

ELEVATE: Our Priorities

Session #2: Talents

Session Objective: The objective for this session is for each student to realize that God has called them to a special and significant role in his plan and Church. Recognizing and identifying spiritual gifts is a secondary objective.

Minimum Prep: Read through the entire session outline. Prepare an environment where discussion can occur.

Extended Prep:

- Take a **Spiritual Gift Inventory** – This simple questionnaire can help you discover how God has uniquely gifted you to serve in the body of Christ. Also, the book and workbook, “**Find Your Fit**”, by Jane Kise provides an overview and detailed process to help a student better understand how God has wired them. Available at Read On Bookstore.
- Work with your church leadership to develop a ministry fair where the various ministries of your church share their needs and opportunities. This allows students to dream about and connect with opportunities to develop and use their talents for kingdom purposes.
- If your youth ministry has a worship team, they could serve as a great object lesson for your Leader Preamble. The Preamble’s goal is to illustrate great teams or groups – how each member has a different but important role to play. Have the team play, but have the sound technician turn down various instruments at intervals during the last worship song. Then, have the sound technician turn down the sound completely. (Note: You could substitute a drama team – lines that are not said, etc. and achieve the same point).

Session Outline

Leader Preamble: *(see above)*

Leader Note: Depending on the size of your group, you may choose to reduce the number of teams or double up with two groups working on the same question.

I’d like to divide our group into three teams:

Group 1 – your mission is to develop a dream team for sports – choose any six players for one sport

Group 2 – your mission is to develop a dream team for music – choose any 5 band members to make one new band

Group 3 – your mission is to develop a dream team for television – choose any 5 people to make characters on one new television show. Go!

Let's hear back from each group – who were your dream teams and why?

What were some common characteristics for your teams?

(Every person had a key contribution; the teams wouldn't be the same without them).

Extended Prep Option – (at end of worship set): I'm really thankful for our worship team this year! Could we express our appreciation to God and the team? (Clapping).

Did anybody notice anything a little different with the last song? (Some instruments were turned down or up over the others, then the sound dropped completely)

Ask Worship Team: What was it like to lead under these conditions?

There was a method to our madness tonight – I wanted to illustrate how each team member and our sound technician have different but important roles to play to make the team function properly. This illustration relates to real life and our focus on priorities,

Small Group Questions:

1. Have you ever been part of a team or group (sports team, band, club, community organization, etc.) that accomplished more together than you could have accomplished on your own? What was the group and what did you learn about yourself and working with a group?

2. Read Jeremiah 1:4-5. How would you react if you were Jeremiah? Why?

Possibilities: Overwhelmed that God had been so personally involved in my life since before I was born, overwhelmed that God wanted to use me for such a significant task, etc.

3. What words would you use to describe what God was calling Jeremiah to do?

Special. Significant. Super-sized.

Let's look at Jeremiah's response in verse 6: "Ah, Sovereign Lord," I said, "I do not know how to speak; I am only a child."

4. What is Jeremiah really saying in verse 6?

I'm too young for this job. You've got the wrong person.

Let's continue on to see how God responds in verses 7-8.

'But the Lord said to me, "Do not say, "I am only a child." You must go to everyone I send you to and say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them, for I am with you and will rescue you," declares the Lord.'

Notice that God doesn't deny Jeremiah's inadequacies in age or speaking ability. Instead, God calls Jeremiah to obedience and pledges his presence and help.

5. Read Ephesians 2:10. How does it make you feel to know that God calls you his workmanship', that you've been created 'to do good works' and that God has prepared these good works in advance?

Possibilities: Special, Significant, Overwhelmed, Responsible, and Denial – can't God get along without me, etc.

6. Read 1Corinthians 12:14-26 - How would you paraphrase or summarize these verses? What does the metaphor of the body mean for you and for our group?

We need one another to fully function.

v. 18 – God has given each of us different (it's good we aren't all the same), special and significant roles (sometimes the Church may value some gifts more than others, but all gifts are critical for the healthy life of the Church. Plus, we shouldn't be praising the holder of a gift – we need to praise the giver of the gift-God!!!).

7. If God has given each of us special and significant roles, how do we figure out what those roles are?

There are different layers to the roles God wants us to play. For instance:

Passions – What do you have a passion for? When do you feel you are making a real difference? What do you think about a lot?

Talents – What are you good at? Think about skills or contributions you have made in the past or areas others have encouraged you.

Likely connected to our passions and talents are spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts aren't based on our work but the Holy Spirit's supernatural work through us. We can, however, partner with the Holy Spirit by being faithful, available and surrendered for his work and plan.

8. Scripture talks about spiritual gifts in a number of places. Read 1Corinthians 8-11 as well as Romans 12:4-8 and make a list of the gifts. Do any of these gifts sound like God at work in your life or someone in your group? (Extended Preparation Option: This would be a good place to do a spiritual gift inventory)

Pray – Lead your group through each of the following three segments of prayer.

Thanks - God for choosing each one of us for a special purpose and for choosing to work through each one of us.

Confess – For being like Jeremiah - looking at our inadequacies rather than God, for envying the gifts of others rather than being thankful, for not seeking to use or develop our gifts.

Ask - God for clarity in discerning our gifts, for wisdom in developing and using our gifts.

Leader Note: Contact Rob McAlpine at compass@baptist.ca with any thoughts or questions suggestions.

Comments and Feedback:

Leader Note: This is your place each week to record significant sharing or growth in the lives of your students for subsequent follow up. You can also use this space to provide feedback on the material. All suggestions are welcome.

Please see the following handout. You have permission to reproduce these handouts for your group.