

**Introduction: God is searching...**

*“For the eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the whole earth, that He may strongly support those whose hearts are completely His.”*

2 Chronicles 16:9

**... for a select group of people.**

**The Context of 2 Chronicles 16:9**

- **Past “success”** 2 Chronicles 14 & 15
  - Asa was a good king at a bad time!
  
- **A great door of opportunity** 2 Chronicles 16:1-6
  - Asa's greatest problem was really his greatest opportunity!
  
- **A sad commentary** 2 Chronicles 16:7-12
  - Asa started well, but finished poorly!

**The question: Will we answer God's call to make a significant impact at this pivotal moment in history?**

- Our great door of opportunity
- What will it mean for each of us?
  1. **MODEL IT**
  2. **FOCUS**

**The preview:**

In the next five sessions, we will examine the conditions that characterize those whom God strongly supports; those who, over time, develop Holy Ambition.

**Our Model = Nehemiah**

*<sup>1</sup>The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah: In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, <sup>2</sup>Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire." <sup>4</sup>When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.*

Nehemiah 1:1-4

## Prerequisite #1: A **DISLOCATED HEART**

- **What is a dislocated heart?**

A God-given concern for others that **PROPELS** us out of our **COMFORT ZONE**. It is a **passionate concern** for God's agenda that supersedes our own desires for personal peace and prosperity.

- **What does a dislocated heart look like?**

Exhibit A = Jesus

Philippians 2:5-13

Exhibit B = Paul

Romans 9:1-3

- **How do you develop a dislocated heart?**

1. Honest **EVALUATION**
2. Genuine **REPENTANCE**
3. **CAREFUL** Consideration
4. Ask God for **A DISLOCATED HEART**

**Discussion Questions:**

1. What was your initial response to hearing 2 Chronicles 16:9?
2. What kind of people is God searching for?
3. In what ways are we, as a church, at a crossroads right now? Discuss the implications for your life in light of Jesus' words, "to whom much is given, much is required."
4. What is a dislocated heart and why is it essential in preparation to answer God's call in our lives?
5. What specific steps of faith/obedience do you sense God is leading you to develop a dislocated heart? Who could help you on your journey?

## Introduction: God is searching...

*"For the eyes of the Lord go to and fro throughout the whole earth, that He may strongly support those whose hearts are completely His."*

2 Chronicles 16:9

...for a select group of people.

## The question:

What does it take to make a difference for God? What kind of person does He promise to strongly support?

## The answer:

A **DISLOCATED** heart.

*<sup>1</sup>The words of Nehemiah son of Hacaliah:*

*In the month of Kislev in the twentieth year, while I was in the citadel of Susa, <sup>2</sup>Hanani, one of my brothers, came from Judah with some other men, and I questioned them about the Jewish remnant that survived the exile, and also about Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>They said to me, "Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire." <sup>4</sup>When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.*

Nehemiah 1:1-4

- What is a dislocated heart?
- What does a dislocated heart look like?
- How do you develop a dislocated heart?

### Prerequisite #2: A **BROKEN SPIRIT**.

- **Two Timeless Axioms Concerning God's Character:**
  - God hates **PRIDE** 100% of the time.
  - God responds to a **BROKEN SPIRIT** 100% of the time.

Proverbs 8:13  
James 4:6

Psalms 51:16-17  
Isaiah 57:15

### How do we develop a broken spirit?

#### Our Model = Nehemiah

- A broken spirit begins with a **RESTORED VIEW OF GOD**.

*<sup>4</sup>When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven. <sup>5</sup>Then I said: "O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps His covenant of love with those who love Him and obey His commands, <sup>6a</sup>let Your ear be attentive and Your eyes open to hear the prayer Your servant is praying before You day and night for Your servants, the people of Israel.*

Nehemiah 1:4-6a

- **Application: Worship** (i.e. Isaiah 6:1-6)

- A broken spirit leads us to an **ACCURATE ASSESSMENT OF YOURSELF**.

*<sup>6b</sup>I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against You. <sup>7</sup>We have acted very wickedly toward You. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws You gave Your servant Moses.*

Nehemiah 1:6b-7

- **Application: Repentance and Confession** (i.e. James 4:7-10)

- A broken spirit results in a renewed commitment to fulfill **GOD'S AGENDA**.

*<sup>8</sup>Remember the instruction You gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, <sup>9</sup>but if you return to Me and obey My commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for My name.'*

*<sup>10</sup>They are Your servants and Your people, whom You redeemed by Your great strength and Your mighty hand. <sup>11</sup>O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of this Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants who delight in revering Your name. Give Your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man." I was cupbearer to the king.*

Nehemiah 1:8-11

- **Application: Intercession** (i.e. James 5:16)

### Summary principles for impact:

1. We must let God work deeply **IN** us before He will work significantly **THROUGH** us!
2. Until we make prayer a **PRIORITY**, progress, and power will never be a **REALITY**.
3. Difference Makers are not necessarily those with “a lot to give,” but those who make available all they have.

### Discussion Questions:

1. What is a “broken spirit?” Why do you think God always responds so positively to those who come with a broken spirit?
2. How does one cultivate or develop “a broken spirit?” (See Nehemiah's model – 3 aspects.)
3. Share one area of your life in which God spoke to you through this message and our time of confession and prayer together.
4. What one thing will you do beginning this week to be a Nehemiah in your world? Tell someone your plan and ask them to check up on you.

## Introduction: God is searching...

*"And I searched for a man among them who would build up the wall and stand in the gap before Me for the land that I might not destroy it . . ."*

Ezekiel 22:30

... for just one man or woman to "step out" and make a difference!

## The question:

Review - What does it take to make a difference for God? What kind of person?

1. The 1<sup>st</sup> prerequisite to Holy Ambition is a **DISLOCATED** heart.

➤ Do you care?

2. The 2<sup>nd</sup> prerequisite to Holy Ambition is a **BROKEN** spirit.

➤ Are you dependent?

## Prerequisite #3:

3. A **RADICAL STEP OF FAITH.**

➤ Will you step out?

## Our Model = Nehemiah

*<sup>1</sup>O Lord, let Your ear be attentive to the prayer of this Your servant and to the prayer of Your servants who delight in revering Your name. Give Your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man." I was cupbearer to the king.*

*<sup>1</sup>In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before; <sup>2</sup>so the king asked me, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart." I was very much afraid, <sup>3</sup>but I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?" <sup>4</sup>The king said to me, "What is it you want?" Then I prayed to the God of heaven, <sup>5</sup>and I answered the king, "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it." <sup>6</sup>Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, "How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?" It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time.*

Nehemiah 1:11-2:6

## Definition:

A radical faith is choosing to "step out" to fulfill God's clearly defined will at great personal risk and sacrifice.

## How do we develop a radical faith?

1. By remembering what faith is and is not.

Hebrews 11:1

2. By remembering how deeply God values our faith. Hebrews 11:6

3. By remembering what Jesus taught His followers about a radical faith.

• Jesus **CALLED** them to a radical faith. Luke 9:23-27

• Jesus **CLARIFIED** the object of their faith. Luke 9:28-45

• Jesus **WARNED** of the dangers of having a radical faith. Luke 9:46-56

- Comparison
- Exclusivity
- Misuse of power

• Jesus **OUTLINED** the cost of having a radical faith. Luke 9:57-62

- You can't hang on to stuff
- You can't hang on to people
- You can't hang on to the past

4. By remembering you can't "walk on water if you don't get out of the boat."

Luke 10:1-27

**Application/Discussion Questions:**

1. What would “stepping out” in faith look like in your personal arena and network of influence? (Family? Work? Finances? Time? Evangelism?)
2. What might a radical faith look like for you in your present and future ministry?
3. What barriers or fears make stepping out in radical faith difficult for you right now? Are you “hanging onto” anything that keeps you from following Christ? Is it stuff? People? The past?
4. What specific step will you take to begin strengthening your faith? Who would help you follow through on this commitment?

## Introduction: Why dreams die

Why is it that so many people sincerely desire to do so much, yet usually accomplish so little?

The Answer: **GOOD INTENTIONS!**

### ***AND***

Why is it that others who carefully prepare to do even a little, accomplish so much?

## Prerequisite #4: A **STRATEGIC PLAN**

### The question:

What must happen to our **Dislocated Hearts, Broken Spirits, and Radical Faiths** to turn our God-given dreams into reality?

### 1. It must begin with a **VISION:**

Chapter 1	Chapter 2
Problem	Solution
Susa	Jerusalem
Prayer	Answer
The Promise	The Provision
A Purpose	A Program
An Individual	A Group
Perceptual	Practical
The Heart	The Head

## 2. Where God's agenda is championed, God's resources **FLOW**:

*<sup>5</sup> ... and I answered the king, "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it." <sup>6</sup>Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, "How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?" It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time. <sup>7</sup>I also said to him, "If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah? <sup>8</sup>And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king's forest, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?" And **because the gracious hand of my God was upon me, the king granted my requests.** <sup>9</sup>So I went to the governors of Trans-Euphrates and gave them the king's letters. The king had also sent army officers and cavalry with me.*

Nehemiah 2:5-9

## 3. Your strategic plan must be "birthed" in **PRIVATE**:

*<sup>11</sup>I went to Jerusalem, and after staying there three days <sup>12</sup>I set out during the night with a few men. I had **not told anyone** what my God had put in my heart to do for Jerusalem. There were no mounts with me except the one I was riding on. <sup>13</sup>By night I went out through the Valley Gate toward the Jackal Well and the Dung Gate, **examining the walls** of Jerusalem, which had been broken down, and its gates, which had been destroyed by fire. <sup>14</sup>Then I moved on toward the Fountain Gate and the King's Pool, but there was not enough room for my mount to get through; <sup>15</sup>so I went up the valley by night, **examining the wall**. Finally, I turned back and reentered through the Valley Gate. <sup>16</sup>The officials **did not know** where I had gone or what I was doing, because as yet **I had said nothing** to the Jews or the priests or nobles or officials or any others who would be doing the work.*

Nehemiah 2:11-16

- 3 keys to “birthing” your strategic plan:

1. Silence: To LISTEN
2. Secrecy: To ASSESS
3. Solitude: To STRATEGIZE

#### 4. Your strategic plan must be launched in PUBLIC:

*17Then I said to them, "You see the bad situation we are in, that Jerusalem is desolate and its gates burned by fire. Come, let us rebuild the wall of Jerusalem that we may no longer be a reproach." 18And I told them how the hand of my God had been favorable to me, and also about the king's words which he had spoken to me. Then they said, "Let us arise and build." So they put their hands to the good [work].*

Nehemiah 2:17-18

- 7 steps to launching a strategic plan:

1. Clearly define the PROBLEM.
2. Identify with the PROBLEM.
3. Propose a “we” SOLUTION.
4. Give a clear, strong CHALLENGE.
5. Motivate at the deepest LEVEL.
6. Help others see God's HAND in your vision.
7. Explain, specifically, how everyone can BE INVOLVED in the project.



## Introduction:

### Prerequisite #5: A **PERSONAL COMMITMENT**

- **The awesome power of commitment:**

**Definition:** A pledge or promise to do something; dedication to a long-term course of action, relationship, project, or cause.

- Commitment **INSPIRES**:
- Commitment **PROTECTS**:
- Commitment **PROVIDES**:

- **Dynamics of commitment: our dilemma**

- **Developing commitment: Nehemiah's secret**

1. He **MODELED** it convincingly!
2. He **ASKED** for it specifically!
3. He **CREATED** an environment to sustain it!

## Builders of the wall:

Nehemiah 3

<sup>1</sup>Eliashib the high priest and his fellow priests went to work and rebuilt the Sheep Gate. They dedicated it and set its doors in place, building as far as the Tower of the Hundred, which they dedicated, and as far as the Tower of Hananel. <sup>2</sup>The men of \*Jericho built the adjoining section, and Zaccur son of Imri built next to them. \*17 miles from Jerusalem – left summer harvest

<sup>3</sup>The Fish Gate was rebuilt by the sons of Hassenaah. They laid its beams and put its doors and bolts and bars in place. <sup>4</sup>Meremoth son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, repaired the next section. Next to him Meshullam son of Berekiah, the son of Meshezabel, made repairs, and next to him Zadok son of Baana also made repairs. <sup>5</sup>The next section was repaired by the men of Tekoa, but their nobles would not put their shoulders to the work under their supervisors.

\*6 miles \*10 miles

<sup>6</sup>The Jeshanah Gate was repaired by Joiada son of Paseah and Meshullam son of Besodeiah. They laid its beams and put its doors and bolts and bars in place. <sup>7</sup>Next to them, repairs were made by men from \*Gibeon and \*Mizpah— Melatiah of Gibeon and Jadon of Meronoth-- places under the authority of the governor of Trans-Euphrates. <sup>8</sup>Uzziel son of Harhaiah, one of the goldsmiths, repaired the next section; and Hananiah, one of the perfume-makers, made repairs next to that. They restored Jerusalem as far as the Broad Wall. <sup>9</sup>Rephaiah son of Hur, ruler of a half-district of Jerusalem, repaired the next section. <sup>10</sup>Adjoining this, Jediah son of Harumaph made repairs opposite his house, and Hattush son of Hashabneiah made repairs next to him. <sup>11</sup>Malkijah son of Harim and Hasshub son of Pahath-Moab repaired another section and the Tower of the Ovens. <sup>12</sup>Shallum son of Hallohesh, ruler of a half-district of Jerusalem, repaired the next section with the help of his daughters.

<sup>13</sup>The Valley Gate was repaired by Hanun and the residents of Zanoah. They rebuilt it and put its doors and bolts and bars in place. They also repaired five hundred yards of the wall as far as the Dung Gate.

<sup>14</sup>The Dung Gate was repaired by Malkijah son of Recab, ruler of the district of Beth Hakkerem. He rebuilt it and put its doors and bolts and bars in place.

\*26 miles south

<sup>15</sup>The Fountain Gate was repaired by Shallun son of Col-Hozez, ruler of the district of Mizpah. He rebuilt it, roofing it over and putting its doors and bolts and bars in place. He also repaired the wall of the Pool of Siloam, by the King's Garden, as far as the steps going down from the City of David. <sup>16</sup>Beyond him, Nehemiah son of Azbuk, ruler of a half-district of \*Beth Zur, made repairs up to a point opposite the tombs of David, as far as the artificial pool and the House of the Heroes.

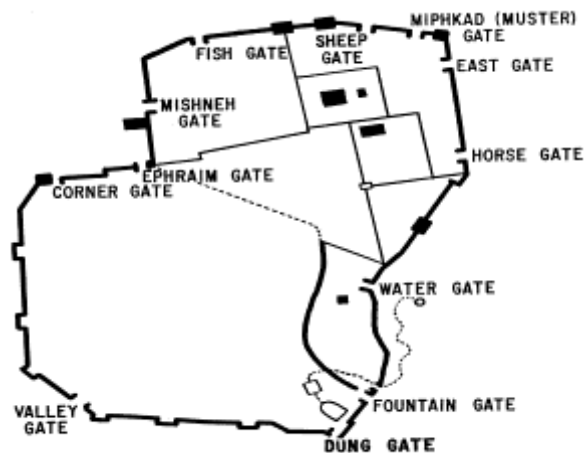
\*16-17 miles

<sup>17</sup>Next to him, the repairs were made by the Levites under Rehum son of Bani. Beside him, Hashabiah, ruler of half the district of \*Keilah, carried out repairs for his district. <sup>18</sup>Next to him, the repairs were made by their countrymen under Binnui son of (Henadad) ruler of the other half-district of Keilah.

<sup>19</sup>Next to him, Ezer son of Jeshua, ruler of Mizpah, repaired another section, from a point facing the ascent to the armory as far as the angle. <sup>20</sup>Next to him, Baruch son of Zabbai zealously repaired another section, from the angle to the entrance of the house of Eliashib the high priest. <sup>21</sup>Next to him, Meremoth son of Uriah, the son of Hakkoz, repaired another section, from the entrance of Eliashib's house to the end of it.

<sup>22</sup>The repairs next to him were made by the (priests) (from the surrounding region). <sup>23</sup>Beyond them, Benjamin and Hasshub made repairs in front of their house; and next to them, Azariah son of Maaseiah, the son of Ananiah, made repairs beside his house. <sup>24</sup>Next to him, Binnui son of Henadad repaired another section, from Azariah's house to the angle and the corner, <sup>25</sup>and Palal son of Uzai worked opposite the angle and the tower projecting from the upper palace near the court of the guard. Next to him, Pedaiah son of Parosh <sup>26</sup>and the (temple servants) living on the hill of Ophel made repairs up to a point opposite the Water Gate toward the east and the projecting tower. <sup>27</sup>Next to them, the men of \*Tekoa repaired another section, from the great projecting tower to the wall of Ophel. \*10 miles south

<sup>28</sup>Above the Horse Gate, the (priests) made repairs, each in front of his own house. <sup>29</sup>Next to them, Zadok son of Immer made repairs <opposite his house>. Next to him, Shemaiah son of Shecaniah, the (guard) at the East Gate, made repairs. <sup>30</sup>Next to him, Hananiah son of Shelemiah, and Hanun, the sixth son of Zalaph, repaired another section. Next to them, Meshullam son of Berekiah made repairs opposite his living quarters. <sup>31</sup>Next to him, Malkijah, one of the (goldsmiths), made repairs as far as the house of the temple servants and the (merchants), opposite the Inspection Gate, and as far as the room above the corner; <sup>32</sup>and between the room above the corner and the Sheep Gate the (goldsmiths) and (merchants) made repairs.



## How to make and sustain “a personal commitment”

### 1. The principle of cooperation: “We will never get beyond how we’re getting along.” How?

- Recognize people are **DIFFERENT**.
- Recognize the immense value of **EVERY** person.
- Recognize that our common **GOAL / VISION** is greater than our individual differences.

➤ *Personal commitments are fostered when we feel like we belong!*

### 2. The principle of coordination: “The multiple efforts of a group are far greater than the sum of its parts.”

- Recognize we **NEED** each other.
- Recognize there is a **JOB** only you can do.

➤ *Personal commitments grow when we know we are needed!*

### 3. The principle of motivation: “The value of the project to the worker will determine the value of the worker to the project.”

- Motivation must begin with the **LEADERS & INFLUENCERS**.
- Motivation is sustained by **GODLY RESTED INTEREST**.
  1. The completed wall would mean **PROTECTION** from their enemies.
  2. The completed wall would mean **PROVISION** for a better life.
  3. The completed wall would mean **PRODUCTIVITY** and impact in their world.

➤ *Personal commitments are sustained when “the” vision becomes “our” vision!*

**Prerequisite #6: A COURAGEOUS SOUL**

**Introduction:**

"I had just made the deepest **personal commitment** of my life. I had followed my holy ambition... and I was discouraged, depressed, and disillusioned."

- A common pitfall: **FALSE EXPECTATIONS**
- A timeless axiom: Our greatest personal commitments and spiritual victories are almost always followed by periods of intense opposition.

**Opposition:**

Nehemiah 4 - 6

	<b><u>Chapter 4</u></b>	<b><u>Chapter 5</u></b>	<b><u>Chapter 6</u></b>
<b><u>Opposition:</u></b>	External	Internal	Individual
<b><u>Strategy:</u></b>	Frontal	Within	Subtle
<b><u>Goal:</u></b>	To Discourage	To Divide	To Destroy
<b><u>Means:</u></b>	Ridicule/Fear	Selfishness, Greed	Deception, Intimidation

**How to handle external opposition:**

Nehemiah 4

- **Round #1:** The enemy's "first punch" to thwart God's program in our lives is:
  - The "jab" of ridicule and criticism Nehemiah 4:1-3
  
  - Nehemiah's response = Our example Nehemiah 4:4-6
  
- **Round #2:** The enemy's "second punch" to thwart God's program in our lives is:
  - The "uppercuts" of discouragement Nehemiah 4:7-12
    - **Four causes of discouragement:** **Key Word:**
      1. Loss of strength **FATIGUE**
      2. Loss of vision **PERSPECTIVE**
      3. Loss of confidence **FAITH**
      4. Loss of security **FEAR**

- Nehemiah's response teaches us how to "come off the ropes" and "rule the ring."

Nehemiah 4:13-23

- **Four ways to overcome discouragement:**
  1. Be **PROACTIVE!**
  2. Remember who's on your **TEAM!**
  3. Fight! **FIGHT! FIGHT!**
  4. Never fight **ALONE!**

### **Summary: The Key = Courage!**

- The **COURAGE** to **FIGHT** when external opposition seeks to DISCOURAGE us.

Nehemiah 4

- The **COURAGE** to **CONFRONT** when internal conflict seeks to DIVIDE us.

Nehemiah 5

- The **COURAGE** to **ENDURE** when personal attacks seek to DESTROY us.

Nehemiah 6

### **Application:**

Use this study guide as a bookmark in your Bible for the NEXT 10 WEEKS. Pull it out often and review it when you experience opposition.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. "God's work is always carried out in a hostile environment." How does remembering this phrase encourage you?
2. In what ways are you experiencing opposition with regard to living out God's agenda in your life and relationships?
3. Which of Nehemiah's examples of "handling conflict and opposition" were most helpful to you? Why?
4. What specific application do you need to make to deal with the opposition you are facing in your life?
5. What can you (and we) expect in the next few months as we step out with Holy Ambition?

## **Introduction: The “extreme makeovers” movement**

1. Houses
2. Cars
3. Motorcycles
4. Pets
5. People

- **What is a “makeover”?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Why are we so fascinated by makeovers?**

### The ultimate “extreme makeovers”

*<sup>17</sup>Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

2 Corinthians 5:17

- Who you used to be Ephesians 2:1-3
- Who you are now Ephesians 2:4-6
- Why God does “extreme makeovers” Ephesians 2:7-9

### You are a masterpiece in the making

*<sup>10</sup>For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Ephesians 2:10

### Where does God do His “extreme makeovers?”

- In a special **COMMUNITY / CHURCH** Ephesians 2:18-22
- In your **HEART** Ephesians 3:14-19

## How does God do "extreme makeovers"?

Ephesians 4:7-16

- He Gave **SPIRITUAL GIFTS** ...

*By the ascended Christ, To every believer,*

*For the profit of others, Through the Holy Spirit* sovereignly;

*At the time of salvation, On the basis of grace,*

*To produce the life of Christ (the "Ultimate Makeover")*

*In every believer.*

## Ten principles to understand spiritual gifts:

1. Every Christian has one or more spiritual gifts.
2. Many believers have received more than one spiritual gift.
3. Spiritual gifts may be given at the moment of regeneration, but they may lie undiscovered and dormant for a long period of time.
4. Spiritual gifts can be abused and neglected, but if they are received at regeneration, it would appear that they cannot be lost.
5. Spiritual gifts are not the same as the gift of the Holy Spirit.
6. Spiritual gifts are not the same as the fruit of the Spirit.
7. Spiritual gifts are not the same as natural talents.
8. Some spiritual gifts are more useful in local churches than others because they result in greater edification of the body.

9. Charismata *literally means* "grace gifts." These gifts are sovereignly and undeservedly given by the Holy Spirit.
10. Gifts are God's spiritual equipment for effective service and edification of the body.

**Conclusion:** How discovering and developing your spiritual gifts will cause an "extreme makeover" in your life.

**Discussion Questions:**

1. In what area of your life would you like an extreme makeover?
2. What is the difference between God's "extreme makeover" and the makeovers we do on our own?
3. On a scale of 1 to 10 how much do you know about spiritual gifts?
4. What is your primary spiritual gift? Why are spiritual gifts so important to God's work in us?
5. What practical difference does knowing and developing your spiritual gift make?

## **Introduction: My Testimony**

- ◆ How unwrapping my gift made a difference in my life.
  
- ◆ My Journey:
  - **The Era of Ignorance** – “I was clueless”
  
  - **The Era of Confusion** – “I was paralyzed”
  
  - **The Era of Discovery** – “I was knowledgeable”  
(I learned the 10 basic principles of spiritual gifts.)
  
  - **The Era of Empowerment** – “I was focused and energized”

**How to discover your spiritual gifts:**

**The facts – Four key passages**

- Romans 12
- Ephesians 4
- 1 Corinthians 12
- 1 Peter 4

**The framework**

*<sup>4</sup>There are different kinds of **gifts**, but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup>There are different kinds of **service**, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup>There are different kinds of **working**, but the same God works all of them in all men.*

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

“Gifts”	“Service”	“Workings”
<b>Motivational</b>	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Manifestation</b>
(Charismata) Romans 12	(Diakonion) Ephesians 4 1 Corinthians 12:28	(Energamaton) 1 Corinthians 12:8-11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prophecy</li> <li>- Service</li> <li>- Teaching</li> <li>- Encouragement</li> <li>- Giving</li> <li>- Leadership</li> <li>- Mercy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Apostles</li> <li>- Prophets</li> <li>- Evangelists</li> <li>- Pastor/Teacher</li> <li>- Teachers</li> <li>- Working of Miracles</li> <li>- Gifts of Healing</li> <li>- Helping</li> <li>- Tongues</li> <li>- Administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Word of Wisdom</li> <li>- Word of Knowledge</li> <li>- Faith</li> <li>- Healing</li> <li>- Miracles</li> <li>- Prophecy</li> <li>- Discernment</li> <li>- Tongues</li> <li>- Interpretation of Tongues</li> </ul>

### Motivational gifts described

Romans 12:6-8

- **Prophecy** – The divine enablement to proclaim God's truth with power and clarity in a timely and culturally sensitive fashion for correction, repentance, or edification. Ability to reveal God's Word accurately.  
People with this gift ask: *“What went wrong? What caused this?”*
  
- **Service** – The divine enablement to attach spiritual value to the accomplishment of physical tasks within the Body of Christ. Ability to demonstrate love by meeting practical needs that releases other Christians for direct spiritual ministry.  
People with this gift ask: *“What can I do to help?”*
  
- **Teaching** – The divine enablement to understand and give detailed explanation of biblical truth. Ability to search out and validate truth which has been presented.  
People with this gift ask: *“What is truth? Where did you get that? Why?”*
  
- **Exhortation** - The divine enablement to come alongside another in need of encouragement to reassure, strengthen, affirm, and challenge those who are discouraged or wavering in their faith. Ability to stimulate the faith of others.  
People with this gift ask: *“What must be done to fix this? How can we move to wholeness?”*
  
- **Giving** – The divine enablement to earn money, manage it well, and wisely contribute to the work of the Lord with cheerfulness and liberality. Ability to entrust personal assets to others for the furtherance of their ministry.  
People with this gift ask: *“What can I give to meet the need?”*

- **Leadership** – The divine enablement to see what needs to be done, set goals and attract, and lead and motivate people to accomplish the work of the ministry. Ability to coordinate the activities of others for the achievement of common goals.

People with this gift ask: “*Where’s the goal?*”

- **Mercy** – The divine enablement to minister cheerfully and appropriately to people who are suffering or undeserving and to spare them from punishment or consequences justly deserved. Ability to identify with and comfort those who are in distress.

People with this gift ask: “*How can I make them feel better?*”

### Conclusion - “The waiter meets the family of God”

- Prophecy
- Service
- Teaching
- Encouragement
- Giving
- Leadership
- Mercy

### Application / Discussion Questions:

1. Review the seven motivational gifts; which two most resonate with you?
2. What new insight did you gain about how spiritual gifts operate?
3. Why do you think knowing and developing your spiritual gift is so important from God's perspective?
4. What is your “next step” in unwrapping your spiritual gift?

**Five reasons you need to develop your spiritual gift:**

1. **DIRECTION** and purpose for your life.
2. **FREEDOM** to embrace and enjoy who you are.
3. **JOY** that results from impacting lives.
4. **AFFIRMATION** of your victory with Christ.
5. **ACCOUNTABILITY** as you will be held responsible for the stewardship of your gift.

**Developing your gifts begins with clarity:**

There are three types of spiritual gifts:

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

1. Every believer has one primary/**motivational gift**. We are to concentrate on discovering and developing this gift.

Romans 12:6-8

2. That motivational gift (drive and ability) can express itself through a variety of **ministry** gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 4:11

3. When we exercise our motivational gift through our ministry gifts the Holy Spirit determines what **manifestations** (or effect) will most benefit the receiver.

1 Corinthians 12:7

<sup>4</sup>There are different kinds of **gifts**, but the same Spirit.

<sup>5</sup>There are different kinds of **service**, but the same Lord.

<sup>6</sup>There are different kinds of **working**, but the same God works all of them in all men.

1 Corinthians 12:4-6

“Gifts”	“Service”	“Workings”
<b>Motivational</b>	<b>Ministry</b>	<b>Manifestation</b>
(Charismata) Romans 12	(Diakonion) Ephesians 4 1 Corinthians 12:28	(Energamaton) 1 Corinthians 12:8-11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Prophecy</li> <li>- Service</li> <li>- Teaching</li> <li>- Encouragement</li> <li>- Giving</li> <li>- Leadership</li> <li>- Mercy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Apostles</li> <li>- Prophets</li> <li>- Evangelists</li> <li>- Pastor/Teacher</li> <li>- Teachers</li> <li>- Working of Miracles</li> <li>- Gifts of Healing</li> <li>- Helping</li> <li>- Tongues</li> <li>- Administration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Word of Wisdom</li> <li>- Word of Knowledge</li> <li>- Faith</li> <li>- Healing</li> <li>- Miracles</li> <li>- Prophecy</li> <li>- Discernment</li> <li>- Tongues</li> <li>- Interpretation of Tongues</li> </ul>

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:7

### Developing your gifts demand a basic understanding of each New Testament gift\*

- **Apostleship** – The divine enablement to start churches and oversee their development. Ability to minister cross-culturally with the goal of planting churches.
- **Prophecy** – The divine enablement to proclaim God's truth with power and clarity in a timely and culturally sensitive fashion for correction, repentance, or edification. Ability to reveal God's Word accurately.

- **Evangelism** – The ability to be an unusually effective instrument in leading unbelievers to a saving knowledge of Christ. Some with this gift are most effective in personal evangelism, while others may be used by God in group evangelism or cross-cultural evangelism.
- **Pastor/Teacher** – A person with this spiritual gift has the ability to lead, nourish, protect, and personally care for the needs of a “flock” of believers. Not all people with the office of pastor (elder, overseer) have or need the gift of pastoring or shepherding, and many with this gift do not have or need the office. This gift also includes teaching ability and is the only dual gift in the list.
- **Teaching** – The divine enablement to understand and give detailed explanation of biblical truth. Ability to search out and validate truth which has been presented.
- **Miracles** – (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28) The ability to serve as an instrument through whom God accomplishes acts that manifest supernatural power. Miracles bear witness to the presence of God and the truth of his proclaimed Word and appear to occur most frequently in association with missionary activity. The gospel message carries its own authority, but God sometimes graciously uses miracles to authenticate and open doors for the proclamation of forgiveness and life in Christ.
- **Healing** – (1 Corinthians 12:9, 28, 30) The ability to serve as a human instrument through whom God cures illnesses and restores health. The possessor of this gift is not the source of power but a vessel who can heal only those diseases the Lord chooses to heal. This spiritual gift should not be confused with the signs and wonders performed by Jesus and the apostles, and it should not be discredited because of the abuses of grandstanding faith healers.
- **Helps** – (1 Corinthians 12:28) The ability to enhance the effectiveness of the ministry of other members of the body. This is the only use of this word in the New Testament, and it appears to be distinct from the gift of service. Some writers suggest that while the gift of service is more group-oriented, the gift of helps is more person-oriented.

- **Administration/Leadership** – (1 Corinthians 12:28) This word, like helps, appears only once in the New Testament, and it is used outside of Scripture as a helmsman who steers a ship to its destination. This suggests that the spiritual gift of administration is the ability to steer a church or Christian organization toward the fulfillment of its goals by managing its affairs and implementing necessary plans. A person may have the gift of leadership without the gift of administration.
- **Wisdom** – (1 Corinthians 12:8) The ability to apply the principles of the Word of God in a practical way to specific situations and to recommend the best course of action at the best time. The exercise of this gift skillfully distills insight and discernment into excellent advice.
- **Knowledge** – (1 Corinthians 12:8) The ability to discover, analyze, and systematize truth for the benefit of others. With this gift, one speaks with understanding and penetration. But “the word of knowledge” can also involve supernatural perception and discernment for the purpose of ministering to others.
- **Faith** – (1 Corinthians 12:9) The ability to have a vision for what God wants to be done and to believe confidently that it will be accomplished in spite of circumstances and appearances to the contrary. The gift of faith transforms vision into reality.
- **Distinguishing of Spirits (Discernment)** – (1 Corinthians 12:10) The ability to discern the spirit of truth and the spirit of error (cf. 1 John 4:6). With this gift, one may distinguish reality versus counterfeits, the divine versus the demonic, true versus false teaching, and in some cases, spiritual versus carnal motives.
- **Tongues** – (1 Corinthians 12:10, 28, 30; 14:1-40) The ability to receive and impart a spiritual message in a language the recipient never learned. For other members of the body to be edified, this message must be interpreted either by the recipient (1 Corinthians 14:13) or by another person with the gift of interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:26-28).
- **Interpretation of Tongues** – (1 Corinthians 14:13) The ability to translate into the vernacular a message publicly uttered in a tongue. This gift may be combined with the gift of tongues (1 Corinthians 14:13), or it can operate separately (1 Corinthians 14:26-28).

**Developing your spiritual gift demands that you exercise them by involvement in...**

- **PEOPLE'S** lives and needs.
- A **SMALL GROUP** community.
- **ONGOING** training and education.
- Regular **RISK TAKING** opportunities.

**Introduction: Five case studies of “spiritual gift abuse”**

1. “God spoke to me about you...you’re supposed to...”
2. “Come into the back room/prayer room and I guarantee you will receive...”
3. “Every believer is supposed to receive this spiritual gift; it’s the evidence that you’re really...”
4. “I don’t have a spiritual gift, I’m not worthy of one yet, but someday I hope...”
5. “I don’t care what the Bible says, I am God’s prophet for this church and He has revealed to me that...”

**The 10 most common abuses of spiritual gifts:**

1. Beware when spiritual gifts are used as a means of manipulation, power, or control in personal and/or church relationships.

1 Corinthians 12:4-7

2. Beware whenever anyone claims to have the ability to give or bestow any particular gift if you follow their formula.

1 Corinthians 12:11

3. Beware when any particular gift is made a universal evidence of spirituality, salvation, or other spiritual blessing.

1 Corinthians 12:29-30

4. Beware when the focus of a church service, ministry, or religious event is on spiritual gifts and their manifestation rather than on the Giver of the gifts and His agenda for His church.

Ephesians 4:11-12

5. Beware of comparing your gifts with anyone else's; it always leads to carnality.

1 Corinthians 12:11-18

6. Beware of any extreme position on spiritual gifts – i.e. “they do not exist” to “a spirit-filled Christian will have all the gifts.”

1 Corinthians 12:1

7. Beware of using your spiritual gift in the energy of the flesh to fulfill personal ego needs or impress other people.

1 Corinthians 13:1-3

8. Beware of confusing spiritual gifts with spiritual fruit as the evidence of spiritual growth and maturity.

Ephesians 4:13, Galatians 5:22-23, John 15:8

9. Beware that apparent “manifestations of the spirit” can be counterfeited by human schemes and demonic forces.

Matthew 7:22-24, 2 Corinthians 11:13-15

10. Beware of viewing the discovery, development, and deployment of your spiritual gift either as an “optional exercise” or interesting but not serious responsibility.

Ephesians 4:7, 2 Corinthians 5:9-10

**Your spiritual gift - action plan:**

1. **COMMIT** to discover, develop, and deploy your spiritual gift in a local body of believers.
2. **PRAY** seriously seeking divine guidance.
3. **STUDY** the gift passages in God's Word and corresponding handouts.
4. **SEEK** quality counsel.
5. **TEST** the waters" for 6 to 8 weeks.
6. **EXAMINE** the fulfillment (joy) factor.
7. **RECOGNIZE** God's evident blessing.

**Application / Discussion Questions:**

1. Which of the abuses have you observed firsthand?
2. What was the impact of those abuses on you? On others?
3. Which of the 10 abuses might you be most prone to "fall into?"
4. Where are you in your journey to discover, develop, and deploy your spiritual gifts?
5. What specific step of faith/obedience are you going to take?

**“GIFTS”**

**Motivational**

Romans 12

- Prophecy
- Service
- Teaching
- Encouragement
- Giving
- Leadership
- Mercy

**“SERVICE”**

**Ministry**

Ephesians 4  
1 Corinthians 12:28

- Apostles
- Prophets
- Evangelists
- Pastor/Teacher
- Teachers
- Working of Miracles
- Gifts of Healing
- Helping
- Tongues
- Administration

**“WORKINGS”**

**Manifestation**

1 Corinthians 12:8-11

- Word of Wisdom
- Word of Knowledge
- Faith
- Healing
- Miracles
- Prophecy
- Discernment
- Tongues
- Interpretation of tongues