

## Spiritual Gifts #1 - Find Your Position on Team Jesus

- Am so excited, brand new sermon series week one. Welcome, welcome. Welcome. We're gonna be dealing with spiritual gifts so you can find your position on Team Jesus. We're gonna cover a lot over the course of four weeks, and you're probably going to have some other questions. So I wrote it all up for, if you want to go deep, grab the free copy of the book on the way out. If you're online, just go to [realfaith.com](http://realfaith.com) and you'll find a free ebook version of it there. So let me start by saying, this is so exciting. You're not excited. I'm so excited for you because what I believe God is going to do, he's going to reveal to you who you are and how he made you and his purpose and his plan for you. And I believe he has meaningful, valuable, purposeful ministry for the Holy Spirit to do through you so that you can be in the front row seat to see God working through you, to impact the lives of others. This is the most exciting life. It's the most purposeful life. It's the most passionate life. It's why you were created and why you're still here. If you've already met Jesus and you have not gone to heaven, you may be wondering why the delay, because he loves you. And he has some things for you to do. And some things that he wants to do in you and through you. And that's what we're talking about, finding your position on Team Jesus. So let me start by saying we've all been on various teams. When you were a kid, maybe you had a work group that was part of a school project. Maybe in college, you were in a club or an organization or a fraternity or sorority or some sort of team. Maybe you've played on a sports team. Maybe you were a musician in a band. Some of us have been on teams for our work and job. Some of you were in the military or are in the military. We've all been on a team. And the key when you're on a team is to figure out, okay, what's my position. What's my contribution. What's my role. What are my responsibilities? And if you are a Christian, you're on team Jesus in the early church, when the New Testament was written, the team was team Caesar. And if you lived in the Roman empire, you would have to say, Caesar is Lord. And that was sort of their pledge of allegiance. That was their highest alliance. That's your greatest commitment. My time, my talent, my treasure, they are to serve Caesar and the Roman empire because Caesar is Lord. Well then Jesus came along and Jesus said, actually, you're not the Lord. I am. I came down from heaven. I'm God I created you and the planet. And my kingdom is a lot bigger than your nation. Well, Jesus has gotten a lot of trouble for saying that he was the Lord. So they killed him. They crucified him three days later, he got up and said, I told you, I'm the Lord. And so now we all know who the Lord is because Caesar was not Lord. He killed Jesus, the Lord and Jesus, the Lord forgive sin and conquered death. It proves that he is the Lord of Lords. And so at that point, Christian started calling out to Jesus as Lord. And it was our way of saying our highest allegiance, our greatest Alliance, our deepest devotion is to Jesus. There's no one that we are committed to. There's nothing that we're committed to that is above Jesus or alongside of Jesus, everyone. And everything is under Jesus. He is the Lord. And this caused Christians to really separate from the rest of the Roman citizens. And there, there was really two teams. Well, he as Caesar, Lord or Jesus Lord. And if you're here and you're on team Jesus, what that means is that we see Jesus as our Lord, and we want to live our life under his rule and reign. And we want to serve on his team. Now, that being said, the good news is if you

are serving, Jesus is Lord and you are serving on team Jesus. The really good news is you're on the winning team. How many of you have been on a losing team? We've all been on a losing team and you give all of your energy and your effort to end up like the diamond backs. And it's, it's I mean, pray for resurrection, but they're obviously buried. So if you're a sons fan so close and oftentimes we're on a team and we give all of our effort and energy to a losing effort, the good news is if you read the rest of the Bible, especially the conclusion, it ends really well for team Jesus. Our Jesus is alive and well ruling and reigning. One day he will return to planet earth. He will crush and conquer all of his enemies. He will usher in his eternal kingdom. He will lift the curse. And if you're on team Jesus, it's going to be a great day every day because you're on the winning team. And when it comes to Christianity, what I want you to know is that we don't have fans. We only have players on team Jesus. What happens in sports? There are a few players on the field, and then there's a lot of fans in the stands. And, and I used to play baseball. I wasn't great. That's why I'm free to do this job, but I used to play baseball and I love baseball. And, and there was a day when I was a player and I was on the field. And then the day came where my playing days were over and I became a fan and had to go sit up in the stands and a buddy of mine. He's about similar age, loves baseball as well. Every year, his favorite day of the year, he signs up for something called fantasy camp. The fantasy camp is where heavy middle-aged men with disposable income, pretend like they're athletes and don't judge. I think it's a good idea. So what he does, he signs up for fantasy camp. And one day, a year during spring training, he gets to put on the uniform. He gets to go into the clubhouse, into the dugout, onto the field, gets to take batting practice with his favorite major league team and shag a few fly balls. But it's just a fantasy. The point is, if you're on team Jesus, there are no, there are only players, but church staff, or to be like coaches equipping the saints to do the work of the ministry. The Bible says, and if you're a Christian, that means you're on the field. You're on the team. You have a position to play. Your contributions are vital and significant. And so the hope her end goal with this series is if you're not yet serving, having found your place on team Jesus, that you wouldn't try and be a fan because we don't have any. Ultimately all we have is players. And we want to get you on the field and to do that, what we're talking about is spirit filled ministry. So we're going to jump in and look at the life of Christ and then Christians doing ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit. And so looking at the story and the life of Jesus, we learned that he was filled, empowered, led did ministry by the power of the Holy Spirit. I wrote a whole book called spirit filled Jesus that covers this, but this is a quick summation in Luke chapter three and four, when Jesus had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened and the Holy Spirit descended upon him. Up until this point, Jesus hadn't begun. His public ministry had started preaching and teaching and healing and casting out demons. This was his public initiation inauguration of public ministry. And it goes on to then explain that this not only the Holy Spirit descend on him, as he begins, his ministry says and Jesus full of the Holy Spirit returned from the Jordan. He was led by the spirit. He returned in the power of the spirit. And then he goes to the synagogue. He opens the Old Testament book of Isaiah. And what scripture does he read? The spirit of the Lord has anointed me. Anointed means that the Holy Spirit has chosen and appointed him. Jesus Christ Christ literally means anointed in the Holy Spirit. So Jesus is God become a man. But the question is, how did he avoid temptation? How did he do ministry? How did he preach and teach and love and heal and serve and lead by

the presence and the power of the person of the Holy Spirit. And so Jesus though, he wasn't his God. He set aside the continual use of his divine attributes. And he lived by the power of the Holy Spirit to give for us an example of what life is supposed to look like when it's live by God's power. And so Jesus' ministry was literally spirit filled, spirit empowered ministry, and you can't do ministry apart from the Holy Spirit. You just can't. You just can't. Because apart from the Holy Spirit, all we have is our sinful flesh. The sinful flesh does not do holy ministry. Only the Holy Spirit does holy ministry. So what happens then is Jesus lives. Jesus dies. Jesus rises and Jesus does all of the work for us to be Christians. And he says on the cross, it is finished. Meaning I paid the penalty for your sin. If you don't yet know the Lord, Jesus Christ, this is the most important decision you will ever make. And this is the day of your salvation. This is the most significant day of your life. And it is the beginning of your new eternal life. That you are a sinner. That Jesus is a savior, that there is a God, and he has a problem with you, but he has sent Jesus to deal with your sin problem as your savior. And after Jesus died and rose, and he forgave sin and conquered death, he appeared to crowds over the course of 40 days. And then he, he ascended rather back into heaven where he had come from. Well, then the Christians are really excited. They're like, everybody's got to know this. Jesus Christ is Lord he's God he's savior he's king he's Christ. And they just want to go tell everybody. But before he returned to heaven, here's what Jesus told them in Acts chapter one and two, he says, you got to wait because you can't go do ministry without the Holy Spirit. He says, you will receive power. When the Holy Spirit has come upon, you ministry is done by God's power, not just our power. And you will be my witnesses. Ministry is ultimately just witnessing to the goodness of God and the presence of others. When the day of Pentecost arrived, that's a Jewish holiday. Suddenly there came from heaven, a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit. And then what happens is they start doing ministry preaching, teaching, planting churches. This is where Christianity finds its inception in the presence of the Holy Spirit. The author of these two books is the same man. His name is Luke and he's a medical doctor. So he writes about the life of Christ and Christians following in the footsteps of Christ. And he shows us that the Holy Spirit descends upon Jesus to anoint and empower him for spirit filled ministry. Jesus fulfills his ministry returns to his heavenly throne and then sends the Holy Spirit to descend upon and spiritually baptized the Christians to continue the ministry of Christ. And so what it means to do spirit-filled ministry is to follow in the footsteps of Jesus and to be following in the example of Jesus. And so what I like to say is, number one, the Holy Spirit gives spiritual gifts, but first and foremost, the Holy Spirit is the gift. Different Christians have different spiritual gifts, but we all have the same Holy Spirit. And so the gift is the Holy Spirit. And then he brings with him additional gifts. Let me see it this way. People don't just have gifts. People are gifts. You may not, no this, but you are a gift. You're a gift to our church family. We love you. If you're here, it's an honor to have you. It's a blessing to have you. My wife and my kids. They're all gifted. God has given them spiritual gifts, but they are gifts. They don't just come with gifts. They are gifts, right? When I held my children and my hands, when they were born, they were a gift. They're a gift from me, the Lord. And they come with gifts from the Lord. So first and foremost, the Holy Spirit is the gift. And then he gives additional gifts and you are a gift and you come with additional gifts. But what we don't want to do is just focus on the gifts that you bring, but the gifts that you are so that we love people. And

we don't just use people for what they can do for us. In addition, what we learn here is that ministry is going to work with your father and that's what Jesus does. And that's what the Christians do. So let me explain spirit filled ministry to you and how I see it. I'll tell you a story. There's probably, I'm like Jesus in three ways. I'm the oldest of a large family. My dad's name is Joe and he's a construction worker. That's probably the only three things I have in common with Jesus. None of which are, you know, high character or particularly nothing that I did. So I was born to a man named Joseph has swung a hammer and that was my dad. And so growing up, my dad worked very hard to literally break his back, feeding our family. And I want to publicly honor my dad, Joe Joseph. Who's a great man and a hard working man. And I learned how to work for my dad. And I would see my dad get up and he would put on his steel-toed work boots, his jeans, he would put on his white t-shirt. He would grab his lunch box with his thermos, grab his hard hat, his tool belt. And he would jump in the truck early to work, long hours to feed our family. And then one day I was a little boy, quite young. I don't remember how young it probably even before school age, my dad said, Hey, Marcie, I'm going to take you to work with me tomorrow. I was like, that sounds awesome. That sounds great. I'm I'm I'm now a man. This is my blue collar bar mitzvah. I'm now a man. And so I got up early in the morning with my dad and I put on my little boots and my little jeans, my low white t-shirt and I grabbed my little lunchbox and my little thermos. I got my little heart out. I got my little tool bucket and I jumped in the truck with my dad and we're going to work. And I'm feeling like, I feel like a little man Markey's feeling good. So I I'm, I'm driving with my dad. We get to the job site. And I, he worked a regular job during the week. And then he would take side jobs on the weekend. And I think this was probably a side job. And I think we're remodeling a house. And he looked at me, said, okay, mark, here's what's gonna happen when I cut wood, I need you to pick up the scraps, you know, put them in the garbage. I need you to sweep up and I'm going to start a few nails and I need you to finish them. And so now I've, I've got, I've got my position on the team. I'm part of the crew. And then lunch comes and we're sitting around and I crack open my lunch box and my thermos. And I'm sitting there with my dad and I looked at him and I said something to the effect of you sure got a lot of work to do. It's a good thing. I'm here. It's a good thing. He brought Marcie to the job and what we call a difference maker. And so in my heart, I thought, you know what? My dad really needs me. And I'm a big help. How many of you know that with power tools on the job side four year old is not really a great contributor. My dad was kind to me and he's like, yeah, thanks. Thanks Marcie for helping you and a big help son. Now that I'm a little bit older. I see things a little bit differently. Did my dad bring me to work because he needed me or because he loved me cause he loved me. There was nothing that I did that my dad couldn't do. And to be honest with you, I think he would have been more efficient. If I wasn't involved. Usually with table saws four year olds are a liability. My dad brought me to work. Not only because he needed me, but because he loved me, not because he wanted to use me, but because he wanted to know me. And so in going to work, I got to see what my dad was doing. And I got to do it with my dad. And it built our relationship. Spirit filled ministry is going to work with your heavenly father. I've got many, the scriptures in the book. I'll give one. This is the language that Jesus keeps using for ministry. He says, my father is working and I am working. You need to know this, that God, the father is at work. He's pursuing people, teaching people, loving people, healing people, blessing people, unburdening people, instructing people right

now. And he's filled you with the Holy Spirit. If you are a child of God and he's asking you to serve and to go to work with him and as you do, it's not something you have to do. It's something you get to do. And it's not something that ultimately should cause a lot of burden for you because your father is doing most of the heavy lifting. But it's a great blessing for you to be involved in what your father is doing. And as you see your heavenly father at work, you're going to get to know him. And he's going to get to know you, your relationship will be built. And this is where there is no maturing without serving. There is no maturing without serving. And so the way we do this is what the Bible calls spiritual gifts. So this introduces our theme for this series. We looked at this in Romans 1, 11 and 12. We just finished this great book of the Bible. And what Paul says, I long to see you, he's going to go visit this church that I may impart to you. Some spiritual gift. There's our theme to strengthen you. That is that we may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith, both yours and mine. What Paul is saying is I want to come visit your church. Cause I have, I have some spiritual gifts that I want to strengthen you with, but you have spiritual gifts that I need to strengthen me. And so what happens when everyone serves everyone benefits, everyone wins. And what happens is when you serve someone with your gift and they serve you with their gift, you're mutually strengthened. And this builds the relationship. This is where sometimes people will be involved in a church will say, I just don't feel. Cause I don't feel connected. I don't have any relationships start serving, start serving once you are serving them and they are serving you and you are strengthening one another. That's how relationships are formed through mutual investment. And so there are four places in the new Testament, that list, what are called spiritual gifts, Romans 12 first Corinthians 12 first Peter four, it Ephesians four. Again, this is all in the book and it's laid out for you. None of these lists are the same. They're all different, they're all different. And so the question is, well, how do we know what the spiritual gifts are? Some people will say, well, if we take all four or less and we combine them, then we'll have the sum total of all of the New Testament, spiritual gifts. And I would say, I disagree with that. I don't believe that the lists are exhaustive. I believe they are examples. And what, what I'm saying is this is my definition of a spiritual gift. A spiritual gift is any ability that the Holy Spirit uses to do ministry through you. As long as the Holy Spirit says, I'm going to use that for team Jesus. Then that's a spiritual gift. And so the Bible does list some gifts, but you will have abilities that are not listed. And those are opportunity for ministry. Let me talk a little bit about this. So example in the old Testament, there are people that are artisans and craftspeople and they're building the temple and doing artwork and making music. And it constantly says that they were empowered by the Holy Spirit. It doesn't mention those gifts in the new Testament, but how many of you have seen a worship leader who is anointed to lead? And you've seen one who is not. You could sense that you're like they have an anointing on them. God has appointed them with special ability to lead in maybe music or in worship. This is not listed in the new Testament, but it is exemplified in the old Testament. There are other things that are called gifts that are not listed in the new Testament for lists of gifts. One example is in first Corinthians seven, seven, the apostle Paul says that he has the gift of celibacy. I don't know about you. That does not sound like a gift as an and if you're praying for a gift, don't pray for that one. And if you do, you're weird. Okay. I just I'll just tell you like, so I'm going to die a virgin, like do I die young? I mean, you know, like I, you know, but for Paul, this was a unique, special gift that God had to give him. Cause he's traveling, he's starting riots. He's hated. He sued he's.

He's got pickets and protests and death threats and jail sentences and execution plots. And if you've got a pregnant wife, who's trying to keep up, that's the problem. And so God gives him this gift of celibacy. What I would simply say to you is this, whatever God gives you, he can use for ministry and God doesn't waste anything in your life. Some of you have great physical talent, your athletics, some of you have perfect pitch. Some of you are very technologically capable. All of you have different skills and abilities and talents and capacities and the Holy Spirit won't waste. Any of that, he'll invest all of that into some form of meaningful ministry for you. So when it comes to spiritual gifts, every Christian believer has at least one oftentimes more than one spiritual gift and different degrees of gifting. So someone might have, let's say an administrative gift and they could manage their household budget and finances. Somebody got a higher degree of gifting. They can run a small business. Someone else can be the CFO of a fortune 500 company. Not only is there a gift called administration, there are degrees of gifting, which different people can lead or serve at different capacities. And the key is this is to be content with your gift, not to covet their gift. I'm telling you, you look at people who are like, I wish I was like them. God's like, no, no, no. I made them and I made you and I need you to do what I made you to do. And I need them to do what I made them to do. Paul tells this to a young man named Timothy. He says, fulfill yours or ministry. Your job is not to fulfill their ministry. Your job is to fulfill your ministry. And the truth is if we covet someone else's gifts, rather than having contended with our own, we will not enjoy the life and ministry that God has appointed for us. And we will take on responsibilities that will crush us, right? If you think I really want this gift and God hasn't gifted you to do that. And the Holy Spirit is an empowering you to do that. If you try to do that, that will harm you. It will not help you because God has not appointed you to do that ministry. So the key is to be content with who God made you to be and not to covet who God has made someone else to be. Now, when it comes to spiritual gifts, there are a lot of varieties. Some are what we would call extraordinary like healing. Others are very ordinary like service. How can I help? In addition, sometimes the gifts are a one-time occasion and sometimes they're ongoing ministry. Generally speaking, there are three categories of gifts. I'll do the introduction this week and then should the ensuing three weeks. We'll do what the three categories. First Peter four list, two of the categories of gifts. Speaking in serving the serving gifts. Some of you are going to do ministry with your hands. You're very practical people. I don't want to argue. Can we do something? You're those people. We love you. You're you're building something. You're, you're serving somewhere. It's, it's a lot of practical physical investment. That's what you do. Your gifts are in serving. Some of you, your gifts are in speaking, you're going to encourage, you're going to teach. You're going to instructor. Correct. And you're largely verbal. And then the third category is the more controversial one it's called the sign gifts or the supernatural gifts. This is like tongues, healing, prophecy, miracles. These things are what we would hold in the open hand, but we're going to deal with all of these in the last sermon. And if you want to read ahead, it's all in the book and I get into all of the issues, but just so you know, little spoiler alert, I believe in all of that. And we're going to talk about all of that. So are these three categories and as we're studying, I want you to be asking the Holy Spirit, what is my divine design? And the divine design is your spiritual gifts, your abilities, your talents, your experiences. This could include some of your employment history, your life experience. God uses all of your divine design to a point for you, some sort of meaningful ministry. So some of you you've dealt with physical

ailment and now you have insight. Some of you have been through a divorce or you have a blended family, or you've lost a child to a miscarriage, or you've started the company, or you've had a lot of responsibility or you've had to manage finances or wealth. God has given you different abilities, capacities, experiences in burdens and all of that together shapes your divine design. And so my hope and prayer in this whole series is not only do you know who God is, but you know who you are and who God made you to be because ministry is what God does for you in you and through you, Jesus lived and died for you. Rose for you. The Holy Spirit does a work in you. He changes your desires. Your nature gives you gifts and a calling. And all of a sudden you want to learn the Bible. You want to pray. You want to serve Jesus. And then God works through you and that's ministry. And so figuring out your divine design prepares you for God, working through you to do meaningful, valuable, purposeful ministry. And I'll just tell you how exciting this is. Some of you are serving in ministry and you know exactly what I'm talking about before. Some of you, you're going to meet with someone and say something, and that's going to be God speaking through you. You be like, I didn't even think of that. And that ministered to them, or God reminded me of that scripture, or I prayed for them. And God answered that prayer. And he showed up and you're going to see the Holy Spirit working through you, which is really the focus of our time together in this series. So that explained spiritual gifts and your divine design. What I want to do now, I want to look summarily and briefly at first Corinthians 12 through 14. It is the most compressed section on spiritual gifts in the whole new Testament. And he's going to give us a few guardrails to operate within four spiritual gifts. And the first thing he is, there's a difference between getting a gift and using a gift first Corinthians 12 one now concerning spiritual gifts. So we introduce is the theme for this section brothers. I do not want you to be uninformed. So the first thing is, God doesn't want you to be uninformed about spiritual gifts. He wants you to know what your gift is or gifts are. In addition, he wants you to help others discover their divine design. Some of you are married. This will help you understand your spouse. When grace and I first got married, we do things very differently. Our gifts are very different. And so as we're, we're doing life together, how she walks with the Lord is a little different than how I walk with the Lord. The key is we're both going north, so we're okay. But I had to learn to understand her so I could appreciate and encourage her. She had to learn how to understand me so she could appreciate and encourage me. And then we started adding kids and they're all different as well. And now it's like, okay, we see this kid's gift. So let's say you've got kids. Like we do the one who organizes everything. You have to have administration. When you're hurting the kid who comes and sits next to you on the couch and holds your hand, oh, mercy or compassion. The kid who helps their siblings with the chores, oh, gift of helps or service of the one. Who's bossing everyone around a gift of leadership that needs to be developed. Okay, you're going to start to see this in others. And so God, God not only gives you a gift and you need to be informed about how that gift operates. Then you need to figure out how to use it. Cause there's getting a gift and using a gift. So let's say somebody gives you a musical instrument. You now have the gift. You gotta learn how to play it. You gotta figure out how to play that instrument. How do you determine what your gift is and help others do the same? Let me ask you some questions. Like what's unique about you. What's unique about you. What in the past, have you then good at or had success at when other people come to you and they're looking for help? What are they asking for? It's like, Hey, could you help? Can you, could

you pray with me about this? Maybe you have gift of faith. I'm really hurting. Can you help me manage my emotion? You may have gifted mercy or encouragement. My life is a mess. Can you help me put a plan? Together? May have gift of administration. I don't know what the heck I'm doing. Can you tell me what to do? You may have a gift of leadership. You have gifts and God has been already using you. And how are people approaching you? And what are they're seeking from you? In addition, what other people say wise, counsel, people who love the Lord. They're like, you're good at this. I see this in your life. I see this given to you as a gift from God, in addition things like, what are you passionate about? Or who are you? What about some of you are really passionate. I talked to a guy recently, he's a, he loves junior high students. I was like, okay, you're the one, you know, he's I just love hanging out with junior high kids. How many? Like, I don't have that passion, right? That's a lie Axe, body spray. I mean, if you've met a teenage boy, it's it's pumpkin man. Some of them, you have a heart for single moms. Some of you have a heart for elderly folks who are unable to live with full freedom. And so you want to go visit them and minister to them? Who or what has God given you a passion for? My wife has a passion for babies. We didn't accidentally have five. So even this week, I think I was on a study break and Grace had an evening free and I kept calling and texting her and she wasn't getting back to me and I didn't know what she was doing. So at the end of the night, she called me back. I was like, honey, where were you? What were you doing? She's like, oh, I went to Trinity Church and I went to work in the nursery because I just needed to hold some babies. How many of you during a monsoon? It was, I mean, like she probably drove our arc to the church. It was kind of weather, monsoon hits. My wife is like, I'm going to go home to meet some babies. And what's crazy is you brought your babies that tells me you really needed a date night. Okay. So, but her, her, her heart in that night was, I just need to hold babies for a few hours. That's what I need to do. She was ministering to them. The babies probably didn't know this. They were administering to her. It's mutual encouragement. What are you passionate about? What are you joyous for? Who or what do you have a heart for? What do you care about? Who do you care about? That's part of your divine design and your spiritual gifts will help you to serve in meaningful ways. So the key is just get started serving, just try something. And if it doesn't work, try something else. I got saved in college at the age of 19. My first ministry was kids ministry. They got up in church and they're like, we've got a women's Bible study meets during the day. We got a bunch of little kids that are too young for school who would like to watch, I don't know, 20 little kids. I was like, oh, well I raised my hand. They looked at me like you're a college guy. Yeah. But I was the oldest of five kids. I was a big brother. I love kids. I, I think I can do this. I learned I can't. But nonetheless, I showed up the moms, tell me, okay, here's what you do. So I'm, you know, I'm fishy crackers, Bible stories. You know, this is what I'm doing. And I learned two things. Number one, I'm a horrible mother. That's the first thing I learned. Even a good father is a horrible mother. Amen. Every day, every man knows this. As soon as you see your wife with a child, you're like, yeah, I can't do that. I don't, I don't have those superpowers. I'm just a dad. And I started serving. And what I realized was I love kids, but I'm probably not called to be a lifelong children's ministry director. Okay. And so then I started finding other ways to serve, just trying to figure out where do I fit? And I did serve in that capacity for the whole year. When Grace transferred out to my college, she started serving with me in kids. She started watching the little ones with me and she was great at it. And so we served together and then we



volunteered for another ministry called meals on wheels. And as college kids, we took our Saturday and we would drive meals to older folks who were home. And I thought, well, it's a short list. We'll knock it out. It took forever because people that cannot leave their home and our elderly are lonely. I didn't know that. Cause I was young. So we knock on the door and got your meal come on in. And you're like, no, they're like, no, come on in. I mean, they're, they're very, they're very persistent and okay, we're playing cards now. That's what we're doing. So we spent a lot of time drinking tea and playing cards and visiting with some elderly folks, some love Jesus. And we learned a lot from them. Some didn't know Jesus. And we talked to him about Jesus. And I thought about it. This is the 29th anniversary weekend of our wedding. Grace and I have been together since we were 17, which is 33 years. And we've been married 29 years, this weekend. you can clap. She has a high pain tolerance, so we're still going, you know, and, but what I thought about was there has not been a week since college that Grace and I haven't been serving together in ministry. I think one of the reasons that we've stayed together as we serve together and we've always done ministry together and in doing so, she figured out her gifts and I figured out my gifts. So then I started going to Bible studies and I had a great first pastor, a godly man that I just hold in the highest honor. And he knew the Bible and he was, it was just a really great Bible teacher. And I remember sitting there going, the guy knows the Bible, people ask questions, he can answer their questions. That's me. My gift is studying and knowledge and teaching. And that just sort of awakened in me and understand, okay, I, I want to do what he does. I know it's going to be a lot of work and I may not do it as well as he does, but I want to do what he does. That's what God has given to me as my gifts. So the way that you find your gifts is by serving. And the way you grow in your gifts is finding people who have your gifts and are a little more advanced or mature than you. And then they help you grow in your giftedness. And that's what it means to be a church family, a few other principles that the apostle Paul or I should say the Holy Spirit through Paul gives us God creates and Satan counterfeits. This is really significant because you don't just need to be spiritual. You need to be spiritually discerning. He says this first Corinthians 12 two through three, you know that when you were pagans, non-Christians unbelievers, other religions and ideologies, you were led astray. You were off track. You were wrong to mute idols, demons, posing, and pretending to be gods. However you were led. Therefore, I want you to understand that no, one's speaking in the spirit of God ever says, Jesus is a cursed and no one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit. What he's saying is when God does ministry, Satan does anti ministry. Every time God is seeking to advance his kingdom, Satan will oppose his kingdom. Every time there is a teacher, Satan's going to raise up a false teacher. Every time there is a shepherd, Satan is going to raise up a Wolf. And what he's saying is you, you used to be in the demonic realm. And now you're in the realm of the Holy Spirit. But even in the church in ministry, Satan will still show up and seek to cause division and opposition. And so you need to be discerning about what is from the Holy Spirit and what is from the unholy spirits. Okay? That's where the Bible says, don't believe every spirit, but test the spirits. Let me tell you how this works. I've even seen in other religions or spiritualities people be healed. And I didn't share this in the previous room, but I'll just share one example. I had a person who was a brand new Christian and they were very sick and they used to be in another religion. And they prayed to their old God to heal them, not to Jesus through the Holy Spirit. They went back to their old

religion and they got healed. So they're like, well, my old God healed me. So I met with him and, and come to find that a demon had tormented them to make them sick. And as soon as they prayed to the false God, the demon removed the sickness to heal them because a demon is willing to heal your body to dam or harm your soul. And so what I said was, I said, the Holy Spirit could have healed you by removing this demonic attack. But instead the demon fooled you to worship someone or something other than God. So the point is this, as we're dealing in the supernatural, we need to be supernaturally discerning. And it's not just, I want to be spiritual. I want to be spirit filled. I want, I want supernatural power. No. I only want what the Holy Spirit wants. And let me say this as well. Sometimes Satan will even use true gifts from God against God. Let's say you've got the gift of encouragement. Is that a good gift? We like you, you are most huggable in high school. Congratulations. Now, you know why you have the gift of encouragement, but let's say someone has evil intended and you encourage them. Now you're taking a true gift and using it for an evil purpose. Some of you need to note, not just what gift do you have, but how to be discerning in the application and use of your gift. Everything that God creates. Satan counterfeits. In addition, he's going to compare and contrast your physical body with our church body. First Corinthians 12, just as the body is one. So he's talking about your physical body and has many members or parts and all the members of the body though, many are one body. So it is with Christ that you have a physical body that your soul lives in the Holy Spirit has a physical body. He lives in. That is in addition to your physical body. It's our church body, all of us together as a church family for in one spirit, we were all baptized into one body for the body does not consist of one member or part, but of many. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were in the air, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members of the body, each one of them as he chose. So what he's saying is this, that you can learn a lot about how to be a church body by looking at your own body. Let me say this, your body physical body. It's a miracle. I talked to somebody recently. They're not a Christian. Like, well, if God would just give me a miracle, I believe in him. I said, you live one, your body's a miracle. I mean, I've seen multiple medical doctors who went to med school is non-Christians get saved, just looking at the human body, going. Somebody made this. This is divine design right here. Everything works together. I'm no doctor, but what I looked up your body as 206 bones, 650 skeleton muscles, 210 types of cells. You look at the body and it is, as the Psalmist says, fearfully and wonderfully made like, that's incredible. If you've ever been a pregnant lady, you're like, okay, I make people and they just sort of grow. And then they grow up. That's, that's a mirror. That's a miracle. And what he says is look at the complexity of your physical body for everything to work together. Just think about what it took for you to drive here. Your eyes are seeing something that your brain is processing, that your system is responding to so that you can drive on the freeway. Just the number of systems that are involved in things that you and I take for granted is really incredible. And what he's saying is that the church body should operate or function like the physical body. And what this means is unity. First and foremost, it means unity. Aren't you glad that your right hand, didn't pick a fight with your face. I mean, that that'd be a bad day. You're like, no, no, we need to get along. I got enough problems. I don't need this one. There needs to be unity and working together, not only in the church, but between the churches. This is really important in the same way, way that your fish didn't punch you in the face, Christian, shouldn't be punching one another in the face. We're

all part of one body. See, we have a church and there are other churches. Jesus looks down from heaven, what does he see, one church, all of his people and what he is saying is, I don't just want the people in these local bodies to get along. I want the whole body to get along. If somebody is on team Jesus, we're on their team. They're on our team. If somebody is loving and serving Jesus, then we love and serve them. We believe in unity among God's people so that there can be harmony within the body of Christ. In addition to unity, there's diversity. What he's saying is you've got different body parts and this diversity means that we're not all exactly the same you and you and you. You're unique. And God uniquely created you and uniquely appointed you. And then there's also, the third principle is interdependence. We need each other, your toe needs your fat. Your fingers need your hand. Your head needs your neck, right? Otherwise we're all Mr. Potato head. And we got ourselves into quite a situation. All the parts are disconnected. It's interdependence. And the point is this just because people are different than you doesn't mean that there's something wrong with them. It means that you need them. This is where sometimes what happens in a church. We will judge people who are unlike us. Well, here's my gift. And if you're really spiritual, you'll be like me. No, no, no, no, no, no. Those who are truly spiritual have the character of Christ and we are different. We are unified. We are interdependent. And let me say how this works. Sometimes God will move people from one local church body to another church body to serve the whole of the body of Christ. Sometimes people will make it a negative thing. Well, they left that church, but they may have been called. There's a situation in acts 13, where there are five amazing well-known Bible preachers. And the Holy Spirit speaks to them and says, you got five guys who could preach. There's a church over here that doesn't have a preacher. So these two guys are gonna go there and God sends them in the same way. If you're on a, let's say you're in a soccer league and one team has got five goalies and no strikers. And one, team's got five strikers and no goalies. You know what they need to do, make a trade. And so what God does, it says that God appoints the parts in each local church body for the benefit of the whole body of Christ. Sometimes God will say, well, I'm gonna put you in that church because they need you. And I'm gonna take somebody out of that church. And I'm gonna put them over in this church because they're needed there. And it's just trusting that Jesus Christ knows exactly what he's doing. Not judging anyone but loving and serving everyone. In addition, the next principle that he gives us is the difference between Christian ministry and Christian maturity. There's a difference between your gifts and your character. And sometimes people get rushed because of their gifts, but they're not ready in their character. So he's gonna talk about law. This is, this is my story. As a young man, I got saved at 19. I started preaching and teaching almost immediately. I was a senior pastor by age 25, before we even had children. And so all of a sudden media's calling and I'm speaking and I'm at conferences and I'm platformed. My gifts were ahead of my maturity. I have no one to blame, but me to quote that great theologian, Chris Stapleton, I got nobody to blame of me. They asked, Hey, you do this. I'll do it. But what happened was my gifts were given by God, but character and maturity has developed over time. So sometimes you can be more gifted than you are mature. And it's not just about your gifts. It's about your maturity. So I said, and did things that I regret as a young man. And what Paul is saying here is out of love for you. Out of love for you. And this is why he puts love in this place. I'll give you an analogy before we read first Corinthians 13, and this is really the heart of the sermon. Not a trick question. What is this?

- [Congregation] Oreo

- Its an Oreo Okay, Pastor Mark. Are we gonna do this for community? And if so, this is a good idea. Okay? No, it's an illustration. Okay. First Corinthians 12 and 14 are like the wafers. It's about spiritual gifts. First Corinthians 13 in the middle is about love. It's like the frosting. What holds it together? What's in the middle. What, Paul is gonna say is here's some gifts here, some gifts, but everything falls apart unless there's love, love, needs to be in the middle. And it holds everyone and everything together. Okay. So we're gonna talk about the unifying factor of love. First Corinthians 13. If I speak in the tongues of men and angels, we're gonna get into that in the last week. What does it mean to pray in the language of angels? We'll talk about it, but have not love. I am a noisy gong or a clanging symbol. If I have prophetic powers, I can predict the future. I actually know when Jesus is coming back and understand all mysteries asked me questions about the book of revelation. I have no problem with Bible jeopardy and all knowledge. I even understand Leviticus. And if I have all faith, I trust God for anything. And when I pray, he moves mountains, but I don't love I am nothing. That's a big statement friends. If I give away all, I have spiritual gift of giving. If I deliver my body to be burned, I'm a martyr, but I have not love. I gain nothing. What is love then what love is patient and kind love does not envy or boast. It is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way. It is not irritable or resentful. It does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love, bears, all things. It believes all things and hopes, all things endures all things love, never ends. Team Jesus is team love. So now faith, hope and love abide these three. But the greatest of these is love. Your gifts, your gives your character. We have different spiritual gifts, but we have the same fruit of the spirit. The fruit of the spirit is love. That's a Paul says in Galatians, sometimes people are like, well, this is my gift. Or this is my gift. It's like either way love. Every spiritual gift is a way for us to love. There was a very popular book on marriage called the love languages. And the basic premise of the book is that different people give and receive love in different ways or languages. So to understand your spouse, how they love may be different than the way you love. You may not feel that they're very loving to you and they feel unappreciated because they are loving you. They're just loving you in their love language. First Corinthians 12 and 14, give us spiritual gifts. Those are love languages. And the first Corinthians 13, he says in the middle, that it's all about the love. So the person who is serving that is their love language. The person who is administrating that is their love language, the person who is teaching or encouraging that is their love language. And this is how we learn to appreciate how others are loving us and how we can love now. And what we're seeing here is really the character, the spirit filled character of Jesus Christ. So you can look at it this way. Jesus is patient and kind, Jesus does not envy or boast. Jesus is not arrogant. Jesus is not rude. Jesus does not insist on his own way. Jesus is not irritable, grumpy or resentful. Jesus does not rejoice at wrongdoing. Jesus' love never ends. And then you can examine your own life. And this is where it gets convicting. And the Holy Spirit will highlight for you and me, the areas where we need to be more surrendered to the spirit. Am I patient? Am I kind? Do I envy? Do I boast? Am I arrogant? Am I rude? Do I insist on my own way? We're gonna do what I wanna do. Am I irritable? Grumpy Am I resentful bearing a grudge? Unforgiving, do I rejoice at wrongdoing? When my enemy goes down, does my joy go

up? How am I doing at being loving? There are different gifts of the spirit, but there is the same fruit of the spirit for all Christians. And what this means is number one, as we serve in our gifting, we need to make love our priority. That needs to be the priority. Let me just say this friends, this world is just absolutely void of love. Our whole world is not loving right now. Our whole world is a hostile, violent, dangerous, self-righteous conflicted, arrogant, painful reality. And what this world needs is love and love comes from God because God is love. And the Holy Spirit is the one who gives us the love of God so that the love of God can not only be for us and in us, it can flow through us and what we want to be as a church family, we want to be an outpost for the kingdom of God. We want to be the players on team Jesus. And we want this to be a place where there is a supernatural love. There's a love that defies everything else in the world, because it is based upon our God who rules over the world. And sometimes what that means is that you and I need to think about what is best for others, not just ourselves. And sometimes that even means serving outside of your area of gifting. And I'm all for personality tests. And I think all of that's actually quite fascinating and interesting, but what it can lead to is very selfish people. Oh, that's not my personality. I'm a J-E-R-K I do L-O-V-E. I do J-E-R-K. That's my personality. Or we will excuse our unwillingness to serve because of our personality or gifting. So I'll give you an example. My wife's gift. One of her gifts is service. She just loves to help and serve. I don't have that gift. So when I would come home from work, my gift is preaching and teaching. I don't know if you know that. So that's my thing. So I would come home from work and she's got five kids, you know? So one's thrown up, two are fighting. I won't name them, but they know who they are. Like, we'd have things going on at the house. And I would walk in the door and guess what? My wife wanted help. She's like, you need this help. I'm like, how about a sermon? You know, I'm a preacher. I will preach about child obedience. Like, no, you're going to take the trash out. Otherwise I'm going to use my gift of stabbing you in the liver. Like you need, you need to serve. In any family and any church family sometimes love says, that's not my gift, but it's not my gift, It's about your need. So how can I do what is loving for you and for all of this to happen, then he has this final principle where he is talking about the difference between public and private ministry. First Corinthians 14, the one who speaks in a tongue. This is a private prayer language of tongues. The angelic language of heaven. We'll deal with that. It's in the book and build himself up. Is it a bad thing in your private worship with God to build yourself up? Is that bad? No, you should have a quiet time. You should pray. You should sing. You need to meet with God. I mean, you need God. That's a good thing. But the one who prophesy builds up the church, preaching ,teaching, speaking, even if lifeless instruments such as the flute or harp, do not give a distinct note. How will anyone notice played since you were eager for manifestations of the spirit, strive to excel in building up the church. He distinguishes between private worship builds up himself and public worship building up the church for you, maybe giving thanks well enough, but the other person is not being built up. Brothers do not be children in your thinking, what all things should be done, decently. And in order, what he's saying is when you're a child. You're totally selfish. And if you raised the job, they come out selfish. You don't need to teach them that. Maturity reaches a point where at some point the child realizes this is a planet that has other people. It's not just me. So I need to start to consider others and not just myself. We all start selfish and maturity is considering others, not just ourselves. And there's a difference here between your private worship to build

yourself up and the public worship to build others up, so let me give you an example. How many of you love to sing to the Lord and worship in your car? How many of you liked that? Amen, but you can't sing. Okay. You just can't. You just can't. Okay. Now the good news is between you and heaven. There's an auto tune. And by the time it gets to Jesus, he's like, they're amazing. So you're doing so that's fine. So in your private worship of God, you are singing and worshipping and it builds you up and it expresses your love for God. And that motivates your soul in your car. So then you drive your car to the church and you walk into the church and you're like, I love to sing, Can I have a microphone answer. We need to see if you can sing no, but I worship God from my heart. I'm sure you do. But when you open your mouth, that's also a variable we need to consider. Okay. And sometimes what happens is we think that our private worship needs to be public and what it does, it's, it's selfish because it doesn't build others up. And we're thinking more about ourselves than about them. I'll give you an example. So I love to sing. I clap my hands. I raise my hands. I kneel, the Bible says shout to the Lord. I'm like, oh man, like I love I liked to sing. I'm an expressive. I can not sing one of my, I checked my mic 17 times after I preach because I go to sing. And my greatest fear is I'm live stream singing. It's like my it's like my nightmare. Like, please, kill my mic, after I'm done preaching because that's private, not public that's to build me up. But here's what I promise you. If I lead us in worship, it will not build up the church. I just promise you that people will just be running, fleeing, like the building is on fire. And so part of it is trying to figure out what is your private relationship with God, your private ministry, with God, your public relationship with God, your public ministry for God, or with God. And this is why I'm so excited for you. God has significant, meaningful, valuable, purposeful ministry for you. He's not going to waste anything in your life. He's going to invest everything in your life, in his kingdom. And so I just want you as we're going to spend time here in a moment, worshipping God, just asking the Holy Spirit, what do you have me to do? How did you make me? What is my divine design? What is my place on team Jesus? And, and in a moment, I'll pray for you. Calvin is your mom here? It's Grace here? I'm going to invite up somebody very special to me. Hey baby. So what I, what I want to do in closing, I'm gonna have Grace close this sermon in prayer. This is my wife, Grace. Today is our 29th wedding anniversary. I'm the one on the right they say, as you get older, you look similar and I praise God. That's not true. So this is for you sweet pie or dripping. Okay. It's okay. Oh, who baptized the flowers? Okay. So I wanted to publicly thank you for your ministry to me, Grace bought me my first Bible. I got saved reading it, and then you moved out and we went to college together. And from day one, we did ministry together. We've been doing ministry together every week. There's not been an exception since we were college students. I want to thank you for your gifts of serving and faith. I want to thank you for loving and serving me and our children and serving very faithfully to help us plant Trinity Church, which is about to turn five years old. And I rejoice that the children have your resiliency and your work ethic and your faith and your love and your kindness. And it has just been really exciting to see your gifts grow and for you to grow as a leader, especially of the women. And we want to establish here at the church, a culture of honor, and to honor, and thank people who are serving and you were the first person to start serving here at the church. And you're still my favorite and the cutest. And I want to thank you for 29 years. And I want to ask you to sign up for 29 more. Thank you for loving and leading all of us.

- Dear Lord, thank you so much that we get the opportunity we don't have to, We get to serve and you change our hearts so that we want to love and serve others. So Lord, I pray that as we do the due diligence to figure out what our gifts are, Lord, that you would just give us spaces to practice those and love others well, and that, that would be such an example of your gospel and of your life Lord, thank you that we get to be a part of this in Jesus name.

- Amen. Love you guys. Thank you.

- Hi, my name is Alison Melnick and I've been coming to Trinity for about 10 months, about halfway through 2020. I picked up my entire life from Alaska and moved down to Arizona. So I grew up with two really awesome parents, but they didn't know who Jesus was and no one in my life really did. I lost my father in 2020. He was my very best friend that threw me into the darkest point in my life. And a couple months into that, a friend of mine from my old job actually invited me at Trinity, got nothing better to do on a Sunday. Why not? So I went with him and I came back the next week and the second service I was here, I got saved it's it was like, God just reached down and changed my entire life. Like he took my heart and gave me a new one. I went to sleep one day. One person woke up the next day totally different person, everything about who I was, what I desired, what I wanted for my life was different. It's all because of Jesus. All I knew was that I wanted to be a Trinity. I didn't care where I was serving what I was doing. I could have been organizing a broom closet and I would've been happy to be here. And then eventually I joined the internship program and then a couple months after that, I came on staff. So eventually I wound up on the preaching team, working on communications and photography. And that was really where I felt God calling me to be. That's where I work. Now I run social media and our photography team here at Trinity. And it's just been the most incredible experience. So if you're, this is my opportunity. If you're wanting to serve on photography, text me. So being on photography and social media, you really get to know everyone on campus and you get to hear all the amazing stories of what Jesus is doing at Trinity sitting to meet everyone and hear all kinds of different testimonies has been absolutely overwhelming and incredible. So I started serving and a couple of months and I met this really cute boy that I liked a lot on December 5th, that I decided to get baptized. And he was actually in the tank. So he baptized me that day. And later that night is when we kind of started pursuing each other and dating. And then we got married less than four months later. We're married now married for two months. So now we actually worked together on the preaching team here at Trinity. We started serving together. We got started, go through serving and now we get to work together every single day. We can't guarantee you a spouse, but you want me one who knows? Start serving, if you're on the fence about serving, stopping on the fence about serving and start serving, it'll change your life. Just meeting all these people that go to Trinity and seeing what Jesus is doing here is worth it. I'm Alison Molnycke. And I found my position on Team Jesus.