

SPIRITUAL: GIFTS, L. G.

LifeGroup PARTICIPANTS Guide

Introduction

Though the Trinity is largely a mystery to us, it also speaks volumes to us. Through the lense of the Trinity we discover that though God is all-knowing, all-powerful and all-sufficient. He is no Lone Ranger or solo superhero. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, each distinct yet contributing to the oneness of God. Think of the gospel for example. In it we learn that it's the Father who sent the Son (John 5:23), who came to do the will of the Father (John 8:26), in the power of the Holy Spirit (John 4:14). So God is all about relationship, unity through diversity and interdependence.

So it should come as no surprise that upon faith in Jesus, not only are we freely forgiven and adopted into God's family, we are also gifted to contribute to God's mission and the unity of his family, the church. Unlike many of the spiritual disciplines that can be practiced alone (ie pray, fasting meditating), spiritual gifts are solely for serving others (ie helping, leading, encouraging, giving). Spiritual gifts make us one with God's mission and each other. To truly be spiritual is to embrace and exercise our God given spiritual gifts.

1. Pick two of the following:
 - a. Sunday's sermon got me thinking . . .
 - b. How many of the nine points can you remember? Any hit home?
 - c. What does it mean that the gifts are more than superhuman power, but they are for supernatural impact.
 - d. How does the unity and diversity of the Trinity represent the connection between Spiritual Gifts and the church?
2. Read Mtt 25:14-30
 - a. As you read, try to identify the question asked of Jesus, the writers context and who this applies to? Or another way to put it, what's the significance of the master going on a journey? Be sure to look at: (cf 24:1-3, 25:13)
3. This parable is critical to us because it applies to those who are living between Christ's first ascension (post resurrection) and his second promised return. The master going on a journey was Jesus' way of preparing his disciples for his imminent crucifixion and ascension and his anticipated return. This parable is also important because it's Jesus' teaching on spiritual gifts.
 - a. Read and discuss the following quote: *As in all his parables, Jesus is using familiar imagery to symbolize spiritual truth. Everything God grants us - our*

possessions, abilities, opportunities, time and circumstances - he command us to steward well. If it were Paul speaking, he would probably talk about our various spiritual gifts. Whether talents or gifts, the principle remains the same; what may not always be true in the economic realm is clearly true in the spiritual realm: 'Use it or lose it!'" Craig Blomberg, *Preaching the Parables*, (Grand Rapids, Baker 2004), p 199.

- b. Take a moment and look at the parable in light of spiritual gifts. What do we learn from Jesus about them?
4. Did you know that though there is overlap, there is no one exostive list of all the Spiritual Gifts? There are 6 different lists of spiritual gifts in the New Testament (Rom 12, 1 Cor 12, 13, 14, Eph 4, 1 Pet 4). A spiritual gift is whatever the Spirit deems necessary for God to accomplish his mission through his church at any given point in time in history. Look over the compilation of gifts listed in scripture below. Read the lists and think through:
- a. How might some of these gifts tie in to natural abilities? How are some of them distinct from any natural ability? Ex. Musician vs. Worship Leader.
 - b. What gifts make most sense to you? Least?
 - c. What gifts do you know you have or don't have?
 - d. How did you come to that conclusion?
 - e. What other spiritual gifts could be added to the list?
 - f. ***Next Level*** What gifts might do you think you have and why? How did you figure it out?
 - g. ***Next Level*** What gifts do you discern in someone else in your group?

Compilation of Spiritual Gifts:

*If this is the first time you are hearing about some of these gifts, you will be left scratching your head around ones like *tongues, apostleship* and more. Don't worry, keep asking questions! Also know that we dove into discussing these gifts in our Mosaic series in 2018. You can listen to these sermons online at baypark.ca or email Doug.

Spiritual Gift:	
Hospitality	Spiritual Discernment
Apostleship	Evangelism
Exhortation	Pastor/ Shepherding
Intercession	Serving
Prophecy	Encouraging
Teaching	Giving

Works of Power (Miracles)	Leadership
Healing	Mercy
Helps/ Serving	Faith
Administration/ Guidance	???
Tongues	
Interpretation of Tongues	
Words of Knowledge or Wisdom Faith	

5. Think of this as a pastoral moment. Hit pause. This is a moment of truth, knowing we will all give an account for how we steward the gifts can be disturbing to say the least. We can all think of times when we squandered the glorious resources and opportunities God lavishes on us. But don't let guilt rob you of the message Jesus clearly communicated. The servant who chose to do nothing with his God given spiritual gift, did so out of misplaced fear - "I knew that you are a hard man . . . so I was afraid and went out and hid your gold in the ground." In other words, his fear of failure was greater than his fear of God.
 - a. What clues in the parable (Matt 25:14-30) help us to stay clear of both the rut of service driven by fear of damnation, and the rut of salvation earned by good works? (Ask yourself questions like: what did the master give his servants, based on what, how did they respond, what was the outcome, and how were they evaluated?)
 - b. Which of the 3 servants do you identify with most and why?
 - c. ***Next Level*** Does fear of failure play a part in you discovering, using or not using your spiritual gifts? What other factors need to be addressed?
6. You likely have more questions than answers at this point. So coming back around full circle, we are reminded that gifts are spiritual because they are given by God for partnership in his ongoing kingdom work and for unity in his church. (Think of the Trinity!) That means that warm fuzzies or tingly feelings are not the best guide to discovering our spiritual gifts. Needs and opportunities are. Together as a group discuss what you think are some of the greatest needs and opportunities within the church in general today and within Bay Park.

PRAYER

Spend some time praying together, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide Bay Park and your group. Pray for some of the areas of lack or adversity that you see at Bay Park. Pray for discernment in

finding and using your spiritual gifts for God's glory. Pray for unity amidst diversity within the church.

THANK YOU!