

LEAD SHEET

REAL CHURCH : Week 5

My Contribution

July 23, 2017

**THIS MONTH'S FAITH SKILL:
SHARE YOUR GRACE STORY**

IF YOU WANT TO KNOW GOD BETTER, TELL OTHER PEOPLE ABOUT HIM!

GETTING STARTED

General Discussion:

- Why does God give us Spiritual Gifts? (*To empower us to serve Him and bring Him glory.*)
- Do you think every believer has at least one Spiritual Gift? (*Yes, see 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 and 1 Peter 4:10.*)
- What happens if we don't use the Spiritual Gifts God gives us? (*Needs go unmet and the Church suffers.*)

DIGGING IN

Let's focus on the difference between talents and Spiritual Gifts. Just because you have an outgoing personality doesn't mean you will be given the gift of evangelism. You may be quiet and shy but that doesn't mean you won't be called to speak in front of people. These gifts are given by God and He will ask us to use them for His Glory.

Last week, we talked about offering our lives to God and to each other. Our conclusion was that we need to give all of ourselves to one another for the benefit of the Church. This includes using the gifts we receive from the Holy Spirit to glorify Jesus Christ.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-20

Discussion Questions:

1. According to this passage, is any body part more important than another? (*Not at all, each one has its place and function.*)

2. Do any of the body parts Paul mentions have the same function? (*No, each serves a specific function within the body.*)

3. What would happen if the body consisted of only one part? (*The body would cease to exist.*)

4. Do these ideas apply to the Church as well? (*Allow for discussion.*)

5. How does bringing in a diverse group of people help the Church grow? (*Diversity provides a larger pool of gifts and talents, which in turn expand the health of the Church.*)

Read 1 Corinthians 12:21-26

Discussion Questions:

1. What is said about the parts of the body that seem weaker? (*We cannot function properly without them.*)

2. What parts of the body seem the weakest to you? (*Allow for discussion.*)

Read Romans 12:3-8

Discussion Questions:

1. On a spiritual level, which Gift would you consider the weakest? (*Allow for discussion.*)

Let's look at each of these Spiritual Gifts in a little more detail:

SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Prophecy

Prophets are truth tellers. They will speak God's message regardless of what the outcome may be. Prophets may be the least liked of all the body parts, because they are only concerned with what God thinks.

Serving

Servants will look for every opportunity to share the Good News through actions. They will find needs and immediately begin to meet them. Servants are usually the first to get to work, and may be the last to speak.

Teaching

Teachers look to bring the Word of God to the people. Teachers will value study and preparation. Teachers want to help others mature in their walk with Christ.

Encouraging

Encouragers lift up individuals and become cheerleaders of the group. Encouragers will take time to write a note of support or thanksgiving, compliment others on the use of their gifts, or affirm the importance of other members within the body.

Giving

Givers are quick to meet needs through the resources God has provided. This may be as easy as giving money to a need, but it also could mean giving time, sharing food, giving resources, and opening up a home.

Leading

Leaders take charge. They will usually be the first to speak and can quickly develop plans of action when a need arises. Leaders are also good at organizing others and making sure that everything runs smoothly.

Showing Mercy

The merciful are those who are looking at the world through a lens of compassion and empathy. This gift is often exhibited in caring for people who would otherwise be forgotten by society. The merciful make sure that the widow, orphan, and weak are always at the forefront of the group's focus.

Discussion Questions: (Continued)

2. Would you consider any of these Gifts to be unneeded by the Church? *(Allow for discussion.)*
3. Although the members have different functions, to whom do they all belong? *(They belong to the Body of Christ.)*
4. What are we to do with the Spiritual Gifts we receive? *(Use them for the benefit of others and to bring glory to God.)*

MAKING IT REAL

A Case Study for Spiritual Gifts

(The following story is designed to help students identify needs for using Spiritual Gifts. Explain that as you slowly read the story, you want them to be aware of the different Spiritual Gifts that could be used to help the woman. Let the students know that most of the Spiritual Gifts will apply at one point or another as the story progresses, so they should listen carefully.)

It is a beautiful Saturday morning and your church has just finished throwing a huge community-wide yard sale. As you begin cleaning up, a tired looking mother, who is cumberosely dragging her three children behind her, approaches you.

Her name is Ann, and she lives in the house at the end of the street. As her children begin to tussle over a ball they have found, she is quick to tell you that her house is in disarray and she is overwhelmed with some repair issues.

On top of that, she mentions that she is behind on her bills, which is why she has turned to yard sales to help alleviate some financial stress.

As Ann continues to talk, she shares that she is recently divorced. Without giving too much detail, you find that she would rather be in a difficult financial situation than be in a relationship with with an abusive man. You can hear the pain in her voice as she tells you it will actually be better for her kids not to know their father.

Ann is perceptive, and after a few surface questions about your own life, she asks rather bluntly, "So, is this a church group or something?" You barely have time to answer when she begins to launch into more of her story. She explains how she attended church off and on when she was little, but in college, she started to wise up a bit. "No offense," she says, "I respect you for your beliefs, but I just struggle to see a good God in a world with so much pain. Plus," she adds, "Our Reverend was creepy. I'm pretty sure he got locked up or something."

You can tell that Ann is very observant towards her neighborhood. “Someone needs to start an after school program for these kids,” she mentions as she points to random children riding their bikes down the street. “They are all struggling in school and most of them are going to get into trouble if they don’t get some guidance.” As she continues to gaze down the street she quietly says, “I’d love to start something, but I don’t have the resources.”

As Ann calls to her children, you notice a tattoo on her arm. It is a circle with four stars around it. “What does that represent?” you ask as her attention draws back to the conversation.

“The stars represent my children,” she replies. You quickly do the math in your head and wonder if she has experienced more loss than she is letting on. After a few more minutes of chatting, you say your goodbyes.

Discussion Questions:

1. Which part of the story jumped out to you? why? (*Allow for discussion.*)
2. How would you use your Spiritual Gift(s) to help Ann? (*Allow for discussion. See examples below.*)

Examples:

- *Servants may focus on repairing Ann’s house.*
- *Givers may want to help with her finances.*
- *Teachers may focus on teaching her more about Jesus.*
- *Leaders may want to start a ministry with her to help neighborhood kids.*
- *Those with mercy may want to help her through divorce and abuse issues.*
- *Encouragers will listen and find ways to lift her up.*
- *Evangelists may want to talk more about her bad church experience.*
- *Prophets may tell her that her overwhelming situation is only helped in Christ.*

CLOSING PRAYER

Pray that each student will use his or her Spiritual Gifts to benefit the Body of Christ.