

Finding Your PLACE in Ministry – Spiritual Gifts – October 27/28, 2018

SLIDE 1 - Have you ever gone to the shelf to pick out an old puzzle and start to put it together, only to realize that there are a couple of pieces missing... Or how about picking a game to play with the family or company and discover that there are a couple of playing pieces or cards or the dice that have been removed to be used for other purposes and you can't play the game as it was intended... Or how about buying one of those furniture-in-a-box kits and see that the company provided a couple of parts that don't fit...

Or how about us and our bodies, sometimes they don't always work the way they're intended...

Uncle Toivo – “all the parts are there, but...they're not moving very fast these days...some of them are expired...they're kind of rusty”...or my favorite, “all the parts are there, but I can't remember what to do with them.”

Today we continue our look at equipping our body of Christ here at Mt. Olive for ministry in our series “Finding Your Place in Ministry.” There are some important things to remember here:

First, we realize that we are part of the body of Christ, that we are part of a faith family because of our foundation, Jesus Christ, our Lord...

Second, we discover that after Christ's death, resurrection and ascension into heaven, God through the apostles gave us faith communities, local congregations in which to gather for worship, for growth in His Word, and to be equipped for service in the church, community, and in the world.

Today we will see how each faith community, especially our faith community here has many different members, to be united for a common purpose – loving and serving God. To do that we are looking at the PLACE process...

SLIDE 2 – We will follow up our discovery of our personalities with learning about our spiritual gift(s). Who has them? Where do they come from? How do I discover mine? We look to Scripture this morning for the answers.

SLIDE 3 – On this weekend when we observe the Reformation, what does Luther say about the Holy Spirit and spiritual gifts? First, in his explanation to the 3rd article of the Apostle's Creed, Luther said this...

SLIDE 4 – In his Large Catechism, he expounds on the work of the Holy Spirit in this way...

SLIDE 5 – To learn what spiritual gifts are, let's first look at what they're not... They are not

Natural Talents – things like humor, intelligence, athletic ability...

Fruits of the Spirit – Fruits are extension of Christ's character...Gifts are extension of Christ's ministry...

A Christian Role – God's calls all Christians to many roles without having gifts in that area – mentor, parent, leader...

SLIDE 6 –So, what are spiritual gifts? Here's what the Bible tells us: Spiritual gifts are...

A Spiritual Attribute – 1 Cor 12:7 *To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

Given by God's Spirit – 1 Cor 12:11 *All these are empowered by one & the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.*

SLIDE 7 – Continuing on, Scripture tells us that spiritual gifts are...

Given to Every Member of the Body – Again in v. 7 *To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.* This was especially important for Paul to highlight as he wrote the church at Corinth...

Given According to God's Grace – Eph 4:7 *But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.*

For the Building Up of the Body – Ephesians 4:12 *...to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.*

SLIDE 8 – Nobody knows for sure how many spiritual gifts there really are, but in the PLACE process 16 different gifts are mentioned based on the major Bible sections which refer to a list of gifts given by the Spirit of God – 1 Corinthians 12, Romans 12 and Ephesians 4.

Paul tells us in our 1st reading today that the gifts all come from the same Spirit. Just as there are different ministries, but the same Lord. Just as diverse activities proceed from the same God . Each "manifestation" (spiritual gift), though given to one, is to benefit all.

In all 3 sections mentioned above, Paul gives us a summary of the different spiritual gifts):

Evangelism, Leadership and Mercy

Administration, Prophecy and Giving Generously

Teaching, a Pastor or Shepherd, and the Gift of Unshaken Faith

Exhortation, Service and Helps

Wisdom, Knowledge, Hospitality, and Finally, Discernment

But it is the same Spirit who works all these things, distributing to each one as He wills.

SLIDE 9 - According to news reports during the last Winter Olympics, one of the most popular places in the Olympic Village was the bowling alley. Interestingly enough, Olympic athletes weren't that good at bowling. One source reports that in more than a half-hour of viewing, she didn't see one strike bowled. Just because you have strengths in one area, doesn't mean you have strengths in others. But, whatever your strength, whatever your role, it is important!

SLIDE 10 – So, how do you know what your gift(s) is/are? Here's some principles to discovering your spiritual gifts:

- Believe You Have a Gift(s)
- Ask God to Reveal Your Spiritual Gift(s)
- Teaching By Other Christians
- Evaluate Your Effectiveness
- Expect Confirmation from the Body

SLIDE 11 –

1 Corinthians 12:12 NIV

*The **body** is a **unit**, though it is made up of **many parts**; and though all its parts are many, they **form one body**. So it is with Christ.*

SLIDE 12 – Conclusion

As we engage in more of this conversation about finding our PLACE in ministry, several challenges are placed before us...

1. There are different ways members serve.
2. Members need to be given direction to develop their gift(s).
3. Members need to be given opportunity to find their place in the body.