes and trusts confidently in God; places all matters into God's hands willingly; inspires others to place their trust in God.	3	2	1	0
I	Gives of their resources graciously and without condition; donates generously of their time or money; sacrifices willingly for the benefit of others.	3	2	1	0
J	Joyfully lends support to meet the needs of others; gets involved through a hands-on approach; identifies needs and places significance on helping, often behind-the-scenes.	3	2	1	0
K	Helps others to feel at home by providing natural care and soul care through fellowship, food, or shelter; creates an environment of acceptance, safety, and trust; focuses on comforting and peacemaking.	3	2	1	0
L	Recognizes the needs of others and pleads with great confidence on their behalf; demonstrates reliability, sincerity, and spiritual sensitivity; conveys that it is an honor to intercede in prayer.	3	2	1	0
M	Shares Biblical insight prompted through the Spirit; provides clarity and understanding for others in matters of faith; effectively communicates and illuminates spiritual truth.	3	2	1	0
N	Motivates and directs people to work together toward a common goal; sees potential in others; instills enthusiasm, models values, and casts a vision for others to follow.	3	2	1	0
O	Demonstrates compassion through bringing help, relief, and comfort; shows an inclination toward those in need; provides love, grace, and dignity to others.	3	2	1	0
P	Nurtures, cares for, and gently encourages others; acts with patience; is protective and devoted; provides security for others through long-term guidance.	3	2	1	0
Q	Comprehends and effectively communicates through teaching; explains ideas in ways that create and develop understanding.	3	2	1	0
R	Practically and effectively provides clarity and wisdom to others; contributes enlightenment and offers perspective during challenges of life.	3	2	1	0
1.	From those that you marked with a "3" (Consistently / Definitely True), indicate this person's 1 st , 2 nd , and 3 rd most notable gifts by writing the corresponding letters in the spaces provided:	1	2	3	
2.	If you are familiar with spiritual gifts, which have you seen most in this person's life? Note that these may not be the same gifts you indicated above.	1	2	3	
3.	Are there any other observations or insights you have that would help this person better understand what they do best?				

* Note: Since this is a peer assessment, there may be gifts that peers will not perceive, yet may or may not be prevalent.

GROUNDWORK

Peer Observation Assessment

The peer observation assessment can provide a fresh understanding of our proficiencies from an outside view. It is a tool designed to help us see ourselves from someone else’s perspective. We recommend asking for the input of three (3) individuals who know you well - preferably from a variety of areas in your life.

KEY

A = Administration	J = Helps
B = Apostleship	K = Hospitality
C = Craftsmanship	L = Intercession
D = Creative Comm.	M = Knowledge
E = Discernment	N = Leadership
F = Encouragement	O = Mercy
G = Evangelism	P = Shepherding
H = Faith	Q = Teaching
I = Giving	R = Wisdom

RESULTS

A) Name: _____

- 1. Three most notable gifts:

- 2. Three gifts they have seen the most of:

- 3. Any other observations or insights?

B) Name: _____

- 1. Three most notable gifts:

- 2. Three gifts they have seen the most of:

- 3. Any other observations or insights?

C) Name: _____

- 1. Three most notable gifts:

- 2. Three gifts they have seen the most of:

- 3. Any other observations or insights?

SESSION 3

Questions for discussion

1. The Animal Story illustrates for us what could happen to us when we do things that God hasn't equipped us for, or when we try to do too many things. Considering that every person has certain gifts, just like the animals had certain gifts, how should this guide your actions? Why is it beneficial to be aware of other's gifts?
2. Look through the spiritual gift definitions and consider how other gifts might apply to the role of Sunday school teacher. Is it possible to redefine the role in a way that would allow differently gifted individuals to find fulfillment and fruitfulness?
3. Sometimes it's difficult to see how we can use our gifts. Do you think God only intends for us to use our gifts in church? Give an example of how you can use one of your gifts outside of the church.

GOING DEEPER

Growing in our Spiritual Gifts

Jesus' encounter with the fig tree (Matthew 21:19) provides an analogy for stages of growth and development of our spiritual gifts. Jesus demonstrated His desire for fruitfulness. As He expected fruit from the fig tree, He also expects fruitfulness from each of us. Apostle Paul points out in 1 Corinthians 12 that we have each been given spiritual gifts and have an individual responsibility to recognize, exercise, and increase our gifts for the edifying of the Body of Christ.



Early Development – Leaves: As early evidence of the fig tree's growth, the leaves represent visible good Christian behavior. They are the actions that are seen by others. Leaves without fruit look pleasant, but provide little substance. Jesus first saw the leaves and then came closer to the tree looking for fruit.

While early stages of growth begin with leaves, let us strive to develop beyond the leaves. This means that your gifts become visibly active in your life of faith; this activity is a testimony that is witnessed.



Moderate Development – First Fruit: Leaves and fruit together are an indication of substance and health. We become fruitful when we apply the Gospel of Christ to our lives. As our spiritual gifts begin to ripen, our lives become exciting and strong. Jesus is always looking for fruit in us: it is always the season to

bear fruit and apply the Gospel in every part of our lives.



Full Development – Full Harvest Fruit: Developing our gifts to their full measure takes spiritual maturity. The highest level of development occurs as we express our true love for Christ. An element of this expression is serving with no expectation of reward or response. Another element is when we consistently respond to adversity in a Christ-like manner. Through the power

of the Holy Spirit, we become transformed into a new creature in Christ. When you serve simply out of love for Christ with no expectation of reward, a "full-harvest" fruit comes into being that contains seeds for future work and new life.

** Taken from a Divine Service by Leonard R. Kolb, Orlando 2013 – Matthew 21:19*

GOING DEEPER

Growing in our Spiritual Gifts

Let's take a look at what an example of this might look like using the spiritual gift of Intercession.



Early Development – Leaves: You understand the importance of prayer in your own life and connect with God in this way on a daily basis. You also start to become more aware of the needs and concerns of others.



Moderate Development – First Fruit: Your prayer life grows and develops, and you find new ways to express your feelings and intercessions to God, such as praying with the words of Scripture. You are inspired to pray for the needs of others and even start a prayer board in your congregation.



Full Development – Full Harvest Fruit: You are at ease praying for and with people you know, and have become part of the Pastoral Care team in your congregation. You are comfortable praying for strangers, and volunteer at your local city mission to serve and pray with people in very difficult situations. People you have prayed for have affirmed your gifts and have experienced the effects of the gift that God has given you.

GOING DEEPER

Growing in our Spiritual Gifts

For your 3 most prominent gifts, what might early, moderate, and full development of your spiritual gifts look like?

Most Prominent Spiritual Gift: _____

Early development _____

Moderate development _____

Full development _____

Second Most Prominent Spiritual Gift: _____

Early development _____

Moderate development _____

Full development _____

Third Most Prominent Spiritual Gift: _____

Early development _____

Moderate development _____

Full development _____



SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Wisdom

Sophia (Greek): enlightenment, broad and full knowledge

What is the spiritual gift of Wisdom?

The gift of Wisdom is the divine enablement to practically and effectively apply a spiritual truth to meet a need in a specific situation. Believers with the gift of Wisdom contribute perspective.

Characteristics:

Common Sense, Disciplined, Experienced, Fair, Insightful, Learns from mistakes, Listener, Modest, Observant, Patient, Perceptive, Possess Self-Control, Practical, Prioritize, Reflective, Sensible

How does the gift of Wisdom manifest itself?

Those blessed with the divine gift of Wisdom find clarity in even the most difficult or paradoxical situations. They are able to reflect upon life experiences and find easy ways to explain divine truth through parables, analogies, and stories to assist others in applying this knowledge. The Wise understand causes of events and act as examples of courage in the face of adversity, knowing and trusting that God will provide. They have the ability to focus on unseen consequences and offer divine solutions during conflict or confusion. The harvest of Wisdom is an outlet for God's guidance.

What do people with the gift of Wisdom need to be aware of?

Those blessed with the divine gift of Wisdom must be careful not to be overbearing or patronizing with those who may not share the same insights. Failure to share their insights limits the benefits of the gift and does not allow it to reach its full expression. However, those with this gift must avoid giving advice for the sake of advice and allow others the benefit of experience. Thus, Wisdom requires balance. It is important that others do not develop a dependence upon them.

Biblical Example: Solomon

King David's prayer for his son, Solomon, was that the Lord give him wisdom and understanding that, as king, Solomon might fulfill God's statutes and judgments. God approached Solomon in a dream, and said "Ask! What shall I give you?" Solomon asked for wisdom and an understanding heart. God was moved and provided not only what was requested, but also all things that Solomon did not ask for. The Bible states that King Solomon became greater than all the kings of the earth in riches and in wisdom.

A specific account of Solomon's wisdom was when two women each claimed to be the mother of a baby. Solomon instructed that the baby be cut in half, knowing that the actual mother would want to keep the child safe. When one woman cried out to keep the baby whole and give her to the other woman, Solomon declared this same woman the mother.

Bible References

1 Corinthians 2:1-14, 1 Corinthians 12:8, 1 Corinthians 13:8-13, James 1:5-8, James 3:13-18, 2 Peter 3:14-18

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > I strongly relate to it
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Shepherding

Poimén (Greek): tending and caring for the well-being of others

What is the spiritual gift of Shepherding?

The gift of Shepherding is the divine enablement to nurture, care for, and guide people toward ongoing spiritual maturity and becoming like Christ. Individuals with the gift of Shepherding contribute guidance.

Characteristics:

Caring, Compassionate, Disciple-maker, Guiding, Influencing, Mentoring, Nurturing, Propelling, Protective, Relational, Sacrificial, Steering, Supportive

How does the gift of Shepherding manifest itself?

Shepherds are protective and fully devoted. They care deeply about the spiritual development of others. They establish trust, loyalty, and confidence, providing long-term guidance and oversight as they gently encourage souls. Favoring strong relationships in a small group, Shepherds are patient yet persistent, understanding that not all believers mature at the same pace. Sometimes they even discipline in love. A Shepherd is concerned over and tends to needs in all aspects of one's life – spiritual, social, and emotional. The harvest of Shepherding is making souls secure and strong in Jesus Christ.

What do people with the gift of Shepherding need to be aware of?

Shepherding can quickly become enabling, therefore they must be aware of when to say "no." Conversely, when followers grow beyond the scope of the Shepherd's care, they must be allowed to grow beyond their mentor. Shepherds must be diligent not to abuse the trust placed in them. They must also be careful not to neglect their own spiritual development and should find a Shepherd of their own who can nurture them. While Shepherds may see potential in others, they must be careful not to impose their vision on another. Instead, they should allow the Holy Spirit to enlighten. Shepherds can also become smothering and/or dominating if not careful.

Biblical Example: Eunice and Lois

Shepherds care for their flock by ensuring they have all they need to grow strong and healthy. Timothy's mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois, shepherded him during the early part of his life. In his second letter to Timothy, Paul notes their sincere faith, which he now sees alive within the young believer. Their kind, loving investment helped ensure Timothy would grow spiritually strong and healthy, and have the opportunity to realize his spiritual gifts (2 Timothy 1:5).

Bible References

John 10:1-18, Acts 18:18-28, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Timothy 4:6-16, Hebrews 13:7 & 17, 1 Peter 5:1-5

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > *I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Encouragement

Parákêsis (Greek): a calling to one's side, exhortation, admonition, comfort

What is the spiritual gift of Encouragement?

The gift of Encouragement is the divine enablement to come to the side of others, comforting and strengthening those who are discouraged or struggling. Encouragers remind believers of the promises of God and exhort them to renew their relationship with Christ. Individuals with the gift of Encouragement contribute affirmation.

Characteristics:

Affirming, Building-up, Challenging, Comforting, Dependable, Inspiring, Motivating, Persuasion, Positive, Reassuring, Reminding, Renewing, Supportive, Trustworthy, Uplifting, Urging

How does the gift of Encouragement manifest itself?

The Encourager applies biblical knowledge and truth to reassure, affirm, and inspire people. They are focused on motivating others to have confidence in God's will, mature as believers, and find their place in the Body of Christ. In their loyalty, they are tireless in reassuring those who are wavering in their faith.

What do people with the gift of Encouragement need to be aware of?

Encouragers must always remember to apply biblical truth to their work because the goal is not to simply make people feel better, but to strengthen their relationship with God. Those with the gift of Encouragement need to listen and understand the other's needs before providing support. Approaching someone without understanding what motivates them can lead to confrontation.

Biblical Example: Barnabas

Barnabas was given his Aramaic name by the early believers after he sold his goods and gave the proceeds to the apostles. The name was not a random choice, but one which drew attention to Barnabas' special gift, as it translates to "son of encouragement." After John Mark deserted Paul and Barnabas during their first missionary journey, Paul was firm in not allowing him to accompany them on their second journey. Barnabas, however, desired to give John Mark a second chance. This differing of opinion led to Paul and Barnabas taking separate routes.

The gift of encouragement is clearly visible in Barnabas' ministry. He was patient and willing to give a second chance to a young believer. The impact of Barnabas'

wise use of his gift is still felt by us today, as John Mark would go on to write the Gospel of Mark. You can read more about Barnabas on your own in Acts 4 through 15.

Bible References

Acts 14:22, Romans 12:6-8, Hebrews 10:25, Hebrews 13:7, 1 Thessalonians 2:11-12, 1 Timothy 4:6-16, Acts 27:20-26

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > I strongly relate to it
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.



Session 4

Our Personal Approach and Passions

SESSION 4

Our Personal Approach and Passions

Our Personal Approach

We've all folded our hands in prayer – maybe thousands of times. Most of us intertwine our fingers when we pray.

Now, try intertwining your fingers with the opposite hand on top. It's easy enough to do, but you probably notice that it feels awkward. One approach is more comfortable than the other. This analogy can be related to our "personal approach." God designed each of us with certain personality traits (or characteristics), and while we may use more than one style from time to time, we each have a tendency towards one particular approach. Our personal approach is the way we relate to the world around us. It provides us a level of comfort. It is "HOW" we make our contribution in the Body of Christ.

For the purpose of this discussion, we will focus on two specific characteristics of our personal approach:

Project –vs– People

Some of us are motivated when we are active in projects and tasks. Then there are some of us that are motivated by working directly with people. One is not better than the other; they are just different.

Adaptable –vs– Structured

Some of us love spontaneity and embrace change; you can say we thrive by being Adaptable. Some of us prefer the discipline of Structure: we simply find it a more comforting and productive style.

You may really enjoy being with people and are energized in a group setting, or you find that you are most productive and personally fulfilled when involved in a project or task. Conversely, you may feel a bit overwhelmed by paperwork and thrive when interacting with others. Spontaneous or casual activity may delight you, or you may find comfort in consistency and routine. Whatever your approach, God has designed each of us differently to tend to every variation of involvement and need.

There are four combinations to our personal approach. Within each of these attributes, a person may find themselves anywhere along the scale

from one extreme to the other (“Project to People” and “Adaptable to Structured”). As you begin to see how God has designed you, it will prove beneficial to focus your activity within your personal approach.

Knowing how God has designed us helps us to determine how we will most enjoy participating in activities. Each of us has experienced a feeling of dread when participating in certain ways. Even though the thought of the event produced interest, we just didn’t find fulfillment or enjoyment. We may not have realized that our challenges arose because we were not engaged within our own personal approach. When we understand our personal approach, we can align our activity accordingly. Then we may enjoy a positive experience: an experience where we are captivated and enthralled.

Note on DISC Personality Assessment:

The DISC assessment is another valuable assessment that can assist us in our interactions with one another. DISC is an acronym which stands for the four basic behavioral styles which are: Dominant, Influential, Steady, and Conscientious. We each have a style of communication, and the DISC assessment allows us to understand how to best communicate with others. With this assessment, as with the Personal Approach assessment, styles may blend – providing numerous combinations. This assessment will be helpful or advantageous once teams have been developed and team members are interacting more closely to accomplish goals and develop their gifts, but will also be beneficial information for personal relationships at home and at work. By understanding DISC, we can better understand the hard-wiring of each team member’s behavioral style, increasing our mutual camaraderie and overall oneness.

Please contact the Work of Ministry Work Group (wgwom@nac-usa.org) to set up a workshop for this training if you have a number of members interested. Note: Ideally, this assessment would come after the Work of Ministry small group training, but it is not a requirement.

Our Passions

Can you think of a time when you were deeply excited about an activity or a conversation? Maybe you were so engrossed in your involvement that you completely lost track of time or even lost sense of your surroundings. In that moment, everything else seemed to fall into the background or disappear altogether. When positive thoughts, feelings, or emotions overpower us, engulfing our mind or entire being, it is likely we are experiencing a passion. A passion is a strong feeling of enthusiasm or excitement to do something. Passions are important in our faith because they provide energy to motivate us and renew our convictions. When channeled properly, they provide strength and direction in our efforts to glorify God and edify others. Our spiritual passions are “WHERE” we make our contribution in the Body of Christ.

Passions direct our thoughts and actions; they compel us to advocate for a cause. People who discover their passion(s) do the following:

Recruit & Evangelize

Talk openly about their passion(s) and encourage others to participate

Tout & Parade

Promote, and even show off, to bring attention to their passion(s)

Connect & Unite

Tend to find and associate with other people that have the same passion(s)

Expand & Improve

Are always looking for ways to make things bigger or better

Learn & Grow

Are driven to always learn more or grow in ability

Spend Time

Set their passions as priorities, which may demand a lot of their time

Spend Resources

Are willing to sacrifice money or resources for whatever is newest or best as a result of their persistent involvement

Here's another way to help us understand and discover our passions. To demonstrate, let us take a moment for a short pop quiz. It may be helpful that your answers begin with a series of somewhat uninhibited responses – the first thought that comes to mind. After gathering a pen and blank sheet of paper, ask yourself the following questions and record the first responses you think about:

Pop Quiz on Passion:

1. What makes you want to get out of bed early in the morning or what keeps you up late at night?
2. If you had unlimited time, how would you spend it?
3. What were you doing the last time you lost track of time?
4. What do you love teaching other people?
5. If someone guaranteed your success, where would you focus your energy?
6. If you had an endless supply of money, where would you spend it?

Why is Passion Important for Us?

Passion is a key element in finding fulfillment in our service to Him and the Body of Christ. God gave us passions to use in order to make a difference in His kingdom. Finding our passion may or may not be an easy process. We have to submit ourselves to God's will, but also take time to personally reflect. This journey can be short or take months or even years. In the meantime, we can continue serving according to our spiritual gifts and personal approach. When we finally discover what our passion is, the what, how, and where of our calling comes into focus, and the picture of God's design for us becomes clearer. The time we devote no longer feels like an obligation, and even when we encounter struggles and obstacles, our passion gives us the energy to continue. We should not rule out a passion that may at first feel unconnected to our church or congregation. We should think outside of the box and find a way to bring something that we are excited about to connect others to Christ and His great love.

GROUNDWORK

Personal Approach Assessment

Read each question, then decide which of the two statements is more like you by circling the best number for each question.

How are you ASSURED?

1. While on vacation I prefer to...

follow a set plan

12345

be spontaneous
2. I prefer to set guidelines that are...

specific

12345

general
3. I prefer to...

settle things now

12345

leave my options open
4. I prefer projects that have...

routine

12345

variety
5. I like to...

stick to a plan

12345

play it by ear
6. I find routine...

restful

12345

boring
7. I accomplish tasks best...

by following a plan

12345

by working it out as I go

Add up the total for the first set of questions _____

If your total was 7-20, you are assured by **structure**.

If your total was 22-35, you are assured by **adaptability**.

I am assured by _____

What INSPIRES you?

1. I'm more comfortable...
being with people 1 2 3 4 5 *doing things for people*
2. When doing a task, I tend to...
focus on relationships 1 2 3 4 5 *focus on the goal*
3. I get more excited about...
creating community 1 2 3 4 5 *advancing the cause*
4. I feel I have accomplished something when I've...
built a relationship 1 2 3 4 5 *completed a job*
5. It is more important to start a meeting...
when everyone is there 1 2 3 4 5 *on time*
6. I'm more concerned with...
maintaining the team 1 2 3 4 5 *meeting a deadline*
7. I place a higher value on...
communication 1 2 3 4 5 *action*

Add up the total for the second set of questions _____

If your total was 7-20, you are inspired by **people**.

If your total was 22-35, you are inspired by **projects**.

I am inspired by _____

Intensity:

The intensity scale for both **ASSURED** and **INSPIRED** is indicated as follows:

7-10	<i>strongly</i>	32-35
11-14	<i>moderately</i>	28-31
15-18	<i>mildly</i>	24-27
19-23	<i>neutral/both</i>	19-23

GROUNDWORK

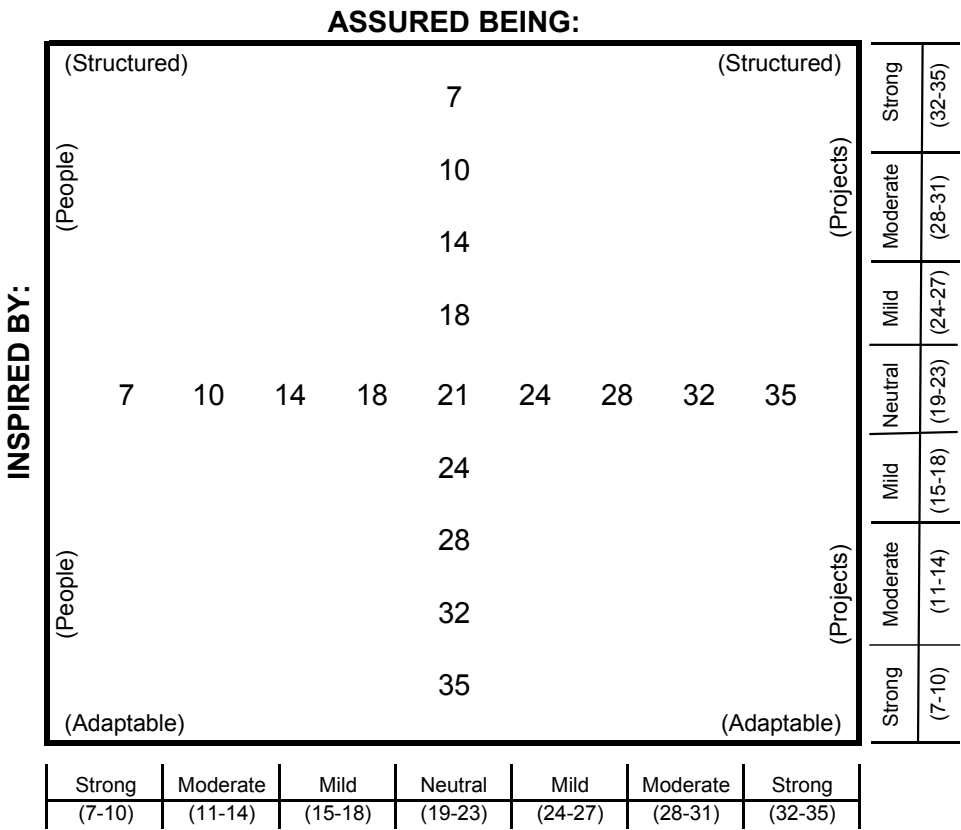
Personal Approach Chart

After completing the assessment, please chart your results in the box below:

ASSURED score - Using the vertical axis, draw a horizontal line on the graph corresponding to your score.

INSPIRED score - Using the horizontal axis, draw a vertical line on the graph corresponding to your score.

The point where the two lines intersect is your **PERSONAL APPROACH**.



Personal Approach Tendencies

Personal Approach Results Summary:

Circle one, then fill in the most appropriate level of intensity:

1. I am inspired by: **People** / **Projects**
at a _____ level of intensity.

2. I am assured being: **Structured** / **Adaptable**
at a _____ level of intensity.

ASSURED BEING:

INSPIRED BY:

<u>STRUCTURED / PEOPLE</u> • Usher • Event Coordinator • Outreach Coordinator	<u>STRUCTURED / PROJECT</u> • Record / iMIS Administrator • Audio / Visual Team • Maintenance Manager
<u>ADAPTABLE / PEOPLE</u> • Visiting Team • Worship Leader • Sunday School Teacher	<u>ADAPTABLE / PROJECT</u> • Flower arranger • Organist • Bulletin Board Organizer

Examples

SESSION 4

Questions for discussion

1. Why do you think it's important for your activity to be aligned with your personal approach?
2. Why is it important for you to not only understand your personal approach, but to understand the personal approach of the people you work with?
3. How do our passions affect our lives?

Take the Pop Quiz on passion and discuss your answers:

1. What makes you want to get out of bed early in the morning or what keeps you up late at night?
2. If you had unlimited time, how would you spend it?
3. What were you doing the last time you lost track of time?
4. What do you love teaching other people?
5. If someone guaranteed your success, where would you focus your energy?
6. If you had an endless supply of money, where would you spend it?

PERSONAL TAKE-HOME

Now that you have started to look at some of your passions, start thinking about how they connect with the gifts you have been equipped with. Take time to reflect on this in the coming weeks.

GOING DEEPER

My Personal Approach

My Personal Approach:

People or Project Oriented

Structured or Adaptable



are my areas of comfort
and self-assurance



This is **HOW** I engage in
the Body of Christ

Quick Facts on Personal Approach

- Personal approach is a matter of finding fulfilment
- If one or both of your orientations are undefined, you may be comfortable with either approach - depending on the situation
- Over time your actions will tend to gravitate toward your natural style
- Our personal approach is how we are inspired and organized

- When you are within your personal approach you will feel confident
- Structure vs Adaptable can differ in a person's thoughts versus their actions
- One can be outgoing, yet find fulfillment in projects
- One can be good with projects, yet find fulfillment with people

- You will spend less energy when you engage with natural approach
- A structured style seeks completion while an adaptable style seeks variety
- A project orientation appreciates people committed to a task
- A people orientation values relationships and complementary interaction

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Mercy

Eleeē (Greek): to have compassion on, help the afflicted

What is the spiritual gift of Mercy?

The gift of Mercy is the divine enablement to perceive suffering and demonstrate compassion, thereby bringing help, relief, and comfort to those in need. Individuals with the gift of Mercy contribute dignity.

Characteristics:

Benevolent, Burden-Bearing, Caring, Comforting, Compassionate, Consoling, Empathetic, Gentle, Kind, Patient, Persistent, Responsive, Sensitive, Tender

How does the gift of Mercy manifest itself?

Those with the gift of Mercy act upon the compassion they feel towards those in pain; whether it be physical, mental, emotional or spiritual. They are drawn to those who are lonely, oppressed, or forgotten by others. They serve others by offering God's solutions with love, grace, and dignity - not pity - and do not shy away from the most difficult of circumstances. Individuals with Mercy envision potential in others and exhibit patience when providing relief to those with personal hardship or crisis. They graciously offer a shoulder to cry on and never show judgment towards those in pain. Because those with the gift of Mercy are empathetic, they may find it easier to forgive others as well.

What do people with the gift of Mercy need to be aware of?

Those with the gift of Mercy extend themselves and may become deeply and emotionally involved in the life of someone else, which can lead to disappointment or even anger when their efforts are not met with sufficient thanks. Caring for those in need is stressful, which can sometimes overwhelm the one providing care. Those with Mercy must be aware that rescuing people from, and carrying all of someone's pain, may not be appropriate and can sometimes also hinder God's work in them.

Biblical Example: Joseph

Joseph's brothers, in their extreme jealousy, sold him into slavery and lied to their father that Joseph was attacked by a wild animal and killed. Joseph eventually rose to great power in Egypt. During a great famine, Joseph's brothers came to Egypt for food. They were brought before Joseph, but did not recognize him. Joseph, however, knew very well that the men before him were his brothers. Joseph had every right to treat them poorly or to not give them food during their time of need. Although Joseph would have been justified due to all the

wrongdoings of his brothers, he showed mercy unto them by forgiving them and sharing his prosperity. For in his wisdom, Joseph knew that it was God who sent him to Egypt for this purpose, not his brothers. You can read the story of Joseph and his brothers in Genesis 37 through 45.

Bible References

Matthew 5:7, Matthew 25:34-40, Mark 9:41, Luke 10:25-37, Acts 2:43-47, Acts 9:36, Romans 12:6-8, James 2:14-17

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > I strongly relate to it
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Intercession

Énteuksis (Greek): a meeting with, prayer, petition, supplication

What is the spiritual gift of Intercession?

The gift of Intercession is the divine enablement to have an awareness of the needs of others and put the gift into action by praying on their behalf. Individuals with the gift of Intercession contribute prayer.

Characteristics:

Advocate, Burden-bearer, Caring, Confident in God, Dedicated, Disciplined, Empathetic, Giving, Kind, Loving, Open, Peacemaker, Pleading, Prayerful, Reliable, Sincere, Spiritually Sensitive, Trustworthy

How does the gift of Intercession manifest itself?

The ultimate expression of Intercession is fervent prayer for others. Those blessed with this gift feel regular impulses of the Holy Spirit, guiding them toward people or causes needing prayerful attention. Having a daily awareness of spiritual battles, the Intercessor feels honored when others ask for their prayers and pleads with great confidence. The upright life of an Intercessor is a means to touch the heart of God (James 5:16). A close, personal relationship with God opens the way for continual communication. They are convinced that God directly responds to prayer. Intercession can also take the form of speaking up for someone (John 8:1-7).

What do people with the gift of Intercession need to be aware of?

Intercessors must remain patient when anticipating answers to prayers and be prepared for the possibility that God may choose to answer in a way that either defies human logic or is not visible to them. They may feel a sense of emptiness if they do not see results. Extended times of prayer should not be used as an escape from fulfilling one's responsibilities. Spiritual intimacy with God, gained through prayer, should also never entice us to place ourselves above others.

Biblical Example: Abraham

When God was displeased with the activity in Sodom and Gomorrah, He sought to destroy the people and their cities. Abraham pleaded with God, interceding with God on their behalf. God's initial response to Abraham was that if He found fifty righteous people, He would not destroy the city. Abraham pleaded that if even forty-five were found righteous, the city would be spared. Abraham continued pleading to God, asking if forty righteous were found, could the city be spared, then thirty, then twenty, and finally ten. Abraham pleaded and interceded six times that the city should not be destroyed if righteous were found within.

Bible References

Luke 2:36-38, John 17:9-26, 1 Timothy 2:1-4, Colossians 1:9-12, James 5:16

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > *I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.



Session 5

Understanding and Anchoring our Passions

SESSION 5

Understanding and Anchoring our Passions

Passion Through Intentional Discipleship – A Biblical Example

Apostle Paul (originally called Saul) was a man of great passion. As we'll see, his intense passion became a driving force in his aligning himself with Christ. Paul came from a God-fearing Israelite family of the tribe of Benjamin. He lived a righteous life, according to the law. In his youth, Paul's passion centered on the Law of Moses as the path of righteousness. In his zeal, he sought to abolish all teachings that were outside the Mosaic Law. However, God saw Paul's zealous love for Him and redirected him. While Paul was on his way to Damascus, Christ appeared to him and asked: "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" (Acts 9:4).

After this amazing encounter, Paul responded to Christ's call and drastically changed his views. According to Philippians 3:7-10, Paul regarded all of his former learning and "gain" to be a loss for Christ; he realized that it was not by his personal righteousness, but through faith in Christ that he received righteousness from God. Once he understood that Jesus was the realization of his greatest hope, he recalibrated his beliefs and aligned his zealous and passionate activity with the Gospel of Christ.

Paul is known for his zealousness. His passion was actually intensified through a negative experience. Imagine his feelings when Christ asks him "Why are you persecuting me?" He became burdened with the realization that he had persecuted his Savior. From the moment Paul experienced Christ, he dedicated his whole being to evangelizing the Gospel, and encouraging others in their belief in Christ. He traveled and established churches in many cities. Even while in prison, he dedicated his time to preaching, exhorting, and writing letters of encouragement to the congregations. Paul's affection and passion for Christ became so intense that he stated: "For to me, to live is Christ..." (Philippians 1:21).

Allowing God's Promises to Kindle Passion

When Christ appeared and spoke to Paul, his knowledge of Scripture and God's promises helped him to recognize Jesus Christ as the Son of God. With such an intense experience with Christ, Paul could then reflect and become assured that many of God's promises came to fruition through Jesus. Jesus also made promises, including the promise to return for those

who long for and are prepared for His coming. Paul cherished and exalted the virtues of Christ's promises. This was evidenced through his passion.

The Sources of Apostle Paul's Passion

Paul's passion became anchored in Christ. Understanding some of the fundamental sources of a Christ-centered passion can help us build upon the same foundation which inspired Paul's zeal. Grounding our passions in Christ will help keep us from drifting away from Him. Paul's passion was full and deep, and among other characteristics, it included:

Deep Relationships Born of Love:

Paul was raised in a rich heritage of loving God. Early on, Paul developed a personal relationship with God. His relationship with God was of utmost importance to him. When Christ revealed Himself, Paul began cultivating his own relationship with Jesus Christ and encouraging others to do likewise. So great were the promises of God within Paul that he travelled extensively in order to preach the gospel in multiple cities, affecting many souls.

Following God's Will, God's Way:

Paul's relationship with God provided awareness, so that Paul could align himself and his activities with God's will. When we first see Paul, he is persecuting the church. Once he encounters Christ, he reassesses his beliefs and continues his quest to be found righteous in God's sight.

Some of the apostles of the first church struggled with sharing the gospel with the Gentiles. Paul passionately accepted his calling to preach the gospel to the Gentiles and the children of Israel. In his letter to Corinth, we see that Paul speaks with the Jews based upon their understanding of Jewish laws and traditions. In speaking to the Gentiles, he speaks through their perspective – that he might also gain them for Christ. “I am made all things to all men that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake...” (1 Corinthians 9:22-23).

Even in suffering, Apostle Paul counted all things a blessing. When asking God to take away an infirmity, God said to him: “My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.” Paul’s immediate response was, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”

Anchoring Our Passions

Each of us has different passions. When our passions are securely anchored in Christ, they lead us closer to Him and become an outlet for spiritual activity and profession of Him. Through these expressions we reciprocate Christ’s love and develop a stronger relationship with God. This relationship deepens when we continue to humble ourselves and seek His will.

Identifying passions may be challenging. While some passions are distinct, others are not so obvious. It may be helpful to know that our passions can also be characterized more broadly. The following are five (5) spiritual passion categories:

Foundation Passions:	When our convictions and motivations are founded in providing structure, support, and assistance for others to prosper
Strengthening Passions:	When our convictions and motivations urge us to uplift, connect, care for, and support others
Equipping Passions:	When our convictions and motivations invest in people in order to discover, to create opportunities, and/or to provide tools which support their success
Worship Passions:	When our convictions and motivations prompt a strong outward expression of praise, devotion, music, word, the arts, and/or prayer in reverence to God
Community Passions:	When our convictions and motivations create an impulse within us to reach out, connect, relate, touch, and welcome; uniting all people in good Christian fellowship

GROUNDWORK

Passion Assessment

Passion answers the question: "WHERE am I energized?"

Much of what we say and do is motivated by our passions. Passion can make the difference between doing something that is acceptable, to that which is exceptional. Passion drives us to go out and make a difference - to go the distance. It's the fuel that propels us forward and helps us hold on and persevere. So, as we evaluate "WHERE" we might serve in our families, congregations, and communities, it is important to understand our passions. Knowing your spiritual gifts will answer "WHAT" you do best, but knowing your passion will tell you "WHERE" to do it.

Trust in the Lord and do good; dwell in the land and enjoy safe pasture. Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart. - Psalm 37:3-4

When you think about it, it is exciting that God places a passion in us and gives us the desires of our heart as we serve Him!

1. Now, ask yourself a few questions...

You may be able to identify your passion by simply asking yourself a few probing questions. Please pray over and answer the following questions with the thought in mind that you have absolutely no restrictions that will stop you from fulfilling your heart's desire. Don't concern yourself about whether you can do something, or how it might be done. Simply think about what you might accomplish assuming you had unlimited resources:

What drives you?

- What would you do for God if you knew you couldn't fail?
- What pushes you to action?
- What moves you so deeply that it keeps you awake at night?

GROUNDWORK

Passion Assessment

Who are the people you most want to help?

- Who do you feel you can influence the most?
- Is there an age range you feel most drawn to? If so, what age group?
- Is there an affinity group you feel most drawn to?

What are the needs you feel most drawn to?

- What are the top two needs you love to meet for people?
- Why do you love meeting those needs?

What cause are you most passionate about?

- What cause or issue makes your heart race?
- Where could you make the greatest impact for God?
- What conversations would keep you up late at night?

How would you like others to see you?

- What legacy would you like to leave at the end of your life?
- What would your friends say you are most enthusiastic about?

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GROUNDWORK

Passion Assessment

2. Identify Groups and Causes

A second way to assess your passion is to identify groups of people, issues, causes and different types of functions that you might feel strongly about. Next, circle all that may apply:

PERSONS/GROUPS

Addicts
Cancer/Illness Survivors
Children
Children of Divorce
College Students
Developmentally Disabled
Divorced
Elderly
Empty Nesters
Engaged Couples
Homeless
Hospitalized
Infants
International Students
Intellectually Disabled
Military Personnel
New Mothers
Orphans
Parents & Family
Persecuted Believers
Poor
Prisoners
Refugees
Sick/Shut-ins

Singles
Single Parents
Teen Moms (Parents)
Terminally Ill
Unchurched
Unemployed
Victims/Abused
Widowed
Women
Young Marrieds
Youth
Other:_____

CAUSES

Addiction Rehabilitation
Arts
Career Transition
Charity
Childcare
Disabilities
Disaster Relief
Discipleship
Economics
Education
Environment
Family Development

Finances
Fitness & Health
Grief & Loss
Healthcare & Wellness
Homelessness
Hunger
Immigration
Inner City Development
Literacy
Marriage Enrichment
Missionary / Outreach
Parenting
Peacekeeping
Poverty Alleviation
Prison Ministry
Relationship Loss
Social Rights
Transitions in Life
Violence/Abuse
Other:_____

LOCAL MINISTRIES

Community Outreach	Prayer Group	Tiny Seeds & Nurseries
Leadership	Prepare & Enrich	Worship & Music
Peacemaking	Seniors	Administrative functions
Small Groups	Visitation	Communications
Work of Ministry	Women & Men	Event Management
Coaching & Mentoring	Young Families	Finances
Children	Youth	iMIS & Record keeping
Grief	Audio/Visual	Property Management
Leadership &	Greeters	Technology
Emerging Leaders	Hospitality & Fellowship	Other:_____
Non-attending	Preaching	

3. Identify Experiences that bring you Joy & Fulfillment

The following exercise can help you uncover a theme from your experience which may give you a different insight into your Passion. List the top 1-5 experiences you have had in your life and briefly describe what you did and why it was meaningful to you. The experience may stem from experiences such as: family situations, education, vocation or spiritual circumstances. These experiences may have taken place at home, school, work, or even during your free time. It may have been something you fixed or something you made. It may have been a problem you solved or something you achieved. It may have been something like helping a friend out, constructing something, or doing a special favor for someone in need. Just remember that these are experiences that made you feel fulfilled and brought you joy.

On the next page list your top five positive experiences and explain why the experience was meaningful to you.

GROUNDWORK

Passion Assessment

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

4. Identify some painful experiences that may have resulted in compassion, understanding, or growth.

Similar to the positive experiences in exercise three, Passions can also stem from painful experiences we have had in our lives. Sometimes our difficulties shape us and prepare us for a particular kind of ministry. Experiences that we dread the most can be a new door that God opens up through you for the benefit of others.

Next, examine some areas in your life that may have been painful. After much prayer, consider if these are something you may have a passion to help with. Write down your thoughts below:

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GROUNDWORK

Passion Assessment

Review

Now, review all of your responses to the different exercises, paying particular attention to only your responses (rather than re-reading the questions or written materials that prompted them). See if you can identify any underlying themes in your answers. For example:

- Is there a particular group of people you enjoy being with or a need you are consistently drawn to?
- Identify any areas where you would like to be in a creative role and could build things from scratch.
- In what ways might you strongly connect with and desire to support people who are hurting?
- Are you drawn to a specific cause or feel strongly about a particular church function?
- While reviewing your experiences, are there areas in which you find particular joy or fulfillment?
- Are there particular areas in which you would enjoy experiencing growth?
- What else do you know about your own interests or passions that would be valuable to consider?

Even the things we sometimes complain about most at church may very well be an area of passion. Pray over it and submit yourself to God. He will open up new ways for each of us to better understand our calling from Him.

Results:

[illegible]

GROUNDWORK

Passion Assessment

Passion Categories

Identifying a specific passion might be more difficult for some people than it is for others. Maybe you are passionate about something for a while, but then seem to get distracted or lose focus over time. Or in other cases, even when great efforts of time and prayer are devoted, your passion doesn't initially become obvious. When this occurs, you may find it helpful to simply identify your motivations and source of passion in a more general sense. We can identify passions more broadly through Passion Categories. Passion Categories can also allow for the variety of expression you may prefer. Even when a passion is clearly identified it may be helpful to see how your passion may align within God's work.

Consider one or more of the faith-based Passion Categories provided:

Foundation Passions:	When our convictions and motivations are founded in providing structure, support, and assistance for others to prosper
Strengthening Passions:	When our convictions and motivations urge us to uplift, connect, care for, and support others
Equipping Passions:	When our convictions and motivations invest in people in order to discover, to create opportunities, and/or to provide tools which support their success
Worship Passions:	When our convictions and motivations prompt a strong outward expression of praise, devotion, music, word, the arts, and/or prayer in reverence to God
Community Passions:	When our convictions and motivations create an impulse within us to connect, relate, touch, reach out and welcome; uniting all people in good Christian fellowship

An important final consideration of your Passion:

Whatever your passion is, there are two questions you should ask yourself:

1. How can your passion glorify God?

2. How can your passion edify others?

When your passion can serve these two purposes, your passion serves God and He will bless your efforts!

SESSION 5

Questions for discussion

1. Paul tells us in Philippians 3: 7-11 that all his former accomplishments and priorities in life have become second to Christ. How does making Christ paramount in your life impact your other passions?
2. What are some examples of people serving in their area of passion? What makes you recognize that they are serving in their passion?
3. In Galatians, verses 1:13 – 2:10, we see that the journey Paul went on before he began spreading the Gospel was a long one (over 3 years). What does this tell you about your own personal journey in discovering your passions?
4. What are ways that you can stay encouraged and connected to God's will during this time?
5. Read through the chart of passion categories. List examples of each as a group. Which category do you most relate to? Do you see any matches between your passion category and the gifts that God has equipped you with?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal green ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

GOING DEEPER

My Passions

My Passions:



are my convictions
and motivations



This is **WHERE** I serve in
the Body of Christ

Quick Facts about Passions

- Passions can motivate a person toward fruitfulness
- Discovering your God-given passion may require effort but will reward you with joy
- Good enough is never good enough: passion won't allow for it
- Joys turn into passions when choice, desire and determination unite
- Being passionate means being invested

- Passion is associated with drive, enthusiasm and limitless energy
- A true passion reveals itself in zeal
- Passions encourage other people and are contagious
- When you find the passion God places in your heart, the extraordinary can happen
- When passions are involved, time and effort have no cost

- A passion is a commitment with ambition and direction
- Serving with passion is serving with fervency
- A passion that is spiritually focused moves us closer toward God
- Passion transforms life's journey into an adventure

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Hospitality

Philóxenia (Greek): fondness of guests, generous to strangers

What is the spiritual gift of Hospitality?

The gift of Hospitality is the divine enablement to deliver both natural care and soul care to people by providing fellowship, food, and shelter. The gift of Hospitality is needed to fulfill our Vision statement, "...a church where people feel at home." Individuals with the gift of Hospitality contribute comfort.

Characteristics:

Caring, Communicator, Enthusiastic, Friendly, Gracious, Inviting, Kind-Hearted, Outgoing, Peacemaking, Responsive, Sensitive, Sincere, Trustworthy, Warm

How does the gift of Hospitality manifest itself?

Those with the gift of Hospitality excel at creating environments of safety and trust where others feel welcome and at home. Understanding the needs of others, they help people feel valued and cared for. They are focused on building relationships and may even put the needs of others ahead of their own. Those with this gift don't view fellowship as a task, but rather as a lifestyle. They often include outsiders and can pin-point activities that encourage them to be engaged. Believers with this gift are often also comforters and peacemakers. The harvest of Hospitality is an atmosphere of acceptance and abundance.

What do people with the gift of Hospitality need to be aware of?

Hospitality isn't the same as entertaining. It is serving, and should always be viewed as such. While those with the gift of Hospitality may be drawn to invite others into their homes, it must not lead to a situation in which their own family feels neglected.

Biblical Example: Mary and Martha

When one thinks of the gift of Hospitality, perhaps one is drawn to the story of Mary and Martha. Martha, who was consumed with preparing a meal for her guests, became upset with her sister Mary, who chose to sit at the feet of Jesus rather than help with the preparations. Martha became so irritated with her sister's actions that she asked for Jesus' help. Jesus reprimands Martha for being so consumed with the preparations and commends Mary for choosing to listen. This is an example of Martha growing in her gift. Hospitality is very important to Martha, and all she could focus on was that Mary didn't want to help with serving the meal. In this example, Martha's actions were more self-serving, and she did not see value in how Mary was serving Jesus. She did not realize that in her strong

desire to serve in hospitality, she was essentially neglecting her guest! You can read this experience with Martha and Mary Luke 10:38-42.

Bible References:

John 12:2-8, Acts 16:11-15, Romans 12:13, Hebrews 13:1-2, 2 Corinthians 8:1-7, 1 Peter 4:9-10

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > I strongly relate to it
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Evangelism Euangelistés (Greek): a preacher of the Gospel, heralds of salvation

What is the spiritual gift of Evangelism?

The gift of Evangelism is the divine enablement to effectively communicate the Gospel to unbelievers so they respond in faith and move toward discipleship in Christ. Individuals with the gift of Evangelism contribute testimony. The gift of Evangelism is different and distinct from the ordained ministry of an Evangelist. A man bearing the Evangelist ministry may or may not be prominent in the gift of Evangelism.

Characteristics:

Articulate, Candid, Commitment-oriented, Confident, Influential, Messenger, Persuader, Preacher, Respected, Sincere, Spiritually Passionate

How does the gift of Evangelism manifest itself?

Those with the gift of Evangelism are messengers that enthusiastically proclaim God's Word, which includes warning of sin, explaining God's solution (the Gospel), and urging acceptance of His call to respond. Those with the gift of Evangelism seek the lost and see every interaction as an opportunity to testify. The gift of Evangelism enables people to understand the limitless nature of God's love and grace. They are not dismayed when others fail to believe. They love to share experiences of faith. The harvest of Evangelism is spreading the Gospel of Christ according to His great commission.

What do people with the gift of Evangelism need to be aware of?

People with the gift of Evangelism must recognize that, if unbridled, they may approach fanaticism. Therefore, they must remember to let the Holy Spirit be their guide and let God do the convincing. Those with this gift must be careful to not turn people away with their overwhelming enthusiasm and to remember that their gift should be used in a way that makes a person want to develop a relationship with Jesus Christ.

Biblical Example: Samaritan woman at the well

Jesus approached the Samaritan woman at the well and spoke with her about deep spiritual truths. Once she realized that Jesus was the Messiah, she embraced His message with joy and went into the town to give testimony of Him. Many of the Samaritans in the town immediately came to the well to seek Jesus and learn more of Him. What makes this so remarkable is that in those days, a woman's word was not typically seen as very important – so, her testimony must have been very

convincing. Through her zeal and love for God, she continued to bring witness to many in that area who also became Christians.

Note: Jesus tells His disciples that they are about to reap a harvest, but He also reminds them that they are reaping where others have sown. It is not their work alone; they may be completing what others have begun or planting a new seed. You can read about Jesus' conversation with the Samaritan woman in John 4.

Bible References

Luke 24:1-11, John 4:38-42, Acts 8:26-40, Acts 14:15-17, Ephesians 4:11-14, 2 Timothy 4:1-5

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > *I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.



Session 6

Building up the Body of Christ

SESSION 6

Building up the Body of Christ

Edifying Others

While we are not all the same, we are all called to serve God in the unique way He designed us. Paul teaches that the “people” are the temple, or the church, of God (1 Corinthians 3:16). Later, he instructs them: “...since you are zealous for spiritual gifts, let it be for the edification of the church that you seek to excel” (1 Corinthians 14:12). Finally, Paul exhorts the congregation that spiritual gifts are given to edify the Body of Christ (Ephesians 4:11-12). God has given us many spiritual gifts for many purposes. However, the most important thing we can do with our spiritual gifts is to bring glory to God. We bring glory to God when we use our gifts to edify others. The term “edify” is derived from the term edifice: a building or structure. The action verb ‘edify’ means to build-up or construct.

Apostle Paul compared the church with the temple and pointed out that God builds the temple, builds the Church. That is a beautiful image. When you build a house, you need different craftsmen for different jobs. When you lay the foundation or build the walls, you will need other craftsmen and tools than when you paint the walls or fit the lights inside the rooms. For each job, you need professionals with special skills and suitable tools. He [the Lord] established the plan of the church. He clearly laid out the building plans of the temple. It is our responsibility to make sure that everything is done in accordance with the plans of God, using the methods of the Holy Spirit...Every Christian, every child of God, is invited to serve the Lord, to help Him, to commit himself, to become a disciple of the Lord Jesus in daily life. – Chief Apostle J. Schneider

Those Who Serve & Those Who Equip

Following Jesus is not about position, it is about service. All of us are called and gifted to serve the Body of Christ in our unique way. Jesus said, “But he who is greatest among you shall be your servant” (Matthew 23:11). Servants feel most fulfilled when God uses them personally to fulfill a need. This is a powerful role, intended to meet needs in the Lord’s work. Each of us are called to serve with our unique gifts within the Body of Christ. When we are grounded in God, we know “who we are” and “who we belong to,” which allows us to serve others with confidence. We are all needed.

We can all find fulfillment and fruitfulness in serving others. However, some of us may be inclined to equip. Equippers invest in others in order to empower another's serving; they naturally enjoy focusing their efforts on others and find fulfillment when others respond to their call and excel in their giftedness. A good example of this is David, who equipped his son, Solomon, to build the temple (1 Chronicles 29). We can illustrate a further example using the gift of Craftsmanship. A bricklayer may not only excel in his craft; he may also teach others how to lay bricks. Now both individuals can make their contribution constructing the building. The equipper provides the tools others need to serve. They make investments in people and become fulfilled when they help others to serve with fruitfulness. Equippers exhibit humbleness by often placing the development of others before themselves. They may even work themselves out of a position by promoting a replacement. The equipper's focus includes vision, developing people, empowering others, and establishing Christ-like relationships.

Each of us may participate in serving or equipping from time to time, but remember, we will experience the greatest amount of joy and freedom when we are engaged by God's design. God assigns us our gifts and our place in the Body of Christ; we do not choose them. Acknowledging whether we are truly servants or equippers helps us to function fruitfully. Jesus was an example of both:

- As a servant, Jesus healed, fed thousands, and even washed the feet of His disciples.
- Jesus also equipped His disciples so that they could continue His work after His ascension.

Engaging for the Future

Our engagement is an expression of our love for Jesus Christ. To engage our spiritual gifts is to live a life of service. It is an intentional and individual calling for which God has equipped us. Through spiritual maturity, we make the decision to respond. It should not be confused with a life of obligation. It is a life of passion, purpose, and deep spiritual abundance. As our Chief Apostle Schneider described in his Pentecost message, it is "to Labor in Love." It brings the rewards of God's Kingdom into our lives now and for eternity.

GROUNDWORK

Equipping and Serving Assessment

Do you primarily Equip or Serve?

Check one box (A or B) depending on which statement best describes you.

	A	B	STATEMENT A	STATEMENT B
1.			You tend to focus on immediate needs, helping to accomplish something for today.	You tend to focus on future needs, encouraging others to reach a vision.
2.			You seek to include anyone willing.	You tend to coordinate with others according to complementary characteristics.
3.			You engage to directly meet the needs of others.	You focus on developing and training others to meet needs.
4.			You would rather do something yourself.	You invest in and entrust others.
5.			You find great satisfaction when the Lord uses you to meet the needs of others.	You find great satisfaction when others develop and serve successfully.
6.			You look for ways to serve others, seeking to make a difference directly in their lives.	You seek to encourage and develop others, helping them make contributions within a team.
7.			You find great fulfillment when you personally serve others.	You find great fulfillment when you equip others to serve.
			TOTALS (Add up your totals for each column)	

Results:

	A	B	
100%	7	0	Your primary role is serving. Seek opportunities to develop your spiritual giftedness by serving others.
85%	6	1	Your primary role is serving. Seek opportunities to develop your spiritual giftedness by serving others.
70%	5	2	Your primary role is most likely serving. While your primary role is serving, you may find some opportunities to equip.
55%	4	3	Your primary role leans towards serving. Your characteristics focus on serving but include some elements of equipping. Be open to equipping opportunities.
55%	3	4	Your primary role leans toward equipping. As you serve, be mindful of opportunities to equip in areas of your giftedness.
70%	2	5	Your primary role is most likely equipping. Your tendency is toward equipping. As you serve, seek advice from peers and leaders as you develop your ability to equip.
85%	1	6	Your primary role is equipping. As you serve, seek opportunities to develop your spiritual giftedness by developing others.
100%	0	7	Your primary role is equipping. As you serve, seek opportunities to develop your spiritual giftedness by developing others.

SESSION 6

Questions for discussion

1. How can you specifically use your spiritual gifts, in collaboration with others, to build up the Body of Christ?
2. In what ways is serving God a privilege for you?
3. Can you think of someone who has been an “equipper” for you in your life? How did they equip you?
4. Do you think you are more of an equipper or servant? Why? Has anyone ever affirmed you?

Every time God calls, it is an expression of His Love. It is God's way of drawing us close to Him and telling us: "I love you." Each of us is called by God as an expression of God's all-encompassing love. We must quiet ourselves to hear this call. We have to recognize that it is the call of God and respond to it. [When] we hear the call of God, "I need your help. I need you to be a good disciple. I need you to serve Me," then we recognize that His is the love of the Master. Then we serve God out of love because we love Jesus Christ, because we love our neighbor. And then things look completely different. We understand that He wants us to commit our service to the best interest of others.

[So] let us listen to the call of our heavenly Father: "I need you." Suddenly this "you" does not refer to the circle of the ministers or to the rector or to my neighbor. We realize that God is waiting for me, to help the young brother, the elderly sister, or the sick brother. God needs me. If I realize that the welfare of the congregation and the atmosphere in it depends on me, then I have to do something about it. – Chief Apostle Schneider

1. What do you think God is waiting for you to do?

2. How do you feel the love of God in His calling for you?

GOING DEEPER

Christ-like love - 1 Corinthians 13

LOVE

For full effect, say each sentence inserting your name out loud. Next, indicate where your heart is most of the time:

** After speaking these statements aloud; then respond with "This is (answer) true" to help with double-negatives*

(Your name)...is patient.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
(Your name)...is kind.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
*(Your name)...does not envy.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
*(Your name)...does not boast.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
*(Your name)...is not proud.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
*(Your name)...is not rude.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
*(Your name)...is not self-seeking.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
*(Your name)...is not easily angered.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
*(Your name)...does not keep a record of wrongs.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
*(Your name)...does not delight in evil, but rejoices in the truth.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
(Your name)...always protects.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
(Your name)...always trusts.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
(Your name)...always hopes.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
(Your name)...always perseveres.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>
*(Your name)...never fails.	<i>Seldom / Sometimes / Always</i>

Improvements

Write down one action you can take to improve your "Love."

Patience:	
Kindness:	
Envyng:	
Boasting:	
Proud / arrogant:	
Rude:	
Self-seeking:	
Easily angered:	
Keeping 'score':	
Delighting in evil:	
Protective:	
Trusting:	
Hopeful:	
Persevering:	
Failing:	

GOING DEEPER

Christ-like love - 1 Corinthians 13

MY HEART...

I choose to place God first, not out of obligation but because I want to.

Seldom Sometimes Always

I seek to serve God with a pure heart regardless of what others think.

Seldom Sometimes Always

My serving reflects God's will: I serve beyond my own needs or desires.

Seldom Sometimes Always

I look to remove boundaries when it comes to pleasing God.

Seldom Sometimes Always

God sees me as a humble servant, not proud or boastful.

Seldom Sometimes Always

My activity glorifies God and is not self-serving.

Seldom Sometimes Always

Improvements

Write down one action you can take to improve your "Heart."

Priorities:	
Pure Heart:	
God's will:	
Removing obstacles:	
Humility:	
Glorifying God:	



SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Apostleship

Apóstolos (Greek): messenger, one sent on a mission

What is the spiritual gift of Apostleship?

The gift of Apostleship is the divine enablement to oversee the development of new serving opportunities and initiatives with spiritual clarity. In its simplest form, individuals with the gift of Apostleship have a missionary or pioneering spirit and contribute development. The gift of Apostleship is different and distinct from the ordained ministry of an Apostle. A man bearing the Apostle ministry may or may not be prominent in the gift of apostleship.

Characteristics:

Adaptable, Adventurous, Advocate, Cause-Driven, Champion, Confident in God, Culturally Sensitive, Entrepreneurial, Missionary, Persevering, Pioneer, Sees Big Picture

How does the gift of Apostleship manifest itself?

Christians with the divine gift of Apostleship are comfortable professing and growing the Kingdom of God in places it does not currently exist. Those with the gift of Apostleship have a missionary heart, which draws them across cultures. They may be active in the inner city, internationally, or elsewhere, and establish new beginnings, such as church planting. They are culturally aware and do not view different attitudes, cultures, or backgrounds as barriers to speaking about the gospel. They frequently find themselves in leadership positions and also raise up and develop others as leaders.

What do people with the gift of Apostleship need to be aware of?

By the nature of their gift and responsibilities, those with the gift of Apostleship often find themselves with authority over projects and groups. As one with influence, it is critical to remember that their gift, and the authority that stems from it, comes from God. They must be patient with those who are tasked with the day-to-day work of implementing changes and make provisions to sustain efforts before moving on to something new. Those with the gift of Apostleship need to guard against pessimism or burdening others with unrealistic demands and expectations. Mishandling this gift may suppress the Spirit in others.

Biblical Example: Timothy

Timothy was raised learning about the Gospel of Jesus through his mother and grandmother. As he became a young adult, he set out on mission trips with Apostle Paul. We see the Holy Spirit working through Timothy as he testified of the Lord

Jesus in various lands. Timothy strengthened the work in Macedonia, traveled with Apostle Paul to Athens, and was sent to the believers in Thessalonica to establish them in the Gospel. The gift of Apostleship is prominent in his activity of establishing and strengthening congregations, in his travels, and in developing leaders for the congregations. Although he exhibits the gift of Apostleship, Timothy did not have the ministry of an Apostle.

Bible References: Acts 8:5-6, 26-40; Matthew 28:18-20

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > *I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Craftsmanship

Technîtes (Greek): an artisan, architect, or builder

What is the spiritual gift of Craftsmanship?

The gift of Craftsmanship is the divine enablement to use skill and creativity to design or build items to be used by those who are serving the Lord. Individuals with the gift of Craftsmanship contribute labor.

Characteristics:

Artistic, Behind-the-Scenes, Builder, Creative, Designer, Handy, Helpful, Imaginative, Inventive, Masterful, Practical, Resourceful, Skillful

How does the gift of Craftsmanship manifest itself?

Those with the gift of Craftsmanship love working with their hands. They see the value and potential in raw materials that others may not see, and apply their skill and knowledge to develop those raw materials into items that benefit others and glorify God. These souls are often practical and look to fix things that are not working right.

What do people with the gift of Craftsmanship need to be aware of?

Because they often work behind-the-scenes, those with the gift of Craftsmanship may not see themselves as an integral part of the Body of Christ. They must be mindful that their projects can bring about opportunities to personally minister to others. The Craftsman needs to remember that all works done for the purpose of glorifying God hold spiritual value and serve to build His Kingdom here on earth. Failure to recognize the eternal value of their works could lead the Craftsman to struggle in finding fulfillment.

Biblical Example: Noah

Using the directions which God gave him, Noah built the ark. While dimensions and even the types of materials were expressly given, Noah was resourceful in procuring the proper materials. He utilized the art of Craftsmanship in using the various tools needed to complete such a project. Noah needed to be practical and creative in designing rooms that would house all of the animals and the food needed to sustain them and his family. It is important to note that a Craftsman's project is a means toward a future goal and not the goal itself. Such was also the case with the ark.

Bible References

Exodus 28, Exodus 31:1-11, Exodus 35:31-35

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 *> I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.

a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Administration

Kybérnêsis (Greek): to steer, pilot, or direct

What is the spiritual gift of Administration?

The gift of Administration is the divine enablement to understand what makes the Church of Christ function and the special ability to plan and execute procedures that accomplish the goals of the ministry. Individuals with the gift of Administration contribute organization.

Characteristics:

Adaptable, Communicator, Conscientious, Detail-Oriented, Effective, Efficient, Goal-Oriented, Objective, Organized, Reliable, Responsive, Supportive, Thorough, Vision-Building

How does the gift of Administration manifest itself?

Individuals with the gift of Administration see order in chaos. They don't get bogged down or overwhelmed with complex problems, but rather see opportunities to bring about order and discipline. Administrators are detail-oriented and may notice small nuances that others miss. This holds true for both tasks and people, and Administrators excel at organizing tasks, as well as bringing the right group of people together to achieve goals. Administrators don't need to be leaders, but are often those working behind the scenes to ensure that leaders are successful in implementing strategies and achieving group goals. The harvest of the gift of Administration is an atmosphere of peace, confidence, and sustainability.

What do people with the gift of Administration need to be aware of?

As those with the gift of Administration are focused on people and/or projects and processes, it is important they remember that individual spiritual growth – both for themselves and others – is critical. Since Administrators are often focused on details, they need to remember that small steps towards a greater goal have a divine purpose. Failure to appreciate small victories could lead Administrators to view their efforts as failed.

Biblical Example: Joseph

God, through Joseph, provided interpretation to Pharaoh's dream; namely, that there would be seven years of abundance and then seven years of famine. Joseph instructed Pharaoh to select a discerning and wise man to oversee all the land. Pharaoh decided that there was none as discerning and wise as Joseph and gave him administrative authority over all of Egypt. Joseph responsibly gathered the necessary supplies during the years of plenty and managed the storehouses well during the years of famine.

Bible References: 1 Corinthians 12:28, Acts 6:1-7, Luke 14:28-30

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > *I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

Session 7

A Mission with Purpose

SESSION 7

A Mission with Purpose

Our congregations are a source of support, unity, and fellowship with those whom we share faith. This is a work of reciprocity -- we give, as well as receive. We strive to build each other up. Our congregational efforts fall into two categories: "Continuous Ministry," which includes examples like music/choir, visiting, etc., and "Special Projects," which might include examples such as vacation bible school, building an addition to the church, etc. By working together, we become more unified in our goals. Our church mission statement is important, as it provides purpose in our work together as a church. The detailed outline of our church mission statement below can be helpful as a guide for our activities within the congregation.

NEW APOSTOLIC CHURCH MISSION STATEMENT

Reaching out to all people in order to teach them the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to baptize them with water and the Holy Spirit. Providing soul care and cultivating a warm fellowship in which everyone shall experience the love of God and the joy of serving Him and others.

Within the New Apostolic Mission Statement, there are four elements on which to base our congregational activity: Gospel, Ministry, Mission, and Worship. When our congregation promotes one or more of these elements, we begin to fulfill our mission as New Apostolic Christians to glorify God and edify others. As we organize people with common passions within the congregation, we want to confirm that our activity supports one or more of these fundamentals:

Gospel: ***"... in order to teach them the Gospel of Jesus Christ and to baptize them..."***

Jesus' life, death, and teachings created our eternal salvation and established the core of what constitutes the gospel. We strive to enliven gospel teaching. For most New Apostolic Christians, the divine services are the focal point of congregational life. This is where we hear the word of God, celebrate communion with Christ, and seek inspiring and fulfilling spiritual experiences motivated by the Holy Spirit. The divine service has many components requiring planning, spiritual preparation, as well as collaboration with other leaders to coordinate music, audio/visual,

decorations and fellowship. There are many opportunities to help create a divine service experience of the highest quality. Our activity also involves seeking opportunities to share our gospel experience.

Ministry: ***"...and the joy of serving Him and others."***

To become and remain spiritually healthy, it is necessary to engage and constantly renew our serving through ministry. Our ministry work includes identifying and developing our own unique gifts of ministry. A healthy congregation also requires enlightened leadership that is skilled in spiritual talent management and that is willing to embrace diversity and inspire activity through "the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ" (Ephesians 4:11 -13).

Mission: ***"...Reaching out to all people... Providing soul care and cultivating a warm fellowship..."***

While we continually focus on congregational health, it is important to communicate Christ's offer of salvation in an open and transparent manner to others. We can promote greater public awareness of our congregations and the mission and vision of the New Apostolic Church. The Great Commandment explains this in another way:

"Then one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question, testing Him, and saying, 'Teacher, which is the great commandment in the law?' Jesus said to him, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'" - Matthew 22:35-39

This commandment becomes a personal mission for every Christian. We can ask ourselves:

- How can I “broaden” this love to others around me?
- Who is in need?
- Whom can I help to come to know Christ and accept Him?
- With whom can I share the love of Christ?
- Whom can I serve with no thought of reward, recognition, or repayment?

These ideals permeate our everyday life and can be carried out by how we live, interact, and speak with others. Community outreach is one facet of mission, but the all-encompassing reach of this mission is that each one strives to achieve a "victory" every day (Pentecost 2016) over self-centeredness.

As those who provide soul care to others, a key element is to provide support on a path leading to Jesus Christ. Jesus provided soul care, and we can use Him as an example for how we should serve others. He knows each one of us like a shepherd knows each of the sheep in his flock, as He said, “. . . I know my sheep, and am known by My own” (John 10:14). We can encourage others by being present and staying close to them. Listening, caring and sharing, crying together and praying together – this is soul care.

True fellowship is based on love toward our neighbor. To cultivate “warm fellowship” is to implement the love of Jesus in people’s hearts. We must talk about Jesus – we should speak about what He does, not what we do. He is bigger than us, so we must let Him be bigger by focusing on Him. Cultivating fellowship takes pure love and time. We need to be patient during this time of cultivation. This mission fills our everyday life and can be carried out by how we live, interact, and speak with others.

Worship: *“... everyone shall experience the love of God...”*

It is one of the tasks of the church of Christ to bring adoration and praise to God. All believers whom Jesus Christ has called together, and who have become part of His church, have been given the mission to praise and glorify God in both a very personal way in our own lives—by simply being a Christian and living our faith in practice—and in a unified way as a congregation gathered for divine service. Every divine service is a collective expression of praise to God.

We look to enrich our worship. Powerful worship creates a robust and joyful relationship with God, our Heavenly Father; with Christ, our Savior and Redeemer; and the Holy Spirit, our Comforter. Praying, singing, serving others, offering, thankfulness, obedience, reading the Bible, reflecting on God’s kindness and the ultimate sacrifice of Christ on our behalf; these things and many more constitute our worship.

The praise of God and the worship of His majesty will never cease. Even in the new creation we will praise and glorify God. All other tasks and purposes of the church will be fulfilled and come to an end; however, this task will remain. If we think about this for a moment, the praise of God takes on an entirely new dimension: we are all part of the church in order to glorify God.

Collective praise is a sure indicator of unity. God wants us to work on this together and set a good example, such that the mission of the church may be fulfilled, namely to give everyone access to salvation in Christ, proclaim the gospel, and bring God the praise and worship He is due. Everyone knows we will never succeed in this on our own. For this, we need one another!

NAC Catechism: Chapter 7 footnote

The New Apostolic Church understands “ministry” as a spiritual, ordained ministry. It therefore understands a minister as one who is authorized, blessed, and sanctified through ordination by an Apostle (cf. Fifth Article of Faith: “I believe that those designated by God for a ministry are ordained only by Apostles, and that authority, blessing, and sanctification for their ministration come forth out of the Apostle ministry.”) The New Apostolic Church does indeed encourage all of its members to utilize their gifts and talents, and to be involved in various activities, as “the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all” (1 Corinthians 12:1–11), and “as each one has received a gift”, we are to “minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God” (1 Peter 4:10), “... for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ” (Ephesians 4:12). The problem arises in that the English translation of the Bible (and the English language in general) uses “ministering” and “serving” (or “ministry” and “service”) interchangeably. While other parts of the Christian church may refer to such services, duties, functions, or exercises of gifts and talents as “ministry,” from the perspective of the New Apostolic Church these must be distinguished from the spiritual, ordained ministry (see paragraph 3 of 7.1; cf. also Divine Service Guide, Special Edition 03/12). Someone who serves the youth, for example, is indeed ministering to the youth, but does not have a “ministry” in the sense of the Fifth Article of Faith. The ministering unto various groups in our Church is a service.



GROUNDWORK

Personal Action Statements

Circle your top three (3) selections from each column.

Choose the most appropriate responses. The lists are not exhaustive, so you can add additional choices if necessary.

MY GIFTS ARE

Administration
Apostleship
Craftsmanship
Creative Comm.
Discernment
Encouragement
Evangelism
Faith
Giving
Helps
Hospitality
Intercession
Leadership
Mercy
Shepherding
Teaching
Work of Knowledge
Word of Wisdom

PERSONS/GROUPS

Addicts
Cancer/Illness Survivors
Children
Children of Divorce
College Students
Developmentally Disabled
Divorced
Elderly
Empty Nesters
Engaged Couples
Homeless
Hospitalized
Infants
International Students
Intellectually Disabled
Military Personnel
New Mothers
Orphans

Parents & Family
Persecuted Believers
Poor
Prisoners
Refugees
Sick/Shut-ins
Singles
Single Parents
Teen Moms (Parents)
Terminally Ill
Unchurched
Unemployed
Victims/Abused
Widowed
Women
Young Marrieds
Youth
Other: _____

I LOVE/EXCEL IN

(People Oriented)

Coaching
Connecting
Consulting
Counseling
Encouraging
Facilitating
Leading
Mentoring
Motivating
Negotiating
Recruiting
Serving
Teaching
Welcoming

(Task Oriented)

Administrating
Building
Computing
Cooking
Decorating
Designing
Engineering
Landscaping
Operating
Performing
Planning
Repairing
Researching
Strategizing
Writing

(Either Orientation)

Analyzing
Communicating
Coordinating
Developing
Directing
Improving
Managing
Organizing
Pioneering
Promoting
Other: _____

CAUSES

Addiction Rehabilitation
Arts
Career Transition
Charity
Childcare
Disabilities
Disaster Relief
Discipleship
Economics
Education
Environment
Family Development
Finances
Fitness & Health
Grief & Loss
Healthcare & Wellness
Homelessness
Hunger
Immigration
Inner City Development
Literacy
Marriage Enrichment
Missionary / Outreach
Parenting
Peacekeeping
Poverty Alleviation
Prison Ministry
Relationship Loss
Social Rights
Transitions in Life
Violence/Abuse
Other:_____

LOCAL MINISTRIES

Culture	Divine Service Experience
Community Outreach	Audio/Visual
Leadership	Greeters
Peacemaking	Hospitality & Fellowship
Small Groups	Preaching
Work of Ministry	Tiny Seeds & Nureries
Coaching & Mentoring	Worship & Music
Pastoral Care	Structure
Children	Administrative functions
Grief	Communications
Leadership & Emerging	Event Management
Leaders	Finances
Non-attending	iMIS & Record keeping
Prayer Group	Property Management
Prepare & Enrich	Technology
Seniors	Other:_____
Visitation	
Women & Men	
Young Families	
Youth	

GROUNDWORK

Personal Action Statements

Create your Personal Action Statements by completing each statement below from your selections on the previous page.

Review your statements to ensure that they glorify God and edify others.

1. I will use my gift of _____ to _____ with _____ or for _____ within _____.
(gift) (ability) (people) (cause) (ministry)
2. I will use my gift of _____ to _____ with _____ or for _____ within _____.
(gift) (ability) (people) (cause) (ministry)
3. I will use my gift of _____ to _____ with _____ or for _____ within _____.
(gift) (ability) (people) (cause) (ministry)

This exercise is a simple start to determining your personal action statements. Even though the example ends with "...within the (ministry)," your action statement may come to expression outside of the church. Write additional action statements, if necessary, that truly reflect what you feel called to do.



SESSION 7

Questions for discussion

1. How could the Mission Statement influence your actions?
2. What part of the Mission do your gifts contribute to?
3. In the areas that your personal gifts don't contribute to, how can you be aware and grateful for the gifts of others?
4. What parts of the mission do you feel uncomfortable about doing?
How could you use your gifts (perhaps in a different way) to work outside your comfort zone?

[illegible]

Living by God's Design: My Stewardship

My Spiritual Gifts:

This is **WHAT** I contribute best
in the Body of Christ

My Personal Approach:

People or Project Oriented	Structured or Adaptable
----------------------------	-------------------------

This is **HOW** I engage in
the Body of Christ

My Passions:

This is **WHERE** I serve in
the Body of Christ

Personal Action Statement #1

Personal Action Statement #2

Personal Action Statement #3

I primarily...



Serve



Equip



SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Leadership

Proístēmi (Greek): respected character providing a model for direction

What is the spiritual gift of Leadership?

The gift of Leadership is the divine enablement to clearly cast a vision, direct, and motivate people to work together toward a common goal. Those with this gift lead to Christ, not themselves. Individuals with the gift of Leadership contribute direction.

Characteristics:

Diligent, Energetic, Flexible, Goal-setter, Governing, Guide, Influential, Managing, Motivating, Orchestrating, Persuasive, Protector, Respected, Self-Aware, Trustworthy, Visionary

How does the gift of Leadership manifest itself?

Leaders see the big picture and are able to clearly convey the vision. They tend to be charismatic, with the intrinsic ability to instill enthusiasm and focus others in a common direction. Good Leaders model values that uphold the cause, taking responsibility for failures and crediting others for successes. They see the potential in others and help them mature in Christ by inspiring their spiritual giftedness. Effective Leaders know when to delegate and who to turn to, matching the need with the appropriate gift.

What do people with the gift of Leadership need to be aware of?

Leaders need to be patient because not everyone will see the vision immediately. They help others to understand that the end goal is worth short-term sacrifice. It is not necessary for someone with Leadership to hold an official title or an ordained ministry in order to utilize this gift. Failure to accept this could cause a Leader to struggle to find their place in the Body of Christ. Leaders must be diligent and consistent in their reliance on God. They don't draw people to themselves, but to God. Out of humility, good spiritual Leaders acknowledge their weaknesses and errors, seeking wise counsel and support. The best spiritual Leaders are servant-minded. The greatest Leader, Jesus, was a servant of all.

Biblical Example: Moses

God chose Moses to lead His people out of Egypt. Throughout the various plagues that God brought and rescinded through Moses, God made Moses great in the sight of all the people. Moses also chose able men as heads over the people, so that every matter could be tended to, with the exception of the difficult cases,

which were still handled by Moses. For forty years, Moses continued to provide God's word to the people, leading them to the Promised Land.

Bible References

Luke 22:25-26, Romans 12:6-8, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-13, 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Hebrews 13:17

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > I strongly relate to it
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Creative Communication Techné (Greek): artistic or skillful expression

What is the spiritual gift of Creative Communication?

The gift of Creative Communication is the divine enablement to communicate God's truth through a variety of art forms. Individuals with the gift of Creative Communication contribute artistry.

Characteristics:

Artistic, Creative, Expressive, Idea-Oriented, Imaginative, Inspired, Musical, Passionate, Poetic, Sensitive, Skilled in Presentation, Unconventional, Worshipful

How does the gift of Creative Communication manifest itself?

Those with the gift of Creative Communication are often visual thinkers who find inviting ways to express God's Word meaningfully through art, media, language, photography, dance, music, drama, and more. They find pleasure in connecting people to the Gospel with fresh perspectives. Creative Communicators are imaginative and unconventional. They have the artistic ability to translate beauty through design, speaking to the soul in a variety of ways. The harvest of the gift of Creative Communication is an engaging message of salvation, capable of connecting with all souls, despite diversity.

What do people with the gift of Creative Communication need to be aware of?

Those with the gift of Creative Communication must remember that the goal is not to draw attention to the art or the artist, but rather to God. Creative Communicators take pride in their work, which can lead to confrontation when that work is not accepted by everyone.

Biblical Example: David

Already from his youth, David exercised his gift of creative communication through music and writing. When the king was in distress, David provided soothing harp music to King Saul. David later commissioned most of the instruments and songs for the temple services. As the writer of most of the Psalms, David's written expressions have become a significant part of the most commonly read and longest book in the Bible.

Bible References

Deuteronomy 31:22, 1 Samuel 16:16, Exodus 31:3-11, 1 Chronicles 16:41-42, Acts 18:2-3, all of the Psalms

-
1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

 2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

 3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?
I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 *> I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

 4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.

SPIRITUAL GIFT WORKSHEET

Giving

Metadídōmi (Greek): to impart or to give without motives

What is the spiritual gift of Giving?

The gift of Giving is the divine enablement to be charitable with money or resources without tying conditions or demands to generosity. Individuals with the gift of Giving contribute resources.

Characteristics:

Benevolent, Charitable, Contributor, Diligent, Disciplined, Generous, Practical, Resourceful, Responsible, Stewardship-oriented, Trust in God

How does the gift of Giving manifest itself?

The gift of Giving isn't limited to those with great means, but is manifest through the attitude of the giver – to give out of sincerity without any thought of return. Givers are happy to make sacrifices and dedicate a significant portion of what God has given them, in addition to their tithe, and acknowledge that Christ is their motivation for giving. Givers often shape their lifestyles to fit their discipleship, finding unique ways to be charitable. They don't limit themselves to only monetary contributions.

What do people with the gift of Giving need to be aware of?

Givers must be willing to give without attaching strings to the gift and should guard against using their generosity to shift a leader's direction. They must be aware that giving is not all that they are called to do. It is also necessary to be aware that some people may be prone to take advantage of their generosity. Those with the gift of Giving must remember that their material contribution supports the work of God's kingdom and that everything they have to give has ultimately come to them from God.

Biblical Example: Joseph of Arimathea

We often think of the gift of giving as only money, but we can see with this example that it can mean a variety of things. The Bible tells us that Joseph of Arimathea was a rich, prominent member of the Council, and was also a disciple. After Jesus died on the cross, Joseph used his influence to ask Pilate for the body of Jesus, which was then given to him. He bought a clean, linen cloth to wrap the body in and then placed Jesus in the tomb he had, which was close to the place of crucifixion. Joseph used his influence and resources to care for the body of Jesus. The story of Joseph can be found in all four of the Gospels.

Bible References

Mark 12:41-44, Luke 3:11, Acts 4:32-37, Acts 20:35, Romans 12:6-8, 2 Corinthians 8:1-7, 2 Corinthians 9:6-15, Luke 10:30-37, Matthew 6:1-4

1. What is special to you about this gift? What stands out to you and why?

2. Who do you know that comes to mind as an example of this gift? What made you think of them?

3. Based on the description above, how well do you relate with this spiritual gift?

I don't relate well to it < 1 2 3 4 5 > *I strongly relate to it*
If you do not relate, look to appreciate it. If you strongly relate, you may be prominent in this gift.
 - a. If you do not relate to this gift (score = 1-2); what do you admire about this gift?

 - b. If you do relate to this gift (score = 3-5); what characteristics can you further develop? Are there any cautions you identify with?

4. Write down ways this gift can benefit the Body of Christ.



Session 8

The Bigger Picture

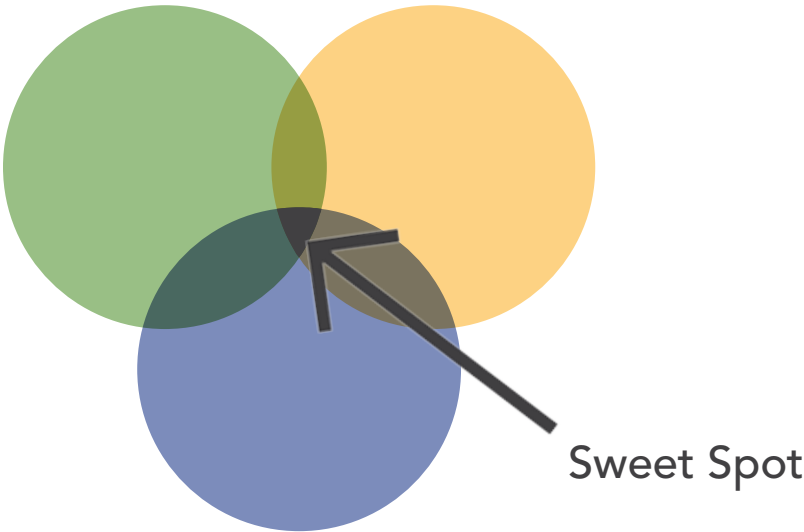
SESSION 8

The Bigger Picture

Now that we've had opportunity for personal reflection and discovery of God's design in us, it's important to understand how to exercise our spiritual gifts in every part of our lives and find more meaning within the larger body of Christ. How do we fit into the congregation? How does our congregation fit into the community? Often times, when talking about spiritual gifts, we tend to focus on the very personal and self-reflective nature of our gifts. However, our gifts go beyond our individual desires, they are meant to edify others. Our introspection equips us to then look outward, and our focus shifts from the 'I' to the 'We'. Our calling is to glorify God and edify the body of Christ.

Each congregation is made up of different people and is distinctive in their combined giftedness and passions. The Venn diagram is a tool that can be used to help us understand and organize the array of resources available for us in a way that is consistent with God's Design. We will use a three (3) circle model, each circle representing a different dynamic of our serving.

THREE CIRCLE MINISTRY DIAGRAM:



The first circle in the diagram represents your group's combined **area of passion**. Your individual passion can fall within an already established ministry such as Sunday School, Choir, or Women's Ministry. For a broader starting point, use the passion categories of Community Passions, Worship Passions, or Strengthening Passions. Record the individual passions from within your group that fall under one of these broader categories. These passions can be broad or specific. For example, I could be passionate about children, which is broad, or I could have a passion for teaching children music, specifically.

We are energized when our ministries fall within our area of passion (or passion category). The number of passions that are defined, determine the number of models a congregation will use. More specifically, each model represents a ministry, an entire group of people serving with a shared passion. So, there can be as many Venn diagrams as there are passions in your congregation. Although, this model can also accommodate smaller groups or even individuals (i.e. personal ministry) when necessary, you will want to be careful not to spread yourselves too thin by branching out into too many areas. There are many advantages of working together in groups and sharing resources.

You can begin to identify shared passions by recognizing what particular focus most energizes your members and leadership team. This is often revealed in the activities that are rallied around and may be tied to the demographics of your members. Do you have a lot of children and families and organize a large vacation bible school each year? Then perhaps children are one area of passion. Also, consider thinking outside the box: personal connections and the stories of people in your congregation may help to inspire you.

The second circle in the diagram is your collective **pool of gifts** (or giftedness). Among those that share a passion, what are the unique resources and capabilities that God brings together? As members participate in the Spiritual Gift small group series, you can create a spreadsheet of the gifts that you have in your congregation. Do you have a lot of Teachers? Do you have a lot of people with the gift of Craftsmanship? It is good to be mindful of these pools of giftedness. This discussion can also extend past

spiritual gifts; what training, education, connections, or networks do your members have? What shared experiences do they have? There are many things to consider as you explore your pool of giftedness.

The third circle in the diagram represents **needs and opportunities**. What are the needs where God has placed us? How can you make use of opportunities to use your collection of gifts and passions to serve your community, your congregation? Perhaps there is an interest in focusing on homeless children in your area or partnering with a school that needs help with an after-school program.

The place where these three areas overlap is your “**sweet spot**”, which is your **area of engagement**. It is where you express your passions and develop your giftedness. The “sweet spot” is your opportunity to bring glory to God by serving those around you.

The discussion following this video will begin a journey of discovery. What opportunities lie within the intersection of your circles? It’s not possible to determine all of this in one evening. Throughout the journey, your leadership team and ministers will need to be included. Don’t be discouraged if it takes longer than you think, the fulfillment you experience will be worth it!

The three circles are simple, yet profound. They are a way of finding fresh meaning in things that are familiar.

So, even if it takes your congregation some time to clarify each of these concepts, the main goal is to start looking at things from this perspective, because when each of us recognize and work toward the purposes that God has gifted us for, amazing things can happen!

[Source: General concept and questions borrowed from Church Unique by Will Mancini]

NOTE: The following questions are not meant to be answered in totality; they are meant to inspire discussion. Please pick and discuss the most relevant questions to your group.



SESSION 8

Questions for discussion

(It may be beneficial to include leadership in this session when possible)

1. For purposes of this exercise, determine a combined **area of passion**. Choose the most prevalent category among your small group.

Community Passions can include things like: feeding the hungry, encouraging children from broken families, teaching children about Jesus, serving the homeless, etc.

Strengthening Passions can include things like: teaching children, mentoring teens, caring for the elderly, encouraging the sick, making everyone feel welcome, etc.

Worship Passions can include things like: interceding for others through prayer, worshipping God through music, finding creative ways to express our worship to God, bringing clarity to the Word of God, etc.

The Passion circle we selected is:

As more people discover God's Design, you can consider more areas of passion and multiple models can be used to expand your ministries. Brainstorming additional areas of passion will open new opportunities and provide fresh perspectives in our serving.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal green ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Questions for discussion

Pools of giftedness may also include training, education, connections, shared experiences and other resources. It may be helpful to share and discuss these dynamics. In addition, the questions on the following page are designed to help you identify a broader perspective of your pool of gifts. You may refer to these questions as a guide for the discussion of your pool of gifts.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal green ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

-
- What spiritual gifts seem to be prominent in your church?
 - If a guest visited your church several times and answered the questions, "What did you like best about this church?" what would the guest say?
 - If you were bringing a friend to your church for the first time, what singular promise (that is, what she will receive or experience from coming) would you be most willing to make?
 - What is the biggest impact your church has made in the community?
 - If your church was immediately uprooted from the community what would people in the community feel is missing?
 - What is the most significant thing your church could do in the community?
 - Who comes to your church? How does ethnicity, age, gender, life stage, and spiritual maturity of your people define your congregation's make-up?
 - What capabilities tend to cluster in your church? What are common aspects of training, education, or occupational history?
 - What atmosphere do we tend to create when our people get together?
 - How do new members talk about what attracted them to the church?

SESSION 8

Questions for discussion

3. On a blank sheet of paper (or white board), brainstorm about the **needs** and **opportunities** that you see around you. Again, the questions on the following page may be helpful in your brainstorming session:

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features approximately 28 evenly spaced horizontal green lines across the entire page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The background is plain white, and there are no margins, text, or other markings present.

-
- What are the unique needs where God has placed you? In your city? In your neighborhood? In your congregation?
 - What special opportunities are found within our immediate sphere of influence (within a half-mile)?
 - What burning issues are alive in the public's eye and brought to attention by the media?
 - What needs and opportunities do the industries specific to your area create?
 - What are the largest community events, and what needs or opportunities do they create?
 - Because of your specific location, what solution could you provide that no other church does?
 - What one positive change in your community would have the most dramatic effect in people's lives?
 - What areas of your congregation do you think God wants to build up?
 - What is the most significant thing your church could do in the community?
 - Considering your Personal Action Statements, are there ways that they may apply to the entire group?

SESSION 8

Questions for discussion

4. Your brainstorming comes together at the “sweet spot”. Once you have answers for each of the 3 circles, see where the concepts begin to merge and opportunities begin to take shape, bringing your “sweet spot” into focus. The merging of circles is not literal, rather a bringing together of complementary ideas. When combined, the pieces form possible courses of action in your **area of engagement**. What opportunities do you envision?

It is important to narrow down the list of opportunities to those you would like to accomplish in the next year (or other pre-determined timeframe). Create a calendar of events for your group and be sure to include planning in your discussion, so that the groups’ ideas move from the abstract to the actionable. When pursuing new ventures, one activity per quarter may be suggested to provide sustained energy and enthusiasm.

If your activity involves a community partner or organization, be sure to meet with them to discuss that you are passionate about helping them, but want to know what they really need. It is very important that we make sure we are serving actual needs, not just what we think someone needs, or what we want to do.

This exercise is meant to start the conversation for your small group, but should be repeated for each ministry within the congregation. Ideally the congregation would get together after they have gone through the Spiritual Gifts small group series, but don’t let that hold you back. The discussions are broad and understandable enough for everyone to participate.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal green ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

SESSION 8

Questions for discussion

Supplemental Questions to Explore Areas of Passion

(If in the previous sessions, your passions were not fully developed, this supplement is designed to support brainstorming areas of passion, so that you can complete your Venn diagram.)

If you need additional help determining which passion to base your exercise upon, the following list of questions may be helpful.

Community Passions

1. What is one thing that bothers you most about the world?
2. If you knew you couldn't fail, what one thing would you pursue for God?
3. What do you tend to pray for the most?
4. What community activities or groups energize you?
5. What projects or events has your congregation done that you are most proud of?
6. What ministries or events does your congregation rally around?
7. What do you never have problems finding volunteers for?
8. Are there any shared personal stories in your congregation that have served as a focus for activities?

Strengthening Passions

1. Who would benefit from more support within the congregation?
2. Are there ways we can strengthen all the Christians in our lives?
3. How might prayer be used as a greater tool to strengthen others?
4. How can we use our passions to help spiritually motivate and energize others?

[illegible]

SESSION 8

Questions for discussion

5. What projects or events has your congregation done that uplift others?
6. What ministries/events does your congregation rally around?
7. Love is creative. What creative approaches can we take to help others?
8. In what ways can we encourage deeper, Christ-centered relationships with one another?

Worship Passions

1. What new elements can we incorporate into our worship (Fruit of the Spirit, etc.)?
2. What can we do to deepen our worship?
3. How can we increase our praise, gratitude, and appreciation?
4. Are there new ways we can magnify God in our eyes and the eyes of others?
5. How can we enhance our worship evenings or the worship that begins a divine service?
6. How can the choir support the worship of the congregation more meaningfully?
7. Love is creative. How can we better express our love toward God?
8. How can we incorporate more members in elements of worship?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal green ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

GROUNDWORK

Establishing your cycle

When we work together we have an opportunity to reintroduce various aspects of this series on a cyclical basis. By periodically reviewing WHAT, HOW, and WHERE we engage our spiritual gifts, we can make adjustments as they are needed. A model providing opportunities for continuous development is outlined below, which can be done with a specific ministry group or team, or in the congregation as a whole. Even though we have included months, this model can be modified or adjusted to fit your congregational needs.

YEAR 1 (January – March) Share God’s Design

Encourage a discussion where members share their gifts, personal approach, passions and serving style with each other. For us to work synergistically and create opportunities to use our spiritual gifts, it is important for members to understand one another. After an initial brainstorming session, discovering “God’s Design” within each member will allow us to understand the dynamics of the congregation and consider the full range of gifts available. Aspects of God’s Design include spiritual gifts, personal approach, passions, and equipping / serving tendencies.

YEAR 1 (April – June) Develop your Spiritual Gifts

Each one shares the stages of development they see for each of their most predominant three gifts. By discussing the current stage of development and how their gifts can be used to edify others, each member can more clearly identify areas of potential growth. A good question to ask might be “How can my activity help me develop my gifts?”

YEAR 1 (July – September) Take the DISC Assessment and Share Results

Contact the Work of Ministry Work Group to set up a DISC assessment workshop. This information will help us appreciate the characteristics of one another and better understand how to relate to each other.

YEAR 1 (October – December) Explore Dimensions of Growth

Discuss how past activities have or have not deepened your growth. What we can do to focus on growth in the future? Consider the following five dimensions of growth:

1. Creating a more intimate relationship with Christ
2. Learning more about Christ and His activity through the gospel
3. Increasing and edifying the Body of Christ
4. Developing our spiritual gifts to maturity
5. Building a deeper understanding of the Catechism

YEAR 2 (January – March) Brainstorming

A full year of activity has now occurred. This is a great time to brainstorm new ideas and tweak former ideas from the following year.

YEAR 2 (April – June) Personal Health

Discuss how each member has developed through working together. Has working as a “team” enhanced congregational experience? Discover additional ways to encourage personal health and growth for each member.

YEAR 2 (July – September) Reflection and Congregational Health

Review past activity and discuss how each has glorified God and edified others. How did the activity support or help the congregation? How has your activity contributed to the vision of the congregation? Has your activity impacted the community?

YEAR 2 (October – December) Assessments & Re-Assessments

Promote new members to take the assessments and encourage members who had previously taken assessments to take them again (spiritual gift, personal approach, passion, equipping / serving). Have each one discuss the results and how they may have changed. How might this impact one’s activity? Do the top three gifts reflect the season of life they are in? Discuss how members can integrate any new results in their congregational life.

[There are a couple possible approaches to these topics: spend 10-15 minutes each quarter for a couple members to share their experiences, or spend more time in a larger forum to discuss experiences together. Some topics may lend themselves better to one or the other format.]

GOING DEEPER

Seasons and Spiritual Re-evaluation

Summers in the north can be quite warm, while the winters can turn bitterly cold. Even in warmer climates where the temperature is more stable, the sun shines more at certain times of the year while wind and rain may be more frequent at other times. Our weather changes as the seasons change.

As we go through life, we also experience many seasons of change. Moving to a new location, marriage, having children, and other milestones are all catalysts of change. Changes occur in life. They come with time and experience or they may simply come in the way someone views life. Life is ever-changing. These seasons of change prompt new opportunities for growth and development. In order to mature spiritually, we also need opportunities to renew ourselves because some of our strongest gifts and passions also change as our lives change. While some gifts and passions remain strong through different seasons, others may fluctuate. Even spiritual growth itself may cause new gifts to become predominant. Anytime we experience a change in life, spiritual re-evaluation becomes important.

In preparation for almost any project, there are tools that can help us. Just as you bring out a recipe book before preparing a new dish, or research a manual before working on a car, we re-evaluate our spiritual gifts and our passions when entering each new phase in life. Re-evaluation helps us prepare spiritually when:

- Seasons of life change.
- A project or a term of serving ends.
- Someone chooses to leave an area of serving early.
- Our current ministry is a mismatch.
- We no longer feel fulfilled or fruitful.

Developing a Cycle of Spiritual Evaluation

As opposed to seasons, where events happen and we respond, cycles are created intentionally. Developing a “Cycle of Spiritual Evaluation” provides an ongoing opportunity for people interested in beginning their discovery, as well as opportunities to re-evaluate for those who need to

be refreshed. Cycles allow us to review our spiritual gifts and revitalize our passions with renewed devotion. Also, when our serving no longer brings fulfillment, we need an opportunity to re-discover God's design for our lives. Re-discovery can prompt fresh discussions and renew our introspection, allowing the Holy Spirit to inspire us in new ways.

Re-evaluation

The assessment tools used throughout this series are designed to draw us into moments of introspection, where we gain insight into our spiritual health and our current stage of development. These are snapshots that capture our spiritual condition at that time. By taking these snapshots during scheduled cycles of small group discussions, and when our seasons of life change, through personal reflection (or with a coach), we begin to see a clearer picture of our spiritual development.

The apostles of the first church continually reminded the members of the importance of their gifts. Peter admonished the congregations to use their gifts, "as each one has received a gift, minister it to one another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God..." (1Peter 4:10-11). The term "steward" depicts a person responsible for managing the property of another. God is the owner of all gifts, and He entrusts us with them for the benefit of His people. Everything is by God's grace. Our responsibility is to manage "all things" to His glory. Our Chief Apostle Schneider once inferred God's desire: Don't keep all of My gifts for yourself. Since it is our God-given responsibility to utilize and develop the gifts He provides, it is important that we continuously evaluate our progress towards completion. For purposes of re-evaluation, we return to some of the personal assessments, but not all of them. While our "Personal Approach" and our "Equipping & Serving" results can possibly vary, our gifts and passions are much more likely to change.

Several tools have been provided in this Spiritual Gifts small group series that can support personal introspection as well as lively group discussions. It is recommended that we reflect, both individually and with the support of your small group. Below are some of the tools that support re-evaluation:

Toolbox for Future Use:

- Spiritual Gift Assessment
- Peer Observation Assessment
- Personal Approach Assessment
- Passion Assessment
- Equipping/Serving Assessment
- Spiritual Gift Worksheets
- Venn Diagram Exercise
- Growing in Our Spiritual Gifts Worksheet
- Christ-like Love Worksheet
- Personal Action Statements Worksheet
- Session videos
- DISC Assessment

The WOM Work Group can assist you
and be used as a resource going forward:

wgwom@nac-usa.org





