



reflecting Jesus

BETA

God has given me gifts
to use for his church **30**

?

did you know...

**not one spirit-filled follower of
Jesus is without gifts given by
Heaven**





the facts of his story

1. When God has a work to do, what type of person does he look for?

a. When God called Jeremiah, Jeremiah thought he was... (Jeremiah 1:6)

b. When God called Moses, Moses thought that he was... (Exodus 3:11)

c. When God called Isaiah, the first thought that came to Isaiah's mind was... (Isaiah 6:1-5)

2. What is the purpose of the spiritual gifts God gives us? (1 Corinthians 12:7)

3. In order to use a spiritual gift, what has to happen first? (1 Corinthians 12:8-11)

[The Lord] chooses His agents not because they are perfect but because, through a connection with Him, they may gain perfection.

Christ's Object Lessons, 330



thinking it through

1. From the texts you have just read, why do you think God called people to work for him who felt they were totally unprepared? What is the lesson for you?

2. Why do you think that many people are afraid to work for God, and what could you say to encourage people who feel like this?



habits for reflecting the work of Jesus ~ using Heaven's gifts

God has given us gifts

While every Christian is called to give a verbal witness for God, God gives special gifts to every Spirit-filled person in God's church also—including you! The purpose of these gifts is for an important purpose:

to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. (Ephesians 4:12-13)

paul's pyramid

Here's Paul's text in a pyramid. Notice that God first gives the people in his church spiritual gifts. These will always lead to serving others, which always leads to growth, then unity, maturity, and finally the ultimate goal is achieved — the church reveals the fullness of Christ to the world!

Fullness of Christ

Maturity

Unity

Growth

Service

Gifts

So how do we become prepared to receive and use the gifts of the Spirit? Jesus says, "how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (Luke 11:13) If you ask God to be used, he will send you exactly what you need from the Spirit to serve him. So we could say that prayer the foundation of Paul's

pyramid.

Sometimes people take tests to try and find their spiritual gifts. While these may be helpful to see what we are already good at or like doing, they don't necessarily tell us what God is preparing us to do. Like Jonah, God may call

If you have any question as to your post of duty, pray to God for guidance, and your work will be assigned. God has told us expressly that He has placed every man at his post.

Ye Shall Receive Power, 220

us to do something we don't want to do. Or like Moses, God may call us to do something we feel unable to do.

It is important to remember that spiritual gifts and talents are two different things. Someone may have a great talent as a teacher, but they may not have the spiritual gift of teaching that results in the church being strengthened. While both talents and spiritual gifts are from God, we can choose how we use our natural talents. However, the Holy Spirit is the one who directs how his gifts are used, as he is the one at work in our lives.

start using your gifts

1. Begin to pray for God's direction, for a place for you to serve in the building up of his church.
2. Immediately offer yourself to God as a living sacrifice (Romans 12:1)—which means to be willing to do anything God asks, not matter the cost to you personally!
3. Share your desire to serve with someone who has the spiritual gift of wisdom and discernment. Ask them to pray for you for God's direction. God may also use them to give you advice.

Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theatre of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts.

Acts of the Apostles, 12



putting the pieces together

In "the facts of his story" we saw that 1) God calls people to work for him even though they feel inadequate. God called a) Jeremiah even though Jeremiah thought he was too young and inexperienced. He called b) Moses when Moses felt incompetent. God called c) Isaiah, but the first thing Isaiah felt was his deep sin and unworthiness. But God called these people anyway, because they were willing to be used and trained by Him. 2) The purpose of the gifts God gives us are for the strengthening of his Church, so increasingly the church—even though it may appear very imperfect—may reveal the character of Jesus. 3) In order to use a gift from the Holy Spirit, we first have to receive the Holy Spirit, and have the Spirit directing our lives.

In "habits for reflecting the work of Jesus" we saw that the use of spiritual gifts in the church enables the whole body to reflect the character of Jesus. It is one thing to reflect Jesus by yourself, but it is a powerful witness, when people who have nothing naturally in common, join together in harmony to show love to each other, and those around them. If we want to be part of God's work, we can begin to pray, for God to equip us to work with him.



my time with God

1. Do you long to be useful to God? Spend some time to pray for the Holy Spirit to direct your life and put you in a place where you can serve the Kingdom of God.
2. Read Jeremiah 1. What was Jeremiah afraid of, and what promises does God give him as an encouragement? What can you learn from this story?
3. Read the story of Moses in Exodus 3 and 4. What is Moses struggling with and why do you think he ends up trusting God?
4. Read Isaiah 6:1-8. How does Isaiah overcome his fear that he is too sinful to be useful to God? What would you say to someone who feels that they are too sinful for God to use?
5. Read Romans 12:3-8. How does Paul say we remain unified? What do you think about being part of the unified body of Jesus in your local church?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 12 again. What is the most important teaching in this passage for you?



pass it on!

How would you explain to someone how to find and use their spiritual gifts?



extra help

1. Christ's Object Lessons, "Talents", by Ellen White.
2. Experiencing God, by Henry Blackaby.