

“Discover the GEM in You”

I Corinthians 12:4-11

Sermon Series: Recharge – Plug into the Power of the Spirit

Week 5 The Presents of the Holy Spirit

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May 29, 2022

A man was strolling the aisles at the Tucson Gem and Mineral Show when he noticed a blue-violet stone the size and shape of a potato. He looked it over and asked the vendor, "You want \$15 for this?" The seller, realizing the rock wasn't as pretty as others in the bin said, "I'll give it to you for \$10." The buyer was a gem expert. The stone has since been certified as a natural star sapphire, worth thousands, perhaps tens of thousands of dollars. It took a lover of stones to recognize the sapphire's worth. The Lover of your soul can see and uncover the true gem in you.

If Jesus Christ is your Lord and Savior, you already received an incredibly, priceless gift – an abundant relationship with God and eternal life with God. All the diamonds and sapphires on earth cannot purchase that gift for you. It is freely offered to everyone on the planet through the death and resurrection of Jesus. We receive it when we believe and follow Him. Yet our gift-giving God does not stop there. As you follow Jesus you discover He places gifts in you – Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Scripture teaches every Christian, every disciple of Christ, receives one or more Spiritual Gifts from the Lord (Romans 12:6, I Corinthians 12:7, Ephesians 4:7, I Peter 4:10). When do you receive spiritual gifts? When the Holy Spirit comes into your life. How many gifts do you receive? Scripture does not say. It could be one or several.

What is the purpose of Spiritual Gifts? That we know for sure. Spiritual Gifts are the tools to build up the Body of Christ and accomplish God's mission in the world. These gifts help all people love God, grow in grace and share with others. Many ask the question, "What is my purpose?" or "Why on earth am I here...on earth?" You will understand your **purpose** when you understand the kind of **person** you are. What God made you to *BE* determines what He intends you to *DO*. This is the secret of knowing God's will for your life! Discovering your Spiritual Gifts helps you know who you are and why you are here. Using your Spiritual Gifts will bring you great joy. You will finally feel: this is what I was made for. It's surprising, and tragic, that many Christians do not use their Spiritual Gifts. God gives you this incredibly priceless beautiful gem and, you think it's only worth \$10. Why? There are a lot of myths about the gifts.

1. Myth: Only pastors have gifts for ministry. Truth: **Every Believer Has Gifts For Ministry**. Paul says:

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. I Corinthians 12:7

Even though you did not go to seminary, you are in the ministry. God's will is for every Christian to discover and use his or her spiritual gifts. You are a gifted minister, you have a ministry, you have a calling.

2. Myth: Some gifts are more important than others. Truth: **All Gifts Are Equally Important**. Paul describes the Church like a body – the Body of Christ.

In fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but

one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable. I Corinthians 12:18-22

Some feel the more visible gifts are more important. The elder and deacon, the pastor and worship leader are more valuable than the Growth Group leader, the Greeter, the kitchen worker or the clean-up team. The real powerful people are the sound booth techs since they can shut me off. Paul says this thinking is silly. My hand and foot are more visible than my liver and heart but I would not want to go through life without any of them.

3. Myth: I use my gifts on my own. Truth: **Each Gift Depends on All the Others.**

...there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. I Corinthians 12:25-27

The Church is not a club, institution or organization. The Church is an organism – a living, breathing, growing, changing body – the Body of Christ. An institution or a club can still function if only 10-40% of its membership is active. But your body will be in serious trouble if 60-90% of it did not work. Your body needs every part to do its part. So does the Body of Christ. Every member depends on every other member. We cannot afford to have a few people burn out by trying to run everything while the majority feel unneeded, unappreciated and inactive. We cannot leave anyone behind.

4. Myth: Some gifts are miraculous, others are mundane. Truth: **All Gifts Are Miraculous.** In I Corinthians 12:7-11 Paul mentions some pretty miraculous gifts: message of wisdom, message of knowledge, faith, healing, miraculous powers, prophecy, distinguishing between spirits, speaking in tongues or heavenly languages, interpreting tongues or heavenly languages. But in Romans 12:6-8 he speaks about gifts which seem more mundane: serving, teaching, encouraging, contributing, governing, showing mercy. Some people desire the seemingly miraculous gifts. Others are afraid of them. Pentecostal churches emphasize the first group of gifts. Presbyterians, being the “Frozen Chosen” are more comfortable with the quieter ones. When I was in college, I was told by another believer that I was not a complete Christian until I received the gift of tongues. The truth is: all gifts are miraculous.

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. I Corinthians 12:11

All gifts are supernatural and miraculous since they all come from the Holy Spirit. And the Spirit wants each congregation to have all the gifts. If you have the gift of prophecy, tongues or healing don’t hide it. Use it along with all the other gifts.

The Holy Trinity wants to bring out the GEM in you. We want to help you discover and use it.

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.(I Corinthians 12:4-6

Here are three steps which help you discover and use your GEM. The G stands for **GIFT**.

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. (v. 4)

We have a simple, free, easy to use method to discover your Spiritual Gifts. It's called GPS. You can find it on the Woodside website. You may remember from last fall that GPS stands for Gifts, Passions, Story. Your phone GPS uses several satellites to get you to your destination. This spiritual GPS uses these three coordinates to help you find your calling from God. It starts by asking you a series of multiple choice questions to identify your Spiritual **Gifts**. You can see the full list of possible gifts you have but it will mainly focus on your top two or three gifts.

Next it will ask you about your **Passions** – the causes you care about, the type of people you want to help, the ministries and missions which matter to you. You will also find out your APEST – if you are an Apostle, Prophet, Evangelist, Shepherd or Teacher.

Finally there will a few short answer questions about the **Story** of your life. What experiences, positive or negative, shaped you into the person you are today? This review of your life story is the key to finding the calling and purpose God designed uniquely for you. Others may possess the same gifts and passions as you but no one ever lived your story. When we did GPS last fall, many stopped at this point because it took some thought to answer these 6 questions. If that's you, please go back and finish the questions even if you just put one sentence in the box. These Story questions are the key to understanding the calling God created just for you. Above all, please email your answers to woodside@woodside-church.org so we can help you unwrap and use your GPS.

Next, the E stands for **ENERGY**.

There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work (v. 6).

The word “working” in Greek is *energemata* from which we get our word *energy*. Simply stated, God gives you the energy to use your gift. I see many who are burned out doing God's work. This includes pastors. It is tragic. Why do we get burned out? We run on our own steam instead of God's power. How do you access God's power and avoid burnout?

1. Talk to God in Prayer – find out what He wants you to do.
2. Time Out from your ministry – every once in a while take a Sabbath
3. Timothy – Always invite others to do the ministry with you. The Apostle Paul had Timothy. You need a Timothy. Never serve alone.

Every staff member, elder and deacon, every youth leader, teacher, Growth Group leader, kitchen worker, greeter, sound tech, choir member, worship leader and mission worker must find a Timothy. We don't need any Supermen or Wonder Women. We need Teams and Teams need Timothys.

Finally, M stands for **MINISTRY**.

There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. (v. 5)

The Greek word for “service” is *diakonion* which is often translated as deacon or minister. Your ministry is the place where you use your Gifts, Passions and Story. Now your ministry might be here within these walls among God’s people but your ministry could also be beyond these walls in prisons, homeless camps, nursing homes, businesses, schools, soccer fields, government offices. Your ministry might be starting new churches, starting a Microchurch with friends who don’t go to church, launching an environmental clean-up project, fixing up an under resourced urban school.

How do you find your ministry? This is a crucial step because you may have the gift of teaching but your ministry is teaching adults not children. The Passions and Story part of your GPS will help you find your ministry:

1. Ask God: Pray and see what doors He opens, what hungers He gives you.
2. Ask Yourself: What gives me joy and energy? What makes me feel alive?
3. Ask Others: Take GPS and then talk to one of our pastors or staff members. We won’t twist your arm to do a church job. We’ll help you find what God is calling you to do.
4. Try Some Ministries, Stick With What Works

Now you need all three – G. E. M. Imagine knowing your Gift and Ministry but not having the Energy to do it. Or maybe you are energetic and want to do a ministry but it’s not your gift. Perhaps you have the gift and energy but no place to use it. When you have all three, you are living in the sweet spot – exactly where God calls you to be.

Next weekend you have a tremendous opportunity to try out a ministry. Next Sunday is Pentecost – the birthday of the Church. On the first Pentecost, 50 days after the Resurrection, the Holy Spirit fell like fire and wind on the first disciples. It drove them out of the building to do God’s work – to share in word and deed the Good News about Jesus. Next Sunday we will celebrate Pentecost by letting the Spirit drive us out of the building to share in word and deed the Good News about Jesus.

You say, “I can’t serve on Sunday.” We have projects on Saturday, June 4th

- Local Yard Clean Up: Light yard clean up for someone who just got out of the hospital
- ReStore help in the Langhorne store. Proceeds build Habitat for Humanity Houses

You say, “I only have time Sunday morning” – we have projects on Sunday morning in the building: make meals for those who are homebound or homeless, create crafts to go in the Operation Christmas Child shoeboxes distributed around the world. Many of these projects are family friendly and good for all ages.

You say, “I want to go out and make a difference!” We have projects for you.

- Urban Promise: Paint a room in the East Trenton Center where kids receive faith, hope, education and a future.
- Adopt a Highway: Clean up our community Oxford Valley Rd. by Edgewood School
- Help lead a Worship Service at the former ManorCare in Yardley.
- Cops n Kids Book Drive – come at 1 pm to Woodside to sort donated books which will go to children in the Morrisville School District.
- Distribute invitations to homes in Langhorne to visit Parkland Church.
- Work on the IFA Garden of Hope. Produce goes to local food pantries.
- Snipes Farm – get your hands dirty at this farm which feeds our hungry neighbors.
- Stoddart and Cailoa Ball Fields-Edgewood Rd power wash bleachers and pick up litter at ball fields named in memory of Greg Cailoa of Woodside.

Join me here Sunday morning at 9 am for a prayer and send off and then come back at 5:30 pm for Pizza and 6 pm for a unity worship service where we'll celebrate communion and all the Spirit of God did through us during the weekend.

Don't just talk Church. Don't just go to Church. BE the CHURCH!