

Discovering

your

Design



Discovering Your Design

Your S.H.A.P.E. for Ministry

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Lesson

One

Introduction To Discovery

Introduction...

To Discovering Your Design

Welcome to Christ Covenant Church's Community Group Ministry. We are excited that you have chosen to participate in this Spiritual Gifts Inventory. Our prayer is that through this study you will continue to grow in confidence that God will use you together with others to build His church, the body of Christ.

Two fundamental concepts underlie this study of spiritual gifts. We are family and we are gifted to serve. Consider this: If we are family, we belong not because of what we do, but because of whose we are. God initially has chosen us and not we Him. (**John 15:16**) Therefore, we belong to Him. We have been adopted into His family. We did not earn our place nor can we keep it based upon our gifts or abilities. We belong because of Christ's perfect life and death on our behalf.

As family we belong not only to Him, but to one another as well. He has placed us together. (**1 Cor 12:18**) As family we are to serve one another. Here's where the gifts come in; we serve Him by serving one another using His gifts given to each of us. You are gifted then, not for yourself, but for others.

When you were young, was there a home in the neighborhood where all the kids hung out after school? A magnet that attracted kids like hot chocolate and cookies in winter and like a swimming pool in summer . . . We are gifted to serve one another, not just for one another, but for people around us who will be drawn into the family because they see and sense the love and servant attitude. So then, God's gifts to us are given for His glory, our good and for a watching world to see and ultimately to experience first hand.

The Discovery Ministry is designed to help you to serve based on how God has uniquely created and gifted you. We will be looking at questions such as, "How has God divinely designed you?", "What do you LIKE to do?", "What age groups do you enjoy or not enjoy serving?" Our purpose is to help you determine where you will be energized, fulfilled and *look forward* to serving.

And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-12

These verses teach that the pastor serves to equip you to **minister**, to accomplish the service that God has placed deep inside you. In **1 Peter 2:9**, the term "priesthood of believers" is used to describe each of us as members who are a part of God's church. We believe each of you has been called to be a minister, playing a crucial role in the church and through it, to our community and throughout the world.

Our goal is to help you discover the unique way that God has created you and where you fit into ministry at Grace Community Church. In defining your S.H.A.P.E. for ministry, we will be looking at each of the five areas listed below.

Spiritual Gifts

Heart

Ability

Personality

Experiences

Ministry is using what God has given you to serve Him and the needs of others. The above five factors will help you determine where you can best serve Him with joy, fulfillment, and fruitfulness. Your unique set of spiritual gift(s), heart for certain people, abilities, personality, and experiences is your primary way of serving Him. Let us keep in mind that God desires our availability and rejoices when we have an attitude of serving Him. (*Titus 3:14*)

God takes ordinary people and
accomplishes extraordinary
things through them.

Remember, God never asks you to do what He has not given you the power to do. As you discover your unique S.H.A.P.E., you will also discover that He has already given you the tools you need to be involved in ministry.

The grace of God is given to you not only as “unmerited favor,” but as “unlimited.” (*1 Cor. 15:10; Rom. 6:14-23*)

The process of **DISCOVERY** can be an exciting adventure as you begin to see how God has uniquely prepared you for ministry. But the real value of this experience will grow out of your readiness to respond to what you discover. Are you ready?

- Complete the questionnaires. This will enable your **DISCOVERY** Guide to be as helpful as possible in suggesting ministry opportunities.
- Pray for discernment and understanding as you consider the spiritual gifts inventory and reflect on your personality profile. This **DISCOVERY** class merely provides the tools that will point you in a ministry direction. Real confirmation will come over time as you watch God clarify His leading in your life.
- Continue to respond to needy areas of ministry. Early involvement in a variety of areas will open your eyes to the breadth of opportunities and give you a taste of the joy to be found in serving in the strength of God's Spirit.

The place God calls you is the
place where your deep gladness
and the world's deep hunger meet.

- Fredrick Buechner

God is BIG enough,
God is GOOD enough,
to work all things together
to accomplish both
His glory and your good.

- Anonymous

Spiritual Gifts

Discovering... Your Spiritual Gift(s)

Many of us have heard of spiritual gifts, but we are not quite sure we understand them. A spiritual gift is a special ability given by the Holy Spirit to believers at conversion. It is to be used to minister to others in order to build up the church. Spiritual gifts are given when the Holy Spirit enters a new believer. They are discovered and developed as we grow in our walk with Christ. A spiritual gift is much like a muscle; the more you use it, the stronger it becomes. Though gifts can be ignored or misused, real benefit occurs when members exercise their gifts out of love for Christ and a desire to serve His body. Once again, your spiritual gift is for others, so give it away. As you do, you will find the unique and motivating purpose of your existence. God has life designed so that we find fulfillment only when we give our lives away for the good of others.

Biblical Truths about Spiritual Gifts

Only Christians have spiritual gifts.	1 Corinthians 2:14
Every Christian has at least one gift.	1 Corinthians 12:7
No one receives all the gifts.	1 Corinthians 12:27-30
No single gift is given to everyone .	1 Corinthians 12:29-30
You cannot earn or work for a spiritual gift.	Ephesians 4:7
The Holy Spirit decides what gift(s) you receive.	1 Corinthians 12:11
The gift(s) you are given are permanent .	Romans 11:29
You are to use the gift(s) God gives you.	1 Peter 4:10-11
Believers will give an account to the Lord for how they have used their gift(s).	2 Corinthians 5:10
It is a delightful privilege to use our gifts and so participate with God in building up the Body of Christ.	Ephesians 4:11-16

If you do not use your gift, other people's lives will be impoverished because the life of the body will be diminished.

Read through these passages to consider the beauty of a “Body” with all the members functioning effectively. No one carries too great a load and no one is without a meaningful place to serve. The result is a church body that in greater and greater ways fulfills the desires of her Head, developing strength and stability, and growing in effectiveness and loving service in the world.

Why is it important to know about spiritual gifts?

We need to know about spiritual gifts because of their unlimited potential to benefit the church. Proper use of the gifts will result in growth and maturity in the body. **Ephesians 4:11-15**

We are told to be aware of them. **1 Corinthians 12:1**

We are called to be stewards and we need to know about our gift(s) so we can use them. **1 Timothy 4:14**
Matthew 25:14-20

We will know God’s will, i.e. our spiritual job description. **Romans 12:1-2**

We will know the satisfaction that serving brings as we experience fruitfulness and fulfillment. **John 15:8**
John 15:10-11

We will be judged by Christ Himself on how faithfully we used our gifts to benefit others.

Unwrapping My Gifts

It is the purpose of this workbook to avoid two errors common in many spiritual gifts inventories. Many mistakenly confuse natural abilities with spiritual gifts, while others test experience and determine one’s spiritual gift(s) based only on past performance.

DISCOVERING YOUR DESIGN, instead, prefers to have you carry an openness into the exploration of your spiritual gifts. Just as a child eagerly unwraps gifts on Christmas morning, we can confidently find presents (spiritual gifts) with our names on them, unwrap them and begin to utilize them for God’s glory.

God desires for you to know the spiritual gift(s) He has chosen for you. “Ask, and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find; knock, and it shall be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it shall be opened.” (**Matthew 7:7, 8**). It is a life-long process of learning more about His gift(s) to us and the many ways we can share those gifts with the church. Many minister and find out their gifts later.

On the following pages you can discover and/or affirm the gift(s) He has given you. The Spiritual Gifts Inventory in this section is not based on your experience or natural abilities. Instead, it is based on *your interests*. It is based on where you enjoy investing your time and energy.

How Many Gifts Do the Scriptures Mention?

Romans 12:3-8

Prophecy
Service
Teaching
Encouraging
Giving
Leading
Showing Mercy

1 Cor. 12:8-10, 28-30

Message of Wisdom
Message of Knowledge
Faith
Healing
Miracles
Prophecy
Discernment of Spirits
Tongues
Interpreting Tongues
Apostleship
Teaching
Service/ Helps
Administration

Eph. 4:7-16

Apostleship
Prophecy
Evangelism
Pastor
Teacher

Are these the only options to consider when trying to discover one's spiritual gift(s)? Many studies of spiritual gifts are confined to these specific passages. Yet even among scholars who stay fairly close to the biblical lists, there is disagreement on the number and nature of the gifts. Some add gifts mentioned elsewhere in Scripture to the lists ... The lists can serve as a helpful guideline, giving us ideas about the kinds of gifts God gives ... The key is to find the areas in which the Holy Spirit seems to supernaturally empower your service to others, and to focus your efforts there. An even simpler test is simply to ask yourself how you can best love the people in your church. The answer to that question will help you see your gift.

1 Peter chapter four breaks gifts down to speaking and serving. As you become familiar with the gift lists in scripture you'll discover that no one passage of scripture cites all of the gifts. Each time the subject is addressed we are given a representative list of gifts, but in no case do we have the "definitive list" of spiritual gifts. This should keep us from becoming overly dogmatic about what gifts are and how they function in a given ministry situation. At the same time, New Testament writers are very concerned that we not be ignorant about spiritual gifts either. Certainly we should take the time to discover our areas of giftedness and invest ourselves in developing these gifts for His service.

No member of the Body can carry the work alone. Spiritual gifts were never intended to work in isolation. Rather, all the members are interconnected and vitally dependent on each other. Though some may appear prominently, their service is no more valuable than the gifted members who serve behind the scenes. Because this is so different from the evaluation of human organizations, we might overlook the importance of this distinction, but the church is a living organism with all the body members interdependently connected together.

Considering the varied perspectives on the gifts listed above, we have chosen to focus on the gifts included in this Spiritual Gifts Inventory. Answer the questions on the following pages **based on your interest** in the specified activities. Indicate your answer to each statement on the answer sheet at the end of the questions. Assume that you have all the experience and training necessary to accomplish the task. React to your “gut” feeling. Answer honestly, not wishfully. Work as quickly as possible. Look only at the first page of the answer sheet, checking the appropriate box for each question. When you have completed the inventory, turn to the second page of the scoring sheet. Score your inventory by adding your numbers going down each of the 12 columns. Write your total for each gift.

Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Where do I enjoy directing my time and energy?

1. Rejoice in God’s provision even while the checkbook is in the red.
2. Clean someone’s kitchen once a week.
3. Search the Bible to check the validity of a sermon.
4. Think of ways to make content “come alive” for students.
5. Recognize root problems, which are keeping one from growing spiritually.
6. Help with the emotional pain of the unemployed.
7. Give use of my car for the youth retreats.
8. Plead the cause of God to the people of the church and/or the world.
9. Talk about Jesus to strangers who do not know Him.
10. Motivate groups toward specific Biblical objectives.
11. Be responsible for the spiritual lives of Christians.
12. Organize ideas, tasks, people and time for Christian service.
13. Motivated by the idea of meeting a need than performing a task.
14. Using my home to minister to others.
15. Wait as long as needed for the right job opening.
16. Run lights for a drama.
17. Recognize when people are pretending or wearing masks.

18. Earnestly desire to explain Biblical principles to others.
19. Map out a plan of action to help develop spiritual maturity in an individual.
20. Sympathize with those who are experiencing hurt.
21. Organize and fund an appreciation dinner.
22. Correct wrong thinking in a friend.
23. Confront my friends and relatives to determine where they stand spiritually.
24. Help, lead, guide, and direct people in an important church ministry.
25. Nurture and disciple people.
26. Plan things where people are involved.
27. Being led by others.
28. Making others feel comfortable in my home.
29. Grow a garden from a seed.
30. Set up the chairs for a church banquet.
31. Detect deceptive or manipulative persons or teachings.
32. Through careful study, clarify ideas for learners.
33. Share a meal with someone while discussing his or her relationship with the Lord.
34. Work with people who suffer physical, mental, or emotional problems.
35. Give when confronted with financial needs for God's kingdom.
36. Speak out on spiritual insights from the Scriptures relating to people.
37. Be instrumental in leading others to believe in Christ as their Savior.
38. Lead and direct others toward goals.
39. Take responsibility and help a Christian being led astray.
40. Make effective plans to accomplish goals.
41. Rapidly meeting the need of others for help.

42. Making strangers feel at ease.
43. Trust God to come through when things seem impossible.
44. Do dishes after a small group breakfast.
45. Look beneath the surface and perceive others' qualities.
46. Communicate the excitement of an idea in a cross-cultural setting.
47. Write notes to praise someone's performance.
48. Detect the spiritual and emotional atmosphere of a group of individuals.
49. Look for new ways to give financially for the Lord's work.
50. Proclaim timely and urgent messages from God's word.
51. End conversations about the Gospel with clear closure.
52. Preside at a meeting to chart a new course.
53. Guide other believers toward spiritual maturity.
54. Coordinate the details necessary to meet a deadline.
55. Helping those in leadership by completing some of their smaller tasks so they can minister.
56. Giving food and lodging to those who need it.
57. Trust the safety rope while rock climbing.
58. Stamp and fill envelopes for the church secretary.
59. Develop an ability to discriminate between good and evil in today's world.
60. Break large concepts into understandable pieces.
61. Spend some time helping in a counseling ministry.
62. Come along side of someone who is healing after the loss of a parent.
63. Maintain a lower standard of living in order to benefit God's work with your financial support.
64. Build up, encourage, and comfort Christians by speaking to them of spiritual things.

65. Share your beliefs in a way that makes them clear and meaningful.
66. Bear the brunt of criticism for a team's failure.
67. Equip people to do ministry.
68. Delegate important tasks to the right people at the right time.
69. Helping someone who can use my abilities.
70. Having people visit my house.
71. Believe that God would heal a family member of cancer.
72. Arrive early Sunday morning to get the coffee going.
73. Interview someone for ministry placement in the church.
74. Discover new ideas to share with others.
75. Help hurting people see God's answers to life's problems.
76. Sense when people are hurting in some way, and feel their pain.
77. Pay rent for a family whose breadwinner has been laid off.
78. Speak out on the moral issues of the day such as abortion, teen sex, and racism.
79. Listen critically and carefully to what someone else believes.
80. Sense when a group is spinning its wheels, and do something about it.
81. Work to help a group bond together.
82. Decide when projects or ministries need to be implemented.
83. Helping others strictly for the need I feel I meet, not because I expect something in return.
84. Welcoming guests and making them feel comfortable and involved.

Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Name: _____

Date: _____

Work Across →

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Love it!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Love it!
Like it	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Like it
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	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	
Love it!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Love it!
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Maybe	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Maybe
Probably Not	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Probably Not
No Way!	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	No Way!

Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Name: _____

Date: _____

Work Across →

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
Love it!	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	Love it!
Like it	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	Like it
Maybe	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	Maybe
Probably Not	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Probably Not
No Way!	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	No Way!

	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
Love it!	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	Love it!
Like it	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	Like it
Maybe	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	Maybe
Probably Not	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Probably Not
No Way!	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	No Way!

	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	
Love it!	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	Love it!
Like it	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	Like it
Maybe	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	Maybe
Probably Not	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Probably Not
No Way!	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	No Way!

	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	
Love it!	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	Love it!
Like it	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	Like it
Maybe	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	Maybe
Probably Not	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Probably Not
No Way!	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	No Way!

	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	
Love it!	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	Love it!
Like it	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	Like it
Maybe	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	Maybe
Probably Not	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Probably Not
No Way!	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	No Way!

	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	
Love it!	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	Love it!
Like it	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	Like it
Maybe	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	Maybe
Probably Not	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Probably Not
No Way!	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	No Way!

Total:														
	Faith	Service	Discernment	Teacher	Exhortation	Mercy	Giving	Prophet	Evangelism	Leadership	Shepherd	Administration	Helps	Hospitality

Tell Me More

Now that you have completed and scored the Spiritual Gifts Inventory, you probably have noticed some areas of strength. The top three scores are the ones you should pay attention to, regardless of your overall numerical scores. Some people like everything and have record high numbers on all of them, while others do not score above 10 on any column. Remember, this inventory is meant to be a guide to help you discover your spiritual gift(s). It is meant to point you in a direction to begin utilizing your possible gift(s). One of the best ways to discover your spiritual gift(s) is simply ministering to others in a variety of situations. The fruitfulness that results will help you know what your gift(s) are. Or, to put it even more simply, just think about how you can best love the people in this church. That should give you great help in discovering your gift(s).

This inventory is not 100% accurate. The only way in which you will discover which gift(s) God has given you is through using it/them. Experiencing fruitfulness and fulfillment when you exercise a specific gift could be a good indication that it is a God-given spiritual gift. Remember, discovery is a process!

A Listing of the Spiritual Gifts on the Inventory

Remember, spiritual gifts are all God-given and God-enabled for building up the church.

- 1. Administration:** The divine enablement to execute the plans of leadership by managing people, resources, and time for ministry. It is a special ability to plan and execute procedures that increase the church's organizational effectiveness. (*Titus 1:5 and 1 Timothy 5:4*)
- 2. Discernment:** The divine enablement to distinguish truth from error and perceive deception based on a teaching's accordance with God's Word. (*James 3:13-18 and 1 John 4:1-6*)
- 3. Exhortation:** The divine enablement to give support and encouragement to those who are struggling. It also could involve the capacity to stimulate faith and promote growth and Christian maturity in others. (*1Thess. 5:11, Acts 11:23-24, and Acts 14:22*)
- 4. Evangelism:** The divine enablement to communicate the good news of Jesus Christ to unbelievers in a positive manner. It also involves the ability to sense opportunities to share Christ and lead people to respond in saving faith. (*Acts 8:26-40*)
- 5. Faith:** The divine enablement to trust God for what cannot be *seen*, and to act on God's promises, regardless of what circumstances indicate. (*Romans 4:18-21*)
- 6. Giving:** The divine enablement to cheerfully and generously contribute material resources and/or money beyond the tithe so that the church may grow and be strengthened. (*2 Cor. 8:1-5*)

7. **Helps:** The divine enablement to invest time and talents into lives of other Christians, thus freeing them to be more effective in their ministries. (*Acts 20:34 - 35; Luke 8:1 - 3; Numbers 11:16 - 17*)
8. **Hospitality:** The divine enablement to generously and cheerfully open one's home for food and lodging to others in such a way as to minister spiritually to them. (*Hebrews 13:2; Romans 12:13; Romans 12:10*)
9. **Leadership:** The divine enablement to instill vision, to motivate, and to direct people to accomplish the work of the ministry. (*Hebrews 13:7 and 17*)
10. **Mercy:** The divine enablement to detect hurt and sympathize with those who are suffering. The ability to provide compassionate and cheerful support to those who experience crisis or pain. (*Luke 10:30-37*)
10. **Prophecy:** The divine enablement to proclaim and apply God's truth and expose sin. The ability to proclaim and apply God's truth so that believers may be edified, encouraged, and consoled and non-believers can be convicted. Prophets also reveal unrighteous motives and actions in others. (*1 Cor. 14:3-5*)
11. **Service:** The divine enablement to take the initiative to meet the practical and physical needs of others, freeing them to fulfill their own callings. (*Acts 6:1-7*)
12. **Shepherding:** The divine enablement to guide, care for, and nurture individuals or groups in the church as they grow in their faith. It also involves the capacity to assume responsibility for their welfare. (*1 Peter 5:1-11*)
13. **Teaching:** The divine enablement to understand, clearly explain, and apply the Word of God to the lives of God's people. It also could involve the ability to equip and train other believers for ministry. (*Romans 12:6-8, Eph. 4:11-12 and Titus 3:1-2*)

**For further definitions of Spiritual Gifts,
please refer to the Appendix beginning on page 40.**

Let's Talk About It

1. Which of the descriptions on pages 15 & 16 might have been unclear or hard to understand? When you consider the gifts can you think of a particular individual for each of the gifts? Comment. What did it look like in his or her life?

2. Maybe this study has reminded you of God's gift to you. What has hindered you from serving in your giftedness in the past? How could the community group encourage you or help provide opportunities for you to use your gift?

3. Have you ever served and felt "a perfect fit?" What have you experienced at such times? What have others commented? Have you ever served outside of your gift? What happened?

4. In considering the various gifts, could you foresee possible tension between the exercise of two gifts, side-by-side? For example, someone gifted in mercy and another in prophecy helping a street person? How can understanding and appreciating the spiritual gifts help us to deal with possible tension?

Lesson

Two

Heart

Identifying...

Your Heart's desires

Knowing your spiritual gift(s) is a good place to start in learning where to serve others, but there is another step you will want to determine. We call it "heart". Just because you have a certain spiritual gift does not mean that you will be fulfilled anywhere you exercise that gift. You probably also have a God-given burden or desire to work with certain groups of people. Or, you may enjoy working in certain arenas such as street ministry, in prisons or in food prep. The local church body provides countless opportunities both within and without. For some, working in the nursery with babies makes one's heart race for joy. For others, it makes one's heart race with anxiety. Both love people, but they are not drawn to the same age group. The same is true for junior high students or singles or young marrieds.

Monitoring *Your* Heart Rate

We at Grace Community Church want to help you identify what makes your heart sing. The assumption that God's will for your life must be something miserable is an absolute misconception. Because God purposely gave you inborn interests, your emotional heartbeat reveals a very important key to understanding God's design and intention for your life. Your specific passions are part of God's way of directing you to where you can best use your spiritual gifts. In other words, your spiritual gift is what you are to do and your heart tells you where you are to use it.

What areas/arenas do you like and/or whom do you enjoy most? Knowing that you will be serving people in an area or in a ministry that energizes you will cause you to enjoy your ministry and protect you from burnout. As you consider your spiritual gift(s), identify in what arena you might want to begin serving.

What has God placed on *your* heart?
What is it that makes it sing?

Spiritual gifts are like the following pencil example. A pencil is a pencil. Each person will pick it up and use it differently. If someone handed you a pencil, you might start working with financial figures, someone else would draw a beautiful nature scene. It is the same with a spiritual gift. You have spiritual gift(s), and now you need to determine what to do with it. Your God-given heart and passions will help you decide your arena(s) of opportunity.

I Have a Heart For:

- | | | | |
|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> women's ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> helping needy | <input type="checkbox"/> internationals | <input type="checkbox"/> families |
| <input type="checkbox"/> welcoming/ greeting | <input type="checkbox"/> construction | <input type="checkbox"/> adults | <input type="checkbox"/> hospitality |
| <input type="checkbox"/> discipleship | <input type="checkbox"/> counseling | <input type="checkbox"/> cleaning | <input type="checkbox"/> specials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> new Christians | <input type="checkbox"/> prayer | <input type="checkbox"/> student ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> graphics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> senior citizens | <input type="checkbox"/> food preparation | <input type="checkbox"/> nonbelievers | <input type="checkbox"/> parenting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> missions | <input type="checkbox"/> service projects | <input type="checkbox"/> kids | <input type="checkbox"/> games |
| <input type="checkbox"/> administration | <input type="checkbox"/> elderly | <input type="checkbox"/> singles | <input type="checkbox"/> helping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> men's ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> family issues | <input type="checkbox"/> teaching | <input type="checkbox"/> finance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> single parents | <input type="checkbox"/> inner city | <input type="checkbox"/> marriage | <input type="checkbox"/> widows |
| <input type="checkbox"/> evangelism | <input type="checkbox"/> parking | <input type="checkbox"/> sports | <input type="checkbox"/> mercy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> prison ministry | <input type="checkbox"/> the arts | <input type="checkbox"/> handicapped | <input type="checkbox"/> college |
| <input type="checkbox"/> racial reconciliation | <input type="checkbox"/> other (list your heart's desire) | | |

These God-given motivations serve as an internal guidance system for your life. They help determine your interests and what will bring you the most satisfaction and fulfillment. They also motivate you to pursue certain activities, subjects, and environments.

We want you to come to Grace Community Church each week excited about who you will be with and what you will be doing.

Heart Questions: Let's Talk About It

1. Do you prefer to work "behind the scenes" or up front?
2. I am attracted to and have the greatest concern for ... (which listings on the previous page, for example: discipling, teaching, giving, serving, administration, etc.)
3. I have a particular burden or vision for _____. More than this thinking of _____ makes me pound the table or weep! This is what I'd like to see happen.
4. What opportunities has the Lord provided for you to pursue the passion and burden He has placed upon your heart? What have you experienced?
5. How are you implementing your passion? What is needed to begin or improve your ministry?

Lesson Three

Abilities

Recognizing... Your Abilities

**We need to understand our abilities,
because all that we have and all that we are,
needs to be used for the GLORY OF GOD.**

You are good at a number of things. Yet, many times we take those abilities for granted. Clarification of our abilities and vocational skills is helpful. We need to stop and reflect on what we do well. However, we must remember that ability does not hold the same priority as spiritual gifting does for the Christian. Many times in churches we ask people what abilities they have and then place them in a ministry with the emphasis being on their natural abilities.

For example, if we ask Jack: "What are some abilities you have?" Jack responds, "I am great at carpentry work!" The church has a tendency to place Jack on the building and grounds team. What happens when this carpenter has a spiritual gift of teaching, and has a heart and passion for children? If we focus only on ability, we bypass the level at which he could be fruitful and fulfilled. Abilities **do** matter, but they need to be kept in perspective.

In the following listing, choose the abilities that best describe you. Rank your top 5, with 1 being the greatest.

I Feel I have the Ability To ...

- ___ **Design/ develop:** to make something out of nothing, getting something started from scratch
- ___ **Pioneer:** to test and try new concepts, not afraid to risk failure
- ___ **Organize:** to bring order out of chaos, organizing something that is already started
- ___ **Perform:** to be on stage and receive attention from others; being in the limelight
- ___ **Serve/ help:** to assist others in their responsibility; enjoy helping others succeed
- ___ **Improve:** to make things better, taking something someone else has designed and improving it
- ___ **Repair:** to fix what is broken or change what is out of date; to restore, maintain
- ___ **Lead/ Be in charge:** to lead the way; oversee and supervise; enjoy determining how things will be done

- ___ **Persevere:** to see things to completion; enjoy persisting until it is finished
- ___ **Follow the rules:** to operate by policies and procedures, to enjoy meeting the expectations of a group/ boss.
- ___ **Entertaining:** to perform, act, dance, speak
- ___ **Music:** to sing or play an instrument (specify) _____
- ___ **Recruiting:** to enlist and motivate people to get involved
- ___ **Interviewing:** to discover what others are really like
- ___ **Researching:** to read, gather information, collect data
- ___ **Artistic:** to conceptualize, picture, draw, paint, photograph, or make renderings
- ___ **Graphics:** to lay out, design, create visual displays or banners
- ___ **Planning:** to formulate strategies, design and organize programs and events
- ___ **Managing:** to supervise people to accomplish a task or event and coordinate the details involved
- ___ **Evaluating:** to analyze data and draw conclusions
- ___ **Hospitality:** to welcome others and make them feel accepted, relaxed and comfortable
- ___ **Computer:** to do data entry, word processing, graphics layout, MIS experience (specify) _____
- ___ **Counseling:** to listen, encourage and guide with sensitivity
- ___ **Teaching:** to explain, train, demonstrate, tutor
- ___ **Writing:** to write newsletters, brochures, articles, letters, and books
- ___ **Editing:** to proofread or rewrite
- ___ **Promoting:** to advertise or promote events and activities
- ___ **Feeding:** to prepare meals for small or large groups
- ___ **Recall:** to remember or recall names, face, and/or information
- ___ **Mechanics:** to operate equipment, tools or machinery

- _____ **Resourceful:** to search out and find inexpensive materials or resources needed
- _____ **Counting:** to work with numbers, data, or money
- _____ **Classifying:** to systematize and file books, data, records, and materials so they can be retrieved easily
- _____ **Welcoming:** to greet others, develop rapport, help others to feel relaxed and included
- _____ **Composing:** to write music or lyrics
- _____ **Landscaping:** to do gardening and work with plants
- _____ **Decorating:** to beautify a setting for a special event
- _____ **Public Relations:** to communicate a favorable view to the public, to handle complaints with care and courtesy
- _____ **Other:** what have we omitted that you feel is an ability or abilities you have?

A Look at My Abilities

I have experience in the following jobs and skills...

Other specialized abilities, which are not listed that I feel I have are (i.e. marketing, computers, graphics, etc.)...

I feel my strongest natural ability is...

“Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” 1 Corinthians 10:31

Abilities: Let's Talk About It

1. Can you think of circumstances when your abilities were not recognized? How did you deal with your feelings?

2. Paul made many amazing statements; this is one of them, **1 Corinthians 15:9** *“For I am the least of the apostles, who am not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.*

Paul enjoyed a much-blessed ministry, but he did not take the credit, even though he gave himself wholeheartedly to it. How have you struggled with the tension between a blessed ministry and that same ministry being the source of your sense of well-being with the Lord?

3. How has the Lord combined your abilities with those of others to produce something much greater than you had expected?

Personality

Learning More About Your Personality

God created each of us with a unique personality. That personality affects the way we respond to the world around us, as well as the way in which we deal with it. There is no wrong or right personality; we are all simply different. We have different preferences in how we relate to other people.

When you are using your own preferred methods and ways of doing things, you are generally able to perform at your best, feel more confident, relaxed and energetic. Serving in a ministry that is consistent with your personality is important. To demonstrate this, we have included a Temperament Evaluation Questionnaire to assess your characteristics.

This evaluation is designed to assist you in identifying your temperament or personality strengths and weaknesses as they specifically relate to ministry and service in the local church. It is not designed to put you into a box or a mold, but rather to enable you to understand why you are motivated the way you are and what some of the accompanying weaknesses might naturally be. In turn, you can use this information to assist in finding the ministry or service area that best utilizes your unique strengths.

On the next page, you will find groupings of four unrelated personality characteristics which may or may not describe you as an individual. Each grouping gives either four positive or four negative characteristics. Rank each characteristic in a particular grouping, whether positive or negative from 1 to 4 (one describing you the least and 4 describing you the most) out of those four items.

Temperament Evaluation Questionnaire

For each group of characteristics given below, rank each in the group from the one that describes you most (give a "4") to the one that describes you least (give a "1").

Animated	_____	Undisciplined	_____	Enthusiastic	_____
Harmonious	_____	Fearful	_____	Long-Suffering	_____
Precise	_____	Moody	_____	Dedicated	_____
Self-reliant	_____	Pushy	_____	Convincing	_____

Impulsive	_____	Liked	_____	Forgetful	_____
Unwilling	_____	Contented	_____	Indifferent	_____
Hyper-Sensitive	_____	Tender	_____	Pessimistic	_____
Undiplomatic	_____	Mover	_____	Unyielding	_____

Bubbly	_____	Disorderly	_____	Amusing	_____
Amicable	_____	Apathetic	_____	Constant	_____
Detailed	_____	Self-Absorbed	_____	Devoted	_____
Enterprising	_____	Overbearing	_____	Determined	_____

Disorganized	_____	Spontaneous	_____	Self-promoting	_____
Lazy	_____	Dry Humor	_____	Indecisive	_____
Critical	_____	Thinker	_____	Unforgiving	_____
Impatient	_____	Productive	_____	Proud	_____

Inspiring	_____	Redundant	_____	Congenial	_____
Arbitrator	_____	Slow	_____	Balanced	_____
Persevering	_____	Solitary	_____	Systematic	_____
Self-sufficient	_____	Impetuous	_____	Daring	_____

Interfering	_____	Encouraging	_____	Unpredictable	_____
Unenthusiastic	_____	Subdued	_____	Anxious	_____
Self-Conscious	_____	Sympathetic	_____	Particular	_____
Manipulative	_____	Tenacious	_____	Combative	_____

Temperament Evaluation Analysis

Bring totals across from the three columns on the preceding page and write the totals in the spaces below:

Add up all the first lines and place the total score on the first line below. Do the same with the second, third and fourth lines. This will give you a score for each of the temperament types

_____ Sanguine
_____ Phlegmatic
_____ Melancholy
_____ Choleric

On the following two pages, some generalized strengths and weaknesses are listed for each of the temperament types. Look primarily at the temperament types on which you scored the highest and second highest. As always, keep in mind that these are not designed to “stereotype” you or put you into a box but merely to help you understand what may be your strengths and weaknesses as they relate to ministry and service.

Sanguine

This personality is predominantly characterized as being optimistic, extroverted, talkative, energetic, and emotionally expressive.

In General

Strengths

- *Magnetic personality*
- *Sees humor in things*
- *Pleasant & positive*
- *Expresses emotions easily*
- *Lives for today*
- *Doesn't stay angry for long*
- *Spontaneous and fun*
- *Enjoys being around people*
- *Friendly & outgoing*

Weaknesses

- *Emotionally changeable*
- *May be dominant in discussions*
- *Easily influenced by others*
- *Prone to lack of discipline*
- *Not naturally organized*
- *Lack of follow-through*
- *More idealistic than practical*

In Ministry

Strengths

- *Quickly volunteers for service*
- *Motivates others to get involved*
- *Enjoys being in front of people*
- *Contagious enthusiasm for projects*
- *Meets new people easily*
- *Creative in planning activities*

Weaknesses

- *Volunteers for more than can do*
- *Doesn't always stay on schedule*
- *May be self-centered & egotistical*
- *Easily tempted*
- *Prone to ministry "burn-out"*

Phlegmatic

This personality is predominantly characterized as being stable, easy-going, consistent, and quiet.

In General

Strengths

- *Takes things in stride*
- *Calm and relaxed*
- *Often known for dry wit*
- *Content with life*
- *Gets along well with others*
- *Friendly and kind*
- *Neat and efficient*
- *Finds effective solutions*
- *Good mediator*

Weaknesses

- *Lack of motivation*
- *Avoids too much work*
- *Self-protective*
- *Prone to indecisiveness*
- *Looks for the easy way out*
- *Tends toward procrastination*

In Ministry

Strengths

- *Not easily disturbed*
- *Competent and stable*
- *Peacemaker*
- *Stays calm under pressure*
- *Listens well to others*
- *Expresses concern for others*
- *Able to accept trials as well as blessings*

Weaknesses

- *Keeps true emotions hidden from others*
- *Avoids confrontation even when necessary*
- *Slow to volunteer*
- *Would rather watch than participate*

Melancholy

This personality is predominantly characterized as being sensitive, creative, a thinker, a perfectionist, and self-sacrificing.

In General

Strengths

- *Emotionally responsive*
- *High standards of excellence*
- *Good problem-solving abilities*
- *Faithful friend*
- *Dependable*
- *Knows limitations*
- *Creative and talented*
- *Practical and thrifty*
- *Won't settle for being "average"*
- *Appreciates the "little things"*

Weaknesses

- *Prone to mood swings*
- *Focuses inward instead of outward*
- *Easily offended or hurt*
- *Prone to depression and negativism*
- *Critical and perfectionistic*
- *Hesitant to make new commitments*
- *Bothered by insignificant details*

In Ministry

Strengths

- *Cares deeply about people*
- *Stays on schedule*
- *Finishes projects*
- *Willing to sacrifice for what is important*
- *In tune to others' needs*
- *Often gifted in music or creative arts*
- *Good planner and organizer*
- *Remembers important details*

Weaknesses

- *Sees potential problems*
- *Subject to fear and worry*
- *Difficulty in making new friends*
- *May be intolerant of others*
- *Doesn't enjoy being "up front"*

Choleric

This personality is predominantly characterized as being a leader, a doer, and an extrovert.

In General

Strengths

- *Natural leader*
- *Makes decisions easily*
- *Sticks to the job*
- *Confident and self-reliant*
- *Excels under pressure*
- *Organized and "together"*
- *Thrives on new challenges*
- *Sets goals and priorities*

Weaknesses

- *Insists on own way*
- *Difficulty expressing emotions*
- *May be insensitive to others*
- *Uncompassionate*
- *Loses temper quickly*
- *Prone to dominate others*

In Ministry

Strengths

- *Sees the "big picture"*
- *Quickly motivated to action*
- *Follows through on projects*
- *Not easily swayed from goals*
- *Organized and practical*
- *Delegates to others*
- *Accepts leadership responsibilities*

Weaknesses

- *Difficulty depending on Christ*
- *May put goals before people*
- *Subject to bitterness*
- *May "run over" others' feelings*
- *Has little need for other people*

Temperament Combinations

Most people will find themselves a close combination of two of the other personality types. These combinations are discussed below. (It is also possible that an individual be a blend of three or all of the personality types, and distinctions may blur as the weaknesses are brought under the control of the Holy Spirit.)

Sanguine-Choleric/Choleric-Sanguine

This individual is extremely outgoing and a natural leader and performer. He seems practically invincible as he not only easily volunteers for projects, but sees them through to the completion. He may have difficulty depending on the Lord as he is naturally self-sufficient. He may at times be insensitive to others because of seeing his own agenda as the most important.

Sanguine-Melancholy/Melancholy-Sanguine

This individual is characterized by emotions. He is either extremely high or low at any given time. He is very expressive of his own feelings and also sensitive to the feelings of others. He is effective in ministry to people, and is very creative in his approach to accomplishing tasks. He may become easily depressed if things don't go the way he would like for them to. This personality combination is quite rare, as many of the characteristics of these two types are mutually exclusive.

Sanguine-Phlegmatic/Phlegmatic-Sanguine

This individual is a delight and pleasure to be around. He is comfortable around people and makes them feel comfortable. He is outgoing and easy going at the same time. He has a high level of tolerance for others, and his good sense of humor helps keep things in perspective. His greatest weakness is a lack of follow-through. While he may volunteer easily for projects, he may have difficulty getting the job done.

Choleric-Melancholy/Melancholy-Choleric

This individual is highly motivated and very productive. He not only sets goals but stays on schedule and sees them through to their desired end. He is likely to be a talented individual, and is not inhibited to use his God-given talents in the service of the Lord. He may be self-centered and more concerned with his own agenda than the "big picture." He may be hesitant to make big commitments, but will sacrifice whatever is necessary to accomplish the things he has committed to.

Choleric-Phlegmatic/Phlegmatic-Choleric

This individual makes a good leader, as he is not easily swayed by others. He is steady and dependable. He is likely to have strong organizational and administrative abilities. He exhibits the characteristics of being confident, calm, and easy going. He gets things done, although he often looks for the easiest way. He is friendly, but unemotional. He may have little tolerance for things that he feels are "purely drama or emotional hype."

Melancholy-Phlegmatic/Phlegmatic-Melancholy

This individual prefers to work "behind the scenes" rather than in front of people. He is a faithful friend and thrives on serving others. He may tend to be pessimistic, and doesn't volunteer easily for new projects. He is sensitive to others, and is effective especially in one-on-one ministries to others. He has a great deal of compassion and concern for others. He thinks before he speaks and acts, and may tend to stay in the background rather than getting involved in visible leadership positions.

Lesson

Four

Experiences

Reflecting on... Your Experiences

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

Each of us has a unique set of life experiences. We have had different jobs, lived in different areas of the U.S. and around the world, come from various family backgrounds, and become Christians in unique ways and at different ages. The list could go on and on.

So much of our readiness to serve others grows out of a wise response to the life experiences that have been sovereignly woven into our past. What we would like to do in this section is have you reflect on some specific areas of your life experiences, especially spiritual experiences and difficult times in your life. Some memories may bring a smile to your face; other memories may bring pain. It is amazing to think that God can and does use all of them to bring glory to Himself. In addition, we can use our life experiences to encourage others.

My Spiritual Inventory

This is where I would place myself spiritually at this point in my life:

- Lack of motivation, struggling in prayer and time in the Word
- Spiritual rollercoaster of ups and downs with the Lord
- Growing steadily, stable in my relationship with the Lord
- Consistent walk with the Lord over an extended period of time; desire to guide others in a deeper understanding of what it means to walk personally with Jesus Christ

Experiences that have shaped your life:

Describe how and when you became a Christian...

Describe several positive experiences...

Describe several difficult and even painful events...

1. How have both positive and painful experiences made you who you are today?
2. How have you struggled to accept certain events or persons?
3. Knowing that difficult times are sometimes the best schoolroom, what have you learned that may help others?

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of comfort; who comforts us in all our affliction so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any affliction with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God.”

Conclusion

What now? In Conclusion, Let's Talk About It

The goal of this study is to help you discover or even rediscover your unique gifting and calling. Yet God's gifts while unique to you are rarely to be used uniquely, that is in isolation. Your gifts combined with those of other believers yield blessing and energy far beyond what any one person could accomplish on his own. Therefore, the following questions will focus our attention as a group to consider how we might strengthen each other and work within our city to give hope where there is none, to give training where there is little vision, to give material help where there is poverty and to shine His light where there is darkness.

1. How have you seen _____ (spiritual gifts, heart's desire, abilities, personality, or experience) expressed in other group members as you have gotten to know each other? How can each of us encourage each other in the way God has specifically equipped each of us?

2. Think creatively here: how might the unique _____ (giftings, heart passions, abilities, personalities, or experiences) be used by God in the in-reach ministry within our group and within our church?

3. How might God use the unique _____ (giftings, heart passions, abilities, personalities, or experiences) to help our group serve together as his tools, his hands and feet to reach out to our community, city, nation and world with the hope of His Gospel?

4. As a group, pray together for God to express his creativity as we exercise these special ways that he has equipped us to serve Him, fellow believers and the world beyond with the Love of God.

Appendix

Spiritual Gifts

The following definitions are from Redeemer Presbyterian Church's *Fellowship Group Handbook*. You may use them as additional resources for defining spiritual gifts.

Summary of Spiritual Gifts

These gifts are described in detail on the following pages.