

GROW Lesson 1: Spiritual Gifts



Q: How would you describe spiritual gifts? Did you already have an idea of what your spiritual gifts were? If you've already taken the spiritual gift inventory, hopefully you have an idea about how God has blessed you with some spiritual gifts to offer to His Church. **Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-31** together. We are the body of Christ, connected and dependent upon one another.

Q: What do you think that Paul means when he describes “weaker” or “unpresentable” parts of the body? We are equal in value before God, but we all have different abilities and capacities - physically, mentally, and spiritually. The family of God must accept these differences and embrace them instead of shaming others who might not seem to have it all together or lifting others up on a pedestal for the abilities that they were given by God. Every person is important and plays a role in the bigger picture. Try to come up with examples of people who might be considered weaker or unpresentable. How can we treat others with “modesty”?

Q: What happens when someone in the church chooses not to use their spiritual gifts? It's not that everything falls apart in God's plan if we fail to use our gifts. He knows the beginning from the end and nothing comes to Him as a surprise. On the other hand, if we choose to not use our gifts, the church is not as strong as it could be; it cannot minister as well without you. It is a privilege and also an important role that each of us plays in the bigger picture of God's plan. God has created each of us to minister to certain people, to certain kinds of people, and in a way that only we can; otherwise they will miss out on what you might have to offer. God also misses out on receiving the glory from your life (**see 1 Peter 4:10-11**).

Q: What are your greatest passions and desires? What makes your heart rate jump? Read 2 Corinthians 5:14-15. The answer to this question will be different for each person, but it will be interesting to get a feel for the different passions within your group. Perhaps some people will have similar desires and might connect through it. The passions that we are looking for relate to the needs of other people and not so much our own personal needs or desires. How does your heart wish to help others who are in need? What topics do you really like to talk about? Who does God want you to serve?

Q: Are you already serving in a ministry at the church? Do you find it fulfilling? Why or why not? Consider **Colossians 3:23-24**. If you're already plugged in to serving, that's great! If not, what is holding you back? If you are not able to serve in a ministry at this time, how can you use your life and schedule to be a blessing to others? You can be a blessing without leaving your home! Find a way to use your gifts for the glory of God. Give others the opportunity to share their experience and encourage one another to live out your passions in service to God's kingdom. If someone is not finding serving to be fulfilling, then perhaps they should consider finding a place to serve that better fits their gifts and passions.

Q: If you could describe the perfect ministry for your gifts and passions, what would it look like?

If we can identify the kind of people God wants us to minister to and how He has enabled us to minister, we should be able to put together some idea of what the ideal ministry might look like. It may not currently exist, but perhaps God might want you to start something new! This is taking the Who and the What, and bringing them together.

Q: What would it take to create or connect to this ideal ministry for you? How could you get started? Read Galatians 6:9.

You might want to talk to a pastor or a ministry team leader to help you move forward with this. If you don't know what your ideal ministry might look like, seek some counsel from someone who can help you to connect the dots. Once you have an idea, perhaps you could write down a plan and share it with some friends. Who knows, maybe they'll want to join you in helping you achieve your goals?

Q: How have your passions changed over time? Do you recognize why or how this changed?

Some people may have been around long enough to see their passions change. For others, maybe their passion has only grown stronger over time. Sometimes the seasons of life will shift our interests and our passions and take us in a new direction. These transitions might be because our kids have grown up, or we've had a major life change, or perhaps an unexpected challenge that redirects our focus. Sometimes our passions fade or wane, but when this happens we should discern the difference between discouragement and the normal changes of life. Discouragement can also rob our passion, but we should fight off discouragement so that God's plans are not hindered.

Note to Leaders: If you find that you have extra time, feel free to ask more questions. For example, "What do you hope to get out of this study?" Or "How do you see God working in your heart at this time?" "How has God's Word brought you strength as you have gone through difficult challenges?"

Class Assignment: For the next six weeks, consider the spiritual gifts and passions that God has given to you and how He has uniquely prepared you to do His will. If you don't already have a ministry that you serve on a regular basis, pray about getting connected to a place where you can both bless others and be blessed in return! Talk to your pastor or a ministry leader about your next steps. Plan to get your feet wet in ministry at church and perhaps explore some other ideas as well.

For this next week, pray about how God might want to use your spiritual gifts (from the survey above) in some way to bless your church.

Getting started in ministry is a big step for some people. Try to encourage them not to let excuses get in the way of what God wants them to do. If they are lacking in direction, do what you can to make some observations about their gifts and their life to lead them to some next steps for discussion. If people aren't

ready to serve in ministry, they may need to get connected to a group/ministry where they can heal and equip themselves for the plans that God has down the road.

Memory Verse (to memorize over 6 weeks): I challenge you to get EVERYONE in your group to memorize this verse! Be the first to memorize it as a leader and set the bar high enough that people will join you in the challenge. This verse reminds us that our abilities are a gift to be used to serve others, not to boost our own ego or to build our own kingdom. To God be the glory! *Soli Deo Gloria*

1 Peter 4:10-11 - *"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms."*

PRAYER REQUESTS: