

# Connecting to God through Ministry

## **WEEK 1 AUTHORIZED TO SERVE**

When Jesus taught, the people were amazed that His teaching was with authority (Matthew 7:29). When Peter and John spoke before Jewish leaders with such boldness, “they realized that they had been with Jesus” (Acts 4:13). Just before Jesus ascended into heaven, after His resurrection, He gave instructions and gave authority to His followers saying, “All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth, go make disciples” (Matthew 28:19).

Jesus authorized His followers to serve. He even said, “As the Father has sent me, I also send you” (John 20:21). We have been authorized and sent to serve.

## **Day 1 There is Work to be Done**

### **Think About It:**

Do you ever make lists of jobs you need to do? What about your parents, do they make lists for you to complete? Do you have an agenda in school where you can list the things you need to finish for homework? Did you know that Jesus gave us work to do, too?

**Read It:** John 17:1-5; John 9:4

### **Think About It More:**

In John 9, Jesus tells His disciples “we must continue the work of the One who sent me.” Jesus knew that He had work to do. Jesus came to do His Father’s work; He knew this when He was only 12 years old! He told His parents, “I must be about my Father’s business.” Jesus had work to do here on earth, and He continued that work until it was finished.

Christians have work to do. Paul knew this as a follower of Christ. As he came to the end of his life, he said, “I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith.” (2 Timothy 4:7 NKJV) As long as we are here on earth, we must be aware that we have work to do. We need to get about that work with a plan to finish well.

### **Pray About It:**

Pray that God will keep the work He has for you on your mind, so that you will continue to live in His will.

## **Day 2 We Do and Serve on the Basis of Jesus' Authority**

### **Think About It:**

Have you ever watched a movie or read a book with a king in it? The king is the man in charge. He makes rules for the people in his country. He looks out for the wellbeing of his people and the land. Jesus is our king. In fact, He's the King of Kings! He has authority over us and takes care of us better than any king in a movie or book.

**Read It:** Matthew 28:18-20

### **Think About It More:**

As the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, Jesus has given us a command. He has sent us into the world to share the good news. He sends us out with the message of salvation. He gives us a job of disciple-making. This job isn't just for preachers or Sunday School teachers; this is for ALL Christ followers. God sent Jesus and now Jesus sends us.

### **Pray About It:**

Jesus has authority over us. Are you obeying His call to share the gospel? Pray that God will help you share with others and help make disciples of people all over.

## **Day 3 Authorized to Warn and Give Good News**

### **Think About It:**

Have you ever seen a wet floor sign in a store or restaurant? This sign is a warning for people to be careful. When you see one of these signs, how can your behavior change? Do you slow down, not run, and walk carefully? Some people may take caution when they see a wet floor sign, and some may ignore it completely, but the sign is doing its job of warning people and telling them what they're about to walk on.

**Read It:** Ezekiel 2:1-5

### **Think About It More:**

God sent Ezekiel to the rebellious nation of Israel to warn them of the coming destruction. Did this mean that all of the people would listen to him and change their behavior? No! Even if they didn't listen, God still sent Him.

God sends people to send warnings and to tell good news. He has a job for everyone.

### **Pray About It:**

Pray that you will be obedient just like Ezekiel to whatever job God has for you.

## **Day 4 Authorized to Spy Out the Land**

### **Think About It:**

Getting a new calendar at the beginning of the year can be so exciting. All of the blanks just waiting for you to write in, the possibilities are endless to fill up the next 365 days. God can do wonderful works on all of those days!

**Read It:** Numbers 13:1-25

### **Think About It More:**

The Lord told Moses to send spies into the Promise Land to see if the land was good and to see what the people were like. He was getting ready to work there.

The Lord sends people out now, too. Sometimes, we will never see how the work ends up that He is preparing for. This doesn't mean that we can give up. God has a plan! We must trust in His plan and share the message of what God can do.

### **Pray About It:**

Pray to be ready to share the message of what God can do.

## **Day 5 Authorized to be Successor**

### **Think About It:**

Do you stay in the same grade or class in school every year? Of course not! You move on to the next grade, and a new group younger than you moves into your place. You can't stay in the same place forever. You need to be ready to move on, and you need to be preparing people to move up after you.

**Read It:** Joshua 1:1-9

### **Think About It More:**

God gave Joshua the authority to take Moses' place and lead the people into the Promised Land. Moses had been faithful to God and shared the truth of God with the people, including Joshua. Moses had helped prepare Joshua to take his place.

Joshua was also faithful to God and was obedient to take Moses' place. God told Joshua that he must study His teachings and to obey them so that he would be successful. God was with him.

We must be helping prepare the people who will come after us to continue God's work, and we must be learning from those who are going ahead of us.

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will use those around you to teach you His truth and that He will use you to share with others.



## **WEEK 2 EMPOWERED TO SERVE**

In John 14, Jesus speaks about the need for the believer to “abide” in Him. He says that the reason is, “apart from me you can do nothing.” He tells us clearly that all we do apart from Him is nothing. It may matter and have an impact in the world, but it will be nothing compared to what we do with His power. The real power of the believer’s life is the Holy Spirit.

### **Day 1 God Gave Saul Another Heart**

#### **Think About It:**

Is there something that you’re not very good at? Maybe you are shy and don’t like to talk to strangers. Maybe you aren’t very strong at math. There are many things that people struggle with, but God can give us the ability to do anything!

**Read It:** 1 Samuel 10:9-13

#### **Think About It More:**

After Samuel anointed Saul as king, the Spirit of God came over him. God’s Spirit made him able to take over kingly responsibilities that he wasn’t ready for. God even gave him the gift of prophesying. The people who were there were so surprised, they asked if he was now a prophet.

God can do miracles, we know that. He made the world we live in, the plants that give us food, the air that we breathe, but He can also do miracles in us. He gives us gifts to help enable us to complete the plans He has for our lives. He helped Saul as he became king, and He will help us.

#### **Pray About It:**

Pray that God will give you the abilities you need to do the work He has for you.

### **Day 2 Empowered with Special Abilities**

#### **Think About It:**

Think about all of the people who go to our church. There are people who teach classes, people who count the offering, people who sing and play instruments, people who clean, even people who make coffee. God has different jobs for all of us, and He gives us abilities to do those jobs.

**Read It:** Exodus 31:1-11

**Think About It More:**

In these verses, we see how God gave Bezalel the ability to do all kinds of things: make things from gold, cut jewels, carve wood, and do all kinds of things to make items for the tabernacle. God also gave him helpers who had special abilities to build things.

God knows the work that needs to be done. He gives us the special abilities that we need to do His work. He wants us to serve Him with the gifts and abilities that He gives us.

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will help you use the special abilities that He gave you to serve Him.

**Day 3 Anointed of the Lord****Think About It:**

Have you ever gotten a new toy, but it wouldn't work without putting batteries in it? We want to play with the new toy so bad, but it must have power. Just like the toy needs batteries, we need God to help power us.

**Read It:** 1 Samuel 16:6-13

**Think About It More:**

In scripture, only prophets, priests, and kings were anointed. This means that they were special people chosen by God for a certain job. Samuel was at Jesse's house in these verses to anoint a future king. Samuel saw Jesse's sons, the oldest one in particular, and thought he looked like a good king. But God doesn't look at people like we do. He can see what's in their heart, not just how they look on the outside. Samuel anointed Jesse's youngest son, David.

The Spirit of God came over David when he was anointed. God's Spirit was powerful in David's life starting at that young age. God had chosen David. God chooses us, and His Spirit in us is also powerful. In fact, we are powerless without it. Jesus tells us in the book of John, "Without Me, you can do nothing."

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will fill you with His Spirit, so that you can do mighty work for Him.

## **Day 4 Empowered to take the Gospel to the World**

### **Think About It:**

Have you ever thought about how amazing it would have been to walk with Jesus like the disciples did? They got to experience His power first hand. They saw the miracles He performed, they got to hear Him preach, and they received power from being one of His followers. What about after He ascended up to Heaven?

**Read It:** Acts 1:8; 2:1-16

### **Think About It More:**

The whole title of the book of Acts is “The Acts of the Apostles”, but a better name may be “The Acts of the Holy Spirit.” All throughout the book we can read how the Holy Spirit was leading, empowering, and spreading the Gospel to more and more people in farther areas. Isn’t it awesome to know that we can have the Holy Spirit in us powering us to share the Gospel?

### **Pray About It:**

Are you a Christian? Have you made a decision to follow Christ? If so, then you have the Holy Spirit inside of you. Pray that it will give you the power you need to share the gospel with others and live the life God has for you.

If you have not yet given your life to Christ, is now the time?

## **Day 5 Be Alert at All Times**

### **Think About It:**

How well do you follow directions? Do you listen the first time and obey? Do you need to be told to do something over and over? God wants us to listen and obey Him.

**Read It:** Acts 8:29-40

**Think About It More:**

Philip, the evangelist, was told by an angel of the Lord to go to a certain road. When he was there, he heard a man reading from the book of Isaiah. The Holy Spirit instructed Philip to go over to the chariot where the man was and stay near it. Did Philip obey? Did the Holy Spirit have to tell him over and over?

Philip did exactly what God instructed Him to do. He followed instructions and through that the man was saved and baptized! We must always be doing what we need to do, so we will stay in tune with the Holy Spirit. We need to be in God's word, praying, fellowshiping with other believers, so that when God speaks to us, we can obey just like Philip did.

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will help you listen to when He is speaking to you.



## **WEEK 3 EMBOLDENED TO SERVE**

It is clear that God gives power and encourages His people to do His will. Remember, apart from Him we can do nothing. There are many times that God's servants may be nervous or scared at first, just like we can be. Moses was very reluctant to serve God. He made excuses and asked that God would send someone else. But we can look at Noah who was the opposite. He was quick to go work on the ark with no questions. Either way, God was the one who provided courage, energy, and support to do what He had given instructions to complete. There are others like Moses and Noah that we will look at this week who God gave his power and encouragement to for the task He assigned.

### **Day 1 Your Days are in God's Hands**

#### **Think About It:**

Do you have a favorite pair of shoes? If so, you probably wear them a lot! Those shoes go wherever you go. You can run in them, play in them, splash in the rain in them, walk through the mud in them...anything! But, what happens when those shoes get too small? Even though you may be sad because the shoes don't fit any longer, you can look at all the fun things you did while wearing them. God can use us like those shoes. He wants us to do all the things He has planned for us while we're here on earth, but we know there will be a time when we no longer fit His plan and He calls us to live with Him in heaven.

**Read It:** Philippians 1:19-26

#### **Think About It More:**

Paul's life was all about presenting the gospel. He knew the job God had for Him, and everything he did pointed to that job. He knew it was great to be on earth telling everyone about Jesus, but he also knew how great it would be to be in Jesus' presence in heaven. He was able to be bold when sharing the Good News because he knew his life was in God's hands.

Paul told us in Romans 14 to do whatever we do as to the Lord. If we live like Paul did, with everything for God, we have nothing to lose and everything to gain!

#### **Pray About It:**

Pray that you will trust all your days here on earth in God's hands.

## **Day 2 To Grow in Jesus is to Become More Confident**

### **Think About It:**

Have you ever had good news that you had to keep a secret? That can be so tough! The more you know and learn about the secret, the more you want to tell everyone about it. Eventually, the time comes where you can share your news with everyone you see!

**Read It:** Mark 15:43, John 19:38-42

### **Think About It More:**

Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus both became followers of Jesus in secret. When they learned more about Him and how His death was to save them, they became more courageous about their beliefs. The same can be true of us. If we know more about Jesus, the more confident we will be.

How can we gain this confidence? We must get to know the truth of Jesus. We must spend time reading and learning from His Word, we must pray and communicate with Him, we must fellowship with other believers. All of the spiritual habits we have learned about will help us to be bolder.

### **Pray About It:**

Pray that God will make you more bold and confident about your faith in Him and in your willingness to share with others.

## **Day 3 Just Start Serving**

### **Think About It:**

Many times we look around and see things that others have. We may want a newer bike, a better phone, a fancier computer. We make excuses based on not having what we need. Do you complain about these things? Do you think God can use you only when you have these newer, more up-to-date things?

**Read It:** Judges 3:31

**Think About It More:**

Did Shamgar complain about needing something in this verse? No! He used exactly what he had to accomplish what God needed him to do. He was one of the judges of Israel who filled in as leader until there were kings. He looked at what he did have rather than focusing on what he did not have.

Shamgar started right where he was. He didn't wait for God to move him somewhere better or give him newer tools. He used just what he had and did what he could to deliver Israel. Do you use what you have or do you complain?

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will give you the power to use what you have instead of focusing on what you don't have.

**Day 4 Take One Step at a Time in Trust****Think About It:**

Do you ever make excuses for jobs you need to do? Cleaning your room can be no fun, but it's something your parents may need you to complete. You may tell your mom that she would do such a better job, but it's not her job, it's yours. You may try to get your younger siblings to do it instead, but it's not their job, it's yours. The best thing for you to do, is just start cleaning, stop trying to make excuses!

**Read It:** Exodus 4:10-17

**Think About It More:**

Moses made excuses for why he wasn't the man for the job God had given him. He tried to get out of it; he even asked God to send someone else. God promised that He would tell Him what to say and do.

Moses job wasn't to come up with what to say. His job was to trust, follow, and to take one step at a time. When God calls, don't worry about the troubles that may come up. If He is in it, He will take care of everything!

*Parents. Pastor Dennis shares a little about his call into the ministry in the adult version of the devotions. You may want to take a look!*

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will give you the trust to follow His command and not make excuses.

## **Day 5 Elijah's Confidence to Go it Alone (Not Exactly)**

### **Think About It:**

Have you ever seen a movie where a bully tells another kid to meet him after school at 3. There, the bully plans to fight and beat up this poor other kid. In some movies, no one shows up, and in other movies the other kid beats the bully. Of course, we know that fighting is never a good idea. There are plenty of other ways to work things out. However, sometimes you must come face-to-face with someone to prove your point.

**Read It:** 1 Kings 18:17-40

### **Think About It More:**

Before these verses took place, Elijah had been hiding at the brook at Cherith and then with the widow in Zarephath. Now, he was commanded to "show himself" to King Ahab. King Ahab was a wicked king who hated Elijah.

Elijah had confidence that he was not alone. God was with Him. When God called him to go to King Ahab, He also made a promise that He would send rain and end a drought that was punishing the nation for three years. Elijah was not fearful, and knew God would fulfill His promise.

Trust like Elijah had is essential for living a life of faith-filled courage and confidence in the Lord.

### **Pray About It:**

Pray that God will help you have trust and confidence like Elijah had.



## Weeks 4-9 Equipped to Serve

From Pastor Dennis:

Have you noticed yet that life is a journey? It can be fun, stressful, entertaining, and challenging and many other terms that describe this journey we are on. God is at work in us and he is faithful to finish what He started. For the next few weeks in this journey we are going to look at how God has gifted us to serve. Talk about connecting! He has made each of us special. The Psalmist says that we are “fearfully and wonderfully made.” Not only has He made each of us special, He has made us that way to serve and to connect to Him and other believers so the body of Christ, the church, can minister and be on mission. I want to let you know that later this year and also in 2018 we will be having PLACE Workshops. These workshops are to assist members in seeing how God has a PLACE for them in the body of Christ.

**P--PERSONALITY DISCOVERY**

**L--LEARNING SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

**A--ABILITIES AWARENESS**

**C--CONNECTING PASSION WITH MINISTRY**

**E--EXPERIENCES OF LIFE**

In these devotions we will be just introducing you to the five aspects and then in the workshops you will go in depth to find your PLACE in ministry.

*Parents, as your children grow, their personalities will change, and that's ok! It's important for them to see how different personalities can work together. It's also important to remember that we are blends of different personality types. To add to these devotions, the church has purchased The Treasure Tree. This book can help children understand their personalities. If you would like to borrow one of the copies of this book, please visit the preschool area and ask for a copy there. (Copies are limited and only to borrow!)*

### **WEEK 4 EQUIPED TO SERVE: PERSONALITY DISCOVERY**

According to Jay McSwain “Personality is the inward and outward expression of emotional traits and characteristics that shape who we are, how we act and what we do,” (“Finding Your PLACE in Life and Ministry”). God has made us unique even in our personalities. In Jeremiah God says, “Before I formed you in your mother’s womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” Jeremiah 1:5. We are different, and we have different personalities. This week we will look at the four personality types that John Trent and Gary Smalley developed. They are the Lion, Otter, Golden Retriever, and the Beaver.

## **Day 1 Your Bent is Your Personality**

### **Think About It:**

Have you ever tried to write your name with your opposite hand? Take a minute to give it a try. Write your name with your normal writing hand and then do the same with the opposite hand. How was it? How does it look? Did you feel natural or comfortable?

It was probably no work of art! The purpose of this exercise was to show that when you are doing something that you are not meant to do, you do not do it well and you feel uncomfortable. The same is true when we are serving God in areas we are not shaped for.

God has gifted all Christians with a spiritual gift. He has also given us all talents and skills. Along with these shaping influences He has given each of us our own nature or personality.

**Read It:** Proverbs 22:6

### **Think About It More:**

This verse gives us some insight to our personality bent. In the original language of the Old Testament, this verse actually reads, “Train up a child according to his bent.” Some people believe that these personality bents can even be seen in newborns!

God has made us all different. We need to appreciate the differences in each other and know that God has made us to work together for His good.

*John Trent and Gary Smalley have developed a personality discovery tool that is based on personality traits and on your personal strengths. Parents, you can find the “Personal Strength Survey” in the appendix of the adult devotions along with instructions for completing the survey. A Personality Checklist for children can be found in The Treasure Tree book.*

### **Pray About It:**

Pray that God will use your family’s personalities to work together for His best!

## **Day 2 The Lion Personality Type**

### **Think About It:**

Think about a lion. Lions are the kings of the jungle, they roar loudly, and other animals follow their lead. The lion personality type is the first that we will look at this week.

These are some things that can be true of “lions”:

- Daring
- Unafraid of new situations
- Like to be the leader
- Makes decisions quickly
- Serious about expectations

Can you think of any of your friends or family that may be lions?

**Read It:** Acts 15:36-41

### **Think About It More:**

Paul is an example of a lion personality in the Bible. He was bold and determined. Paul wrote much of the New Testament and was an important part of spreading the gospel to the gentiles. He stood firm and did not back down from the mission that God had for him. His lion personality helped him do God’s work.

In the verses we read today, we can see how Paul was decisive and would not allow something that he didn’t think was right. Even though Paul and Barnabas had a disagreement, they still continued on mission.

### **Pray About It:**

If you are a lion, pray that God will use your personality to serve Him. If you are not a lion, pray that God will help you work with those lions around you.

### **Day 3 The Otter Personality Type**

#### **Think About It:**

Have you ever seen otters play? They are definitely funny animals! The otter is the personality type we will look at today.

These are some things that can be true of “otters”:

- Enjoys being in groups
- Talkative
- Impulsive
- Full of energy
- Sees the good part of everything

Can you think of any of your friends or family that may be otters?

**Read It:** Matthew 16:16-23

#### **Think About It More:**

Peter is an example in the Bible of a person whose main personality type was otter. People may have called Peter a big mouth! A nicer way to say that is he was a spokesperson. We know that his mouth did get him in trouble on at least one occasion.

God always has a plan for all different personalities. After Jesus died on the cross, rose again, and then went to heaven, His plan continued. He had a spokesperson to spread the good news. Peter was the right person for the job! He had been prepared by his experience as a Jew, a follower of Jesus, and was equipped because of his personality.

#### **Pray About It:**

If you are an otter, pray that God will use your personality to serve Him. If you are not an otter, pray that God will help you work with those otters around you.

## **Day 4 The Golden Retriever Personality Type**

### **Think About It:**

Do you know anything about Golden Retrievers? Golden retrievers are dogs that are wonderful pets. The golden retriever is the personality type we will look at today.

These are some things that can be true of “golden retrievers”:

- Loyal
- Listen carefully to others
- Peacemaker
- Does not like change
- Patient

Can you think of any of your friends or family that may be golden retrievers?

**Read It:** Acts 9:26-30

### **Think About It More:**

Barnabas is an example of a golden retriever personality in the Bible. We can see in these verses that he was taking care of Saul. He stood by him to the disciples and was diplomatic speaking to them.

### **Pray About It:**

If you are a golden retriever, pray that God will use your personality to serve Him. If you are not a golden retriever, pray that God will help you work with those golden retrievers around you.

## **Day 5 The Beaver Personality Type**

### **Think About It:**

Have you ever seen a beaver's dam? They are carefully made to serve a specific purpose. The beaver is the last personality type we will be looking at.

These are some things that can be true of "beavers":

- Organized
- Detailed
- Asks a lot of questions
- Perfectionist
- Tells things just the way they are

Can you think of any of your friends or family that may be beavers?

**Read It:** Exodus 18:24-27

### **Think About It More:**

Moses is an example from the Bible whose main personality type was beaver. We can see in these verses that we read today that he was a careful listener. He had a plan and followed it. He stuck with the task until it was complete.

### **Pray About It:**

If you are a beaver, pray that God will use your personality to serve Him. If you are not a beaver, pray that God will help you work with those beavers around you.



## **WEEK 5 EQUIPPED TO SERVE: LEARNING SPIRITUAL GIFTS**

When we become Christians, we receive the Holy Spirit who lives inside of us, but God gives us something else. He gives each and every believer Spiritual Gifts. These are qualities to help us build up the body of Christ. God has connected us to Him in many ways and our spiritual gifts are one of those ways.

*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all.  
1 Corinthians 12:7 (NKJV)*

*But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.  
Ephesians 4:7 (NKJV)*

Over the next few weeks, we will look at 16 Spiritual Gifts that God gives. Pray that God will show you which gift(s) He has given you.

The primary Biblical passages on spiritual gifts are found in these passages.

1 Corinthians 12  
Romans 12:4-8  
Ephesians 4:11-16  
1 Timothy 4:14  
2 Timothy 1:6  
1 Peter 4:10-11

*Parents, if your children have not yet accepted Christ, make sure they know that when they are the right age and make that decision, they will receive their gifts.*

### **Day 1 Gifted: Serving and Results**

#### **Think About It:**

Are you good at math? If not, think about someone who is. What are some jobs that a person who is good at math could do? Math teacher, accountant, carpenter... There are many jobs that require math. Just because you're good at math, you do not have to have the title "mathematician". Different experiences that you have and things that you're good at along with math could lead to countless jobs.

**Read It:** 1 Corinthians 12:1-6

**Think About It More:**

Look at these verses carefully...

Different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit

Different kinds of service, but the same Lord

Different kinds of working, but the same God

The word used for gifts really means a gift that's given but not deserved. It can not be earned.

The word for service, means ministry. The Lord gives us different places of ministry or service.

The word for working means effect. God gives the results.

If we surrender to Him, He can use our gifts in many different types of service throughout the church, and He will give great results. Remember, apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5).When He makes things happen, we can boast in Him.

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will use the gifts He has given you for the ministry He has planned for you and for the results He will bring.

**Day 2 The Gift of Administration**

**Think About It:**

Think about the captain of a ship. What is his job? His job is to steer the boat on a safe path from a starting point to a final destination. The captain knows that the right people are in place to make the boat run and to take care of passengers. He also knows the path the boat must take, when it needs to leave, how long it should take to travel, and where to put down the anchor.

**Read It:** Romans 12:8

**Think About It More:**

The gift of administration is a gift given by God to someone who can steer God's people, just like the captain steers a boat. These people can be given goals and they find ways to get things done. This gift can bring a clear direction and a plan to God's church.

**Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Give thanks to God for those who are gifted with administration.

**Day 3 The Gift of Discernment**

**Think About It:**

Have you ever had a bad feeling about something? Have you heard your mom say that before? Sometimes we can just feel that something isn't right. It may not be something that is wrong to do, but for some reason, you just feel uneasy about it.

**Read It:** Acts 5:1-11; 1 Corinthians 12:10

**Think About It More:**

The gift of discernment is a gift given by God to people who may have those kinds of gut feelings. These people know with confidence if other people, teachings, or motives are from God. This gift can keep the church safe from people who could teach things that are not true.

**Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Give thanks to God for those who are gifted with discernment.

**Day 4 The Gift of Evangelism**

**Think About It:**

Do you know Keith Fordham or David Akin and his family? These are evangelists that we have at our church. Mr. Keith is a preacher and Mr. David and his family are musicians. God uses them to share the message of Christ to people everywhere!

**Read It:** Acts 8:26-40; Ephesians 4:11

**Think About It More:**

The gift of evangelism is the gift given by God to people who want to share with non-Christians. They want to make sure that all people know how to become Christians and that they all have a desire to do so. These people want to share about their relationship with Jesus.

It's important to remember that we all are called to present the gospel and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20). We cannot leave this only to those with the gift of evangelism.

**Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Give thanks to God for those who are gifted with evangelism. Pray specifically for our full time evangelists, Keith Fordham and David Akin.

**Day 5 The Gift of Exhortation/Encouragement****Think About It:**

When you're at a football game, who do you hear yelling for the team on the sidelines giving them words of encouragement? The cheerleaders! Who do you hear in the stands? Family and friends who are fans and want to cheer on the team. Who else may be yelling encouraging words and giving a plan of action for the team? The coaches! It's important to hear encouraging words when you're trying to do something.

**Read It:** Acts 14:21-22; Romans 12:8

**Think About It More:**

The gift of exhortation/encouragement is the gift given by God to people who encourage and console the distressed. They want to provide positive and practical steps for others to follow. They can see the problem in a person's life and then come up with a plan of how to get things straightened out. They want to help people succeed, especially at their Christian life.

**Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? If so, pray that God will begin to more fully develop it and help you use it. Have you been encouraged along the way in your Christian life? If so, thank God for that person and send them a note or give them a call to let them know you are thankful they use their gift.

## **Day 6 The Gift of Faith**

### **Think About It:**

Think about Noah. This is a Biblical historic account of a man who had great faith. He spent 120 years building a boat. He was preparing for a flood when it had never even rained before. He had faith in what God told him, and he acted on his faith.

**Read It:** Hebrews 11

### **Think About It More:**

The gift of faith is the gift given by God to people who believe God's promises and act with assurance to carry out His will. People with this gift can be inspirations to other Christians. They show confidence in God in all they say and do.

Hebrews 11 is called the "Hall of Faith" because it gives an account of so many biblical figures who had strong faith in God. Without the special gift of faith from God, how would the things they did be possible?

### **Pray About It:**

God gives all Christians saving faith. Do you have the gift of faith that goes above and beyond saving faith? Do you know someone who does? Thank God for those who are gifted with faith.



## **WEEK 6 EQUIPPED TO SERVE: GIFTS OF GIVING, HELPS, HOSPITALITY, KNOWLEDGE AND LEADERSHIP**

This week we will continue looking at the gifts of the Spirit. Are you beginning to recognize some of the gifts in your friends or family? How about in yourself? Isn't it exciting to see how God has given each of us special gifts?

### **Day 1 The Gift of Giving**

#### **Think About It:**

Here's a story about our church from Pastor Dennis.

Soon after we had completed our first building the parking lot was not yet paved. A sudden and unexpected opportunity to get it paved without planning came along. The paver could start that day. All he needed was the "go ahead." The chairman of deacons at that time, Jim Wright and I looked at each other and said, "go ahead." It was needed. Each Sunday morning the ladies were damaging their dress shoes with heels as they would sink down into the gravel. By Sunday the lot was paved. As people drove in and walked on the nice new smooth surface they rejoiced. Some asked, "how did this happen." By the end of that day, even as happy as everyone was, Jim and I were in hot water. We had approved a \$17,000 expenditure without prior approval. I was young and even much more foolish. Spiritual gifts were an unexplored area for me at that time. A wonderful member of the body approached me and said, "How much was the parking lot, I'll write a check." A check was written for \$17,000 to cover the cost of the parking lot. I now understand, that person has the gift of giving.

**Read It:** Acts 4:34-37; Romans 12:8

#### **Think About It More:**

The gift of giving is a gift given by God to people who give their possessions and finances above the tithe. They not only give, but they do it with a cheerful and willing spirit. All of us are called to tithe, but people who are gifted with giving have the desire and capacity to give way beyond the tithe to advance the work in God's church.

#### **Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Give thanks to God for those who are gifted with giving.

## **Day 2 The Gift of Helps**

### **Think About It:**

Aren't babies the cutest? They may be super cute, but they can't do much for themselves. They need help with everything! They need someone to feed them, bath them, change their clothes, comfort them, play with them...everything! God gives babies parents to help them. God also gives a gift of helping to some Christians.

**Read It:** 1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 16:1-2

### **Think About It More:**

The gift of helps is the gift given by God to people who can help others be more effective in using their gifts. These people have compassion and grace when helping.

### **Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Thank God for those who are gifted with helping.

## **Day 3 The Gift of Hospitality**

### **Think About It:**

Have you ever had spend the night company at your house? Maybe it was a holiday and family came to visit, or maybe your best friend spent the night. How did you treat your guests? Did you forget to feed them dinner? Did you not make up the bed for them to sleep in? Did you give them dirty towels to use in the shower? I bet not! Having guests is a good time for us to show hospitality. We are on our best behavior. We make a yummy meal, have nice clean sheets on the bed, and clean towels to use. We make them feel welcome.

**Read It:** 1 Peter 4:9-10; Romans 12:9-13

### **Think About It More:**

The gift of hospitality is the gift given by God to people who cheerfully provide a warm welcome, food, friendship, or shelter. These people connect others together; they provide a safe and comfortable setting where relationships can be built.

### **Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Thank God for those who are gifted with hospitality.

## **Day 4 The Spiritual Gift of Knowledge**

### **Think About It:**

Do you know someone who is really smart? Do they make really good grades and not even need to study? Are they good at all subjects or just one? God's gift of knowledge is much more than just understanding math, English, science, and social studies.

**Read It:** Colossians 2:1-4

### **Think About It More:**

The gift of knowledge is a gift given by God to people who can discover, organize, think about, clarify, and study different information. They like to search the Bible for insight and understanding. These people can apply truths to serve the church.

### **Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Thank God for those who are gifted with knowledge.

## **Day 5 The Gift of Leadership**

### **Think About It:**

When you're in preschool, you often hear the phrase, "follow the leader." Why is this important to do? The leader knows where you are going. The leader can show you the way and keep you out of trouble. The leader can help everyone get to the destination together.

**Read It:** Romans 12:6-8; Hebrews 13:17

### **Think About It More:**

The gift of leadership is the gift from God to people who provide direction and goals to a group. These people bring together resources and people that work together to accomplish these goals. Leaders keep the "big picture" in view. They set goals, work to achieve them, and welcome evaluation. A church is able to reach goals and accomplish much when it has gifted leaders.

### **Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Thank God for those who are gifted with leadership. Pray for the leadership in our church.



## **WEEK 7 EQUIPPED TO SERVE: GIFTS OF MERCY, PASTOR/ SHEPHERD, PROPHECY, SERVICE, TEACHING, AND WISDOM**

We will be looking at Spiritual Gifts for one more week. Think about the gifts we have looked at over the last 2 weeks. How is God using these different gifts in our church? Can you think of specific people who have these gifts at church? As you learn more about the different gifts God gives to Christians, pray about the people you know who have the gifts.

### **Day 1 The Gift of Mercy**

#### **Think About It:**

When you are sad or disappointed who do you go to? Do you go to someone who will listen to you and share in your sadness? This person is showing you mercy. They are sympathetic to how you are feeling. (Sympathetic means feeling, showing, or expressing compassion and concern.)

**Read It:** Luke 10:33-37; Romans 12:8

#### **Think About It More:**

The gift of mercy is a gift from God to people who feel the hurt of others. They express sympathy and provide comfort to others with a cheerful heart. Those with the gift of mercy focus on people, not projects. They respond to the suffering of others with Christ's love.

#### **Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Thank God for those who are gifted with mercy.

### **Day 2 The Gift of Pastor/Shepherd**

#### **Think About It:**

Have you ever seen pictures of shepherds? Shepherds care for their sheep, they protect them, lead them, provide for them. The shepherd loves his sheep. He wants the best for them.

**Read It:** 1 Peter 5:1-4; Ephesians 4:11-14

**Think About It More:**

The gift of pastor/shepherd is a gift from God to people who guide, protect, nurture, and feed a group of believers into growing spiritually. Pastor Dennis is not the only person in our church who could have this gift. Many Sunday School teachers have this gift and are shepherding a group of pre-schoolers, children, students, or adults. People with this gift want to help people learn and grow. They hurt when their “flock” is hurting and rejoice when they are rejoicing.

**Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? If so, pray for those that God has for you to lead. Do you know someone who has this gift? Thank God for those who are gifted as pastors and shepherds.

**Day 3 The Gift of Prophecy****Think About It:**

If someone told you the sky was green, what would you do? Most of us would tell them the sky is blue, not green! We would want to speak only the truth about the sky and point out that they were wrong. People with the gift of prophecy only want to speak the truth of God all the time.

**Read It:** Romans 12:6; Acts 25: 32

**Think About It More:**

The gift of prophecy is a gift from God for people who proclaim the Word of God boldly and with confidence. He sees where ungodliness is and speaks out against it without apologizing if he hurts someone’s feelings. In the Old Testament, prophets received the truth directly from God. Now, people who are gifted with prophecy get the truth and principles directly from God by reading and studying God’s Word.

**Pray About It:**

Sometimes, people do not respond kindly when prophets speak the truth because they feel convicted. Pray for people with this gift, you or others you know, that they will not be discouraged.

## **Day 4 The Gift of Service**

### **Think About It:**

Jerry Hairston is a servant who serves at Harp's Crossing in ways that few people know. One way he serves is by heading up the ushers. Each Sunday morning he is standing beside the usher cabinet waiting as men sign up to serve as an usher. He also has coached and headed up one of our men's softball teams for well over 30 years. He always carries the bat bag and the ball bag each in a hand and will tell you that he does not want help because carrying both keeps him balanced. Mr. Jerry is a true servant.

**Read It:** Acts 9: 36-42; Romans 12:7

### **Think About It More:**

The gift of service is a gift from God for people who identify, help, and support ministries of the church. Because of them, other ministries can do the things they need to do. This gift is sometimes called the gift of helps. Whatever it is called, those with this gift get things done! It can be picking up papers in the sanctuary, mailing letters, or carrying boxes, servants do what they can do.

The gift of service is very important in the Body of Christ. The account of Dorcas (or Tabitha) shows us how much she meant to the others around her. We can see how important she was in God's eyes also. He allowed her to be raised from the dead!

### **Pray About It:**

How many servants can you name? Pray for them. Thank God for those who are faithful to serve. Write them a note thanking them for using their gift. If you have this gift, pray that God will show you ways that you can serve.

## **Day 5 The Gift of Teaching**

### **Think About It:**

Can you name teachers that you have had in the past that you considered to be good teachers? Teaching is more than just knowing about a subject. Good teachers need to be able to break down information so that others can understand it.

**Read It:** Acts 18:24-28; Romans 12:7

**Think About It More:**

The gift of teaching is a gift from God for people who communicate truths from the Bibles so that others can learn and understand these truths. Those with this gift have a desire to learn from the Word of God and then they are able to present it simply, but accurately.

We are lucky to have many great teachers at our church. Can you think of those you have had in Sunday School, on Wednesday nights, or in Life Classes? These teachers do not want to hold on to things they have learned, they wanted to share it with you! Thank these people for using their gifts.

**Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone who has this gift? Thank God for people who are gifted as teachers.

**Day 6 The Gift of Wisdom****Think About It:**

Are there areas in your life where you need wisdom? Where you can learn from others who understand more than you. We all have these areas. People with God's gift of wisdom can counsel, teach, and lead us.

**Read It:** Exodus 18:13-27

**Think About It More:**

The gift of wisdom is a gift from God for people who understand and discern Biblical truths and apply these truths. People with this gift can understand and speak truths from the Bibles in such a way that they can skillfully apply it to situations in life.

The gifts of wisdom and knowledge seem very similar. The gift of knowledge involves understanding the truth in a way that can only come from God. Wisdom understands and can then apply truths to life.

**Pray About It:**

Do you have this gift? Do you know someone with this gift? Thank God for people who are gifted with wisdom.



## **WEEK 8 BECOMING AWARE OF YOUR PASSIONS AND ABILITIES**

It is a blessing when you look around in the Body of Christ and see the many abilities of the people! God has blessed the church in so many ways. He has given different personalities, spiritual gifts, passions, experiences and abilities. And each one of us is a unique blend. The Bible is filled with special, uniquely gifted people and you are no exception. We also see that God has given each of us a heart or passions for certain things.

### **Day 1 A Heart for Second-Graders**

#### **Think About It:**

Here's a story from Pastor Dennis.

Over thirty-five years ago I served in a church where there was a sweet God-called Sunday School teacher. Mrs. Cave taught second-graders. But just to say that she taught second-graders is a tremendous understatement. Mrs. Cave had a heart for second-graders. She was so drawn to second-graders, she knew what a second-grader looked like. She could be in a department store and see a second-grader and know they were second-graders. She would strike up a conversation with the child and parent with the desire of finding out about the child's relationship with the Lord and His church.

**Read It:** 1 Samuel 12:19-20

#### **Think About It More:**

Even when you are young, you can be drawn to certain things. These things are your passions; they're what you have a heart for. Maybe you enjoy playing with babies, athletic competition, or music performances. God can use all of these things.

Our passions can be just as important as our Spiritual Gifts when it comes to how and where we will serve God. We feel deeply about some things and not about others. These feelings motivate us to join in certain activities. This gives an idea about what God has placed in your heart. If He has placed these passions there, He will be able to use them in service.

#### **Pray About It:**

Pray that God will use the passions He gives you to serve Him.

## **Day 2 Your Heart Determines Three Things**

### **Think About It:**

Think about your day. (If you're doing this in the morning, think about yesterday.) Did you use kind words that encouraged people, or were you negative? Were you in a good mood? Did you obey your parents and teachers? Your heart determined all of these things. What's in your heart?

**Read It:** Proverbs 4:23

### **Think About It More:**

Your heart determines certain things about you. Consider these three things that your heart determines:

1. Why I say the things I say. (Luke 6:45)

How do you use your words? This could be a good or bad thing. What we say comes out of our heart. Psalm 51:10 says, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." You may need to pray this verse over and over until your words represent a heart that you want.

2. Why I feel the way I do. (Hebrews 4:12)

Do you let the weather, situations, or other people determine your mood? The Psalmist said that he set his heart to follow the Lord (Psalm 119:112). We must do the same thing instead of focusing on what's going on around us. Our moods and what we feel come from our hearts.

3. Why I act the way I do. (Proverbs 4:23)

Everything we do comes from our hearts, it's the "wellspring of life." Who is in control of your heart? What is in your heart?

Do you act out of a clean heart, or do you react to what's going on around you? Give your heart over to Jesus and let Him take control.

### **Pray About It:**

Have you asked God to come into your heart? If so, pray that He will maintain control. If you have never invited Jesus into your heart, is now the time?

## **Day 3 Your Heart is Your Appetite**

### **Think About It:**

What is your favorite food? You have an appetite for this food. You want it because it's so good to you. Your appetite can drive you to action.

**Read It:** Proverbs 16:26

### **Think About It More:**

When a person hungers for the things of God, they will look to Him to satisfy that hunger. There's nothing better to fill a hunger! When we hear that someone has a heart for God, that means they seek Him and serve Him. Their hunger drives them on.

Do you have an appetite that remains unsatisfied? Maybe you need to work harder to fill it. Maybe you have talked about things that you want to do to serve God, but you haven't acted on it. Are there steps that you need to take to help fill your appetite?

### **Pray About It:**

Ask God to show you appetites that you have, so you will have a better picture of what's in your heart. Ask Him to develop appetites that will push you to serve Him.

## **Day 4 Skilled by God**

### **Think About It:**

Studies have shown that the average person has from 500-700 skills. Can you imagine? Some of our skills may be small, like tying your shoe, but some are great things that you may not even know you can do. Next time you think to yourself that you can't do anything, remember this!

**Read It:** Exodus 31:1-6

### **Think About It More:**

Exodus 31 begins with God telling Moses who He has skilled to work on the construction project of the tabernacle. Bezalel had been raised in Egypt as a slave, so he knew hard work. God worked through his life as he grew up preparing him for this special task.

You have special abilities that God has given you. He gave them to you not just so you would be good at something and enjoy it yourself, but so you can serve Him. You can use those skills to do God's work.

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will begin to reveal your abilities to you, so that you can get better and better at them and use them to serve Him.

**Day 5 You Have been Skilled, Too!****Think About It:**

Think about church service from Sunday. Can you name some of the people or jobs that helped everything run smoothly in church? There were Sunday School teachers, directors, people making coffee, people working on lighting, sound, and cameras, the choir and orchestra, men taking up offering, the greeting team, the security team, and the list goes on and on! All of these people have skills that they are using to serve God.

**Read It:** Exodus 36:1-6

**Think About It More:**

God gifted Oholiab to be Bazalel's assistant. Oholiab, like Bazalel, was gifted with the skill for artistic work necessary for construction of the tabernacle. In both of these lives it is clear that God had been protecting, preserving and preparing both of these men in the past for future service. If this was true for these 2 men, it is true for us also!

Are you using your special skills that God has given you? Do you know what these skills are? As you get older, you may begin to see more clearly the skills that God has given you.

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will show you the skills he has given to you. Pray that you will use these skills to serve Him.

## **WEEK 9 WHAT EXPERIENCES HAVE YOU HAD?**

Everyday you live, you have different experiences. You come in contact with new people, you learn new things, you experience life. You do this differently than anyone else. The experiences you have can be used by God.

### **Day 1 What has Happened to You?**

#### **Think About It:**

Think about the past week. Did anything extraordinary happen to you? Anything good or bad that you won't forget? Maybe nothing big happened, but what about the small things? Did you make a 100 on a test? Fail a test? Make a new friend? Have a fight with an old friend? There are things that we experience each and every day that make us who we are.

**Read It:** Philippians 1:12-18

#### **Think About It More:**

Paul definitely had some major experiences. He was in prison waiting to be sentenced. Would you think this was a negative experience? Most people would say things couldn't get much worse. But what did Paul say in these verses? He said that what had happened to him was actually serving to advance the gospel.

What about your experiences? How are they shaping you? You may think that you are too young to have any life changing experiences, but that's not true. Think about it a little more...

Your Spiritual Experiences

Meaningful decisions and times with God

Your Painful Experiences

Problems, hurts, trials that have taught you

Your Educational Experiences

What is your favorite subject?

Have you received any special training?

Your Ministry Experiences

How have you served?

#### **Pray About It:**

Pray that God will use all of your past experiences so that what has happened to you can serve to advance the gospel just like Paul.

## **Day 2 Life Changing Spiritual Experiences**

### **Think About It:**

God spoke to Abraham, and everything changed for him from that point on. God told Abraham He would:

- Make him into a great nation
- Bless him
- Make his name great
- Make him a blessing

Abraham definitely had a spiritual experience that was life changing.

**Read It:** Genesis 12:7; Acts 9:18-20

### **Think About It More:**

Saul also had a life changing spiritual experience. He was on his way to arrest Christians when Jesus appeared to him. It changed his life and even his name!

For both Abraham and Paul (formerly Saul), their spiritual experiences didn't just impact them, but generations far after them. Think of people who have impacted you because of their spiritual experiences. How can God use your spiritual experiences to impact others?

### **Pray About It:**

Share any spiritual experiences you have had with your family. You may want to write them down to share with your future family. Thank God for what He has done in your life and the lives of those around you.

## **Day 3 Life Building Painful Experiences**

### **Think About It:**

Do you remember the Biblical historic account of Joseph? He had major painful experiences. His brothers sold him into slavery. Time went by and Joseph had even more painful experiences; he was sold as a slave, falsely accused by Potiphar's wife, thrown into prison, and forgotten about.

**Read It:** Genesis 50:18-21

**Think About It More:**

The Bible tells us that God was with Joseph through all of his experiences, and we see that God blessed him. He did not have a pity party because of all of the bad things that he experienced. He knew that God was in control. All of these painful experiences were used by God for good.

How do you handle painful experiences? Do you allow God to use them for good?

**Pray About It:**

Pray and ask God to use your painful experiences for good.

**Day 4 Our Suffering and Serving****Think About It:**

Have you ever run a race? You can get tired and worn out before the end very easily. What happens when people run with you? Does that help you keep up your pace and keep going until the end? Not only people can come alongside us, God does, too!

**Read It:** 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

**Think About It More:**

God allows things, both good and bad, to take place in our lives. God is always here to comfort us in those bad times. We know that His Word is true, no matter what the world may say. Then, what should we do when we see others going through similar situations?

Look at verse 4. See the words “so that”? Sometimes we go through things “so that” we can minister to others. We can bring the comfort that God brought us in those tough situations.

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will use you to comfort people who may be going through hard times.

## **Day 5 Classroom and On-the-Job Training**

### **Think About It:**

Do you ever wonder why you have to go to school every day? There are so many things that you learn, that you don't even realize. Other than math, science, English, social studies, history, art, music, P.E., technology, and all the other classes, you are also working on other skills. You're learning to listen, to work with others, to follow directions, to manage your time, to obey your authority, and on and on! There are many skills that you have that you learn outside of the classroom also. You can learn how to ride a bike and some day how to drive a car, how to start a fire, how to wash dishes, how to cook a meal. The list of skills you will learn is limitless!

**Read It:** Samuel 17:34-37

### **Think About It More:**

David used his educational background to convince the king that he could battle against Goliath. Did he talk about things he learned in a classroom? No, he talked about a real life experience. Will there be times we will use things we did learn in a classroom to serve God, of course!

God uses all of the things we learn to serve Him, whether it was in school or out. God has prepared us to serve Him.

### **Pray About It:**

Think about your educational background, both in school and out. Pray that God will use the things you have learned to better serve Him.



## **WEEK 10 PARTICIPATING WITH GOD**

One of the great ways to connect to God is by getting in on what He is up to. The way to do that is to find your PLACE in Life and ministry. The Bible is filled with historical accounts of men and women who joined God by serving Him and others according to His plan and will. Noah got to experience God in a very special way when He got in on what God was up to when God sent the flood. God used Noah and his obedience to deliver Noah, his wife and his sons and their wives. From these, God again replenished the earth with His creation. Here we are thousands of years later celebrating Noah and his participation with God. This week we will talk about participating with God.

### **Day 1 The Ecstasy of Community**

#### **Think About It:**

Think about all of the different cells in your body. There are cells for everything, and they are all unique. With all of the cells we have, there is no pleasure cell. There is not a certain cell that makes us feel pleasure, so how do we experience it?

Let's say that you are going to the beach and want to see a beautiful sunrise. You set the alarm at night using brain cells to make that choice and decision. You sleep through the night with kidney cells and blood cells all at work to maintain body functions. You awake in the morning to the buzz of the alarm alerting your ear cells. You climb out of bed with the aid of bone and muscle cells. After getting dressed, using all kinds of different cells, you eat some breakfast using those taste buds and their cells. After breakfast you walk to the beach, again with a concert of body cells working together to get you there. You sit on the beach gazing toward the horizon, watching as it gets lighter and lighter. Then suddenly, a golden sun rises as though coming out of the sea. Chill bumps erupt on your arms, back, and neck. And yet not one pleasure cell in your body!

(Adapted from Fearfully and Wonderfully Made by Paul Brand and Phillip Yancey)

**Read It:** 1 Corinthians 12:21-27

**Think About It More:**

When all the parts of the body of Christ work together in the way God created us to work, we can bring God pleasure. As we join with God on what He is doing, we are connected to Him and to others. The Body of Christ is a beautiful thing!

**Pray About It:**

Ask God to show you where He has planned for you to join in on the work He is doing in the Body of Christ.

**Day 2 No Real Soloists in God's Church****Think About It:**

Have you ever been to an orchestra or band concert? When an orchestra or band present a concert, that is what they do, they play in concert. That word means many instruments playing together. Some play trumpet, others saxophone, others the flute, tuba, drums, trombone, and many others. Beyond music the word concert means agreement of two or more to work in harmony for a design or plan. As with the orchestra, the many instruments are playing the same song in the same key with the same beat.

**Read It:** 1 Corinthians 3:5-8

**Think About It More:**

Paul and Apollos were working independently together! They were in concert with God as the director. God gets the glory and praise and He brings the success. It is our job to obey and use our gifts, heart, abilities, personality, and experiences. When we each do our part as God has shaped us, we are in concert—playing the same song, in the same key under the direction of God.

**Pray About It:**

Thank God for His church. What task has He given you? Pray that you will obey and do what He is making you to do.

### **Day 3 Don't Ever Give Up**

#### **Think About It:**

Doug and Evelyn Knapp served as Southern Baptist Missionaries in East and South Africa. Doug was there in 1964 as an agriculture missionary to help the farmers improve their crops. At first the people did not accept them or their help. The local witchdoctor told the people that the Americans were there "to take your blood." The people would not come around. The Knapp's set up a demonstration farm and grew corn. The farmers in the area only had inferior seed. One day a man came and asked for some seed. Others came also. A leader of one village accepted an invitation to the Knapp home for refreshments. The leader asked, "Why did you come to our valley?" Doug said that he came to tell about God and His Son. The leader responded to the gospel by accepting Jesus. He invited the Knapp's to come to his village and tell his people. Others were saved also. And as a result many others came to know the Lord, also.

**Read It:** Galatians 6:6-10

#### **Think About It More:**

Read verse 9 one more time. We must do what God wants us to do and keep doing it! He has promised that He will cause the seeds that we plant to grow and bear fruit if we will not give up. It can be hard at times when it seems like nothing is happening. But, we will experience God and see what only He can do if we stick with it.

#### **Pray About It:**

Pray for everyone who is on mission with God. Pray that we will keep on going until He tells us to stop.

### **Day 4 Why Tithe?**

#### **Think About It:**

Do you know what a tithe is? A tithe is the 10% portion of what God gives us that we give back to Him. Remember God gives us everything we have. This 10% is a reminder of that. So, what are we talking about that now? There are several reasons we need to tithe, but the real reason is obedience. If we are on mission with God and serving Him how He made us to serve, then tithing is something we cannot forget about.

**Read It:** Deuteronomy 8:11-18

**Think About It More:**

So, why do we tithe?

1. The first and most important reason is because God tells us to. In Malachi 3:10, God makes it very clear that the tithe belongs to Him. If we don't, then we are robbing God.
2. This one you may not understand until you start, but tithing works! God tells us that if we obey Him, He will bless us.
3. Tithing is useful. There are lots and lots of things that must be paid for in our church. God said to tithe so there would be food in His house. This food for us is not physical food for eating, it's more important. It's for feeding people spiritually.

We can give of ourselves, not just our money. We have been talking about how God has gifted you. Are you giving those gifts back to Him?

**Pray About It:**

Pray that God will help you be obedient with tithing of your money and giving of your skills and abilities.

**Day 5 I Will...****Think About It:**

For many weeks, we have been talking about the personality, skills, abilities, and gifts God has given us. You must decide what you are going to do with the things with which He has blessed you. You are not too young to make a choice to follow the Lord wherever He leads you.

**Read It:** Joshua 24:14-18

**Think About It More:**

Joshua made his decisions, "But as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord." He had led the people into the Promised Land and called them to make a choice to serve the Lord. What will you choose?

**Pray About It:** Ask the Lord to help you live your life with a heart that is determined to serve Him.

Mr. Dennis gives a list of certain things we should make up our mind about because the Lord is our God.

- I will worship God daily
- I will seek first God's Kingdom
- I will be in worship with other believers each week
- I will be involved in Sunday School
- I will read God's word daily
- I will pray daily
- I will serve God according to how He has shaped me
- I will seek to lead others to Jesus
- I will tithe

We can't wait and see how we feel every day when it comes to these things. We have to determine that we are going to serve the Lord, and we will do these things because of that.

**Pray About It:**

Ask the Lord to help you live your life with a heart that is determined to serve Him.



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