

Session 4

DO YOUR JOB

John 21:15-17,20-23; 1 Corinthians 12:4-7

Memory Verse

*“If I want him to remain until I come,” Jesus answered,
“what is that to you? As for you, follow me.”*

– JOHN 21:22, CSB




Do Your Job

THEOLOGICAL THEME: Every believer receives spiritual gifts. Although we might feel tempted to compare gifts and wish for what others have received, Jesus was clear that each person should stay focused on using and developing his or her own gifts for the sake of the kingdom.

How often do you find yourself scrolling through social media and getting caught up in what other people are posting and doing? Do you ever start to wish your life looked more like theirs? Although we know we should not get caught up in comparing our life to what we see online or in person, the temptation to compare your life to others seems overwhelming.

While keeping up with what other people are posting and doing isn't wrong, it can produce negative consequences. It is a problem when you find yourself spending more time looking at others' lives than being present in your own. We often experience discontentment when we fall into the trap of comparing our lives to others. Scripture addresses the tendency to compare ourselves to other people and gives clear instruction on what to do when our focus rests more on what they are doing than on what we should be doing.

 When have you felt discontent from observing others' lives?

 Why is it especially tempting to compare yourself to others in the age of social media?

Session Summary

It is important for all Christians to know and recognize they have been given gifts by the Holy Spirit. These gifts are widely diverse and yet all have a common purpose. Spiritual gifts should be used for the good of the body as a whole and not for personal gain.

(To discover your gifts, see links in the application section of this study)

We should not get caught up in comparing and assessing our gifts against those of another believer. It's easy to focus on what other people are doing instead of what God has called us to do. Peter did exactly that when he deflected Jesus's question in John 21 by asking about another disciple. Jesus was clear and direct, telling Peter it wasn't his job to worry about what anyone else was doing with their gifts or calling but to stay focused on his life. This is helpful guidance for believers today. When we fulfill the role God has given us then the body will flourish, and the gospel will continue to spread.

1. You Are Gifted (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

Although all spiritual gifts come from the Holy Spirit, Paul stressed to the believers in Corinth diversity and unity both exist in these gifts. Each Christ follower receives gifts from the Spirit to be used for a common purpose. The gifts come from the same divine source and are specifically intended for certain individuals as the means of building up the whole body.

We tend to look at our spiritual gifts and either think too highly of them or devalue them based on others' gifts. Both responses are wrong. This is why Paul made a clear statement about the purposes and function of the gifts. We fail to use our gifts in the intended way when we become focused on comparison and pride or jealousy.

? How does it change your perspective on the gifts you and others have received to remember God gave each person specific gifts based on His desire for them? How does this make the value of all the gifts equal?

Paul said no matter the gift, all have a role, and all are valuable in God's kingdom. Paul addressed the temptation of thinking that one gift was better or more important than another. When you realize the common source and goal of the gifts, you can understand they all work together and are all vital to the work of the gospel.

? When have you been tempted to think too highly or too lowly of your spiritual gifts?

LEADER NOTE: Have group members share about their gifts in groups of 3-4

There is no place for inflating the value of your gift or devaluing it. God's power can be displayed and poured out in innumerable ways. Our role is to recognize the gifts we have received and use them to bring glory to God. Evidence of the spiritual gifts in our lives is described as the manifest presence of God. When sinful, imperfect human beings serve, love, share, teach, lead, and use their gifts rightly, it is proof that the Spirit of God is at work among us.

When we obey Scripture and fulfill the purpose of our gifts, others will notice that there is a greater power at work in us. Paul stressed that the common goal of the spiritual gifts is for the profit of all. We should never seek personal gain or glorification from our gifts but remember they were given to us for the good of the body of Christ as a whole.


? Application: How should the common purpose for the spiritual gifts affect the way you look at your own spiritual gifts?

2. You Are Called (John 21:15-17)

The interaction between Jesus and Peter in John 21 took place after the resurrection. It was a powerful moment of restoration and challenge for Peter. As predicted, he had denied Jesus three times prior to the crucifixion. That morning on the shore, Jesus took the time to restore Peter.

 Why would it be important for Jesus to restore Peter in the presence of the other disciples following Peter's public denial?

Jesus addressed Peter personally, using the name Simon, and asked about his love for Jesus. Before his denial of Christ, Peter had claimed to love Jesus more than the others. On this day, Jesus asked him to assess and restate his love. This gave Peter and opportunity to show his humility and reassert his love for Jesus. After asking this question twice, Jesus responded to Peter with a command on how to act toward God's people. Often, love for Jesus is revealed in our actions toward others.

 How does the way we treat God's people show our love or lack thereof for Jesus?

If we love Jesus, we will feed and tend to His sheep. We will stay focused on obeying the Word and not continually compare ourselves to those around us. Peter previously had an inflated sense of his own commitment to Jesus, and he was humbled by the reality of his own weakness. When we hold ourselves up or think our gifts are better than someone else's, we allow pride a place it should not have.

Jesus asked Peter a third time and this time responded by pointing to the sacrifice Peter would make as a display of his genuine love for Christ. Asking Peter the question three times aligned with the three times Peter had previously denied Jesus. After Jesus restored Peter, he renewed the commandment to follow Him.

This call is the same for all followers of Jesus. To reach the world with the gospel, we must be intentional about using the gifts we have been given. Jesus stated this clearly in Matthew 22:37. When we love God rightly, then we, like Peter, will recognize our calling and seek to use the gifts we have been given to profit the whole body and bring glory to God.

? Application: Can you honestly say you are seeking to love God with your whole heart, soul, and mind? What needs to change for this to be the case?

3. Get to Work (John 21:20-23)

In response to Jesus's command, Peter responded like we often do today. After hearing the Lord's challenge to him, Peter looked around at the others and asked a question about Jesus's intention for John.

? Why is it often easier to focus on what others are doing or not doing than on the ways Jesus is speaking to us directly?

When confronted with an issue, kids will often immediately deflect by turning the attention to another person. Apparently, we don't outgrow this tendency because adults often respond in the same way—even within the church. It may be when a leader invites you to step up into a new role or gives you an opportunity to put your gifts to use in a new way. Have you ever responded with a question designed to move the attention to a different person?

Instead of stepping up and living out the call of God on our lives, we often look for ways to deflect attention and avoid responding. Jesus knew what was happening addressed it with Peter.

? When have you sought to deflect attention instead of responding directly to an opportunity for you to serve or minister? What might you have missed by not taking this opportunity?

Without addressing John's call, Jesus essentially told Peter to mind his own business. The thing Peter needed to do was focus on his own calling instead of worrying about what everyone else was doing. The time to respond to Jesus is always now. It is clear Jesus wanted Peter to see this truth because He repeated the command for Peter to follow Him. We should heed this response as well.

Instead of delaying our response so someone else might step up in our place, we need to obey Jesus when we have the opportunity. We gain nothing from comparing our gifts and calling to others'. When God calls you to obedience, you may not even be the most skilled person for the task; it is more about the way God wants to shape and use you for His purposes and your own good. Stay focused on what God wants you to do. It is that simple.

? Application: What do you need to do differently so that you respond appropriately to Jesus's call on your life?

Conclusion

All Christ followers receive spiritual gifts. These are not tools of comparison or to create jealousy; the same Holy Spirit gives them with a common purpose. They are both diverse and unifying. These gifts are not meant for personal gain or glory but for the good of the whole body of Christ.

First, discover your gift. *Second*, find a coach or mentor to help you develop that gift. *Third*, go to work. Find a place to serve others using your gift. Receive the fulfillment God offers by using your gift faithfully.

Jesus had an important conversation with Peter following the resurrection in which He stressed the importance of obeying His call on our lives without becoming distracted by His purposes for others. By asking Peter the same basic question three times, Jesus restored Peter in front of the other disciples and made a vital point about Peter's calling.

When we question what our next step should be, we can look to what God has already commanded and just obey. In Matthew 22:37, Jesus made it clear our focus should be on loving God and people.

From Jesus's and Peter's interaction, we also learn we are to stay focused on what God wants us to do and not compare our calling with others. Although it is easy to get distracted by what everyone else is involved in, this is counterproductive to our own spiritual walk. It is time to respond in obedience to what God has called us to do.



What is God calling you to do to show your love for Him by loving His people?

Resource Links

Discover your gift: <https://brentwood.servesurvey.com/>

Coaching:

To become a coach: <https://brentwoodbaptist.com/event-details/?id=207773>

To be coached: <https://brentwood.church/coaching/>

Here's How to Become a Christ-Follower:

Read the following verses and ask after each one: "What does this say to me?"

- **All have sinned:** Romans 3:23 & 1 John 1:8
- **The wages of sin:** Romans 6:23 & John 3:18
- **But while we were sinners, salvation was provided:** Romans 5:8
- **Become a Christ-follower:** Romans 10:9-10 Confess and Believe

Accepting Christ is Just the Beginning:

Next Steps:

- Publicly profess your faith by being baptized (Matthew 10:32-33; Luke 3:21; Romans 6:4).
- Join a church which follows the Bible, where you can grow in your faith through prayer, Bible study and fellowship with other Christians.
- Get involved in groups for encouragement and accountability.
- Begin a daily personal worship experience with God where you study the Bible and pray.
- Share with others what Jesus has done for you. Tell your story (Romans 10:14; Matthew 28:19-20).
- Begin to live for God (Romans 12:1-2, 9-18; James 1:19-27).



FOR NEXT WEEK

Time to Get to Work

Main Passages

- John 9:1-7; James 4:13-17

Session Outline

1. The Time Is Now (John 9:1-7)
2. The Time Is Short (James 4:13-15)
3. Do What You Know to Do (James 4:16-17)

Memorize

“If I want him to remain until I come,” Jesus answered, “what is that to you? As for you, follow me.”

- John 21:22, CSB

Prayer

1. Ask God to show you your gifts and how to use them in your church and your community.
2. Ask God for guidance on your next step in developing your gifts.