



MAKE US ONE MINISTRY - 501



Hope Christian Fellowship

*Making disciples who
live & love like Jesus*

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Open-book TEST

CALLED TO SERVE

(All scriptures are taken from the New Living Translation, 2nd Edition, unless otherwise indicated.)

A Leader is a Servant

MATTHEW 20:25-28

But Jesus called them together and said, “You know that the *rulers in this world lord it over* their people, and *officials flaunt their authority* over those under them. ²⁶ But among you it will be _____. Whoever wants to be a _____ among you must be your _____, ²⁷ and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave. ²⁸ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

Serving and ministry are one in the same.

James and John thought greatness was having the right position. Jesus corrected them, explaining that greatness comes through serving.

We need to be willing to serve in humble conditions.

LUKE 14:8-11

“When you are invited to a wedding feast, don’t sit in the seat of honor. What if someone who is more distinguished than you has also been invited? ⁹ The host will come and say, ‘Give this person your seat.’ Then you will be embarrassed, and you will have to take whatever seat is left at the foot of the table! ¹⁰ “Instead, _____ the _____ place at the foot of the table. Then when your host sees you, he will come and say, ‘Friend, we have a better place for you!’ Then you will be honored in front of all the other guests. ¹¹ For **those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.**”

Every Saint is Called to be a Minister

ROMANS 12:6-13

In his grace, God has given us different _____ for doing _____ things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. ⁷ If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. ⁸ If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

⁹ Don't just pretend to love others. _____ love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. ¹⁰ Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. ¹¹ Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. ¹² Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. ¹³ When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality.

To minister means to serve. There are various kinds of ministry because we all have different abilities.

This may be a difficult statement to accept, but we will put it out there anyway — **Believers who do not serve or minister are weak Christians.**

We are going to use our human bodies as a metaphor. If we do not do some kind of physical labor or exercise, we become weak. In the body of Christ, if we don't serve one another in some capacity, we become weak.

We grow up and become mature by **practicing** and **experiencing** what God tells us to do.

HEBREWS 5:14

Solid food is for those who are mature, who through _____ have the _____ to recognize the difference between right and wrong.

Another truth that must be realized is that the pastor of a Church cannot do everything.

Many church people believe that their pastor should do all the work of ministry. Can you imagine a pastor doing 4,000 push-ups every day? This is a metaphor for what happens in churches.

This is not what God intended, according to what the Bible teaches. Instead, it teaches that each member is a minister.

It is far more effective for each Church pastor to do twenty "push-ups." For the Church to be built-up, each person must do their work to minister and serve the people.

EPHESIANS 4:16

He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As _____ does its own special work, it _____ the other parts _____, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

EPHESIANS 4:11-13

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and _____ the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

We must remember that Jesus gave *each of us* special abilities. We can use whatever abilities we have to encourage and equip each other, building up the Body of Christ. Then we can serve and minister the good things He has prepared for us to do.

EPHESIANS 2:10

For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the _____ he planned for us long ago.

Minister with Compassion

Jesus had compassion for those He served.

MATTHEW 9:36

When he saw the crowds, he had _____ on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd.

Chapter 13 of First Corinthians tells us we can do all kinds of good deeds in the name of the ministry, but without love, it will profit nothing.

Love is serving others without expecting anything in return. Jesus came to earth and turned the thinking of the religious people of the day upside down. They were satisfied to help those who they loved and loved them in return. Jesus commands us (it's not a suggestion) to go much deeper than that, to a sacrificial kind of love, like the love He has for us.

LUKE 6:27-31

But to you who are willing to listen, I say, love your _____! Do good to those who _____ you. ²⁸ Bless those who _____ you. Pray for those who _____ you. ²⁹ If someone slaps you on one cheek, offer the other cheek also. If someone demands your coat, offer your shirt also. ³⁰ Give to anyone who asks; and when things are taken away from you, don't try to get them back. ³¹ **Do to others as you would like them to do to you.**

Notice, Jesus said, "But to you who are *willing to listen* . . ." Not everyone is willing to listen! We must **choose** the ways of the Lord! Love is a decision. Jesus **chose** to go to the Cross regardless of our response to Him.

We need to love others and give our lives for them. Let James 3:17 be a checklist for your heart as you are ministering to others.

JAMES 3:17

But the wisdom from above is first of all pure. It is also peace loving, _____ at all times, and willing to yield to others. It is full of _____ and good deeds. It shows no favoritism and is always sincere.

Remember, if you want to be great in God's Kingdom (which I'm sure you all do) then you must

be the servant of all.

If we humble ourselves, it is God's promise to lift us up. If we honor the Lord by following His ways, He will honor us! Being honored is not the reason we serve others, it is simply a promise from God that *if* we serve others, we will reap a reward.

JAMES 4:10

Humble yourselves before the Lord, and _____ will lift you up in honor.

Every person who serves others is a true minister and will influence many people.

When people see us serving, they will glorify God.

MATTHEW 5:16

In the same way, let your good deeds _____ out for all to see, so that everyone will _____ your heavenly Father.

God uses hundreds of ministers, through practical service, to minister and bring them into God's Kingdom.

Ways to Help Others = Methods of Ministry

- Give aid, support or assistance to another person involved in ministry.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:28

Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church: first are apostles, second are prophets, third are teachers, then those who do miracles, those who have the gift of healing, those who can _____, those who have the gift of leadership, those who speak in unknown languages.

For example, women who served Jesus were in a "ministry of helps." They helped Him and His disciples, enabling them to minister to others more freely. They gave of their time, their talents and their treasure.

LUKE 8:1-3

Soon afterward Jesus began a tour of the nearby towns and villages, preaching and announcing the Good News about the Kingdom of God. He took his twelve disciples with him, ² along with some women he had healed and from whom he had cast out evil spirits. Among them were Mary Magdalene, from whom he had cast out seven demons; ³ Joanna, the wife of Chuza, Herod's business manager; Susanna; and _____ who were contributing their own resources to _____ Jesus and his disciples.

- Disciples preparing the upper room served Jesus in a ministry of helps.
- Disciples distributing the loaves and fish were involved in a ministry of helps.

Future spiritual leaders are those who are willing to serve.

We learn Faithfulness by Serving in Practical Ways

LUKE 16:10

If you are faithful in _____ things, you will be faithful in _____ ones. But if you are dishonest in little things, you won't be honest with greater responsibilities.

Moses spent forty years tending sheep before he led God's people out of Egypt.

Joshua served Moses in a ministry of helps capacity before he took over Moses responsibilities.

The question we must ask ourselves is, "How can I serve a leader?" "If I have been called into this church, how can I help our leader fulfill the vision God has called him to fulfill?"

Tell that leader you are willing to be involved in a ministry of helps, in whatever capacity is needed.

All ministry begins in the ministry of helps.

The Lord wants to develop the heart of a servant in every person.

How can I Serve with the Abilities I Have?

Start small. Use the abilities God has given you in a small group or in a specific area of helps. When you are faithful in a small way, you will be released to larger settings.

Some people are more task-oriented; some are more people-oriented. We need to learn both. We need to help each other "get the job done" and also "love people" at the same time.

We need to grasp what is important for eternity. For example: What is more important, your relationship with people or your relationship to things? What did the Lord show us His priority was? (John 3:16-17)

People who work with children are taught to get down on their level when speaking to them, so they can be "eye-to-eye" with the little ones. The same is true for working with other groups of people. It may not be a height issue, but there are other areas where we can "get on the level" with the people we are ministering to. The idea is to find common ground together so we can relate to one another.

1 CORINTHIANS 9:22

When I am with those who are weak, I share their weakness, for I want to bring the weak to Christ. Yes, I try to find _____ with everyone, doing everything I can to save some.

Love, Accept and Forgive one another.

JOHN 13:34-35

So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. _____
_____ I have loved you, you should love each other. ³⁵ Your love for one another
will prove to the world that you are my disciples.”

Jesus has higher standards for us than we have for ourselves. He calls us to love beyond ourselves, to love in the same way He has loved us. That is quite a high calling!

QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS

Before this lesson, had you ever considered the concept that a leader is really a servant?

In Luke 6, Jesus prefaces his teaching by saying, “For those who are willing to listen . . .” Do you consider yourself a person who is willing to listen? Are you a teachable person?

Have you considered being a help to a person who is involved in ministry? Do you have a personal vision for ministering to others?

JESUS, OUR PARTNER

(All scriptures are taken from the New Living Translation, 2nd Edition, unless otherwise indicated.)

It is amazing to think about, but the King of the universe has picked you as one of His ministers!

The Lord wants us to seek His Kingdom first even when problems are happening all around us.

MATTHEW 6:33-34

Seek the Kingdom of God _____ all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need. ³⁴ “So don’t worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its _____. Today’s trouble is enough for today.

Every problem is an opportunity for the Lord to do something special, beyond what we can ask or think.

God wants to use us as instruments of His power and goodness.

Like Him, we need to speak words that bring life to others, words that place their hope in the One who can bring healing, deliverance, or provision to whatever circumstance or condition they are facing.

One Day at a Time

When we learn to hear and distinguish the Lord’s voice, we realize He is at work.

JOHN 15:17

This is my command: _____ each other.

JOHN 15:19-20

The world would love you as one of its own if you belonged to it, but you are no longer part of the world. I chose you to come out of the world, so it hates you. ²⁰ Do you remember what I told you? ‘A slave is not greater than the master.’ Since they persecuted me, naturally they will persecute you. And if they had listened to me, they would listen to you.

We need to partner with Him as one of His necessary ministers.

Remember, it is God who draws people to Jesus Christ. As He does that we then can respond.

JOHN 6:44

For no one can come to me _____ the Father who sent me draws them to me, and at the last day I will raise them up.

God Desires a Personal Love Relationship with Each of Us

JOHN 15:10

When you obey my commandments, you _____ in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love.

JOHN 15:13-15

There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵ I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. _____ you are my _____, since I have told you everything the Father told me.

We minister because God loves us. We are accepted by God and are able ministers.

As we experience His love, we can effectively minister to others.

ISAIAH 43:4

Others were given in exchange for you. I traded their lives for yours because you are precious to me. You are honored, and I _____.

God Chooses Us to Partner with Him

JOHN 15:16

You didn't choose me. I _____ you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name.

Ask Him how He can use you.

- He will use you to encourage others
- Even though we make mistakes, God chose us.

We need to make a decision to obey God as His minister.

- Jesus chose to heal the blind
- The blind man made a decision to obey Jesus' order to wash in the pool.

JOHN 9:4

We must quickly _____ the tasks assigned us by the one who sent us. The night is coming, and then no one can work.

JOHN 9:6-7

Then he spit on the ground, made mud with the saliva, and spread the mud over the blind man's eyes. ⁷ He told him, "Go wash yourself in the pool of Siloam" (Siloam means "sent"). So the man _____ and _____

and came back seeing!

Life is a series of decisions. It pays to obey God!

- Naaman obeyed (2 Kings 5)
- When we partner with Jesus, life takes on a new meaning.

You May be Misunderstood when You Minister to Others

Jesus and the blind man were misunderstood.

JOHN 9:25

“I _____ whether he is a sinner,” the man replied. “But I know this: I was blind, and now I can see!”

Paul, the apostle, was misunderstood.

GALATIANS 1:10

Obviously, I’m _____ trying to win the _____ of people, but of God. If pleasing people were my goal, I would not be Christ’s servant.

When we Minister, we are Called to Love and Bring Peace

ROMANS 12:18

Do _____ that you can to live in _____ with everyone.

We cannot focus on pleasing people more than the Lord, we need to obey God rather than men.

ACTS 5:29

But Peter and the apostles replied, “We must obey _____ rather than any _____ authority.

As We Partner with the Lord, We will Get to Know Him Better!

JOHN 14:12-14

I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father. ¹³ You can ask for anything in my name, and I will do it, so that the Son can bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ Yes, _____ me for _____ in my name, and I will do it!

Partnering with someone in ministry allows two people to get know each other better while they serve others.

What is Jesus doing in your life? In the lives of those around you?

How has God called you to partner with Him to minister?

The power we have to minister is from God.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:7

We now have this light shining in our hearts, but we ourselves are like fragile clay jars containing this great _____. This makes it clear that our great power is from God, not from ourselves.

How Amazing it is – God has chosen You!

Questions for Small Groups

Prior to this lesson, had you ever considered the idea of partnering with God?

How can we begin to practice the encouragement of others?

Discuss why you think others might misunderstand those who minister to others.

THE PRIORITY OF MINISTRY

(All scriptures are taken from the New Living Translation, 2nd Edition, unless otherwise indicated.)

Our goal at HCF is to equip believers to be ministers of Jesus Christ.

Through living out our values we equip believers to be ministers of Christ so they can inspire, influence and impact our culture.

EPHESIANS 4:11-13

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their _____ is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will _____ until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ.

The Lord has called some to be apostles, some as prophets, some evangelists, some teachers and some pastors.

These five specific five ministers were given by Jesus for the Church. We call them the "five-fold ministry gifts."

We need every minister that God has provided.

One or two are not enough; we need all of the five-fold ministries.

As God restores these ministries to the Church, we must correctly respond to them.

God's purposes will not be fulfilled outside of His divinely appointed leadership.

Having all five offices in place in a church does not mean the congregation is free from all work and responsibilities. On the contrary, they will find themselves in a place of growth and equipping that nobody had ever dreamed possible.

Today, God is restoring a biblical understanding of what these roles and callings mean, so that His bride can come into the fullness of what He has for her, getting ready for her Bridegroom's glorious return.

What is the Main Purpose of the Five-Fold Ministers?

The main purpose is to equip the saints for the **WORK OF MINISTRY**.

What does it mean to equip?

Definition of Equip: 1. to furnish for service or action by appropriate provisioning.
 2. To load on board a ship, embark, outfit, man,

Jesus has given the fivefold gifted ministers the ability to equip believers for the work of ministry.

If we as believers are to do ministry what does that make us? Ministers!

The Priority of Ministry

Traditionally, the setting of priorities has been explained as in the diagram on your right. However, this method of handling priorities does not always work.

A better way to consider priorities is the diagram below, "God Determines Priority."

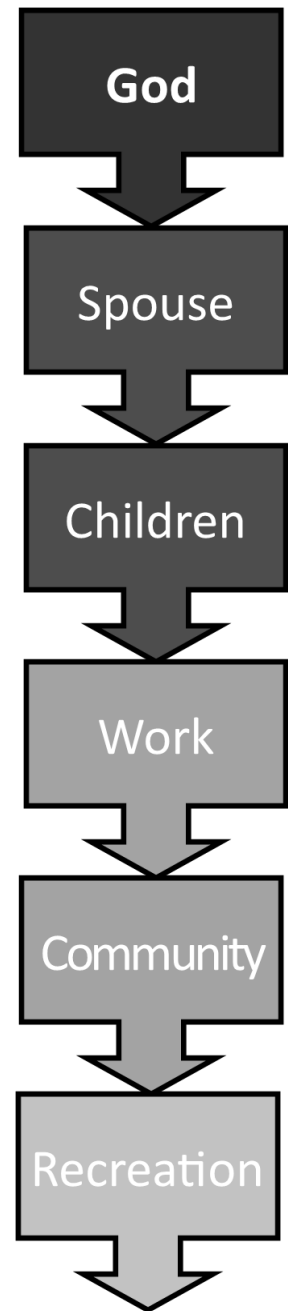
Why should I be interested?

MATTHEW 6:33

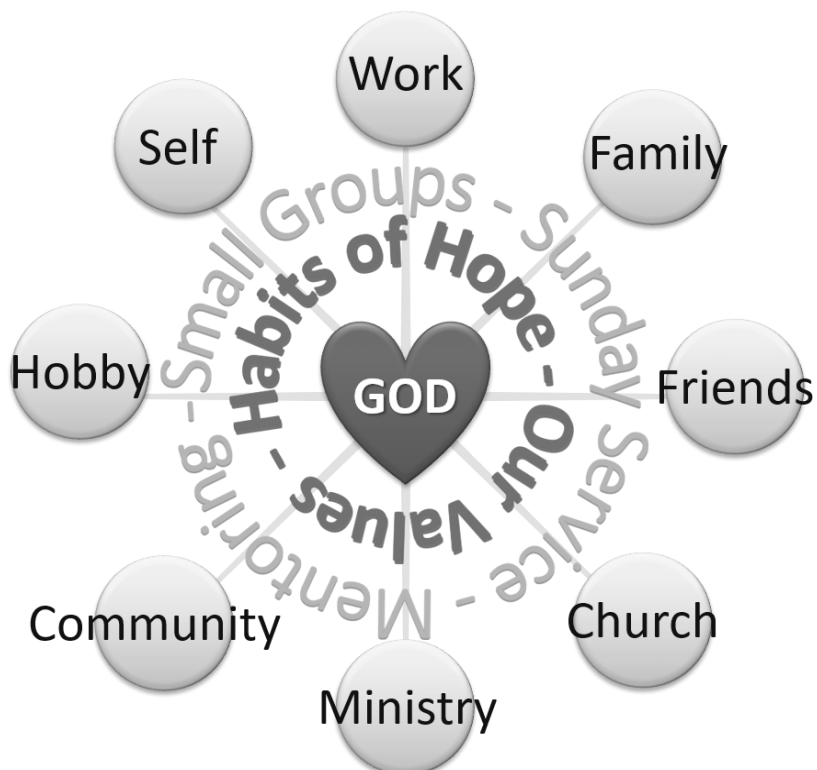
Seek the Kingdom of God _____ all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.

Our purpose in life is to function first and foremost as a minister of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Everything else I do flows out of my function as a minister of Jesus.



God Determines Priority



This thinking may be new to you, but please allow it to sink in as we continue studying the Bible concerning ministry.

Ten Foundational Truths

These are things the Bible teaches about ministry.

- **I'VE BEEN CREATED FOR MINISTRY.**

EPHESIANS 2:10

For we are God's masterpiece. He has _____ us anew in Christ Jesus, _____ we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.

We were created in Christ Jesus to do good works. You were created for ministry.

Most people don't know that. You were created for ministry, good works, that God prepared in advance for you to do. You were made for ministry.

People ask, "Why am I here on earth?" You're made for ministry.

- **I'VE BEEN SAVED FOR MINISTRY.**

2 TIMOTHY 1:9

For God _____ us and called us to live a holy life. He did this, not because we deserved it, but because that was his plan from before the beginning of time—to show us his grace through Christ Jesus.

It is He who saved us and chose us for his holy work, not because we deserved it but because that was his plan long before the world began."

God planned that you would be saved and that you would begin to serve Him in ministry.

The Bible teaches that every Christian is saved to serve.

A non-serving Christian is a contradiction.

- **I'VE BEEN CALLED INTO MINISTRY.**

GALATIANS 1:15

But even before I was born, God _____ me and _____ me by his marvelous grace. . .

EPHESIANS 4:1

I . . . beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been _____ by God.

1 PETER 2:9-10

But you are not like that, for you are a _____ people. You are royal priests, a holy nation, God's very own possession. As a result, you can show others the goodness of God, for he _____ you _____ of the darkness into his wonderful light. ¹⁰ "Once you had no identity as a people; now you are God's people. Once you received no mercy; now you have received God's mercy."

Can you see that you have been chosen by God himself? You are priests of the King. You are God's very own. Why? - so you may show others how God called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

If you ever have a hard time with self-esteem, meditate on I Peter 2 :9-10 for a while!

Before you became a Christian you were a nobody, but now you're a somebody. Once you were less than nothing, now you are God's own.

You are called into ministry.

1 PETER 2:5

And you are living stones that God is building into his spiritual temple. What's more, you are his _____ . . .

Every Christian, from the moment you first became a Christian, you were called into ministry.

God says that my primary identification is not that I am a man or a woman, not that I am a husband or a son, or a daughter or a mother, or a husband or wife. My primary identity is: **I am a minister of Jesus Christ.**

If you let that sink into your mind and heart, it will change your perspective on everything.

I am not who *I* think I am, I am not who *you* think I am, but I am who *God* says I am!

And God says I was created, I've been saved, and I've been called into ministry.

Say it aloud, "I am a minister of Jesus Christ."

We could just stop right here, because that's one of the most profound truths you'll understand.

When you became a Christian, you became a minister. It is clearly taught in Scripture. I was called, I was created, I was saved to minister.

So, how many ministers do we have at Hope Christian Fellowship? If your answer is, "One," or even, "Five." That is wrong.

There's a difference between a minister and a pastor.

If someone says, "How many pastors do you have?" or "How many full time staff members do you have?" that's one thing, but ministers? *All* of us are ministers.

- **I'VE BEEN GIFTED FOR MINISTRY**

1 PETER 4:10

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

- **I'VE BEEN AUTHORIZED FOR MINISTRY**

Jesus said, "All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples."

2 CORINTHIANS 5:20

So we are Christ's _____ . . .

An ambassador is someone who represents royalty or a throne or government.

The Bible says you're an ambassador on the earth for Jesus Christ.

When someone comes up to you and says, "So you are minister of Jesus Christ, huh?"

You say, "Yes, I am!" without any shame or lack of confidence. They say, "Who do you think you are, anyway?" You say, "I've been authorized by Jesus Christ."

It's not because you deserve it. You don't. It's not because I deserve it. I don't deserve to be in the ministry. I don't deserve even to be a Christian.

But it's all God's grace. I have been authorized and you have been authorized to minister to other people.

- **I'M COMMANDED TO MINISTER**

Matt 20:26-28

(Jesus speaking) "But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you _____ be your servant,²⁷ and whoever wants to be first among you must become your slave.²⁸ For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Jesus said, "Your attitude *must* be like my own, for I, the Messiah, did not come to be served, but to serve." Jesus emphasized that it is not an option.

A non-ministering Christian is not obeying God. He expects us to be like Jesus Christ.

To Archippus, Paul says in Col. 4:17, "**Be sure** to carry out the ministry the Lord gave you."

The secret of a fulfilled life is to find the ministry for which God made you and get right in the middle of it.

You're going to find fulfillment there more than any other area of your life, because it's what God made you to be.

He said, "You lose your life to find it." I'm commanded to minister.

- **I'M TO BE PREPARED FOR MINISTRY**

EPHESIANS 4:11-12

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to _____ God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

This verse scares pastors sometimes because the Bible teaches very clearly that they will be evaluated on how well they prepare the people God has placed under their care. They are to prepare you for ministry. So let them do their job! Make yourself teachable. Be willing to sacrifice some time and effort to serve others.

- **THE BODY OF CHRIST NEEDS MY MINISTRY**

STORY

At a conference with sixteen pastors of the largest churches in America, one guy said he answered the phone one day after hours and a lady was asking about the church,

"We're looking for a church where we can be blessed," she said.

The pastor said, "That's fine. We're looking for members who can bless the church."

She said, "You don't understand. We're looking for a place where we can be fed."

He said, "That's fine, ma'am. But we're looking for members who can feed others."

She said, "What kind of church *is* this?"

1 CORINTHIANS 12:27

All of you _____ are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it.

When I don't fulfill the ministry God has given me, you get cheated.

When you don't fulfill the ministry God has given you, I get cheated and other people get cheated. We're all a necessary part.

What if your liver said to your body, "I don't want to serve this year. I need some time off."

Have you ever heard your liver say, "I just want to be fed." You say, "I'm sorry, dear liver, but because you're part of my body, you've got to perform your function." Because, if the liver doesn't do its part, the whole body gets cheated.

Many people are in such a "church-hopper" and shopper mode that they think the church exists *for them*.

The Bible says that the church exists for the world.

We, the body of Christ, exist for the world.

The body of Christ needs my ministry.

Ministry always follows function in the context of the church family. It's meant to be through some local body because it's for the body of Christ.

"When Jesus saw the crowds, he had compassion on them because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said, 'The harvest is great but the workers are few. Ask the Lord to send out workers into his harvest field.'" Is this still true today? We live in Northeast Ohio. The harvest is truly plentiful. There are more people out there ready to receive Christ than we're ready to give it. The body of Christ needs my ministry.

- **I AM ACCOUNTABLE FOR MINISTRY.**

ROMANS 14:12

Yes, each of us will give a personal _____ to God.

There are many, many parables in the New Testament -- like the parable of the talents.

God talks about how the man gave one man one talent, one five talents and one ten talents and came back a couple of years later and said, "What did you do with it?"

The one who hadn't done anything with it, he said, "You're wicked and lazy!"

If God has given me a talent, it is a sin not to use it.

One day I'm going to stand before God and I'm going to give an account of the talents, the gifts and the abilities that He's given me.

One day you are too.

One day God's going to say to you, "What did you do with what you were given?"

You're accountable for ministry.

God could have left it at that but He doesn't leave it on the negative.

- **I WILL BE REWARDED FOR MINISTRY**

COLOSSIANS 3:23

Work _____ at whatever you do, as though you were working for the Lord rather than for people.

God says you will be rewarded in heaven on the basis of your ministry.

MATTHEW 25:23

The master said, "Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been _____ in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!"

The Bible teaches very clearly:

- I was created for ministry.
- I was saved for ministry.
- I was called for ministry.
- I've been authorized to minister.
- I'm commanded to minister.
- I'm gifted for ministry.
- I'm prepared for ministry by pastors and teachers.
- The body of Christ needs my ministry.
- I'm accountable for ministry.
- I will be rewarded in heaven on the basis of my ministry.

This is not some minor topic we've been teaching about here. We're talking about a central issue of the Christian life.

This is why our God-given goal is to equip believers to be ministers of Jesus Christ because that is who you and I ARE!

QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS

Why do you think we need all five of the “five-fold ministries” given by Jesus to the church? (see Ephesians 4:11-13)

Discuss what it means to be equipped for the “work” of the ministry.

Have you ever, prior to this lesson, thought of yourself as a minister?

Are you allowing yourself to be equipped, so that you can grow and mature in your walk with the Lord and also help others?

THE PURPOSE OF MINISTRY

(All scriptures are taken from the New Living Translation, 2nd Edition, unless otherwise indicated.)

It is commonly understood that if you do not understand the purpose of a thing you will either misuse it or abuse it.

We believe that once you understand how God made you, then you will understand what God prepared you to be involved in.

At HCF, we are convinced that you must first be committed to a church community and committed to the habits of spiritual maturity before you are ready for ministry.

Community and Maturity are foundations for Ministry. If you have no community (other people), you will have no one to minister to. Immaturity will hinder your ability to minister.

EPHESIANS 4:11-12

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to _____ God's people to do _____ and build up the church, the body of Christ.

These five ministry gifts: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, we describe as the "Five-fold Ministry." Here in Ephesians, the Bible teaches that five-fold ministers are the equippers and the rest of the people are the ministers.

That's the whole HCF strategy in relation to our structure. If I am the pastor, it is not my job to *do* the ministry. It is the pastor's job as a five-fold minister to *prepare God's people* to do ministry. The same is true for all the other five-fold ministry gifts. Therefore, the Evangelist, the Prophet, the Pastor, the Teacher and the Apostles are all *equipping* ministers for the body of Christ.

Therefore, lessons like this one are one of the most important things a five-fold minister can do. It is more important than Sunday morning service, or a home group meeting. Why? Because from teaching like this, we are helping people to be prepared to do God's work (ministry).

My Ministry is Determined by My Design

God has created me. He has given me specific talents and abilities. Those abilities are an indication of what He intended for me to do during my time on this earth.

Therefore, I will understand the purpose I was created for when I understand the kind of person I am.

This is one of the secrets to knowing God's will for my life.

God is consistent in His plan for each of our lives. He would not give us inborn talents, temperaments, spiritual gifts, and all sorts of life experiences and then not use them. So, by examining how God made me, I can discover the kind of ministry I would be most successful pursuing.

Whatever it is that God has created you to do – when you discover it, you will find fruitfulness and fulfillment.

A friend of ours, Randy Gladden, shared this anecdote about finding his ministry. He said that he wanted to sing. But when he sang, God told him, “Hey Randy, why don’t you go over and try this other thing!” He taught, “When you discover God’s purpose for your life, it will be the best and the most enjoyable thing you have ever done.”

Fruitfulness and Fulfillment.

When you discover what God made you to be and then you begin to do what God made you to do, you’re going to be fulfilled. Fulfillment comes from service, not from status or anything else.

Often I hear people say, "I'm frustrated! I'm not sure what The Lord would have me to do." Or, "I don't feel connected."

What I tell them is, "You just need a ministry. You need an outlet."

You see what I'm telling them is we are never going find the fruitful fulfillment that the Lord intended for us without engaging in the designed purposed he made us for.

Individuals vs. Institutions

Most churches take the institutional approach. The Church is the center. Ministries are developed, and people are seen as resources for the ministry. They make up a large list of jobs that need to be done. Then they try finding people to fill those jobs whether they match or not. Often people feel pressured to fill a position whether or not they have any ability or passion for the role.

At HCF, we take the exact opposite approach to ministry. We want the ministry that takes place in and through HCF to be determined by GOD’S purposes and the MAKE-UP of our congregation. We focus on an individual approach to ministry rather than an institutional approach. We center it around people and each person’s uniqueness.

We don’t force a square peg into a round hole. Our goal is not to build an institution. Our goal is to build people. We want to develop YOU.

What is Ministry?

The Greek word for ministry is the word "diakonos". What word do we get from that? Deacon. The word "deacon" simply means servant. The word "diakonos" means to serve.

Here's the HCF definition for ministry: "Ministry is using whatever God has given me to serve Him and the needs of others."

Another way we say that is "The Church is people, equipped to serve, meeting needs everywhere in Jesus' name".

When we talk about finding your ministry we're saying, "What has God given you, specifically?"

That's where it starts. Whatever He has given you, He expects you to use it in serving Him and the needs of others.

We Minister in Three Directions

- First, **we minister to the Lord**. We do it through worship. When we worship, we are actually ministering to God. We are using what God has given us to serve Him. Worship is not just singing on Sunday mornings, it is our entire lifestyle. Often, as we focus on ministering to the Lord, He reveals to us the specialized ministry we should be involved in.

PROVERBS 3:5-6

Trust in the LORD with all your heart; do not depend on your own understanding. ⁶
Seek his will in all you do, and _____ will _____ which path to take.

- Then we minister to **believers**. Hebrews 6:10 talks about ministering to other Christians.

HEBREWS 6:10

For God is not unjust. He will not forget how hard you have worked for him and how you have shown your love to him by _____ for other _____, as you still do.

- Then we also minister to **unbelievers**.

MATTHEW 5:13

_____ are the salt of the earth. But what good is salt if it has lost its flavor? Can you make it salty again? It will be thrown out and trampled underfoot as worthless.

We Minister to Three Areas of Need

Likewise, we minister to three areas of need. You're made of a spirit, a soul, and a body and we believe ministry involves those three things.

- We minister to people's **physical needs**. That is a legitimate ministry.

At the final judgment, according to Matthew 25, the King will say, "I was hungry, and you fed

me. I was thirsty, and you gave me drink. I was a stranger and you invited me into your home. I was naked and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison and you visited me. When you did it to one of the least of these, my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!"

Jesus was saying that whenever you do something kind for another person in His name it's as if you're doing it directly for Him, the Lord.

There are legitimate ministries in our church that simply take care of people's physical needs -- hunger, clothing, food, things like that.

MATTHEW 10:42

If, as my representative, you give even a cup of cold water to a little child, you will surely be _____.

To those of you who are Sunday School teachers, even if you take a little child to the restroom you'll be rewarded. Everything is rewarded by God.

- To people's emotional needs.

People have different kinds of emotional needs and the Bible says it takes different kinds of ministries. "Warn the idle, encourage the timid, help the weak, be patient with all."

We respond to different people in different ways. When you minister a word of counsel or encouragement or comfort, that is ministry.

- To people's spiritual needs.

2 CORINTHIANS 5:18

And all of this is a gift from God, who brought us back to himself through Christ. And God has given us this task of reconciling people to him.

A reconciliation is when you take two opposing parties and you bring them together. God first reconciled us to himself. Then he gave the "ministry" of reconciliation to us!

When a couple reconciles in a marriage, they've been separated but they come back together. That's reconciliation. Two formerly opposing parties come together.

The Bible says it's our ministry to reconcile people with God. If they are separated from God, we are to bring them together.

"We proclaim Christ, counseling and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ."

There are spiritual needs that need to be ministered to.

What is the Purpose of Ministry?

1 CORINTHIANS 12:5

There are _____ kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord.

Notice that this verse says there are different *kinds* of service. God does not expect or desire us to be the same as everyone else. We are not “cookie cutter” Christians! He has made us each unique.

The Holy Spirit displays God's power through *each of us* as a means of helping the entire church.

EPHESIANS 4:16

He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As _____ does its own special work, it _____ the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

God wants to use *me* to build up His body. That is the purpose of ministry. Think of it this way: God wants every one of you to be a bodybuilder, a *spiritual* bodybuilder.

- C Christlike
- A Action
- R Reaching out to people
- E Everywhere

- T Together
- E Everyone
- A Accomplishes
- M More

QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS

Why is it important that we understand our purpose?

What are some of the talents and abilities that God has given to you? Do you feel you have grown and increased them since you were a child?

Do you use your talents and abilities with excellence? Have you found a way to use those talents and abilities to minister to the Lord? to others?

Can your talents and abilities be used in some way to meet the needs of others?

DISCOVERING MY MINISTRY

(All scriptures are taken from the New Living Translation, 2nd Edition, unless otherwise indicated.)

Some Insights for Discovering My Ministry

Now that we have discussed what ministry is, now let's discover some insights for discovering our own personal ministry.

Our most fundamental call is to know God in Jesus Christ.

This call to belong to God as a child begins the process whereby God, through the Holy Spirit, works in us His grace.

His grace enables us to respond to His call to serve Him.

As we learn to serve Him, we begin to recognize His call to be a servant of the Most High God in all areas of life.

As His grace grows in us we begin to see our spouses and children as more than human choices.

And our responsibility to fellow believers begins to take on an air of calling as well.

Beyond that, our profession or job takes on aspects of His calling.

Suddenly it dawns on us that life itself is a high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

When these truths become clearer to us then our intention toward our calling will take upon a more serious tone.

As that occurs, we will want to make way for more ministry opportunities to be able to happen in our daily schedule.

With this understanding in mind, let's continue to gain some insight about how these things may happen in your life.

Let's start by reading Romans 12:1-8 in its entirety before we go on to a more thorough examination of the passage.

ROMANS 12:1-8

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to give your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy sacrifice—the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him. ² Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by

changing the way you think. Then you will learn to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect. ³ Because of the privilege and authority God has given me, I give each of you this warning: Don't think you are better than you really are. Be honest in your evaluation of yourselves, measuring yourselves by the faith God has given us. ⁴ Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, ⁵ so it is with Christ's body. We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.

⁶ In his grace, God has given us different gifts for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. ⁷ If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. ⁸ If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Now let's look at some specific insights we can glean from this passage to help us discover and function in our God given ministries.

Insights from Romans 12:

- **Offer My Body**

ROMANS 12:1

And so, dear brothers and sisters, I plead with you to _____ your bodies to God because of all he has done for you. Let them be a living and holy _____ — the kind he will find acceptable. This is truly the way to worship him.

It is most likely that you wouldn't be here if you hadn't already made this type of commitment to the Lord.

You said something like, "Jesus Christ, I want to serve You. I dedicate myself. I don't understand it all, but I dedicate myself to be what You want me to be."

Once you've done that . . .

- **Remove Competing Distractions**

This is the step some of you need to take now.

The reason why you haven't been able to be involved in ministry is because your life is filled up with everything else but ministry.

ROMANS 12:2

Don't copy the _____ and customs of this _____, but let God transform you into a new person by _____ the way you _____. Then you will learn

to know God's will for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

After the act of dedication, comes the act of elimination. We've all heard the metaphor about "burning the candle at both ends." It means to overwork or exhaust oneself by doing too many things, especially both late at night and early in the morning.

Living that kind of life is not sustainable – you can't keep it up for very long before you burn out. If you burn the candle at both ends you're not as bright as you think you are.

If you're serious about serving God, you're going to have to cut some things out of your life.

You can't keep adding and adding without taking things out. It may be less television or it may be something else.

If you put in important things you're going to take out things of less importance. This doesn't mean you can't have fun, it just means you are redirecting your life for that which is of greater importance.

- **Evaluate Your Strengths and Weaknesses**

- ROMANS 12:3 (PHILLIPS TRANSLATION)**

- Don't cherish exaggerated ideas of yourself or your importance, but try to have a sane estimate of your capabilities by the light of the faith God has given to you.

What Paul is saying here is, "Be honest about yourself. Be realistic."

Every one of us are a great mixture of some strengths and weaknesses. You have some things that you're very good at. You have some things that you're lousy at. So do I. With every strength comes a weakness. With every weakness comes a strength. The key is to find out what you are good at and have a sane estimation. Humility is not denying your strengths. Humility is being honest about your weaknesses.

It's OK to say, "I'm good with my hands." Why? God made you to be that way. Some of you are good with words. Some of you are good with numbers. Some of you are good with people. Some of you are lousy with people, but you're good with taskss. You might good with projects. God has made us different to fit us all together in the body of Christ. Evaluate your strengths.

Believe it or not, of the most important things I do is helping people know what they are not good at.

- **We Serve and Belong to Other Believers**

- ROMANS 12:4-5**

- Just as our _____ have many parts and each part has a special function,⁵ so it is with Christ's body. We are _____ of _____ body, and we all belong to each other.

Paul uses the analogy of the body and there are four very important implications that I want us to understand here from Paul's anatomy lesson.

- Every member is a minister in Christ's body.
- Every member has a different function.
- Every member's ministry is important.
- Every member belongs to all the others.

This concept is expanded upon in I Corinthians 12:

1 CORINTHIANS 12:21-24

The eye can never say to the hand, "I don't need you." The head can't say to the feet, "I don't need you."²² In fact, some parts of the body that _____ weakest and least important are actually the most _____.²³ And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen,²⁴ while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity.

Look what the Lord has done! He has made us to need one another, to work together. We need to work and flow with other believers. The pineal gland is the smallest organ in the human body. But it is very important. It produces melatonin, which affects how we sleep, wake up, our moods and our reactions to seasonal changes. If it doesn't function properly, we might not be able to sleep, or we might have trouble handling stress. Isn't that amazing? That little part has a great effect on the whole body!

Nobody is an island unto themselves. I need your ministry. You need the ministry of others around you.

- **We need to engage our gifts**

ROMANS 12:6-8

In his grace, God has given us _____ gifts for doing _____ things _____. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you.⁷ If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well.⁸ If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.

Those are just some of the spiritual gifts. There are many more.

How God has Shaped Me for Ministry

JOB 10:8A

You _____ me with your hands; you _____ me . . .

God started uniquely shaping you even before you were born. Even in your mother's womb, God was molding you for ministry.

PSALM 139:13-16

You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. ¹⁴ Thank you for making me so wonderfully complex! Your workmanship is marvelous — how well I know it. ¹⁵ You watched me as I was being _____ in utter seclusion, as I was woven together in the dark of the womb. ¹⁶ You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

Even before you were born, God knew that on this day you would be looking at this lesson, studying this text. He knows every day of your life before you were even born.

- You were shaped for a purpose. Not by accident but for a reason.
- You are unique! There is no one else like you in the world. If you do not do the ministry God has given you, nobody else is going to do it because God made you unique.
- You are wonderfully complex!

In the book of Romans, the apostle Paul writes, "What right do you have, a human being, to cross examine God? The pot has no right to say to the potter. Why did you make me this shape? A potter can do what he likes with the clay." (Rom 9:20-21)

Should we be rebellious against God and question Him saying, "Why didn't you make me different? Why didn't you give me... the ability to read faster, or... the ability to speak better . . . or make me taller, shorter, skinnier, fatter... whatever?" God made each of us in a special way and the gifts and the abilities and the background He's given you have a specific design and intent.

We say that in ministry, function follows form. In architecture, it's the exact opposite. In architecture, form follows function. In other words, what you are going to do with a building determines how you should build the building. The first things an architect asks is, "What are you going to do in it?" Forms follows function. Then the building is formed to fit its purpose.

When it comes to human beings, to ministry, it's the exact opposite. Function follows form. What God made you to be determines the function you are to have.

QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS

Romans 12:2 says, "Let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think?"

Have you asked God to change the way you think? How has your thinking changed since you became a Christian?

How can a person go about gaining a balanced, realistic viewpoint of their own strengths and weaknesses?

Before this lesson, had you ever considered that others may need a person like you in their lives? If you are an independent type of person, have you considered that you really do need other people in your life?

DISCOVERING MY SPIRITUAL GIFTS

(All scriptures are taken from the New Living Translation, 2nd Edition, unless otherwise indicated.)

What the Bible Says about Spiritual Gifts

1 CORINTHIANS 12:1 (NKJV)

Now about spiritual gifts I do **not** want you to be **ignorant**.

Many people are ignorant about spiritual gifts. There's a lot of bad teaching and emotional reactions out in the world about many different things, including spiritual gifts. But Paul says here that we are not to be ignorant about spiritual gifts. So, we are going to discover what they are, how you get them, when you get them. But this lesson is a condensed overview. For deeper study, try *Discovering the Holy Spirit*, from our *Discovery Series*.

We're convinced that one of the primary ways you learn spiritual gifts is by getting involved in ministry. Many people try to figure out their gift and then get in ministry. We're saying that one of the ways is the exact opposite. As you get into ministry you'll find out what you're gifted at.

You're not going to discover your gift simply by taking some kind of evaluation or test, although you might gain some insight from those. But we are going to give you an overview of what spiritual gifts are so that a year from now you'll have a much better understanding of what *your* spiritual gift is.

What is a spiritual gift?

It is a special ability given by the Holy Spirit to every believer at their conversion to be used to minister to others and therefore build up the Body of Christ.

A spiritual gift is a special ability. It's different from a talent. It's given by the Holy Spirit to every believer. Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift. You get it the moment you became a Christian. Many people don't know they have a gift but they do. You've got one. It may be hidden and you have to unwrap it. It's like when you were born physically you got a sense of physical senses: hear, touch, taste, smell, feel. As a baby, you didn't know you had those things. You figured it out as you matured. Suddenly you realized, "I have the ability to smell. I have the ability to hear..." You got them at birth but you didn't understand them until you matured. The same is true of spiritual gifts, when you're born again.

They are to be used to minister to others (not to build up yourself) and therefore to build up the body of Christ.

Ten Truths about Spiritual Gifts:

1. Only believers have spiritual gifts.
2. Every Christian has at least one spiritual gift.
3. No one receives all of the gifts. Why? If someone received all the gifts, he'd have no need of anybody else. And God does not give any person all the gifts because He wants us to depend on each other. He wants us to need each other so no person can say, "I'm an island unto myself. I don't need you, I don't need the church." No one has all the gifts.
4. No single gift is given to everyone. Again, God built marvelous variety into His creation.
5. You can't earn or work for a spiritual gift. That's a contradiction in terms. A gift is a gift. It's something God gives, not that you've earned or worked for. It's like salvation, it's a gift.
6. The Holy Spirit decides what gifts I get. You can't say, "I'd really like the gift of teaching... mercy... whatever." That's fine to desire them, but the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit decides who gets what gifts. They are given by His sovereign will.
7. The gifts, once given are permanent. Once you've received it, you've got it for life. God does not take them away. They're permanent.
8. I am to develop the gifts God gives me. When you're given a gift, they're given in seed form. But just like a muscle, the more you exercise it, the stronger it gets. The more you use your spiritual gift, the stronger it will get. One of the gifts God has given me is the gift of encouragement and it comes out in my preaching. I like to encourage people. The more that I use it, the better that I get at it. It expands, grows, develops.
9. It is a sin to waste the gifts God gave me.
10. Using my gifts glorifies God, helps me to grow, and benefits others. We bear fruit and it glorifies God.

The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts:

They are not for my benefit, but for others.

This is a very important truth. Spiritual gifts are not for my benefit but for others.

1 PETER 4:10

God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.

We are to be good managers of the gifts God has given to us, using them for the good of others.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:7

A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

Contrary to what some think (and even teach), when you get a gift it's not merely for your own benefit. It's not to bless you, although it probably will bless you in some way. The gift that God gives you is given for the purpose of blessing other people, of blessing the church. It is to help the *entire* church. Using spiritual gifts when you are not a part of a local church is an unbiblical use of a gift. God meant for them to be used through the church, to build up the body.

To produce maturity and stability in our church family.

EPHESIANS 4:11-14

Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ. ¹³ This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord, measuring up to the full and complete standard of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be immature like children. We won't be tossed and blown about by every wind of new teaching. We will not be influenced when people try to trick us with lies so clever they sound like the truth.

Probably most of you know at least one Christian who started out right for the Lord and then some cult came along, swept them off their feet and they went off into that crazy cult. Why? Because Christians around them were not using their spiritual gifts to help them grow and become stable. When you use your gift it produces maturity and stability in the church family.

The Lord wants us to be stable. He want us to be mature. He does not want us to be led astray, or tossed about by "new" teachings that sound great, but prove to be false. He wants us to be wise.

Cautions about Spiritual Gifts

Don't confuse gifts with natural talent.

Somebody might say, "I'm good at sales." Fine. That's a vocational skill. That's an ability but that's not a spiritual gift.

Don't confuse gifts with the fruit of the Spirit.

The gifts of the Spirit are different from the fruit of the Spirit. The fruit of the Spirit shows my maturity; the gift show my ministry. This is very important. The fruit of the Spirit is listed in Galatians 5:22-23. They are love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control. The development of these characteristics in your life show the development of your maturity.

A person can have a spiritual gift and be spiritually immature. You receive them the moment you become a Christian. When you first become a Christian, you may be gifted as a teacher, but that does not mean you have the maturity to teach yet. You have to grow and develop. You need

both the fruit and the gifts in your life.

Don't confuse gifts with Christian roles.

For instance, shepherding or pastoring is a spiritual gift. It is the ability to care for the spiritual needs of other people. The gift of pastoring is different from the office or the role of being a pastor. So you might have the gift of pastoring or shepherding even though you're not an ordained "pastor". Don't confuse the two.

Be aware of gift projection tendencies.

If we expect others to serve in the way we do and have similar results, we are projecting our gifts upon them. People with the gift of mercy expect everybody else to be just as merciful. People with the gift of prophecy tend to be confronters. They come up and say "That's wrong!" and they expect everybody else to be just as confrontational. When you get a person with mercy and a person with prophecy in the same Bible Study group, you can expect sparks because they're going to tend to project onto other people. People with the gift of administration expect everybody else to be organized. It's natural. So we must be careful not to project onto other people. People with the gift of evangelism are passionate about witnessing and they are constantly sharing the gospel with others. They tend to bring lots of people to church. It's natural to them. They just have that gift, an ability to share Christ with other people. And it makes everybody else feel guilty! They wonder, "Why don't I don't see that many people come to Christ?" We must accept the fact that there are different gifts and abilities, and you should not project your gift onto somebody else.

Realize that your gift does not make you superior to others.

First, the gift is given by God Himself. There's nothing you did to earn it, so why consider yourself above someone else simply because you've received a gift? The gifts are all important and there's no superiority or inferiority to assume over them.

Realize that using your gifts without love is worthless.

It's not by accident that the greatest chapter on love in the Bible -- 1 Corinthians 13 -- is sandwiched between 1 Corinthians 12, which is on spiritual gifts, and 1 Corinthians 14, which is on spiritual gifts. Right in the middle of the greatest passage on spiritual gifts, Paul stops and says, By the way, let's talk about love. Because if I don't have love I'm like sounding brass and tinkling symbol. I could be the greatest teacher in the world, I could be the greatest preacher in the world, I could be the greatest administrator in the world, I could have the most mercy—but if I don't have love it doesn't count for anything. I may be able to speak in tongues, I may have the gift of inspired preaching, I may have lots of knowledge. I may have all the faith that moves mountains. But if I don't have love, I am nothing, and benefit no one.

Recognize that I have both a primary and secondary ministry in my church.

How do you know the difference? My primary ministry commitment should be in the area where I'm gifted. That should determine what your primary ministry is. My secondary ministry includes serving in any other area of the Body where I'm needed.

TITUS 3:14

Our people must learn to do good by meeting the urgent needs of others; then they will not be unproductive.

For example, let's say I don't have the gift of mercy and I see somebody fall down. I can't say "It's not my gift to go help them." Just as you are gifted to be a minister in a primary area, God expects us to manifest all the gifts just as roles. In other words, some people have the gift of giving, the ability to make money and give it away. That's their gift. That does not excuse all the rest of us from giving. I don't have the gift of giving, but I'm called to give simply because I'm a Christian. All of us are called to teach in different situations or settings. All of us are called to be leaders in different settings and situations. All of us are called at times to give a word of encouragement. You say, "It's not my gift, therefore I never encourage anybody." (One lady told her pastor, "I have the gift of criticism." He told her, "I'm sorry, ma'am, but that's not in the Bible. It's not a spiritual gift.")

So the secondary ministries mean I'm just willing to serve, to help out when I'm needed. If I'm needed to set up chairs I can't say, "That's not my gift." I just go set up chairs because I'm a servant of Christ and Jesus said, "He that wants to be great learns to be a servant of all." If I'm asked to serve in a Sunday School I'll help out, not because I'm gifted there, but because there is a need that I might be able to fill. It's a secondary ministry, not a primary role. But I'm willing to do that because of my maturity.

Discovering Your Ministry

All this may be very new to you, and so you are growing in your understanding of what it means to serve, to be in ministry. If you want to know more. We have many resources that may be able to help. And it is also helpful to seek advice from those who are more seasoned in their walk with the Lord. Elders, Pastors, older Christian friends or family members. Please don't be too shy or too proud to seek advice.

Please feel free to ask for our
Spiritual Gifts Evaluation booklet,
available from our main office.
Call 330-385-HOPE

NEEDS QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS

What experience have you had with spiritual gifts?
Did this lesson affect your understanding in any way?

Discuss the difference between the gifts of the Spirit and the fruit of the Spirit.

Discuss how a person can have a spiritual gift and yet be spiritually immature. What insight does this fact bring to how we evaluate gifts like the word of knowledge or prophecy?

Discuss what we call, "gift projection." (see pg 40)

TEST

Name _____

Test Score _____

THIS IS AN OPEN-BOOK TEST. You will need a score of 80% to receive a certificate of completion.

INSTRUCTIONS: Circle the correct answer in each of the following multiple choice questions.

1. In the Kingdom of God, greatness comes through
 - a. Gaining a position of authority.
 - b. Humility.
 - c. Practice.
 - d. Sinlessness.
2. Future spiritual leaders are those who are
 - a. Financially sound.
 - b. Can tell people what to do without offending them.
 - c. Willing to serve others.
 - d. Able to counsel and teach.
3. Who is it that draws people to Christ?
 - a. Evangelists
 - b. Pastors & Teachers
 - c. God Himself
 - d. The people of God
4. The main purpose of the five-fold ministry is to
 - a. Do the work of the ministry.
 - b. Prepare the people of God to do the work of the ministry.
 - c. Preach the Gospel to all people.
 - d. Help parents raise their children in the love of God.
5. A non-serving Christian is
 - a. A contradiction.
 - b. A blessing.
 - c. Normal.
 - d. Encouraging.
6. My primary identity is
 - a. The job I perform in the workplace
 - b. My role in my family.
 - c. My place in society.
 - d. As a minister of Christ.

7. When you discover what God made you to be and begin to do what God made you to do
 - a. You'll be depressed.
 - b. You'll be alone.
 - c. You'll be fulfilled.
 - d. You'll have a burden.

8. We minister
 - a. To the Lord.
 - b. To believers.
 - c. To unbelievers.
 - d. All of the above.

9. God has made us all to be
 - a. The same as everyone else.
 - b. The same as all Christians everywhere.
 - c. Unique.
 - d. All of the above.

10. Our most fundamental call is
 - a. To know God in Jesus Christ.
 - b. To be in the ministry.
 - c. To save the world.
 - d. To be excellent in all my roles.

11. Your function is determined by
 - a. Your friends and relatives.
 - b. What your boss says about you.
 - c. What God has made you to be.
 - d. The role you happen to be in at the moment.

12. Who decides which spiritual gifts I get?
 - a. I choose for myself.
 - b. The Holy Spirit decides.
 - c. My pastor analyzes my talents and makes a decision.
 - d. All of the above.

13. When I get a spiritual gift,
 - a. It can be of some benefit to me.
 - b. It is for blessing others.
 - c. It is for building up the church.
 - d. All of the above.

INSTRUCTIONS: Circle the correct answer (T for true, F for false) in the following true or false questions:

- | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|----|--|---|---|-----|---|
| T | F | 1. | Believers who do not serve or minister are strong Christians. | T | F | 7. | God had no plan in mind when He created you. You are simply a product of random chance. |
| T | F | 2. | Pastors should do all the work of the ministry. | T | F | 8. | We can minister to the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs of people. |
| T | F | 3. | God wants to use us as instruments of His power and goodness. | T | F | 9. | The apostle Paul encourages us to be honest and realistic about ourselves. |
| T | F | 4. | Partnering with someone else in the ministry allows two people to get to know each other better while they serve others. | T | F | 10. | We have a right to question and argue with God about how He formed us. |
| T | F | 5. | The “Five-fold ministry” gifts are not needed in this day and age. | T | F | 11. | There is no way we can learn about spiritual gifts while being involved in ministry. |
| T | F | 6. | You have been chosen by God so you can show others how God called you out of darkness into light. | T | F | 12. | The gifts of the Spirit and the Fruit of the spirit are the same thing. |

When you have completed your test, tear it out of the book and turn it in to the office or to your Home Group Leader.

If you score 80% or above you will receive a certificate of achievement.

