

2019-9-29



Talk together about the glory of God's kingdom. —Psalm 145:11
Love the Lord your God and **walk** in all his ways. —Joshua 22:5

Questions for Discussion & Application

Triangle Community Church aims to be a “transforming church”. We exist to be used by God as He transforms ordinary people into extraordinary followers of Jesus Christ. TCC believes not only that life-change is possible—but that it is to be expected. Growth is God's will for *all* his people. But transformation **does not** happen by accident. It requires intentional, intelligent action. 1 Timothy 4:7 instructs you to “discipline yourself for the purpose of godliness.” Since “**Talking Points, Walking Points**” is intended both for individual reflection and for group discussion, questions vary in degree of vulnerability required. Generally it is best to begin group discussions with questions which involve less personal disclosure—but don't linger there. Be sure to “dive deep” too! The questions which require the greatest openness and honesty, as well as those in the section entitled “**Digging Deeper in your Daily Quiet Time**”, are perfect for private reflection.

- What from Sunday's message interested you? ...made sense to you? ...confused you?
...intrigued you? ...upset you? ...encouraged you? ...and **why**?
- Is it possible to **abuse** spiritual gifts? If so, how?
Have you ever belonged to a church which did so? Tell us about it. What harmful things happened?
Ever belonged to a church which **deemphasized** spiritual gifts to an unbiblical degree? Tell us about it.
- Read 1 Peter 4:10-11. Peter divides spiritual gifts into two broad categories. What are they?
Do you have a speaking gift or a serving gift? **How** did you conclude that?
When you speak, what must you make sure is the **content** of your speech (v. 11a)?
When you serve, what must you make sure is the **source** of your power (v. 11b)?

Creating "God Space": "God Space" is where cynics, skeptics, and spiritually curious people can safely raise their questions, reservations, & doubts because we have listened well and demonstrated love in practical, authentic ways.

- As an act of service to God and man, list three people you will pray for to take a step closer to God.
- Ask God to increase your awareness of these three friends—notice their likes, dislikes, and needs.
- As a group, brainstorm some "wondering" questions you could ask your friends this week.

Application-Challenge

- Take the spiritual gifts assessment you will receive by e-mail.
- Prayerfully consider how you can use your gifts here at TCC.

Sermon Summary Key Text: Romans 12:3-8

Many of you have probably taken a personality assessment of some kind—an evaluation of how you are wired, how you respond to various circumstances, what brings you joy and other factors. For the next two weeks we will be taking a look at spiritual gifts—which are not analogous to personality types! Your personality type is formed by some mixture of genetics and environmental factors. That's not the case for your spiritual gift. Your spiritual gift is God placing within you a certain passion, aptitude, or attitude that He wants to use to advance His Kingdom on earth. You weren't born with spiritual gifts; the Spirit of God gives them to us when we place our trust in Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:1, 4). There's only one source of spiritual gifts. It's not up to genetics, it's not up to environmental factors, it's only the Spirit of God making his home in our soul.

There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. Some people are really handy at fixing things, others are gifted to counsel and comfort, but each manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good (1 Corinthians 12:7). Here's where our spiritual gifts really separate themselves from personality assessments... spiritual gifts were given for a purpose. And not just an inward purpose, but an outward one: to build up the Kingdom of God. Your individual gift wasn't given simply so that you can know yourself better, it was given for you to put to work for the good of the world around you.

There are multiple lists of spiritual gifts found in the New Testament. For the purpose of this series, we are going to focus on the list found in Romans 12:3-8. There's no hierarchy of gifts in God's view. Each gift is equally necessary for the building of the Kingdom. He uses the illustration of the human body, made up of various parts to show us how our variety of gifts comes together to form something more useful than the sum of the parts. Each part depends upon the other parts working in unison to function at full capacity. And so it is with the body of Christ. God has placed his Spirit in you for a purpose. The Spirit manifests itself in different ways in each of us, but however you have been gifted, God's number one instruction is to put that gift to use, serving the Lord and His people. Let's do a quick walk through each one to make sure that we understand it and potentially can identify if it's a gift we have.

Prophecy. A prophet is not a Christian version of a fortune teller. At this stage in redemptive history, prophets are not communicating new revelation from the Lord. They hold forth the truth that God has already communicated. Christians with the prophetic gifting aren't afraid to hold their Christian neighbors to biblical ways of living, applying the law of sowing and reaping within a given context. Prophets have a deep concern that the word of God is being taught correctly and that individuals are applying it as well.

Serving. Do you typically accept whatever task or job is given to you? Are you unafraid to get your hands dirty? Are you passionate about serving in areas that don't necessarily get a lot of recognition? Of course none of these gifts are meant to be used to gain admiration or praise, but those with the gift of serving are especially satisfied to serve with no spotlight.

Teaching. Those with the gift of teaching don't just have a lot of knowledge; they're able to help others become more knowledgeable about the things of God. Whether in an individual, small group, or large group context, children, students or adults, the teacher's role is to make seemingly complex passages, themes, or doctrines simple. Good teachers discern the needs of those who will hear their teaching and deliver it appropriately.

Encouraging. The encourager is more than just a cheerleader, picking us up and making us feel better. Biblical encouragement runs much deeper than that and, like teaching, is always tied to biblical truth. They never cheer you down paths that lead to ruin; they step in and help you turn toward God. They are loving coaches who step in to show you how to move forward in your relationship with the Lord.

Giving. Those with the gift of giving aren't limited to those who make, and give, a lot of money. They are people who see material needs around them and generously use whatever God has given them to meet those needs. They don't view giving as burdensome, but rather fulfilling, as they give their time, talent or treasure to meet the needs of others.

Leading. Biblical leadership is not like the world, where one's own success and image most important. And don't just think about the person out in front of the organization—biblical leaders don't seek their own glory or try to put attention on themselves. Their goal is to guide attention towards Christ and direct all glory to Him. They are skilled in inspiring others to action (1 Peter 5:2-3). Servant leaders believe that no task is beneath them and care more about the people on the team than the tasks at hand.

Mercy. Those with the gift are especially adept at seeing the pain and brokenness in people's lives and walking alongside them as they grieve, sensitive to others' feelings and circumstances. Christians who receive the gift of mercy move towards those who are suffering, while many of us would retreat. When some of us would pass judgment, those with the gift of mercy are moved to compassion. The gift of mercy is God's Spirit enabling you to see people like God sees them and feel for them what God feels.

Spiritual gifts are **not** to help us get more in touch with ourselves. They are gifts God has given us to move us to **action**. The Bible is clear: **whatever your gift is, use it!**

Digging Deeper in Your Daily Quiet Time

"Five Question Bible Study" (see page below) is a simple way to study any topic. Let's use it to study the fascinating topic of **"spiritual gifts"**...

Monday— 1 Corinthians 12:7 & 14:12 What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

Tuesday— 1 Corinthians 12:4 & 11 Who decides what gift(s) you have?

Wednesday— 1 Corinthians 12:31—13:8 What is "more excellent" than great giftedness?

Thursday— 1 Corinthians 13:11-13 & 14:20 What danger exists with regards to spiritual gifts?

Friday— 1 Corinthians 12:14-26 What is your main "take away" from this passage?

Saturday— ***In preparation for worshipping your risen Lord tomorrow with your church family,*** study 1 Peter 4:7-11.

Bible Text: _____

Date: _____



What idea particularly strikes me from this text? [Note in which verse(s) it is found.]



What question does this text raise in my mind—and how would **this text** answer it?



What about Jesus Christ—his character and/or his redemption—relates to this text?



What action must I take as a result of this text? Be concrete and specific.



With whom will I share what I learned from this text? [and what was their response?]