

BRMC Small Group Study: Holy Spirit Session 5

Leader's Guide

Please note that the suggestions below are not model answers but to help guide your study. Feel free to adapt the questions for your group.

Scripture Passage:

Focus: Ephesians 4:11-16

Supplementary: 1 Corinthians 12:6-7 and 12-31

Open to the Spirit:

Focus chapter: 14

Supplementary chapters: 12 and 13

Context:

"Each Christian is given something to do for the sake of others." These are done from "spirit-prompted gifts". (p 116) The focus of this session is to direct our attention on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, what they might be, what they are for and how we might each discern the gift(s) that have been given to each of us. We should therefore acknowledge that: these gifts are from God the Holy Spirit, given for service in the Body of Christ (i.e. for the benefit of others), we each need to know our gift(s) and to actually use it for the "common good".

The focus passage (Ephesians 4:11-16 read with the supplementary passages) highlights that it is God the Spirit who gives the gifts, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up. This means, all reach unity in the faith and knowledge of Jesus and become mature, and to attain full measure of fullness of Christ (see Session 4 on Christlikeness). The purpose of "spirit-prompted" gifts is for growth into Christ and to be built up in love.

Lesson Objectives:

- Every Christian is granted one or more gifts by the Holy Spirit.
- These gift(s) are for the common good.
- Every Christian should desire these gifts, to know our gifting and to use it to build up the Body of Christ.

Introductory

1. In Ephesians 4:11-16 and 1 Corinthians 12:6-7, who is the Giver of these gifts? What is the purpose for these gifts?
 - The gifts are given by the same Spirit for the common good (1 Cor 12:6-7). The gifts are given to prepare God's people for works of service, so that:
 - Body of Christ may be built up until all reach unity of the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God;
 - Attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

2. What are some examples of the gifts?

- 1 Corinthians 13 identifies, apostles, prophets, teachers, workers of miracles, healing, administration, helps, tongues, while Ephesians 4:11 identifies, apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers. McKnight states that there are an “amazing variety of gifts” and that the lists are merely illustrations of the sorts of things the Spirit is doing through us for the benefit of others. (p 121)
- The discussion should lead to the reflection questions which aim to focus on what each person discerns is their gift, not necessarily from a test, but from experience or prayerful reflection with the Holy Spirit.

Reflection

3. Have you observed examples of people exercising Spirit-prompted gifts in church or your small group (e.g. hospitality, teaching, leadership, etc)? What do you think happens when people exercise their Spirit-prompted gift(s)?

- McKnight shares the story of Derwin Gray (p 117-118) whose Spirit-prompted gifts manifested clearly in transforming the way that he spoke. (The extract of Derwin Gray’s story may be found at the end of this Guide.) The essence of the manifestation is the transformation in the physical of what must have been led in the spiritual. It is only by the empowering of the Holy Spirit that human inability can be transformed to human ability. (p 118)
- Another aspect of Derwin Gray’s story is that the transformation impacts others and is for the service of others. McKnight writes: “Like so many others who have experienced an empowerment from the Spirit to serve God, Derwin’s life is a life for others.” (p 118) One noticeable effect of Spirit-prompted gifts is that they operate to benefit others.
- Are these examples of the emphasis in Scripture that the gifts are to be “for the common good”?

4. Have you been serving or do you currently serve in church, your small group or in the Body of Christ?

- McKnight focuses on the common good for the Body of Christ. (p 117) To be “other-oriented”. And includes more specifically contributing to the local Body of Christ, the local church. (p 120)
- This question allows people to reflect and share on whether and how they have been serving in the local or wider Body of Christ. Some may not be serving or confused about whether their “service” counts as an exercise of their spiritual or Spirit-prompted gifts.
- This is also an opportunity to reflect on what Pastor-in-Charge and our pastors have been sharing from the pulpit concerning the church vision which includes developing small groups and serving one another.
- This can then lead to the next question on discerning spiritual or Spirit-prompted gifts.

5. Have you discovered your Spirit-prompted gifts? How can I discern my Spirit-prompted gifts?
- This is an opportunity to allow people to share about their particular journey of discovery or discernment with God the Holy Spirit. Listen carefully for moments where it is clear the discernment comes from the Holy Spirit. Emphasise that all gifts come from the Holy Spirit.
 - McKnight takes a functional approach to discernment of Spirit-promoted gifts. He writes: "... instead of working to figure out which gift in the composite list [from scripture] is yours, ask yourself this question: What is God doing through me for my local Body of Christ? Whatever that is, that's your gift." (p 121)
 - For those who have yet to discern their gifts, McKnight shares about Amanda Holm Rosengren, who, in her journey took the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) her type and suggested vocation. (p 119-120) It is therefore also useful to consider using tools such as the MBTI to help those who have not been serving to discern where their gifts may lie.
 - However, it is also significant to note that Amanda's calling to be a pastor was discerned from hearing God and seeking God for confirmation – an aspect of confirming the Spirit-promoted gift. (p 120)

Application

6. Do you desire the Spirit-prompted gifts? How might you exercise your gifts?
- This question seeks to give an opportunity for people to take steps to actively seek to discern their Spirit-prompted gift(s). Some in your group may require more assistance to understand what this means. The structure for each group will also differ depending on the discussions of the previous question.
 - An important aspect of this process is:
 - o Has to be Spirit-prompted gift(s) which transforms human inability to human ability – the enabling, the empowerment must be from the Holy Spirit.
 - o There has to be a desire to be others-oriented, to serve, to benefit others.
 - It may be possible to use free online surveys to give tentative indicators of strengths or propensities towards a particular service. A simple online survey that was recently used by Shine Forth (<http://blog.faithpromise.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/05/spiritual-gifts-assessment.pdf>) may be useful.
 - It may also be useful to pray together, review the ministry areas in BRMC and to sign up to serve in one or two ministry areas. Please refer to the Call to Action below.
 - It is important to note that the small group does not have to all serve in the same ministry area. This is because everyone may have a different gifting, which may lead to different ministry service. Perhaps the most important is for people to have a desire and to take concrete steps to move towards serving.

Prayer

- Write out a prayer for yourself based on what you have heard and learned from this session, and for your application steps.
 - It may be useful to break into smaller groups, or to keep within the small groups for the sharing above.
 - Allow some time for people to process what they have heard and learned from the Holy Spirit. Then encourage them to share with one another what their prayer is for this session, and for themselves for the week.
 - It is always useful to collate these prayers and to refer to them for thanksgiving and sharing next week.
 - If it is appropriate, suggest to members to write down specific instances when they feel the Spirit at work in them and through them. This aims to help them become more aware of the Spirit's presence in their lives.

Call to Action

- Would you and your small group prayerfully consider immediately answering the call to serve in Barker Road Methodist Church? Would you take this opportunity to explore serving in one or more the ministries in our church? Would you take that step to contact a Pastoral Team Staff or sign up from our registration page using the QR Code or URL below:



<https://brmcsg.churchcenter.com/people/forms/96422>

- This is an opportunity to encourage your small group to prayerfully seek to use their gifts, and to steward their talents for the benefit of others. A list of BRMC's ministry opportunities can be found on the website: www.brmc.org.sg



Derwin Gray's story:

DERWIN IN THE ELAH VALLEY

Recently I co-led a tour of Israel, where we made a stop at the Elah Valley. This valley is known to Bible readers as the location of the contest between David and Goliath.² A doctoral candidate in the group who came closest to Goliath, at least in terms of size, was Derwin Gray. Derwin played football in high school and at Brigham Young University, although he is not a Mormon. He was drafted by an NFL team and played six seasons for the Indianapolis Colts and the Carolina Panthers.¹ He not only had been converted by the power of the Spirit but the Lord had also called him into ministry. He graduated from seminary with honors and planted

Transformation Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. The church has been recognized as one of the fastest-growing churches in America.

Derwin is a big man with a big voice and a powerful capacity to preach and speak. And he loves to discuss theology. There in the Elah Valley I asked him to read 1 Samuel 17 as our group walked across a field and gathered near the famous stream associated with David's five smooth stones. Derwin prayed and then began to read. He knew the Lord had been on David's side, but he had the voice of Goliath. His booming voice echoed off the walls of the Elah Valley.

Derwin had had a terrible stutter at one time. And though it occasionally manifests itself in his speech now, the Lord has given him a transcending power to speak. That day I heard a miracle of God's own doing as Derwin read a passage from the Bible.

In his book on *Famous Stutterers*, Gerald McDermott sketches the lives of twelve famous people who had a stutter,² including Moses, who told God, "I am slow of speech and tongue."² McDermott wrote that those who stutter will need to seek transcendence, so I quote again the line from my teacher, Jimmy Dunn: "The prominence of the Spirit in Luke's narrative from Pentecost onwards makes clear beyond doubt that for Luke the mission of the church could not hope to be effective without this empowering from God (the Spirit of God) which *transcends human ability and transforms human inability*."³ Yes, only the Spirit gives what transcends and transforms.

Like so many others who have experienced an empowerment from the Spirit to serve God, Derwin's life is a life for others. If God calls, God gifts. And what God gives is a gift for the sake of others.