

The Anglican Church  
in the Diocese of Trinidad & Tobago

*Making Disciples– Using Spiritual Gifts*

A Bible Study for 2020



***Our Mission:*** To give honour and glory to God by making disciples of Jesus Christ, empowering them to live according to the principles of God's Kingdom through the ministry and mission of the Church.

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Edited by the Diocesan Project Management Team

## Conclusion

We have trust that by engaging in this Bible Study series that you have had an opportunity to explore not only spiritual gifts but also how those gifts offer you opportunities to be of service to God. We trust that you will commit to being open to God's Holy Spirit who will assist and teach us as we discover and use our Spiritual Gifts. In addition to Spiritual Gifts, we pray that you will allow the Holy Spirit to help you discern and identify your natural abilities or talents. Additionally, we urge you to nurture, grow and develop those talents which complement and work in tandem with Spiritual Gifts to make us more effective disciples of Jesus Christ. While we know this discussion by its very nature has to be an ongoing one, we urge you to continue to explore God's purpose for you as an individual.

As we explore our own purpose God will lead us to the things that help us to find where we fit in this world and ways to express His Divine will in the choices we make and the paths we pursue. We become better disciples the more we accept all that God has entrusted to us in Christ Jesus, walking in faith with Jesus as our perfect pattern. As we commit to this process individually, we become a Church that more fully functions as the Body of Christ and become better able to make disciples through our faithful witness.

May God grant us the grace to find ourselves in Him.

This booklet was prepared by  
The Reverend Canon Richard Jacob and The Very Reverend Shelley-Ann Tenia, D.Min.  
It was reviewed and edited by The Diocesan Project Management Team.



**27. Music:** Instrumental: Play an instrument in such a manner that it brings praise to God and inspires and leads others in worship. Scriptural References: Psalm 33:1-5, Psalm 150, 1 Samuel 16:14-23

**28. Serving:** identify unmet needs involved in a task related to God's work and make use of available resources to meet those needs and accomplish the desired goals. Scriptural References: Luke 23:50-54, Romans 16: 1- 16, Philippians 2:19-23

**29. Writing:** put your thoughts and ideas into written works that will be relevant and meaningful to those who read them. People will find knowledge, guidance, and courage as the words are read. Scriptural References: I John 2:1-6, 12-14, I Timothy 3:14-15, Jude 3

**30. Understanding:** is being aware of how the Holy Spirit works within us and the Church. Understanding helps us to look into another person's heart as if it were our own. It means to look beneath what is on the surface. Understanding helps us to be sensitive to one another. Reference: Isaiah 11:2

**31. Right Judgment (Counsel):** This gift helps Christians make good decisions in their own lives and enables them to help others make good decisions in their lives. This gift enables us to demonstrate true godliness. Isaiah 11:2

**32. Courage:** The gift of courage gives Christians the inward strength of character to make good decisions in the face of difficulties and opposition. At times of discouragement and hardship we are helped by God's grace and by others who have the gift of courage and can encourage us to be brave and to hold on.

**33. Reverence:** This gift helps us to be mindful of the true nature of all creation. It helps us to reverence God, see that we are God's creatures, loved and fashioned in His image and likeness, and to adore God by prayer and liturgy. It helps us to recognize the beauty and wonder of all life and show respect and care for all of God's creation.

**34. Wonder and Awe in God's Presence:** this gift is about knowing the holiness of God and allowing this realization to fill us with constant awe and wonder at the mystery of God's unconditional love for us. It reminds us of that God has invited us into a loving relationship and inspires with reverence for God, the Christian community and the whole world.

Note: The List of spiritual gifts given is by no means exhaustive but is intended to stimulate our reflection on the variety of gifts that God bestows.

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**DIOCESAN BIBLE STUDY 2020**  
**MAKING DISCIPLES TODAY...USING SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

**INTRODUCTION**

This Lent and beyond we will explore more deeply the work of the Holy Spirit in the process of being disciples of Jesus Christ and disciple making. This Bible Study is a tool for our journey together on the adventure of using Spiritual Gifts. Spiritual Gifts are endowments from the Holy Spirit, given to us by grace through faith. They enable us to become like Christ, to manifest God's power and glory, to mature in faith, to build up the body of Christ and to accomplish the work of ministry which Jesus Christ commissioned us to do.

In the Old Testament (Isaiah chapter 11), God promises that “a shoot will come up from the stump of Jesse...” (Jesus). Upon that shoot the Spirit of the Lord will rest and he will manifest the sevenfold gifts of the Spirit of God: wisdom, knowledge, understanding, fortitude (inner strength/courage), godly counsel (direction/right judgement), fear of the Lord (awe and wonder) and piety (reverence in love and devotion). Later, in chapter 61, the prophet Isaiah proclaims God's good news of deliverance as he declares, “the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me because He has anointed me and sent me ... *to attend to the needs of the poor, vulnerable and oppressed, to facilitate deliverance and healing for the broken, and declare promises of hope and freedom for those in bondage*” (Isaiah 61:1-3).

In Luke's gospel (Luke 4:14-21), Jesus, filled with the Holy Spirit, begins to teach in synagogues and reinterprets the passage from Isaiah 61:1-3 in terms of himself and his ministry as he declares, “today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.” All throughout the gospels, Jesus moves in the power of the Holy Spirit as he makes manifest the power of God, the character of God and God's care and concern for human need and suffering. He taught his disciples to do the same, to proclaim the good news of the Kingdom, to cast out demons, to heal the sick, to raise the dead, and to teach, as they followed him. Jesus promised that, “I will ask the Father and he will give you another Advocate to be with you forever; this is the Spirit of truth... I will not leave you orphaned... the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you everything, and remind you of all that I have said to you,” (John 14:15-17, 26).

The Holy Spirit empowers Jesus' followers as promised, as described in Acts chapter 2 and fills Paul after his conversion when Ananias lays hands on him and prays (Acts 9:17-19). The disciples filled with Holy Spirit continue to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ, to baptize new converts, to do deeds of power, and to set up Christian communities of Spirit filled believers, teaching them, as Paul taught the Christians at Ephesus, “There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all... The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ,” (Ephesians 4: 4-6, 11-13).

In the same way, at baptism we were made children of God, members of the household of faith, and inheritors of the Kingdom, filled and empowered by the Holy Spirit so we can be Christ's faithful soldiers and servants to the end of our lives. At confirmation the Bishop invokes the Holy Spirit to pour out upon each candidate a fresh anointing and strengthening of God's power, that

counselor. You will see that God's Word is fed to those in your care and you will also feel responsible for the well being of a group of individuals. Scriptural References: I Timothy 4:12-16, I Timothy 3:1-13, II Timothy 4:1-2

**18. Teaching**

The gift of teaching allows people to transform data and information into life changing knowledge. Teachers do not have to stand in front of a class to teach. Often gifted teachers communicate best in informal, one-on-one settings. **Application:** Teachers have the uncanny knack of helping people learn effortlessly. People internalize and retain the knowledge and learning they receive from gifted teachers. Good teachers transform more than they inform. share knowledge with children and/or adults that will aid in their growth and the spiritual health of the community of faith. Scriptural References: I Corinthians 12:28, Matthew 5:1-12, Acts 18:24-48

**19. Tongues**

The gift of tongues is a communication gift that allows people to speak foreign languages and convey concepts they never formally studied. People with this gift “pick up” the ability to communicate across barriers of language, culture, age, or physical limitation (some people with the gift of tongues work with the deaf or blind). The identification of the gift of tongues as a “secret” prayer language is often misunderstood. An individual manifesting the gift in this way must always be paired with someone who has the gift of interpretation of tongues. These gifts are given for the upbuilding of the body of Christ.

**20. Wisdom**

The gift of wisdom allows people to understand deeper meaning and apply knowledge, beliefs, and experience to every day situations. Wise, gifted individuals make connections and help other make them as well—to understand the implications of our beliefs and actions. **Application:** Those gifted with wisdom often understand root causes of disagreements, conflict, and barriers to growth and development. People with wisdom help others understand and clarify options to make good decisions. They offer counsel and advice with a special understanding of situations that arise in people's lives. Active listening skills are often used. Scriptural References: I Corinthians 2:6-12, James 3:13-18, II Chronicles 1:7-11

**21. Craftsmanship:** Arts and Crafts: use your hands, thoughts and mind through creative, artistic means to further God's kingdom. Scriptural References: Exodus 31:1-11, Psalm 149:3a

**22. Craftsmanship:** Manual: use your hands and ideas in areas of maintenance and upkeep of God's physical and environmental settings. Scriptural References: Exodus 30:1-6, Exodus 31:3-5, Ezekiel 27:4-11

**23. Hospitality:** to be caring and open to those in need. You feel good as you provide food and lodging and enjoy having people in your home. Scriptural References: Romans 12:13, Romans 16:23a, Luke 10:38

**24. Intercession:** to pray for extended periods of time and see frequent and specific answers to your prayers, to a degree much greater than the average Christian. Scriptural References: Matthew 6:6-15, Luke 11:1-10, Ephesians 6:18

**25. Mercy:** feel genuine compassion and empathy for individuals who suffer mental, physical, or emotional problems and translate that compassion into cheerfully done deeds that reflect God's love. Scriptural References: Luke 7:12-15, Luke 10:30-37, Matthew 25:34-36

**26. Music:** Vocal: use your voice to sing praises to the Lord and sensitize the listener to receiving the message of the gospel. Scriptural References: Psalm 96:1-9, Psalm 100:1-2, Psalm 149:1-2

## 12. Knowledge

The gift of knowledge allows people to automatically convert facts, data, and information into useful and important knowledge. People possessing this gift can learn in a variety of ways, retain what they learn, and understand how learning can be applied in meaningful and productive ways. Those gifted with knowledge have a voracious and insatiable desire to learn more, and they seek multiple avenues for deepening their understanding of God's world, God's will, and God's people. **Application:** they accumulate, discover, analyze and share ideas and information that are pertinent to the growth and well being of the community of faith. Scriptural References: I Corinthians 12:8, I Corinthians 14:6, Romans 12:2

## 13. Leadership

The gift of leadership is a visionary, and forward looking gift that enables people to stay focused on where God might be leading us as individuals, congregations, and communities at any given time. **Application:** Leaders look more to where we are going rather than where we currently are, or where we have been. Leaders motivate others to work together in ways that help them achieve more together than any could on their own. Leaders provide examples of how we should order our lives to honor and glorify God. They set goals in accordance with God's will and share these goals with others in such a way that they work together to accomplish the desired outcome. Others look to you for guidance and direction. Scriptural References: Romans 12:8, John 21:15-17, II Timothy 4:1-5

## 14. Miracles

The gift of miracles is not about performing miracles, but about living in the miraculous reality of God's creation. Those gifted with miracles never doubt the power and presence of God in creation, and are able to help others see and believe in God's power. The gift of miracles does not focus on the extraordinary, but sees the miraculous in the mundane and normal. Living in the spirit of the miraculous, people see God in nature, in relationships, in kind acts, and in the power of love.

## 15. Prophecy

The gift of prophecy is the ability to speak God's word to others, or more appropriately to be open for God to speak God's word through us. Prophets do not predict the future, but offer insight and perspective on current conditions and how things might turn out if changes aren't made. Prophets are incisive, clear, and often controversial, communicators. Prophets see things that others often don't, and they have the courage to "tell it like it ought to be."

## 16. Servanthood

Servanthood is the gift of doing for others, sometimes to the exclusion of meeting personal needs. Servants look for ways to do for others both within and beyond the congregation and community. Servants do not choose to serve, but serve from a sense of identity and call. Gifted servants never feel put-upon or taken advantage of, but see each opportunity to do for others as a way to be true to self.

## 17. Shepherding

The gift of shepherding is the gift of mentoring and providing spiritual guidance to others to help them develop in the discipleship and faith formation. Shepherds take an active and individualized interest in the life of faith of others. Shepherds share from their own faith journey to make the way easier for others. **Application:** Shepherds are good at asking provocative questions, recommending appropriate resources and experiences, and helping people find their own way to the next level of their development. They serve as one who is a facilitator or

the gifts of the indwelling Spirit and the character of the living Christ will manifest boldly in our lives. The ministries of the Church and the circumstances of our daily lives become the classrooms and workshops for us to use our spiritual gifts, to mature spiritually, and to make disciples of Jesus by our faithful witness. A final note, Spiritual Gifts are different from talents. They are often complementary to each other but talents are natural abilities or aptitudes that we must discover, develop and nurture; they don't always correspond to a Spiritual Gift. A Spiritual Gift can manifest in someone who may not have a natural ability.

We will search the scriptures together to better understand the Spiritual Gifts. We will each discover the gifts that may be uniquely ours. We will experience how the gifts manifest in our communities of faith and how they help us to become more like Jesus Christ. Additionally, we will learn to become more faithful disciples and to more effectively make disciples of Jesus Christ in our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Caribbean context. Each week there will be a subtheme, a biblical text, additional reading, a brief commentary, questions for discussion and/or reflection, a practice activity and a prayer. We encourage you to make this your personal study. Moreover, we urge you to use this bible study in your bible study groups or ministry groups at Church, in your homes with your family and friends, with colleagues at work and in your neighbourhood. Over the next six weeks we will discuss how the gifts:

help us to Become like Christ in mind, character and action  
cause us to Mature in faith  
move us to Build up the Body of Christ  
inspire us to Unify the Church in mind and purpose  
empower and Equip saints for the work of ministry  
stimulate us to Glorify God through manifesting God's power

Share your insights on the various diocesan social media platforms, in the Anglican Outlook, and in your parish Whatsapp groups. Write a blog, journal, create a small group, whatever you choose - participate in this study of the Spiritual Gifts and experience the transformative power of the Holy Spirit in your personal life, in your relationships, and in the Church.

### The Weekly Outline

Sub-theme  
Opening Prayer  
Bible Reading  
Commentary  
Questions for discussion and/or reflection  
Spiritual practice / Activity  
Additional Reading or Bible References  
Closing Prayer



## WEEK 1 – BECOMING LIKE JESUS

**OPENING PRAYER:** Heavenly Father, we ask you to continue to make us over into the image of Your Son that we may become more like Him in word and thought and deed. Lead us Father into those things that will help us to have the same mind that was in Christ, that we may fulfil Your gracious purpose. We ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Amen.



<sup>1</sup>If then there is any encouragement in Christ any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, <sup>2</sup>make my joy complete: be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind. <sup>3</sup>Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. <sup>4</sup>Let each of you look not to your own interest, but to the interests of others. <sup>5</sup>Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus...

Philippians 2:1-5

### COMMENTARY

Paul invites us to recognise that we can enter into “the mind of Christ”. He urges the Philippians to allow themselves to be guided by Christ’s way of thinking and being so that their “choosing” and “doing” may in fact reflect God in Christ. It may seem a little far-fetched that Paul makes this exhortation, until he goes on to explain that Christ Jesus “emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant”, even unto the point of death on a cross. Paul asserts that Jesus as eternal Word of God did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped but chose obedience instead.

When we choose to become (more) like Jesus, we choose to allow ourselves to seek God’s will above our own; to use our gifts for God’s purpose and not ourselves; to allow our very being to be poured out for others in the way that Christ was poured out for us. We begin to journey with God more expectantly trusting that Christ will be made present when we seek the Father’s guidance in things great and small.

When we doubt that “Becoming like Jesus” is possible, we should remind ourselves of Jesus’ own words in Matthew 5: 48, “be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect”. Jesus is always urging us on to become deeper manifestations of God’s love to others. This is the way in which our spiritual and other gifts were meant to be used, in His service and by which we become the best version of our selves. The version that looks like Christ.

- 1) What does it mean to you to become like Jesus Christ?
- 2) What are the ways in which we as individuals limit ourselves because we believe that we can’t “be perfect”?
- 3) What do you think is God’s expectation of us as we journey with Him in faith?

and inviting them to make a decision for Christ. Gifted evangelists do not force their faith on others, but offer relationship with God as a gift, and are ready to tell the story of God and Christ in their own lives. **Application:** one is able to share the Good News of the love of Jesus Christ in such a way that others will experience that same love and will come to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior. Scriptural References: Matthew 28:16-20, Ephesians 4:11-16, Acts 2:36-40

### 7. Faith

The gift of faith is more than belief in Jesus Christ, but an abiding foundation of confidence that God works all things together for good, and that the people of God can rise above any obstacle. Faith is the bedrock upon which we build lives, congregations, and communities. **Application:** one is able to see the spirit at work and know with confidence what God’s will is for your life and the community of faith. Trust the leading of the Holy Spirit where it may lead. People with the gift of faith hold fast to the deep conviction that no matter what one sees with our eyes, we can trust the promises and plan of God. Scriptural References: Genesis 12:1-4a, Mark 5:25-34, I Thessalonians 1:8-10

### 8. Giving

The gift of giving is the deep commitment to provide whatever resources are needed to support God’s will and plan. In addition to radical generosity, those who possess the gift of giving have the uncanny ability to discover and channel new sources of money, time, and energy to needs. **Application:** recognize God’s blessings by contributing your material resources to the work of the Lord with generosity and cheerfulness. Money management skills, grant writing abilities, and the easy knack of asking for donations and cultivating donors are among common skills of gifted givers. Scriptural References: II Corinthians 9:6-15, Luke 21: 1-4

### 9. Healing

The gift of healing is not about transferring spiritual power to eliminate suffering and disease, but the ability to channel God’s grace and healing love to those who suffer physical, emotional, or spiritual pain. Healers are moved to be present with those who suffer. Healers pray for those who suffer, visit those who are ill, and are usually moved to extend a hand of comfort and touch to those who are afflicted. Healers give their time and energy to offering aid and comfort to others.

### 10. Helping

Helping is a gift of support and behind-the-scenes effort that make groups, families, and congregations more effective. Not everyone is gifted to lead, but many are gifted to follow and handle the tasks that are so essential, but less glamorous. **Application:** Helpers love to serve others, support others, and assist others in the important work of ministry and mission. Tireless in their willingness to serve, helpers are less interested in receiving thanks and recognition than in doing good, valuable work. You use the gifts you have to assist others in the life and ministry of the church, allowing the person helped to increase the effectiveness of their spiritual gifts. Scriptural References: 1 Corinthians 12:28

### 11. Interpreting Tongues

Those who are gifted to interpret tongues help build bridges across cultural, generational, and language divides. People who possess this gift have an innate ability to learn new languages and cultural practices, and can help others understand them as well. Foreign speaking people are attracted to those with this gift, and feel intuitively that they will be better understood and received by interpreters. Interpretation breaks down barriers.

## A GLOSSARY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The thirty-four gifts below are those listed within the Pauline epistles to Rome, Ephesus, and Corinth (Romans 12, Ephesians 4, 1 Corinthians 12–13), and recognized by the first-century church. While all of life is a gift from God, these twenty gifts are lifted up within Scripture as the gifts of the Spirit, given specifically for the upbuilding of the body of Christ. <http://www.umc.org/what-we-believe/exploring-your-spiritual-gifts>

### 1. Administration

The gift of administration allows a person to organize people and resources for greater efficiency, effectiveness, and success. Administrators have the natural ability to apply resources where they will do the greatest good. Administrators are good with details and are deeply aware of how all the parts of a group or organization work together to achieve their goals. **Application:** Better understand and set goals for various groups. You will be able to work with facts and/or figures, plan programming and see that goals and ideas are accomplished. Scriptural References: 1 Corinthians 12:28, Acts 14:23

### 2. Apostleship

The gift of apostleship compels people to reach out to new and unfamiliar groups and individuals to invite them into relationship with God and community. Apostles share the story of faith in other lands, cultures, and traditions, as well as welcoming the stranger in their own land. Apostles extend the hand of friendship to those of other generations, nations, and languages. Many apostles desire to be missionaries.

### 3. Compassion/Mercy

The gift of compassion moves people to action on behalf of those in need. Compassion is not a simple caring about others, but such a radical caring that we have no choice but to make sacrifices for others. Those with the gift of compassion rarely ask “Should I help,” but instead focus on how to help. Compassion makes us fundamentally aware of the Christ in others and springs from our desire to care for all of God’s creatures and creation.

### 4. Discernment

Discernment is a gift of deep intuition and insight. Discerning people can separate truth from fiction and know at a visceral level when people are being honest. Deeply sensitive and “tuned in,” those with the gift of discernment are open to feelings, new ideas, and intuition as valid and credible information. Discernment is not irrational, but trans-rational—beyond empirical—knowledge.

### 5. Exhortation / Encouragement

The gift of exhortation is manifest in people who offer encouragement, wise counsel, unflagging support, and empowerment. Those who exhort stay focused on helping people maximize their own potential and live from their own gifts and skills. **Application:** Exhorters help people feel good about themselves, build confidence, and not grow discouraged. Often, those with the gift of exhortation make others feel good just by being present. They minister words of counsel, comfort or encouragement to members of the community of faith in such a way that they feel uplifted, helped or healed. Scriptural References: John 14:1, II Timothy 1:16-18, III John 5-8

### 6. Evangelism

The gift of evangelism is the gift of faith-sharing and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ to those we meet. Evangelism is primarily a one-to-one or small group experience, grounded in building relationships with others

- 4) Which traits found in you do you believe were part of Jesus Christ’s life?
- 5) What are some of the hindrances you may have to overcome to persevere on the path to becoming like Jesus?

**PRACTICE:** 1. Reflect on and journal about your view of Jesus and the things you would like to pattern from His life.

**ADDITIONAL READING:** Philippians 2: 1-18; Isaiah 11: 2-5, Isaiah 61:1-3; Matthew 5:38-48; 1 Corinthians 2

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Almighty God, help me to remember always that I am made in Your image and likeness; bring that image to its fullest potential by helping me to become like your Son, Jesus Christ for I ask this in His most precious Name. Amen.



## WEEK 2 – TO MATURE IN FAITH

**OPENING PRAYER:** Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.



<sup>11</sup> The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, ...some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until all of us come...the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. <sup>14</sup> We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, <sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

Ephesians 4:11-16

### COMMENTARY

Pauls reminds believers that the proper use of our spiritual gifts individually and in community results in spiritual maturity. Spiritual maturity, is not a matter of worthiness or righteousness, eloquence, charisma, breath of knowledge, intellectual capacity, ego strength, will power, age, or expert religiosity. It is about the steady intentional practice of choosing Jesus Christ daily and applying his teachings in every situation. Maturity comes with a daily prayer practice, being open to and curious about the scriptures and the work of the Holy Spirit, having a teachable spirit and being penitent. It also includes, taking risks - practicing faith boldly including making mistakes, learning and growing from them.

We know we are maturing in faith when we recognize and accept that we are the clay and God is the potter and we submit to the process of being moulded and shaped. A mark of maturity in faith is acceptance of the process of being refined which involves heat and the continuous removal of dross (impurities) until there is a pure product. Paul wanted believers to understand that the spiritual gifts are not ends in themselves to be owned, lauded or hoarded, but they are to be accepted on loan, nurtured, developed and used for a greater purpose – maturity in the faith to attain the measure of the full stature of Christ. Paul reinforces that the spiritual gifts help us to recognize our need for God, our need for each other, the generosity of God, the faithfulness of God and the boldness of God to allow us to partner with God to fulfil God's mission.

The process of maturity is transformative in terms of a deeper relationship with Christ, which increases our knowledge of God's truth, forms our character, informs our service and

ers and so much more. God is glorified when we accept God's love and its power to heal, redeem, justify, forgive, reconcile, bring deliverance, transform hearts, change minds, and bring about justice. We honour God most by recognizing where God is at work, by participating in what God is doing, and by living our faith as Jesus did, everywhere we go allowing others to see and experience God's love.

What does it mean to you to glorify God by having God's power manifest through you?

What gets in the way or is challenging for you as an individual to use your spiritual gifts?

What needs to change to make this possible? What would you like to work on?

How have you seen God's power manifest in your life and in your relationships?

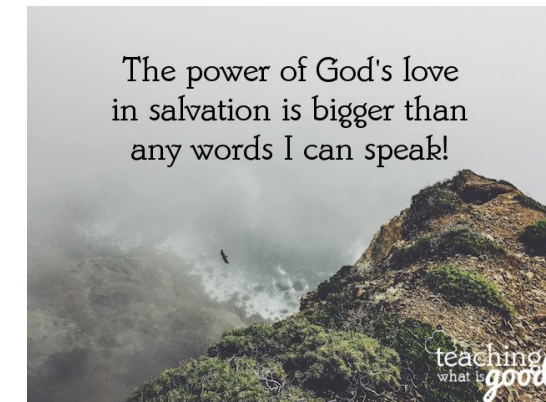
How have you used your gifts to glorify God?

**PRACTICE:** Identify opportunities to use your spiritual gifts this week.

Identify and journal about the ways you've seen God's power manifest at church, at work or at home.

**ADDITIONAL READING:** Exodus 13-17, 19; Luke 4: 1-20; John 6:1-59; Acts 2:1-36, 10; BCP 392-398, 404-405; Questions 21, 22, 55-59, 84-87

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Almighty God in whom we live and move and have our being, you have made us for yourself, so that our hearts are restless until they rest in you. Grant us purity of heart and strength of purpose, so that no selfish passion may hinder us from knowing your will, no weakness from doing it. Grant that in your light we may see light clearly, and in your service find our perfect freedom. Grant us the grace to choose the power of love especially during times of hardship and sacrifice and so allow your power to manifest boldly through us. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen [Adaptation of the prayer of St. Augustine]





## WEEK 6 – TO GLORIFY GOD BY MANIFESTING GOD’S POWER AND LOVE

**Opening Prayer:** Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.



<sup>7</sup>The end of all things is near; therefore, be serious and discipline yourselves for the sake of your prayers. <sup>8</sup>Above all, maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup>Be hospitable to one another without complaining. <sup>10</sup>Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received. <sup>11</sup>Whoever speaks must do so as one speaking the very words of God; whoever serves must do so with the strength that God supplies, so that God may be glorified in all things through Jesus Christ. To him belong the glory and the power forever and ever. Amen.

1 Peter 4:7-11

### COMMENTARY

Peter writes to the Jewish Christian communities in the diaspora to remind them that they are God’s chosen people, sanctified by the Holy Spirit to be obedient to Christ Jesus (1 Peter 1:1-2). He points out to them that the living hope and the gifts (the inheritance) that they possess came through the resurrection of Jesus and are therefore imperishable, irrevocable, undefiled and unfading. They are to remember that the genuineness of their faith will be tested through various trials and their faithfulness will bring honour and glory to God. They are living stones called to a holy life. They are a people set apart, servants of God, who are to be good stewards of God’s gifts, even if it means suffering, like Jesus did, for doing right.

These characteristics are to be seen in their attitude toward their spiritual lives (serious and disciplined), in their loving relationships with each other, in their attitude toward serving (willing, joyful, without complaining), and in their hospitality. They are empowered by the strength God supplies so that God may be glorified.

We are to do likewise: to love each other well, engage in good works, exhibit self-control, patience, fortitude, and right judgment. We do so not by our own will or power, but because of the power of God at work in us through the example of Jesus Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. According to Matthew’s gospel we are to “let our light shine so that others will see our good work and glorify our Father in heaven” (Mt. 5:16). Endowed with the gifts of the Holy Spirit we are able to be and do as Jesus commissioned.

God’s power and love is made manifest when we are light, salt, a city on a hill, healers, prophets, teachers, administrators, care givers, apostles, ministers, evangelists, miracle work-

emboldens our witness. Consequently, our spiritual practices become more meaningful and consistent. We are able to trust God more and the power of God’s love. We then experience God’s peace and become more self-controlled. We ultimately let go of our habits of self-promotion and self-preservation, live with more integrity and in freedom. Therefore, we are better able to work with/alongside others.



- 1) What does it mean to you to grow spiritually or to mature in faith?
- 2) Which parts of your life do you want to work on at this time: character, knowledge of God’s truth and your gifts, how you relate with others, service, how you relate to possessions, spiritual practices, attitude and thoughts?
- 3) What has been your experience of maturity in faith or spiritual growth?
- 4) What are your spiritual gifts? How do you use them with family, at work, in the Church, in community?
- 5) What are your spiritual practices or disciplines that help you grow and mature?

**PRACTICE:** 1. Reflect on and journal about your desire to grow spiritually and mature in faith.

2. Keep a log for the week of how you spend your time. Pay particular attention to where most of your time is spent. Note how much time is spent on spiritual activities or things related to your faith.

**ADDITIONAL READING:** Luke 8:4-8, 11-15; Colossians 1:9-14, 28-29; Galatians 5:13-26; 1 Corinthians 13; 14:20; Hebrews 5:12-14; 2 Peter 3:16-17; Jeremiah 18; Malachi 3:1-6. <https://www.freeshapetest.com/> (read and take the inventory)

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Merciful God, grant me the courage to desire maturity in faith, the will to pursue it and the grace to encourage others. Amen.

### WEEK 3 – BUILDING UP THE BODY OF CHRIST

**OPENING PRAYER:** Almighty God, we thank you for the gifts that you give to us as members of the Body of Christ. Give us a sense of respect, awe and right thinking in our use of them. Help us all to discern our spiritual gifts and to be willing to discover your intended purpose of them, we ask this through Jesus Christ Our Lord, Amen.



<sup>4</sup> For as in one body we have many members, and not all the members have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another. <sup>6</sup> We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us: prophecy, in proportion to faith; <sup>7</sup> ministry, in ministering; the teacher, in teaching; <sup>8</sup> the exhorter, in exhortation; the giver, in generosity; the leader, in diligence; the compassionate, in cheerfulness.

Romans 12: 4-8

#### COMMENTARY

Paul is deeply concerned about the ways in which persons view and use their gifts. In both Ephesians and Romans, he emphasises the notion that gifts are not given for selfish use but for the Body of Christ as a whole. He identifies “varieties of gifts” and gives several different listings but always he urges his hearers to acknowledge that:

- a) the gifts come from God for God’s purpose and
- b) they are given for the building up of the Body of Christ.

In recognising these two crucial facts, we are encouraged to receive our own gifts in humility and have deference and respect for the gifts of others. That attitude helps us to build the kind of relationships that assist us to work together for the common good.

God grants to His people his gifts liberally making us work for the well-being and effectiveness of the Body. However, having given us free will, He will not force us to seek the common good or build each other up. We must therefore actively seek to understand our gifts in that context. We must seek God first, acknowledge the ways in which He empowers us and then CHOOSE to use what he has given for the COMMON GOOD. Paul does his best to help us understand that we must grasp this perspective in order to find our right place in the Body. We trust that God will help us to build the Body and not hurt it by our actions.

- 1) What factors keep us from using our gifts to build up the Body of Christ?
- 2) How can we create an environment where persons feel free to offer and use their gifts to build up the Church?
- 3) How can we promote excellence in the use of our gifts in the church and in the wider society?
- 4) How can we see our different gifts not as a source of competition but as an opportunity to build up the Body of Christ?

- 1) What makes you aware of God’s grace at work in your life?
- 2) What are some of the gifts that you believe that God has “equipped” you with that may help you serve others?
- 3) How can the church help persons to identify and make better use of their gifts?
- 4) How can being equipped for ministry help us to grow?
- 5) How do believe that your talents may be relevant to the life and work of the Church today?

**PRACTICE:** 1. Find out about the ministries available in your parish. Get involved with activities suited to your gifts.  
2. If there is a ministry idea that you have that does not yet exist in your parish, have a conversation with your clergy person.

**ADDITIONAL READING:** Luke 4: 18-19; Ephesians 4: 11-16; 2 Timothy 4:5, 2 Corinthians 4:1, Acts 20:24, Romans 12; BCP 402-402 Questions 78-83

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Almighty God, we ask you to equip us for the work of ministry that we may take our rightful place in your world. Grant us such a sense of your grace and presence that we may work tirelessly for You in the ministries that you set to us. Help us to empower others even as we have been empowered, that our work together may be for your honour and glory. Amen.



## WEEK 5 – EQUIPPING THE SAINTS FOR THE WORK OF MINISTRY

**OPENING PRAYER** Almighty God, we thank you for equipping us for the work that you have set before us. As we engage in ministry help us to seek Your will. Continue to guide us into the proper use of the gifts that you have given. Give us the perseverance and determination to see our work through so that we may accomplish your purpose for our lives individually and collectively. We ask this for Jesus Christ sake, Amen.



<sup>4</sup>Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; <sup>5</sup>and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; <sup>6</sup>and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. <sup>7</sup>To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good...<sup>11</sup> All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

1 Corinthians 12: 4-7, 11

### COMMENTARY

There are varieties of gifts and ministries, but Paul is clear that they are given for common purpose from the one Source who is God. The gifts are given to, “equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,” so that we individually can find ministries and work suited to the character and personality that God has given us. God’s grace at work in us reaches into our personality and brings out the things which God placed in us in the first place.

We discover as we use our gifts, our usefulness to others, our unique talents and dispositions that help us to be able to deal with situations and challenges that we might have otherwise avoided. We learn, guided by the Holy Spirit, that these gifts and talents can be a great source of strength but must also be used in conjunction with others.

Being equipped confirms God’s call and invitation to us to engage in ministry. The more we respond positively to that invitation the more grace is poured into our lives. Being equipped by God and helping others to be equipped keeps us grounded in Christ and helps the church to function in ways that become more Christ centred. As we engage in ministry, let us seek opportunities to have our gifts and talents be used for the building up of the body, not the breaking down of the church.

There can be no selfish ambition or hidden agendas in ministry that is grounded in GRACE, only what will further the cause of Christ. Let us trust God to EQUIP us.

**PRACTICE:** Do a search and list all the spiritual gifts named in the NT. If you haven’t, take a spiritual gifts inventory/test to explore which gifts may be yours. If you have, learn some more about the gifts you’ve identified.

**ADDITIONAL READING:** Romans 12: 1-2, 9-21, 1 Corinthians 12, 14: 1-12,

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Dear Lord we give you thanks for the uniqueness of our gifts and for Your wisdom in giving them to us. We ask that you help us to be selfless in the use of these gifts. Help us to recognise that they are given for the building up of your Body. Help us to see that You always provide what we need to fulfil your will and that most of the gifts are already in our midst. Assist us to discern the right use of what you have given to the benefit of our Church and our society. Amen.





#### WEEK 4 – TO UNIFY THE CHURCH IN MIND AND PURPOSE

**OPENING PRAYER:** Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth. O, God, who by the light of the Holy Spirit, did instruct the hearts of the faithful, grant that by the same Holy Spirit we may be truly wise and ever enjoy His consolations, Through Christ Our Lord, Amen.



“<sup>10</sup>Now I appeal to you, brothers and sisters by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you be in agreement and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and the same purpose. <sup>11</sup>For it has been reported to me by Chloe’s people that there are quarrels among you, my brothers and sisters...<sup>17</sup>For Christ did not send me to baptize but to proclaim the gospel, and not with eloquent wisdom, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its power.”

1 Corinthians 1: 10-11, 17

#### COMMENTARY

In John 17, Jesus prays for unity among his disciples. Unity is a bold witness to the power and presence of God. Unity does not mean uniformity. Jesus’ closest disciples and those who faithfully followed him were a very diverse group made up of women, tax collectors, fishermen, prostitutes, the infirmed, and religious zealots. Paul reinforces Jesus’ call for unity in his teaching among the new converts urging them to avoid divisions and quarrels that lead to factions and to be unified in mind and in purpose. They are taught to have the mind of Christ to emphasize and look for goodness, to choose mercy and compassion, to discern truth, and to call out evil, hypocrisy, duplicity and injustice. Paul teaches them to pursue the purpose for which Christ came, to proclaim the Reign of God and to establish God’s kingdom which is marked by attention to human need and suffering, sacrifice, justice, freedom, healing, righteousness, abundant life, and access to God’s extravagant transformative love. What Paul called them to in Jesus’ name is deep, demands radical change, and takes time, persistence and patience.

Jesus was clear that he came that we might have life, to offer those who would accept it an opportunity to repent, and to fulfil God’s law. His purpose was to make known the redemptive love of God, the power of the presence of God to transform lives, and the faithfulness of God in keeping covenant. As Jesus guided his disciples to be of one mind and purpose and as Paul did the same, we are called through our baptismal promises to do likewise. We are the Church – Jesus’ hands and feet in the world. We are to make God known through our proclamation of the good news of Christ, through our faithfulness, through the use of our spiritual gifts in service/ministry, through our love and radical hospitality, through our relationships, and through our character and attitude.

Despite our differences in culture, politics, socio-economic standing, colour, ethnicity, sex, physical appearance, gender, age, physical or mental ability, or denominational preference, we are to proclaim Christ, we are to make disciples of Jesus Christ, we are to be one in Christ, with the same love, the same spiritual resources, called to the same purpose and being held to the same standard. The Church, like Christ, is called to hold the tension, to be light, salt and purveyors of possibility as we live with the paradox of our capacity for great evil and great good.

- 1) What does unity in Christ mean to you? What is beneficial about unity and what is challenging?
- 2) What in your experience has gotten in the way of the Church being of one mind and purpose?
- 3) How do you feel about Jesus’ expectation that unity must be a priority for Christian community?
- 4) What do you think unity in Christ requires of you? What would you like to work on to make that possible?
- 5) How have you used your gifts for a common purpose? How does your life reflect the mind of Christ?

**PRACTICE:** Identify what inhibits unity in the Diocese, in your parish and among your family. Discuss this with someone you do not know very well or someone you are not used to working with.

**ADDITIONAL READING:** Matthew 12:9-37, 28:19-20; John 17; Acts 2: 37-47; Romans 8; 1 Corinthians 1:10-31, 2: 11-16; Philippians 2:1-5; Ephesians 4: 1-10; 1 Peter 3:8-22. <https://www.anglicancommunion.org/resources/document-library.aspx?subject=Unity>

**CLOSING PRAYER:** Heavenly Father, you have called us in the Body of your Son Jesus Christ to continue his work of reconciliation and reveal you to the world: forgive us the sins which tear us apart; give us the courage to overcome our fears and to seek that unity which is your gift and your will; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord. Amen [Common Worship: for the Unity of the Church]

