

EQUIPPED TO SERVE

Part Two: Service Gifts

- Romans 12:7-8

**Our church needs to be a service station
attending to the needs of its members.**

I. SERVICE GIFTS

A. HELPS - Romans 12:7 and I Cor. 12:28

1. Definition

- a. A special ability to assist and support those in need - Acts 20:35
- b. The ability to see a need and meet it in a very practical way
- c. A self-motivated willingness to work behind the scenes or in the shadow of someone else

2. Descriptions - See Colossians 4:7-15

- a. Personal Assistants: Like Timothy in Phil. 2:19-23
- b. Hospitality Providers: Consider Lydia in Acts 16:14-15
- c. Prayer Warrior: Note Epaphras in Col. 4:12-13

B. GIVING - Romans 12:8

1. Definition

- a. The ability to give to God's work with generosity, frequency, spontaneity, anonymity and cheerfulness
- b. One who willingly contributes extravagantly
- c. The ability to make money without greed or stinginess - See I Tim. 6:17-19
- d. A special perception toward those in need and how that need can be met by their involvement - See II Cor. 8:1-4

2. Demonstrators

- a. Barnabus - Acts 4:34-37
- b. Dorcas - Acts 9:36-39

C. LEADERSHIP - Romans 12:8

1. Definition

- a. Those who organize and administer with harmony and efficiency
- b. The ability to:
 - Communicate a vision and get others to catch it
 - Organize and lead projects with zeal
 - Act quickly and solve problems without procrastination
 - Handle people tactfully
 - Not become discouraged by obstacles

c. Literally two thoughts

- Decision-making: Ruling or leading > Overseeing a group of people
- Direction-giving: Administration > Steering a ship, setting a course and staying on it (The same word is translated "pilot" in Acts 27:11)

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2. Demonstrators

- a. Deacons - Acts 6:1-4
- b. Treasurers - II Cor. 8:18-23
- c. Titus - Titus 1:5

D. MERCY - Romans 12:8

1. Definition

- a. Sensitive to the needs of others and embracing them with warmth, comfort and hope
- See Proverbs 14:21
- b. Perceptive to those in pain or misery - Exp: The Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37
- c. Showing mercy with cheerfulness indicates an upbeat optimistic spirit

2. Demonstrators

- a. The Philippian Jailor - Acts 16:31-34
- b. Epaphroditus - Phil. 2:25-30
- c. Onesiphorus - II Tim. 1:16-18

E. FAITH - I Corinthians 12:9

1. Definition

- a. The ability to discern God's will and then pursue it with extraordinary confidence
- b. Laying hold of God's promises with remarkable results
- c. An unshakeable trust in God's ability to supply specific needs

2. Demonstrators

- a. Paul in Acts 27:22-25
- b. Heroes in the Hall of Faith in Hebrews 11

G. DISCERNMENT - I Corinthians 12:8

1. Definition

- a. To accurately judge and truly evaluate something
- b. One who is a watchdog, guard or sentinel for those around him

2. Demonstration

- a. Peter in Acts 5:3
- b. The arbiter in I Cor. 6:5

II. SERVANT GUIDELINES

- Some practical suggestions for discovering and using your gifts

A. PRAY

- 1. Ask: God where do you want me to serve? - See Acts 9:6,11, 15
- 2. Consider Paul in Acts 16:6-10 and Nehemiah in Nehemiah 2:12 and 7:5

B. KNOW

- 1. God wants you to be informed about spiritual gifts - I Cor. 12:1
- 2. Your gift is the Holy Spirit's personalized expression of God's grace especially for you! - I Cor. 12:11
- 3. Spiritual gifts make our membership in the body of Christ meaningful - I Cor. 12:18, 28

C. VOLUNTEER

1. Present yourself to God - Rom. 12:1-2
2. Use in the local church whatever you've been given - Rom. 12:6
 - a. Join the church in order to minister more effectively (Acts 2:41)
 - b. Never use your perceived lack of giftedness as an excuse for inactivity
3. Do not neglect the spiritual gift within you - I Tim. 4:14
4. Even "natural talents" can be spiritual gifts that you can use - See Eph. 2:10

D. EVALUATE

1. What am I passionate about?
 - a. Note Paul's confession in I Cor. 9:16
 - b. Consider Stephanas' household in I Cor. 16:15
 - c. Sometimes the area of church life of which you are most critical is the area where you are gifted and should be serving
2. Am I edifying the church? - I Cor. 14:12
 - Contributing to the common good? - I Cor. 12:7
3. Am I fulfilling my ministry? - Col. 4:17
4. What good things are in me? - Philemon 6

CONCLUSION:

We need to be servants who serve each other using the spiritual gifts with which God has richly blessed us.