

Final thoughts

Do you realize you have a place in the church that you alone and no one else can fill? We need some joy and excitement about serving the Lord and exercising the gifts He has so graciously given to us. Why should we see a need and let it go by just because someone hasn't specifically asked us to jump in? Been there, done that; stepped back and waited on others to do it. Well, those days need to be in the past. If God has given us gifts, and we know He has, then *stir* up those gifts and get busy. No wonder Paul told Timothy in 2 Timothy 1:6 to "...stir up the gift of God, which is in thee.." He didn't want Timothy to be idle and not use the gifts he had been entrusted with. Ladies, hold on to sound doctrine, grow in grace and knowledge, practice love, and do not be fearful of the gifts God has blessed you with. Your church needs you. Your life will be enriched if you are doing what you love to do.

—Carolyn



Beginning thoughts

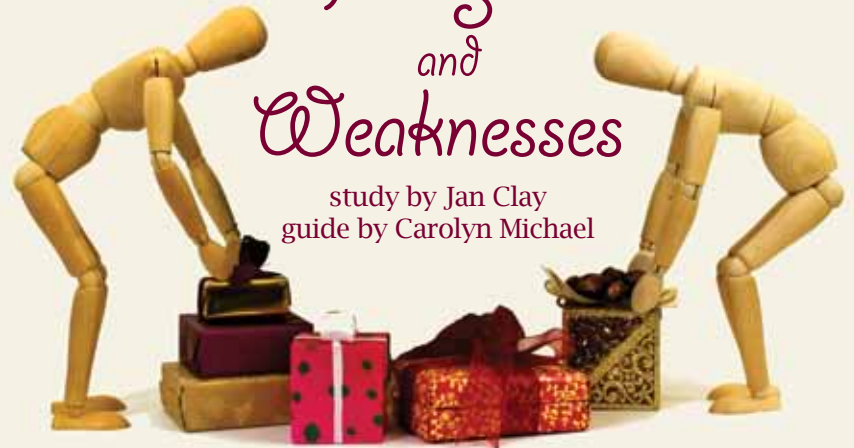
God's gifts to us are so amazing. He started with the creation and then, Adam and Eve. Do you realize how complex and unique your body is? God formed and fashioned you in your mother's womb and instilled in you wonderful traits, attributes, and abilities that were gifts for only you. Others may have similar gifts or even act like you, but they are not the same.

Have you opened your spiritual gift? Is there an area of your life not being utilized because of a lack of understanding of the gifts mentioned in the Bible? This study will give you ideas about how to untangle the wrappings from the one-of-a-kind gift God has graced you with.

I can feel your skepticism now. You think that you don't have the gifts mentioned or that you can't use them because someone else is already performing with that particular gift and doing it quite well. That's all right. You'll probably be surprised at how quickly your offer of help is received when things need doing around your church. But are our gifts only to be used in church? I think not. They can be used at work, at home, or wherever you like. Others will benefit and be blessed from you exercising your gifts. The objective here is to encourage and build up the body of Christ. You can have a part in that.

Strengths and Weaknesses

study by Jan Clay
guide by Carolyn Michael



EXPLORING THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS



Strengths and Weaknesses

THE BODY IN SYNC

BODY FITNESS GOAL: Scripture refers to the Church as the Body of Christ. Each body part (each member of the Church) plays an important and vital role in the proper function of the whole body.

CORE DEVELOPMENT: “[Christ]: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love” (Ephesians 4:16).

- 📖 Read the Body Fitness Goal aloud.
- 📖 Write the Core Development verse, Ephesians 4:16, in your journal.
- 📖 Go over the questions and answers on p. 25 of *Treasure*.
- 📖 Why do you suppose God created our bodies with so many different organs? (*They all have different functions which we need to survive or thrive.*)
- 📖 Can you replace a heart with a kidney? A lung with a liver? (*No, it would be impossible for their functions are completely different.*)
- 📖 Do you believe every Christian has a special gift or gifts from God? (Ephesians 4:7)
- 📖 Can someone else exercise/use your gift? (No-it’s YOURS. No one else can do what you can do in the body of Christ, like you would do it.)
- 📖 Compare the major systems in the human body with the general support ministries or working gifts.

Human Body	Support/Working Gift
Skeletal System (<i>Foundation</i>)	Apostolic (<i>Lays foundations</i>)
Nervous System (<i>Motivates to action</i>)	Prophets (<i>Motivates</i>)
Digestive System (<i>Nourishes</i>)	Evangelists (<i>Builds up for growth</i>)
Circulatory (<i>Blood maintains</i>)	Teaching/Pastors (<i>Maintains life of the body</i>)

- 📖 Do you know people who have any of these specific working gifts?
- 📖 Why do these four support ministries exist? (1) *For the equipping of the saints unto the work of the ministry* and (2) *the edifying/building up of the body of Christ* (Ephesians 4:12.)
- 📖 What does that mean? (1) *Contact with the world* (2) *Maintaining health of the church*
- 📖 Who is to do these two things? (*The saints, the people of the church*)
- 📖 Notice the pastor’s job: Equipping or enabling the body to carry on the life of the church.
- 📖 Do you feel like your church has this concept fully established in their mind?
- 📖 Go over the Muscle Toning question.
- 📖 Cool down. Pray and dismiss.



Strengths and Weaknesses

THE BODY IS SIGNIFICANT

BODY FITNESS GOAL: God gives spiritual gifts to believers through the work of the Holy Spirit to benefit the entire body, build up others, and glorify God.

CORE DEVELOPMENT: “So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us...” (Romans 12:5-6).

- 📖 Read the Body Fitness Goal together.
- 📖 Write Romans 12:5-6 in your journal. This passage tells us that we have gifts that determine our function in the body.
- 📖 Go over the questions and answers on p. 27 of *Treasure*. Have different individuals look up and read the Scriptures listed.
- 📖 When you look in the mirror, do you see a disjointed group of limbs and organs? (*No, you see one body with many members—ears, eyes, fingers, hands, arms, toes, feet, legs—fitly joined together—Ephesians 4:16.*)
- 📖 Do these members of your body have a purpose? (*Yes, they belong to your body and help maintain it for you.*)
- 📖 Do you see how the church has many members, but belong to one body?
- 📖 Are these members all alike? (*No, they are all different.*)
- 📖 Are the separate parts of your body important/useful? Is each member of the church important/useful?
- 📖 Notice the word “grace” in Romans 12:6. Read Psalm 84:11; Acts 11:23, 13:43.
- 📖 How do you define grace? (*Unmerited favor of God*)
- 📖 How is grace given? (*Freely—Romans 3:24*)
- 📖 What does grace do? (*Impowers men for service—1 Corinthians 3:10, 15:10.*)
- 📖 To whom is grace promised? (*The humble—1 Peter 5:5.*)
- 📖 Fill in these blanks from Ephesians 2:8. “For by _____ you are saved through _____;....., it is the _____ of God.”
- 📖 Paul calls the gifts God gives “graces”. Why? (*He wants you to use the gifts “grace-fully”, which is naturally and smoothly without boasting or bragging. Spiritual gifts are fulfilling when used correctly and for the benefit of others. They are to be enjoyed.*)
- 📖 Should a person pray for or seek a gift they really want? (*Luke 11:10-13*)
- 📖 Do you enjoy giving your children gifts? Aren’t we God’s children?
- 📖 Cool Down: Use the suggestions for your dismissal prayer.



Strengths and Weaknesses

THE BODY SPEAKS

BODY FITNESS GOAL: The church benefits when each believer recognizes her spiritual gift(s) and practices using those gifts biblically and zealously. The speaking gifts offer opportunity for others to hear and respond, as well as be challenged and encouraged by God's Word.

CORE DEVELOPMENT: *"For I say, through the grace of God given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith"* (Romans 12:3).

- 📖 Read the Body Fitness Goal together.
- 📖 Write Romans 12:3 in your journal.
- 📖 Go over the questions and answers on p. 29 of *Treasure* together.
- 📖 Do you enjoy hearing your pastor preach? Or hearing an evangelist or guest speaker? How about a testimony?
- 📖 Speaking is a form of communication. Why did God not give the speaking gifts to everyone? (*Do you want to hear everyone preach or teach?*)
- 📖 Does your body speak to you? (*Mine does way too often. It tells me when I hurt, when I'm hungry, tired, too cold, too hot, etc.*)
- 📖 Why is this? (*Something is not functioning properly.*)
- 📖 When the body of the church is not functioning properly, what happens? (*Unity is threatened and maintenance breaks down.*)
- 📖 What should happen within the body of the church? (*Love and care for each other. We're brothers and sisters. When one hurts, all should hurt, because we belong to each other.*)
- 📖 Is it your responsibility to use the gift God has given you? (*Yes. Put yourself to work. Don't wait for an invitation to use your gift. It might not come. 1 Peter 4:10; Romans 12:6; Matthew 10:8.*)
- 📖 Name a person in the Old Testament who didn't feel like he had the gift of speaking? (*Moses—Exodus 4:10-13*)
- 📖 Who spoke for him? (*Aaron, his brother—Exodus 4:14-16*)
- 📖 What gift did Moses have? (*Leadership—Hebrews 11:23-29. Moses became the greatest leader of the Israelite people.*)
- 📖 Cool Down: Dismiss with the suggestions given.



Strengths and Weaknesses

THE BODY SERVES

BODY FITNESS GOAL: Every member in the body of Christ is a candidate to receive spiritual gifts. A believer should not feel more or less important because of the gifts he has been given. Though the gifts vary, they all work together to fulfill God's purpose in the Church.

CORE DEVELOPMENT: *"As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God"* (1 Peter 4:10).

- 📖 Write 1 Peter 4:10 in your journal.
- 📖 Go over the questions and answers on p. 31 of *Treasure*.
- 📖 Do you know people in your church who possess more than one of the serving gifts. (*I do. These are the people that we usually consider "Energizer Bunnies." They never seem to stop doing something for the church or other people.*)
- 📖 In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus taught in parables. One of these was the "parable of the talents." These talents/money were given so that more could be cultivated. *Read Matthew 25:15, 20-23.*
- 📖 What happened to the person who buried his talent? (*Matthew 25:28*)
- 📖 When service gifts are used, how does that help the church? (*It demonstrates love—John 21:16; helps others with burdens—Galatians 6:2,10; it's Christlike—John 13:14; demonstrates neighborliness—Luke 10:36-37.*)
- 📖 Do we understand why there are diversities of gifts? (*No, except for it being God's purpose from the beginning—John 3:27.*)
- 📖 What is everyone to do in the body of Christ? (*Promote unity—Ephesians 4:1-3,32*)
- 📖 Do you want to do the Father's will?
- 📖 Do you desire wisdom in discerning the gifts you've been given?
- 📖 Here are a few suggestions for determining your spiritual gift: (1) Take note of your desires, (2) Ask others what they see in you, (3) Try out various things, (4) Do a study on how to find your gift, and (5) Put what you think your gift is to work.
- 📖 What should be our aim in exercising our gifts? (*To honor and glorify God—Psalm 107:32, 145:5; Matthew 5:16; Romans 15:6; 1 Corinthians 6:20.*)
- 📖 Cool Down: Dismiss in prayer and praise using the suggestions listed.