

What's Your Spiritual Gift?

"Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen" (1 Pet. 4:10-11).

Recently I was blessed to serve the homeless in Los Angeles through an outreach known as 1DayLA alongside my fellow Christian Care Ministry/Medi-Share family. What an awesome mission trip this was!

When I was asked if I would participate in this event, the decision took no time at all. I made it on the spot and said yes. This meant being apart from my family for over a week, but my family knows me all too well—when God calls, Dave goes. When any opportunity arises to serve the church, my work or my community to bring glory to Jesus Christ, my eyes light up, and I am thrilled to be used.

God wants to use each of you in this same way. He wants your response to be instantaneous. He wants you to be filled with the joy that can only be found when you are serving using your gifts. God has provided each Christ-follower special gift(s) to be used to glorify Him. Sometimes people don't understand that they have a gift. And this isn't just any ordinary gift but one given to us by our heavenly Father. These gifts are often broken down into these areas: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers and helpers.

If you're unsure, one way to identify your spiritual gift(s) is through online tests. Or just start serving in your local church and see what God will do. I personally recommend that you pray to God to make it apparent. He won't hide it from

you.

I didn't need a spiritual test to tell me I was here to lead and to serve. I can guarantee you that you are gifted! God did not put us here sit back and watch. We are to be active participants. Jesus gave us what is known as the great commission: "to go out into all the world and spread the gospel" (Matt. 28:16-20). Jesus also told us to love God and love people (Mark 12:30-31).

I began today sharing about my most recent opportunity to serve. This was far from my first—or my last for that matter. I am a nobody, just an ordinary Joe. I have no special training, and I am not a pastor's son. But I do have one incredible qualification: I am a child of the God of the universe. What could be greater than that? And guess what: This is true about you too.

God has called me to orphanages in Haiti, to assist hurricane victims, to care for flood victims, to be involved with prison ministries, to assist the video production team at church and to help in my own community by doing anything from picking up garbage to pressure washing buildings and, most importantly, to just sit down and listen to someone share their story. That's when it gets great!

You can start to build such bonds with another person you didn't know before. You can share with them what God has done in your life, speaking life into theirs. These "God appointments" are never by accident. He is always orchestrating these events for His glory. There are no coincidences with God!

I have found that many people don't realize God is always speaking to them and pointing them to their gift(s). They keep suppressing that still, small voice, which is God speaking to them. They feel they must be a pastor, a bible scholar or some super bold missionary who goes out into deep jungles to do

what God has called. They feel God would never use them, an ordinary person, in great ways.

That could not be further from the truth. God needs and uses visionaries, leaders, planners, financial backers, parents, teachers, prayer warriors and, yes, even people to lick stamps and seal envelopes. God wants us all involved, and he has a purpose for each of you.

Jesus made this simple for us to understand. In Matthew 25:40-45, it is written as Jesus' own words: "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.'"

I pray that I have shared something that has spoken to you today. I pray that writing this is once again another calling from God to be used by Him. If God touches one person to use his or her gifts because they read this, then this had a purpose.

You might be asking yourself right now what the next step is. *How can I be used by the Creator of the universe?* You could pray this prayer: *God, I am available to be used by You; use me!* I know for a fact God will answer that prayer. He is waiting for you to open that door. God doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called.

Are you ready to be bold enough today to pray that simple prayer? If you are, God will use you to change the world in which we live in ways you could never imagine. I know when I enter the gates of heaven I want to hear, "Well done good and faithful servant." Don't miss out and let life pass by without experiencing the unbelievable joy of serving our Savior, Jesus Christ. {eoa}

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