



**Face the Issue:**

This week, Jeremy challenged us with this statement, “You see, we all have a little bit to offer to God. God doesn’t need a lot. He can take what you have, if you are willing to give it to him and grow you.”

If this is true, what is stopping us? While there are many answers to this, one of the main ones is that we have doubts that what we have is “important enough”.

Read these five statements, and decide whether a spiritual gift is being exercised or not:

1. For years now, Marge has made it her business to wash the toys in the nursery, although few people know she does it.
2. It seems like at every church meeting, Sid has to weigh in with his opinion—which is often controversial.
3. Sarah has fond memories of her childhood Sunday school teacher Mrs. Tucker. Mrs. T. somehow made Jesus real to her students.
4. Since Bob is a Certified Public Accountant, he is always being asked to serve on the church’s finance committee. He serves, but his heart is not in it.
5. Long after he retired, Pastor Don faithfully wrote personal letters to his former youth group kids, almost never forgetting a birthday or anniversary.

*What issues were “sticking points” as you tried to decide if the people in the above scenarios were exercising their spiritual gifts?*

**Into the Word:**

Read this excerpt from the poem *Never* by Shel Silverstein:

I’ve never scored a touchdown  
On a ninety-nine-yard run,  
I’ve never winged six Daltons  
With my dying brother’s gun,  
Or kissed Miz Jane, and rode my hoss  
Into the setting sun.  
Sometimes I get so depressed  
‘Bout what I haven’t done.

Many times we as Christ followers feel like we really have nothing of value to contribute. That compared to others we are insignificant. That can sometimes keep us from being willing to serve.

### **Read 1 Corinthians 12:14–26.**

Some Christians might suspect that this talk about gifts is like the pep talk we give our kids when they get a small part in the school play. “It’s just as important to be one of the flowers as it is to be Little Bo Peep”. We’re really just trying to make them feel better.

We might think God is trying to make the bit players in the church feel valuable in spite of their tiny contribution. But that’s not what the Bible is saying. By comparing the church to a body, Paul makes it clear that all parts are important and that no gift is either superior or inferior to the others.

*Some people in the Corinthian church thought their gift made them more spiritual and more important than others. In what ways does that kind of thinking occur in churches today?*

*Is there a hierarchy of gifts? Which gifts are considered most important? Which is least important? How does Paul address that issue in 1 Corinthians 12:11–25?*

*Picture in your mind someone exercising a spiritual gift—Jeremy preaching a helpful sermon, for example, or someone whose encouraging phone calls help people keep their spiritual balance. Is it appropriate to thank the person when the Holy Spirit is who makes their ministry possible? What might you say to that person?*

*What might you say if someone compliments you for exercising your spiritual gift?*

### **Application**

Jeremy’s bottom line was this: *Are you willing to offer what you have?*

### **Read 1 Corinthians 12:27**

Scripture is pretty clear. We ALL have a part in the body.

*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?*