



WEEK THREE: CALLED TO SERVE

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By Carey Madding

Every Western hero has a special gift. He may be the fastest gun, the best shot, or have the most incredible stallion. She may have the moral high ground or amazing courage. There is always something a little different that gives the hero the edge needed to overcome.

This weekend, we talked about the parable of the talents found in Matthew 25:14-30. We paid special attention to verse 23. It should be the goal of every believer to follow well and do what Jesus did. Is it your heart's desire to hear, at the end of your life journey, "Well done, my faithful servant"? If so, you must use your gift! You must consider serving. It's required.

[Wide-angle shot: Hero rides into the sunset. Fade to black.]

Where Am I Today?

- 1) Would you say that you have been given five talents, two talents, or just one talent? Have you invested them and are seeing a "return" on that investment? Or, would you say that you're sitting on your talent and not really making any "profit" for your Lord?

THE CALLED

WEEK THREE: CALLED TO SERVE – STUDY GUIDE

Into the Bible

- 2) **Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 and 11-27.** Think about the following questions and write down your observations.
 - a. Why are the spiritual gifts given to individuals in the family of God?

 - b. Who makes the decision about who gets what spiritual gift?

 - c. What part of the body is the most important? Which has the greatest honor? And what does this have to do with spiritual gifts?

 - d. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts?

- 3) Make a list of the major spiritual gifts as found in the Epistles below. Just list the different types of talent, ministry or service you find in each passage. If you don't understand it, mark it and do a little study on that particular gift. Then ask your group.
 - a. **Romans 12:6-8, 13**

 - b. **1 Corinthians 12:8-10**

 - c. **1 Corinthians 12:28**

 - d. **Ephesians 4:11-13**

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WEEK THREE: CALLED TO SERVE – STUDY GUIDE

How Does This Apply?

- 4) No matter what our gift or service, we have been given specific instructions on carrying them out. **Read 1 Peter 4:8-11**. What do you notice that you should be doing as you serve, however you are gifted?

- 5) What do you think your spiritual gift is? Do the people in your group agree? Ask them!

- 6) What other gifts are evident in your group? If you have an insight about talents and gifts that others haven't seen in themselves, encourage them by sharing.

Digging Deeper: Going Further on Your Own

- 7) Spiritual gifts all come down to one thing: grace. The Greek word for grace is called *Charis*. Many times when the word "grace" is used in conjunction with spiritual gifts, the Greek word then becomes *Charismata*, which means, "free or divine gifts given to us." People often confuse spiritual gifts and spiritual fruit. Let's take a look at the differences.
 - a. **Read Romans 12:6**. What does this verse tell us about our gift and what to do with it?

THE CALLED

WEEK THREE: CALLED TO SERVE – STUDY GUIDE

- b. **Read 1 Corinthians 12:4,9,28.** Do you recognize the Greek word Charismata in these verses? Do you see how the English words “grace” and “gifts” are used interchangeably to come back to the same meaning?
- c. We can become confused by the difference in “spiritual gifts” and “bearing spiritual fruit.” Let’s look at some verses that talk about what the fruit of the Spirit really is. **Read Galatians 5:22-23.** Do you recognize the differences?
- 8) If you are unsure about your spiritual gift, there is a link to an online gift assessment test [here](#). Remember, as Mike mentioned earlier in this series, finding out your gift should be motivated by your desire to make God famous and to serve others, not just for personal interest. Pray before, during and after the test, that God would use you for His glory and His purposes!