

Gifted 1 Overview of the grace gifts

Welcome to the Gifted series.

As we start this series, there are three components to making this a successful exercise for your life:

- 1. Six Sunday messages**
- 2. Six week devotional book (our gift to you)** Tomorrow is Week one, Day one (six days each week)
- 3. Six midweek videos, with small group discussion**

- These can also be watched online, or you can join an online group
- Our children's church has adapted material to go through at home
- Our youth will break into groups each Friday night for discussion

If, for some reason, you are unable to walk this road with us, you can watch the videos off our website or YouTube channel.

If you turn to **pg.4** of your Gifted devotional-study book you'll find space to make notes of today's lesson.

NOTES:

Illustration of some rugby player positions:

1. **Prop.** Moderately tall fat lad, who's often aggressive when something obstructs his way to the bar, the pie shop, or occasionally to the ruck. He tries doing weights and running a bit, although no one knows why. He's the manliest member of the team based purely on body hair.
2. **Lock.** Big hard lad who thinks he's the enforcer. The police describe him as a hooligan and a danger to smaller people. He wears shorts and flops all year round and lives with his mom. They seem to have a proper hatred for their fellow man, and enjoy running into people at full speed.
3. **Flank.** Glory boy, often with psychotic tendencies. Spends a lot of time on the stitching table or in the concussion room, but can really help the team when he's actually on the field. He's often a cheat or unpopular, or both. They compete with the centers for dress sense off the field, and can actually tackle.
4. **Scrum half.** A gobby midget who can get himself into trouble faster than he can run away from it. He has a small stature and a big whiny voice, and has serious Napoleonic syndrome issues. Nothing is ever his fault, and he fancies himself a strategic genius. Has an amazing way to irritate just about everyone else.

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5. **Flyhalf.** There are two sorts – running or kicking. Generally, they don't know which one they are until it's too late. Unusually nice hair and overconfident in all situations until its too late. Has plenty of hair products in his bag. Has plenty dance moves, often has highlights in the hair – and their main job seems to be to throw the ball over other people's heads, kick in the general direction of the tall poles (unless of course they're standing straight in front of them, in which case it's to the left of the uprights). They also kindly provide soft padded landing for opposing flankers and locks who always seem in a hurry to get to them.
6. **Winger.** For a winger to get the ball, almost every single other member of the team needs to have done something right and they all need to have done it consecutively. The number four lock often finds himself standing where the wing should be. They often get cold and lonely out there, but wear bright boots or remind everyone else they're actually on the field.

Imagine a discussion among the players one night, around the subject of who is most important.

- The prop may lead the chat because he takes up the most space. Anything that needs lifting, pushing, sweating, leaning, he's your man.
- The winger will say the prop has no finesse, and is definitely from the 'Vale...doesn't look after his hair or have any dress sense.

NOTES:

- The flyhalf feels he's criticised the most, and so unfairly. He feels he gets everyone going forward and is indispensable.
- The lock just smiles because he knows no one can punch like he does or jump as high in the line out, or intimidate anyone like he can.
- The scrum half feels he's the most intelligent, most important and most needed player. He touches the ball the most and needs to be the fittest.
- The flank knows the girls only watch to obviously look at him getting his face improved on in the stitching room, and South African criminals watch him to get tips on how to steal (the ball)

The solution to the argument is that each player is designed differently for different purposes – so the issue isn't who's most important in the team, but who is needed for the job at hand.

NOTES:

This brings us to the key text for the series.

Rom.12:1-8

Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God–this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.

For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

We have different gifts (or, in other words, different designs or super powers), according to the grace given us. If a man’s gift is *prophesying*, let him use it in proportion to his faith. If it is *servicing*, let him serve; if it is *teaching*, let him teach; if it is *encouraging*, let him encourage; if it is *contributing to the needs of others*, let him give generously; if it is *leadership*, let him govern diligently; if it is *showing mercy*, let him do it cheerfully.

NOTES:

These are seven **“motivational”** gifts. Four points for this session:

1. I am unique

- We’re all wired differently according to our uniqueness by God. Our Creator God expresses His genius by making all of us unique.
- This isn’t an exhaustive list, but these seven “grace/motivational” gifts are Paul’s way of trying to help us see how we are spiritually wired.
- We each have a grace given us by God, according to His creative genius.

Let’s imagine we could give the gifts colours according to strength or usage in our lives...

Another person could have the same gift mix in different weightings, strengths or expressions.

They can look completely different, and give you a different feeling, but when you study them you see they’re the same colours in a completely different pattern and order.

Paul is saying that every single one of us represents a different array of supernatural gifting, designed so by God – that makes us unique individuals in our reflection to our community. We are calling them superpowers (a bit tongue in cheek) because these gifts have been given to us divinely by God.

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2. I am connected

Each member belongs to all the others...

Going back to the players in the team; the prop, as essential as he is in set piece time, is no good by himself to get the whole job done. He needs to rely on the skill sets of his team mates to succeed.

In the same way, we have to remain connected to each other so that God can be glorified and we can build each other up.

I am uniquely gifted so that others can be divinely lifted.

When I exercise my gifts, when I bring to the table what God has divinely gifted me with – other people are divinely lifted through God's grace flowing through my life

A small example could be this meeting we're having right now:

- Our worship team brought their wonderful gifts, blessing us all with the presence and joy of the Lord
- The sound team brought their expertise so that we could hear the worship
- The camera crew at work
- The greeters at the door
- The children church leaders team
- The serving teams around the facility

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And that's just for this meeting!

3. I must grow

Part of God's plan for my life is to help me grow. So a series like this is put together to help us grow in our understanding of God and of our relationship with Him.

When I learn more about myself I actually bring God honour by doing that.

If you're listening now and you figure you've covered this kind of teaching to the degree that you don't really have to listen, chances are your heart isn't in learning mode anymore and you're in a bad place without knowing it. We're all meant to be life-long learners in the school of Jesus.

We're all figuring things out – and this series is to help us figure out how we're gifted with grace/motivations to serve others.

They fluctuate in importance and effectiveness as we focus and grow in the effectiveness of one “grace expression” at a time.

NOTES:

These seven gifts are listed in Romans 12, starting with prophecy, service, teaching, encouraging, generosity, leadership and mercy.

On Wed nite on the video, I will be giving a brief definition and explanation of each of the seven, and then over the next five weeks we'll be diving into each of those topics, and asking:

- What do those gifts mean, and
- How can I grow in each of them

Because...we're all meant to be functioning in all seven gifts, and we'll have different weightings in that we're stronger in some and less strong in others.

Turn in the book to Day Zero.

“Prepare for the journey” by discovering your spiritual gifts.

On the website we have an analysis tool to help us discover the order and weighting of our different gifts.

Follow the link to a little 42 question survey. Try and answer it as honestly as you can. You'll come to a results column which suggests your strengths in all seven gifts in a sequence.

NOTES:

4. I must act

This series is not just about getting more information about myself; it is about how to put these things into action.

The Nike slogan says it all: **Just do it!**

This is recognised almost anywhere in the world when you see this slogan...

This short, powerful statement is really what Paul is saying here:

First of all, find out how you're wired, what your gifts are, what their ratios are, how God has made you.

But then, do that so that you can act – so that you can do something!

Listen to Paul's encouragement:

...then prophecy

...then serve

...then teach

... give encouragement ...give generously

...do it diligently (lead)

...do it cheerfully (show mercy)

NOTES:

Our hope, as we go through this series, is that as all of us are learning our giftings, we will find the courage and humility to express them to help others, because others are divinely lifted because of our unique giftings.

As we do that the entire church, the body, is built up, We ourselves start to live in more of God has for us, And God is glorified.

A brief recap:

1. You and I are Unique
2. We Are Connected
3. We Must Grow
4. We must Act

We have provided you with a daily devotional, a Sunday preach, and a midweek Wed evening small group so that you can JUST DO IT.

If you're not in a small group yet, please commit to the next six weeks – JUST DO IT

We can even set up a zoom group for those of you who really can't get out! There's really no excuses!

NOTES:

Last thing:

Take the fly half in a rugby game, or any tool on a workbench; the most important part isn't even its design, aerodynamics, shape or strength – but the hand that's holding it, or the coach that's coaching him.

We have been designed by God, but the most important thing about our lives is Who's hand is holding us tight!

The reason we're still here is because the hand of God has been holding you tight from the day you were born until right now – even if you don't yet recognise it.

God has gripped you, and He has designed you for His purpose – and He wants to use you for His glory.

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