



JUNE MEDITATION

“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”

I Corinthians 12:4-7 ESV

Living Word Lutheran Church members will be asked to complete a time and talent form as part of the annual stewardship initiative in a few months. It is a valuable tool for helping ministry leaders identify people to help in various roles. But, maybe we need to ask another question on that form — one that would read like this:

What are your spiritual gifts?

Asking such a question is not just another way of finding out what your talents are. Talents and spiritual gifts are two different things. You do not have to be a Christian to be talented. For example, there are a lot of talented athletes, musicians, and teachers, but not all are Christians. Education, training, and practice help people develop talent. However, you must be a Christian to receive a spiritual gift—a special ability God gives you to make the name of Jesus known and advance His kingdom on Earth. Therefore, Christians should look to their spiritual gifts when deciding where to use their talents.

We are pretty discerning when making stewardship decisions about treasure. Unfortunately, we are less discerning about using our spiritual gifts, time, and talent. When we are not discerning about how we use our gifts, the results are anything but God-honoring.

We may be serving in roles that are not in alignment with our gifts and, therefore, not doing the tasks well. We may be depriving someone else of exercising their gifts. We may feel frustrated at not being able to use our gifts. So before saying “yes” to the next request, ask yourself:

1. Am I spiritually gifted to serve in this role?
2. Is someone else better suited to this responsibility?
3. Will I regret saying “no” to this invitation?
4. Am I making this decision to bring glory to God or myself?

Bearing in mind that the purpose of spiritual gifts is to advance God’s kingdom, the consequences of getting this wrong are significant. If you have never taken a spiritual gifts test, or maybe it has been a long time ago, now is a good time to do so. There are many such tests available online, and no two are alike. Identifying Spiritual Gifts is not an exact science but giving a label to the things that are as natural as breathing for you. We hope that the prayerful consideration of your Spiritual Gifts will lead you to the places where God would have you serve at Living Word Lutheran Church and in the world.

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