

# Using your gifts and talents

by Ross Callaghan  
<http://rosscallaghan.yolasite.com>

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10*

Everyone has many gifts and talents!



## God designed you with many abilities

*For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139:13-16.*

God doesn't make junk! He gave you many unique natural gifts. eg. your skills, intelligence, personality. There's no-one else like you!

## If you use your natural gifts they develop into talents

eg.

<i>Natural gift</i>	<i>Talent</i>
logical thinking	computer programming, strategic planning
creativity	writing, painting, designing, problem solving
working with your hands	making things, using different media, fixing things
compassion	helping people, counselling, encouragement

What are your main talents? How did they develop?

### See Matthew 25:14-30 The Parable of the Talents

- Everyone has different talents.
- We are to use our talents to bless others.
- God is pleased when we use our talents.
- God expects us to use our talents.
- Using our talents will make them grow.
- Our talents should produce fruit in others.
- If we don't use our talents we will lose them.



*For everyone who has will be given more, and he will have an abundance. Whoever does not have, even what he has will be taken from him. v29*

*'Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!' v21*

## God also gives special gifts for particular situations.

### See Romans 12: 1-8

- We all have different gifts.
- These gifts (*charismata*) are given to us by God's grace (*charis*).
- The gifts are to be used to bless others.

### See 1 Corinthians 12: 4-21

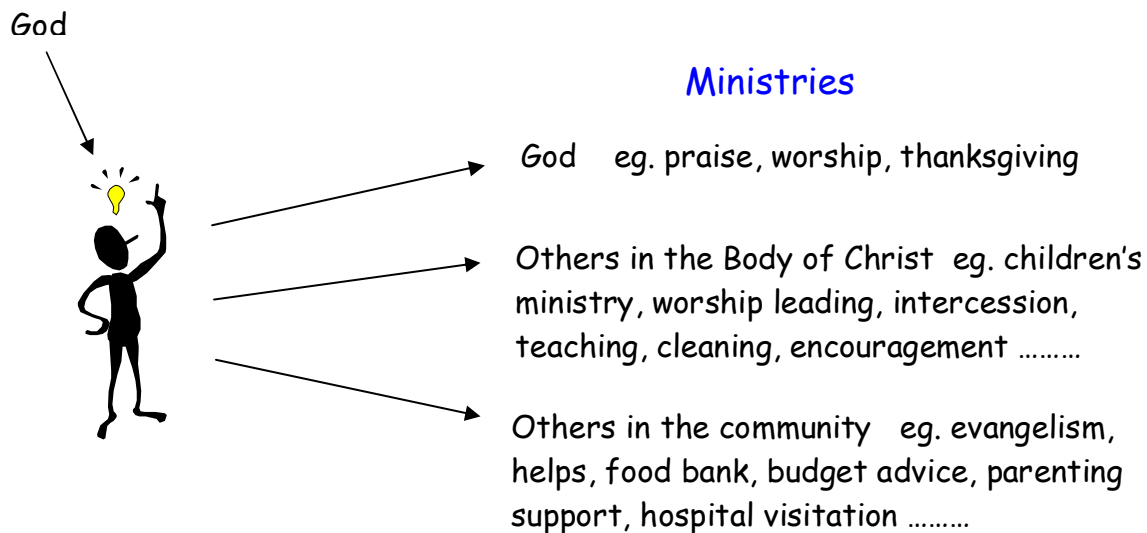
- There are different kinds of gifts and different ways of exercising them.
- God works through all of the gifts to bless others.
- God gives His gifts to everyone.
- The gifts are given so we can share them with others.
- There are different gifts for different situations.
- God determines who gets the gifts and what gifts they get.
- The gifts come to us by the Holy Spirit.
- The gifts must be shared in love.
- Eagerly desire God's gifts and share them willingly.



## When you share your gifts and talents with others they become ministries

*Our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant - not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.*

*For God, who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory displayed in the face of Christ. We have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. 2 Corinthians 3:5,6 and 4:6,7.*



There are countless different ministries. In each God does His wonderful works through Christians who are open to receive from Him; willing to learn, grow and develop, and willing to share God's grace with others.

When you exercise your ministry (or ministries) you will find real meaning and purpose in life. That's because you will be doing what God created you for; why He placed you on Earth at this particular time in history. You will be making a difference in other peoples' lives: helping them come into all that God has for them. You'll be helping build the Kingdom of God.

## Finding your ministry

*You are the light of the world. A city on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*

Matthew 5:14-16

Many Christians want to have a ministry, but are not sure what their ministry is!

- They know God has called them to make a difference in other peoples' lives, and really want to make a difference.
- They know they have gifts and know how valuable other people's ministries have been in their own lives.
- They may feel unclear about what God is calling them to.
- They may feel they have no opportunities for ministry (but they know there are countless people out there who need Christ and who are really hurting).
- They may feel ill-equipped to share with others.
- They may be too busy or too shy or .....

**God wants to use you to make a difference in this hurting world!**



### Here are some tips for finding your ministry:

1. Identify your gifts and talents. (What are you good at? What do others say you are good at?).
2. Identify what you are passionate about. (What do you love doing? It's likely that your ministry will be linked to this).
3. Ask God to show you what He wants you to do. Be open to whatever He says, and be willing to obey! Like Isaiah say *Here am I, Lord. Send me.* Isaiah 6:8
4. Get involved in other people's ministries. Support them and learn from them. Be willing to try new things. Let yourself be extended so your faith can grow.
5. Ask for ideas and feedback from trusted Christian friends. (What do you think I could do? How could I have done it better?).
6. Use one (or more) of the on-line guides for finding your ministry. Google 'Finding your ministry' or 'Finding your spiritual gifts'. eg. [www.churchgrowth.org](http://www.churchgrowth.org) has a simple 'Spiritual Gifts Analysis' you can complete on-line.
7. Study Romans 12:3-8, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40, Ephesians 4:7-16 and 1 Peter 4:7-11.
8. Recognise that you can have many ministries, and that your ministries may change throughout your life.
9. Assess your priorities and place ministry high on the list! Determine to make a difference for Christ in your short time on earth.

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. 1 Peter 4:10*

## Growing in your ministry

The best way to grow in your ministry is to exercise it!

Get involved in sharing God's grace with others. This will stretch you and grow your skills, understanding and effectiveness. (See the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30).

I am a promise, I am a possibility.  
I am a promise with a capital P.  
I am a great big bundle of potentiality.  
And I am learning to hear God's voice  
and I am trying to make the right  
choices....  
I'm a promise to be,  
anything God wants me to be.

There are lots of other things you can do to develop your ministry:

- **Wait on God.** Find the things that He wants you to do, and do them.

*They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. Isaiah 40:31*

- **Study God's Word.**

*Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth. 2 Timothy 2:15*

- **Enrol in a Bible College course or training programme.** Learn as much as you can about your ministry.
- **Go to conferences.** Hear what is happening in other places in your area of ministry.
- **Read widely.** Read different perspectives and approaches for your area of ministry.
- **Get involved.** Try new approaches. Offer. Volunteer. Go. Use your skills!

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations. Matthew 28:18*

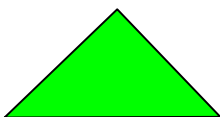
- **Think!** Think about all aspects of your ministry. eg. What is happening in society? Where are people hurting? What are people thinking? What is likely to happen in the future? How can I do things better?

*The wisdom of the prudent is to give thought to their ways. Proverbs 14:8*

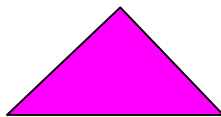
- **Find a mentor.** Ask an experienced person to help you develop in your ministry.
- **Ask for feedback.** Listen to it, then evaluate and act on it.

*Let the wise listen and add to their learning, and let the discerning get guidance. Proverbs 1:5*

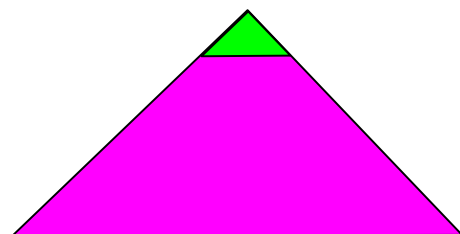
As your ministry develops you will grow in credibility and effectiveness:



You share all you know, (or more than you know). Bluffing!



You have lots to offer! It's time to start sharing.



Credibility

Your ministry is built on a strong foundation.

 your skills and knowledge

 what you share

You may feel that you are inadequate to minister to others. But remember Luke 1:37. God will help you. Ministry is a partnership between you and the Holy Spirit.

**Nothing is impossible with God.** Luke 1:37

*I can do everything through him who gives me strength.* Philippians 4:13.

*And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.* Philippians 4:19.

*But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you.* John 16:13, 14.

The Holy Spirit will bless, heal, encourage, help, save, forgive, reconcile ..... but He will do it through you!!!

Are you willing to take ministry seriously? Will you offer yourself in obedience to God and lay down your life in service for others? Will you go into this hurting world and share God's life and love with the people He loves?

*Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.* John 15:13.

**This is where you will find real meaning and purpose in your life!**

***Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to His power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.***

**Ephesians 3:20, 21**

## **Discussion questions**

What's the difference between natural abilities, talents, gifts, and ministries?

Why do so many Christians feel they have no ministry? What is the effect of this on the mission of the Church?

*I can do everything through him who gives me strength.* Philippians 4:13. What are the implications of this verse for Christian ministry?

Do giftings, talents, and ministries change over time?

We can minister to the Lord; to others in the Body of Christ; and to those outside in our communities. Which of these are you involved in? Which of these are you most effective in? Which of these is your Church most effective in? Which of these do you need to develop in?

Why are Christians seen as being so out of touch and irrelevant, when our message and ministries are so vitally needed in our communities?

*Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.* 1 Peter 4:10. What are the implications of this verse in the light of the Parable of the talents? (Matthew 25:14-30).

