

discipleship essentials

Essentials for Spiritual Leadership Study Guide

SPIRITUAL GIFTS LESSON 3: THE SERVING GIFTS

INTRODUCTION

This lesson is part of a Discipleship Essentials module titled Spiritual Gifts. The module examines a broad range of spiritual gifts mentioned in Scripture, and how believers can use these gifts in serving God and His people. You will be given guidance in how to identify the spiritual gifts you and others around you possess. The focus of these lessons is unity in the Church while we actively love and serve one another. You will be encouraged to put your spiritual gifts into practice, in fulfillment of God's purposes, by serving each other and worshiping in spirit and in truth.

The Study Guide is intended for an individual to look deeper into a specific lesson on their own. The lessons can be used in conjunction with other Discipleship Essentials materials, such as the video and audio productions found on www.discipleshipessentials.org.



SPIRITUAL GIFTS

LESSON 3: THE SERVING GIFTS

WHAT IS IT ABOUT?

The purpose of this lesson is to explore the spiritual gifts of serving the Church. These include craftsmanship, giving, hospitality, helps and mercy.

JUST SO YOU KNOW...

Each and every one of us is called to be a servant, and to put the needs of others before our own. When there is work to do, we must do it out of love for one another, whether or not we feel we have a specific gift in that area. However, some Christian believers are uniquely equipped to serve in extraordinary ways. Every person is called to give to God's work, but some have a special ministry of joyful and sacrificial giving. Having different gifts does not exempt us from serving, nor are the gifts of serving 'lowly'. They are vital to the Church and should be encouraged just as much as leadership roles or miraculous gifts. Remember the high calling of servant hood that Jesus placed on all of us!

GETTING STARTED

1. What are some ways that people serve behind the scenes at your Church? What would happen to Church programs without them?

2. What is something that needs to be done around your Church or community that no one seems to be doing? What skills or abilities would someone need to accomplish that task?



STUDY

- ❖ **THE SERVING GIFTS:** As a Christian, we are to follow all of Jesus' teachings and His example of serving. While society might look down on those who do menial tasks or those who give up something in order to have more to share with others, Jesus clearly taught and demonstrated what it means to be a servant. At the heart of serving is putting aside our own comforts, needs and desires in order to fulfil someone else's. While all of us are called to serve one another, some people are spiritually equipped to serve in special ways.

What did Jesus say about the importance of serving? Read [Mark 10:45](#):

What do the following verses tell us about the gift of serving others? Read [2 Corinthians 4:5](#) and [Galatians 5:13](#) and write down what you learn.

- **Why it is Needed:** The serving gifts meet practical needs that arise within the Church, helping the Church accomplish its mission. These gifts are needed for serving the Church as a whole, as well as serving individuals. The focus is on needs being met.
 - The Church often makes use of physical space or a building that requires design, construction and maintenance.
 - When people come together someone needs to take care of practical needs of the event and location.
 - The work of the Church must be financed by giving, and some people are called to sacrificial giving.
 - Those in leadership require joyful servants to help with their tasks.
- **When Used Lovingly:** People who have the gift of serving will be drawn to opportunities that meet needs in meaningful ways. When serving gifts are used lovingly, the people serving will:
 - have a Spirit-driven capacity to invest their time and energies in helping others.
 - love seeing people welcomed and comfortable in the Church community.
 - have a genuine love for people they serve.
 - be fulfilled in their work behind the scenes without applause.
 - clearly identify needs around them without needing to be asked.



- **When Used Selfishly:** When a person with these gifts is not acting out of love, they are no longer able to see needs clearly, and may feel invisible or unappreciated. This can result in:
 - o offers of help where no help is needed in order to manipulate or control.
 - o threats to 'quit' helping in order to get attention.
 - o resentment that they have received a 'lowly' gift or job to do.
 - o inability to complete tasks with care or excellence.
 - o losing sight of the importance of serving joyfully.

As strange as it sounds, we can serve selfishly rather than lovingly. What would it look like if a person was trying to serve for selfish gain rather than with love? What might they do or say? What could their motivations be?

❖ **DESCRIPTIONS OF THE SERVING GIFTS:** There are many ways that people are equipped to serve the people of God. The following chart outlines a few with examples from Scripture. For each gift, read through the brief description, and then look up the verses that follow. Write down what you learn about how this gift should be used, and what you learn from the Biblical example of someone using this gift.

THE GIFT OF GIVING	
What it Is	This gift enables a person to share resources generously and joyfully in order to see God's work accomplished. This may take the form of someone being blessed with wealth which they give to God's work, or a desire to give sacrificially when a need arises.
Core Motivation	<i>To See The Work of God Unhindered by Providing Financial Resources</i>
You Might Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I manage my finances well so I am always able to give money to God. • I see financial needs that others don't see, and enjoy giving in secret. • I am quick to support a project or ministry that I believe is of value.
Uses in the Church	Giving to sustain necessary ministries or mission efforts
Write Down What You Learn About Giving and Givers	
Romans 12:8	
2 Corinthians 9:5-15	
Philippians 4:15-19	



THE GIFT OF HELPS	
What it Is	This gift enables a person to see what is overlooked by others, and do whatever needs to be done. They also help others use their gift and multiply the effectiveness of their service to God. This person finds opportunities to serve in many areas of ministry.
Core Motivation	<i>To Meet Practical Needs and See Others Enabled to Use Their Gifts for God</i>
You Might Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I see what needs to be done around me, even if no one else does. • I am happy to do tasks for others to free them to do greater things. • I know there are eternal purposes to ordinary tasks of life.
Uses in the Church	Church secretary or office assistant, assistant for children's classes, committee member, assistant to ministry leaders, usher, serving the community, visitation,
Write Down What You Learn About Helping and Helpers	
Romans 14:18-19	
Titus 3:14	
Acts 6:1-7	

THE GIFT OF HOSPITALITY	
What it Is	This gift enables a person to care for people, especially visitors, strangers and guests, and welcome them into the Church or home. They uniquely connect with people on a relational level and meet their needs. They are especially able to reach out to the outcast.
Core Motivation	<i>To See Every Person Feel Loved and Included in the Family of God</i>
You Might Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I love to meet new people and want to put them at ease. • I enjoy using my home to serve others, preparing food or giving people a place to stay. My home feels empty without guests. • I love to provide for people's practical needs – food, drink, a place to stay.
Uses in the Church	Welcoming newcomers, hosting people in their homes, preparing meals, visiting those in prison, caring for the elderly, serving the poor, befriending people in the community, reaching out to neighbours, helping refugees
Write Down What You Learn About Hospitality	
1 Peter 4:9	
Matthew 25:31-40	
Hebrews 13:2	



THE GIFT OF MERCY	
What it Is	This gift enables a person to feel genuine empathy and compassion for those who suffer. They don't run away when there is sorrow or pain, but rather show love through actions and presence. They display the love of God to a world that needs the hope of salvation.
Core Motivation	<i>To Show Compassion and Love in the Name of Jesus</i>
You Might Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am sometimes deeply aware when someone around me is lonely, feeling fear, pain or anger, even if they don't express it outwardly. • I will comfort the suffering even if they don't deserve it. • I am sensitive to the suffering of others and will champion their cause.
Uses in the Church	Visitation, ministry to elderly, prison ministry, serving the poor, providing material needs for community, community outreach ministries, delivering meals or material goods, raising money, medical ministry, caring for orphans
Write Down What You Learn About Mercy	
Romans 12:8	
Colossians 3:12	
Luke 6:36	

THE GIFT OF CRAFTSMANSHIP	
What it Is	This gift enables a person to work with their hands to design and create objects to the glory of God. This gift may be used to build, repair, beautify or maintain buildings, spaces, tools or equipment. It can also include creative and visual arts, including music, drama, painting, cooking, sewing, as well as mechanical and computer skills.
Core Motivation	<i>To Create and Maintain Physical Objects used to Glorify God</i>
You Might Say	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • I like to work with my hands and make physical objects. • I am creative, resourceful, and focused. • I am the first person to be called when something needs to be fixed.
Uses in the Church	Building churches, construction of pulpits, baptismal fonts, pews or other objects, operating technology, maintenance, decoration of worship space, preparing music for worship, producing media for use in church, cooking for special ministry events
Write Down What You Learn About Craftsmanship	
Ezekiel 27:4-9	



Exodus 31:1-5	
Colossians 3:23	

❖ **ADVICE TO THOSE WHO SERVE:** Those among us who are servants should serve as Jesus did – with confidence, selflessness and putting the needs of others before our own. We can all serve those around us, whether or not we have been given a special serving gift. We should also recognize and thank those who serve faithfully among us. What do the following verses say about this important role in the family of God?

1 Peter 4:10	
1 John 3:18	
Galatians 6:9	

❖ **CONCLUSION:** There are many gifts given to the Church, but the serving gifts are of special value because they enable the vision of the Church to be carried out. Great plans and Biblical teaching are important, but if we don't actively love those around us, we are not a Church! The body of Christ must care for the needs of each member, and those with the serving gift are able to serve lovingly, and inspire others to do the same. Each of us must consider ourselves a servant. These serving gifts are not lowly or less important than other gifts; they are highly valued in the Kingdom of God!

IN SUMMARY

- We must all follow Jesus' teachings and His example of serving – but some people are equipped to serve in unique ways because they possess the spiritual gift of serving.
- We must guard against serving selfishly, but rather serve one another in love and putting others before ourselves.
- Some of the serving gifts are giving, helping, hospitality, having mercy, and craftsmanship.



REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. Do people look down on servants in your community? According to what we are taught by Jesus, what should our view of servants be? How could you demonstrate this in your daily life?

2. Who are some of the servants in your Church or community? How can you pray for them and encourage them this week?

3. What is one way you could use the spiritual gifts you have been given to serve others?