

**Face the Issue:**

In this week's message, Jeremy shared with us that there are two secrets to joy:

- 1- Get the focus of myself.
- 2- Use my gifts to help others.

James Thurber wrote a story about a man with little joy in his life called "The Secret Life of Walter Mitty". Walter is always dreaming of being someone that he isn't. Usually it was a hero or adventurous person because he believed that his own life was boring. Have you ever wished you were someone else? The problem for Christians is not usually pretending that we are really important, but thinking we're nothing *but* a Walter Mitty, boring, useless, no real purpose. That is because we do not understand what it means to be spiritually gifted.

Do you have a sense of what your spiritual gifts are? What difference has knowing those gifts made in your walk with the Lord or, if you do not know what they are, what difference could it make?

Into the Word:

Some people might think God gives spiritual gifts to manipulate people into working, kind of like telling a man he has the gift of digging, then giving him a hole to dig.

The Greek word Paul uses for spiritual gift is *charismata*, which means a "gift of grace." One of the amazing things about God's "grace gifts" is that they not only represent His grace to us—giving us a Christ-like ability to serve that we could never earn or develop ourselves—but they also allow us to be channels of God's grace to others so that they can experience the goodness of God through us!

Read Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:4–11, 27–31; Ephesians 4:11; and 1 Peter 4:10–11.

The above passages list lots of gifts but you can really put them into two basic categories: Gifts of Speech and Gifts of Compassion.

Gifts of speech can also be called gifts of truth telling. Gifts that make the truth of God's Word clear to the church and that help us see how to wisely apply God's Word are important if the church is to reject false teachings or ideas.

Gifts of Compassion make the love of Christ real to people. The mercy and tenderness of Jesus, which might otherwise seem unknowable or distant to people, becomes personal and real when Christians exercise these spiritual gifts.

Reread the passages above and put the gifts mentioned in one of the two categories in this table.

Gifts of Speech	Gifts of Compassion

What are some ways you can know you are exercising a spiritual gift?

How would exercising spiritual gifts within a church affect unbelievers who visit or who know a believer from that church?

1 Corinthians 12:27 says, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it." How does Christ walk and work through each Christian in a way that builds up the entire body?

Apply The Word

Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? How did you discover them? Are there gifts that you may not yet be aware of? How can you find out what they are?

Consider this statement: "The presence or absence of a gift will quickly become apparent." If someone is trying out some area of service, what are some things that indicate whether or not they are gifted in that area?