

Power Tools

You could dig a hole with a screwdriver, but why would you want to? You could drive a nail with a pair of pliers, but why would you? There is a tool designed for every task, both in the physical world and the spiritual world. Jesus serves as our example in today's Templates of Truth.

Mark indicates that as Jesus went into the region of Judea, the crowds gathered around Him and, *according to His custom, He once more began to teach* (Mark 10:1). Another way this phrase can be rendered in the Greek language is to say, "in the manner of His usage, He continued to teach." While the concept of spiritual gifts may not be applied to Jesus in the same way it does to believers today, this pattern in Jesus' life offers us a deep insight into how God has equipped us for the work in which He has called us to do. Once you have come to know and understand your spiritual gift, you will discover how naturally and consistently you function in its usage.

Taken from Paul's teaching in I Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, Bible students have identified the seven service gifts as: administration, teaching, prophecy, service, giving, mercy, and exhortation. Some students add several other gifts as sub-groups of these basic seven. All believers have been equipped with at least one primary spiritual gift, and most with strong evidence of secondary gifts. See these like power tools God has given you to perform the tasks related to the Kingdom work He has called you to. When you are using your supernatural tool, you will find it much easier to perform the task. Those with the spiritual gift of teaching, for instance, function effectively as Sunday School teachers, pastors/preachers, evangelists and writers. Even in secular work, it is easy for them to assume the role of trainer, or a presenter in sales and marketing endeavors. Your spiritual gift equips you for more than just spiritual work. It becomes a natural part of your overall ability in career and relationships.

A common problem is seen when a believer is functioning in a role outside the sphere of his or her spiritual gift. There is often frustration, ineffectiveness and outright failure in carrying out the task – much like digging a hole with a screwdriver or driving a nail with a pair of pliers. If the church has a job that requires structured organization, the tracking and analysis of data & statistics, and leading the process of action plans & evaluation, put a person in charge who has the gift of administration. They are great organizers and detail people. Service people love the foot work, but they don't tend to be good organizers and leaders. Mercy people are equipped to focus intently on people needs and often get distracted from the administrative detail work. Givers will tend to measure the practicality of the effort based solely on its cost instead of its visionary potential.

As you can see, it is important to fit a person and his gift with a prescribed role & work. Accordingly, prophets may make better evangelists than pastors. Exhorters make great counselors, but may not necessarily serve as effectively in the role of prophet. Mercy folks make wonderful children's workers and nurses, and enjoy ministering to people in the hospital and in

grief situations. They don't tend to do well as teachers or administrators. God has so intricately designed this spiritual network so that His church can function with the greatest of ease and effectiveness, and believers can experience ultimate satisfaction and fulfillment in their service to God. You will never be happy and complete in the family of faith until you know how you are gifted spiritually and you are actively involved in exercising those gifts in ministry work through the church.

Jesus was the perfect servant. His divine nature possessed an equal and perfect balance of all the spiritual gifts and fruits. As He went about His Father's business, we see Him functioning easily, naturally and effectively in the manner in which He was equipped. Through the indwelling presence and power of the Holy Spirit, you and I can do that same thing. If this is an area of neglect in your spiritual walk, I encourage you with the same words in which Paul admonished Timothy: *do not neglect the spiritual gift within you* (I Timothy 1:14); and, *kindle afresh the gift of God which in you* (II Timothy 1:6). In Romans 12, Paul affirmed: *God has allotted to each one a measure (gift) of faith...let each one exercise them accordingly*. What is your power tool and how are you using it in your church?

That's today's Templates of Truth. This is your Bible teacher, Rick Smith, reminding you to attend church this Sunday for Bible study and worship, pray for one another, and always strive to abide in Christ. Until next time, have a blessed and glorious day in the Lord Jesus.

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