



ALOVE<sup>+</sup>



The Salvation Army for a new generation



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## Welcome to... GIFTS The Leader's guide!

This resource has been provided to facilitate you as you guide your young people through an exploration of spiritual gifts, and enable you to support them as they unwrap their own gifts and put their gifts into action.

God has made us all unique! Each one of us has different strengths, abilities and gifts. God has equipped us with all that we need to fulfil his plan for us and make our specific contribution to his plan for this world. We want to encourage our young people to believe and accept that they are gifted, then offer themselves to God and make a commitment to do whatever he asks of them, trusting that God will give them what they need for the task.

Discovering personal spiritual gifts can be a key part in the spiritual growth of young people. When a young person realises that God has paid special attention to them and equipped them with valuable and specific gifts, it can bring a sense of purpose and identity. They will understand themselves and their place in God's world a little better. They will know that God loves and values them. They can become all that they can be with God.

**Once we know that we are gifted and that God makes no mistakes in the gifts that bear our name, then our lives make more sense. We are happier and we feel more useful. (Ruth Vander Zee)**

As you use this resource with your young people you have the privilege of speaking into each young life with words of encouragement and affirmation. You will be able to learn with them and discover together what God has done and is doing in their lives. We would love there to be great joy, excitement, and even surprise, as young people take hold of and unwrap the gifts that God has given them. You will have the opportunity to encourage this generation of young Christians into meaningful service and perhaps even start them on a road they will travel for the rest of their lives.

**We hope that you enjoy walking with your young people on this journey of discovery.**

# GIFTS

## The Resources

# THE SALVATION

## ARMY & Spiritual gifts

### GIFTS IS MADE UP OF TWO SEPARATE ELEMENTS.

In addition to this Leader's Guide (including four small group sessions) there is a booklet about spiritual gifts for young people. It is assumed that this resource will most often be used in a group setting, like a cell group or youth group, but the activities could easily be adapted for use in a one-to-one discipleship/mentoring relationship. All spiritual gifts are intended to be practised in

the context of community, so a key aspect of this resource is going to be the opportunity and freedom for the young people to be able to use their gifts within the church community in some way. As you read on through this Leader's Guide we hope to offer you some suggestions as to how to take your young people on this journey of discovery of their spiritual gifts.



It is important that you read the youth booklet as the material in it will not be reproduced here.

### A. THE YOUTH BOOKLET

The youth booklet provides teaching on spiritual gifts in a simple and understandable way for young people. The emphasis is placed on using our gifts in service to God and others. The booklet unpacks 20 of the spiritual gifts in detail and provides some real-life examples of people using spiritual gifts.

The booklet does not linger on the wide-ranging debates that many in the Church have about spiritual gifts, but seeks to present a straight forward biblical position on the gifts and why they are an essential part of a Christian's life with God.

Towards the end of the booklet, time is spent giving some practical suggestions about how an individual can begin to discover his/her own spiritual gifts. Walking alongside a young person as they begin to explore their own gifts is perhaps one of the most crucial roles that you can play as a youth leader / mentor / church leader.

### B. SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDES

There are four small group discussion guides on the theme of spiritual gifts that work alongside the youth booklet and can be found at the end of this pack.

The four sessions are:

1. Introducing Spiritual Gifts
2. What are the Spiritual Gifts?
3. Discovering my Spiritual Gifts
4. Putting my Gifts into Action

Each is designed to last around one hour and includes Bible study, interactive discussion material and prayer ideas. You may wish to use these discussion guides as they are, or pick and choose those parts most relevant to your groups.

In case you need to brush up on The Salvation Army's position on spiritual gifts, here is an extract from The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine.

### A. THE GIFTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Spiritual gifts are given by the Holy Spirit to unite the Christian fellowship in its life together and in its mission. As such, they are to be recognised as evidence of God's loving generosity to his people and of his desire that they be fully equipped to share in his mission. Gifts are diverse, yet each person is important and each has a responsibility to deploy their gifts in the fellowship **(Romans 12:3-8)**

In the New Testament there are a number of passages in which specific spiritual gifts are identified. They speak of the many differing ministries that the Spirit has given to sustain

the life of the Church. There are gifts that enable Christians to proclaim the gospel message, such as preaching, teaching and prophecy. Others are given so that Christians may serve people in Christ's name, for example gifts of service, healing, generosity and hospitality. Some are gifts of leadership. Some are gifts which enhance and encourage devotion to God, such as gifts of prayer, faith and speaking in tongues. Whatever our gifts, they are to be used to serve one another and to glorify God **(Ephesians 4:7-13; 1 Peter 4:7-11)**.

### B. MISUSE AND ABUSE

It follows that the use of spiritual gifts to promote competition or to further individualism is misuse. We must beware, then, of the elevation of certain gifts as proof of spiritual superiority and the consequent undervaluing of other gifts.

Speaking in tongues is the clearest example of a gift that is overvalued in some Christian fellowships and undervalued in others. This gift is overvalued when it is regarded as the definitive evidence of the baptism in the Spirit and so becomes a measure of spiritual accomplishment. It is undervalued when it fails to be acknowledged as a true gift of God's Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12-14).

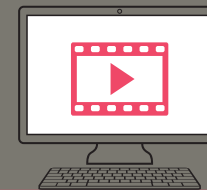
### C. THE SALVATION ARMY AND SPIRITUAL GIFTS

The Salvation Army recognises all spiritual gifts. However, in the light of the susceptibility of some to abuse in public worship, the Army emphasises those gifts that encourage the clear proclamation of the gospel and draw into the circle of worship everyone who is present. The New Testament shows that spiritual gifts are exercised in different ways in different congregations, often because of different circumstances and needs. It also emphasises the special value of those gifts that enable the Church clearly to present Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.



Pages 268-9 – The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine 2010/2013





## A. PROVIDE TEACHING

It is important that we teach our young people the things of God and how to live a life of faith. However, sometimes we can shy away from the topic of spiritual gifts due to the different positions that sometimes surround this topic. Different churches and denominations do have differing stances on some of the gifts, but let's not let that deprive our young people of some good biblical teaching on this topic and the opportunity to allow spiritual gifts to enrich their lives.

### SOME OF THE MORE COMMON MISPERCEPTIONS THAT YOU MAY ENCOUNTER ARE

- Spiritual gifts are given at conversion and do not change in one's lifetime.
- Scripture gives a definitive list of all the possible gifts in 1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 4, Romans 12 and 1 Peter 4.
- It is crucial to your spiritual maturity and your own sense of worth in the church that you discover the nature of your gift and exercise it.
- Your gift describes your identity ('I am a teacher').
- The more spectacular gifts are evidence of advanced spiritual maturity.
- The emphasis on spiritual gifts threatens unity in the Church.
- The Salvation Army doesn't 'do' spiritual gifts.

### SOME OF THE WAYS YOU CAN TEACH YOUR YOUNG PEOPLE ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS ARE:

#### ○ Use the Gifts youth booklet.

Give each young person a copy of the Gifts youth booklet, or ask them to download a copy from the ALOVE website. You can then read through the booklet together, either as a group or with an individual. Allow time to discuss and answer any questions written in the booklet.

#### ○ Bring in a teacher / role model

If you don't feel confident enough to teach your young people yourself, you could arrange for a gifted teacher to come and run a teaching session with your group to kick-start discussions around spiritual gifts. This in itself will model the gift of teaching! Or you could ask for one or two people from your church who have specific gifts to come and chat to your group about their own gift, and also spiritual gifts in general.

#### ○ Small group discussion guides

Use the four small group discussion guides / Bible studies at the end of this pack to go deeper into the topic of spiritual gifts. You can either use these as a series of four, or pick and choose activities from each one as appropriate for your group and the time you have available with them.

#### ○ YouTube

There are loads of clips on YouTube on the topic of spiritual gifts, which could provide a 20-30-minute overview of the gifts if you feel this would be suitable for your group. You will need to search through to find what is relevant and current.

## B. ENCOURAGE EACH PERSON TO CONSIDER THEIR OWN GIFTS

Part of the teaching will be providing time and space for each individual to consider and reflect on their own gifts. Some young people may find it difficult to accept that they are gifted by God and may need a lot of encouragement and affirmation that this is so. They may not realise that God has a part for them to play right now... not just when they are older.

The last few pages of the Gifts booklet outline some ways of assessing what spiritual gifts we may each have been given.

There are of course, many spiritual gifts tests online or in the back of books. Usually these tests involve someone rating him/herself against a series of statements. Each response is given a score, and the scores are added up at the end to reveal their top spiritual gifts.

These tests may have their place, and could provide a good starting point, but should be used with caution and with the strong recommendation that each person discusses their results with a trusted leader/friend (ie YOU!)

A recommended online youth spiritual gift test can be accessed via [spiritualgiftstest.com](http://spiritualgiftstest.com). This test includes 15 spiritual gifts, but does not include the spiritual gifts of healing, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, miracles (as it is felt that these will be self-evident) or hospitality.

For a good written test see the book *Spiritual Gifts* by Jim Burns and Doug Fields. This test has 120 statements that you answer on a score sheet. Then you add up the totals yourself and see which spiritual gifts you score highest in. If you know your young people well, you will hopefully already be able to see some spiritual gifts growing in each of their lives. If you have the opportunity to spend time with a person individually, you can go a long way to encouraging and reinforcing God's giftedness in their life, and possibly be able to point to some specific gifts that you feel they may have been given. In a group setting you could facilitate a time where the young people can encourage each other and point out gifts that they may have already noticed in each other. If you have used a spiritual gifts test with your young people it would be advisable to spend some time discussing these results, either individually or as a group as well.



### C. OPPORTUNITIES TO SERVE

Nothing reveals or sharpens spiritual gifts more than practical action, so provide opportunities for young people to get stuck in and have a go. Let them try out some of the gifts that they feel they may have or that they would like to have. Encourage them to practise any gifts that you have pointed out to them. Or, if they are not sure what gifts they have, point them to a whole variety of ways to get involved within the church and the community. God can use these opportunities to develop a passion and heart for his work.

If you take your group out to a nursing home, hospital visit or soup kitchen, you will soon see

those with the gift of mercy come to the fore. If you allow your group to plan their own schedule or session or Bible study, you should see the leaders and teachers emerge. If you take them on a short-term mission trips or an outreach event, look out for the evangelists to step up. If you have a 'work day' in the church or in the community, those with the gift of service will blossom.

You could also help individual young people that you feel have been gifted in a certain way or have an expressed a desire for a particular area of service. You may need to get some other members of your church on board with this too.

#### FOR EXAMPLE:

For a young person with a teaching gift, ask them to lead a cell group Bible study or share a short 'thought' at a church meeting or home group.

For a young person with a gift of helping, find them a role within the church that they could get involved with, perhaps serving the refreshments after a meeting, helping with the crèche, or babysitting for someone who needs some time out.

For a young person with a gift of hospitality, encourage them to host a cell group meeting

in their home (with parental permission), look after a church/youth group guest or take responsibility for welcoming new members/visitors.

For a young person with a gift of administration, get them involved in organising a community project or church/youth group event.

For a young person with a gift of mercy, get them involved in one of your community projects helping people in need.

### D. ENCOURAGEMENT AND FEEDBACK

As you see a young person getting involved in serving in some way, be quick to encourage their efforts! Notice what they have been doing – and get others to notice too. If they are working alongside others in your church, gather up some feedback from them that you can give to your young person. If they are doing something especially well, tell them so.

Allow space to chat with the individual and time for them to share with you any worries

or misgivings they may have about their gifting. Listen carefully to the Holy Spirit as you guide the young people in their giftings. Evaluate with them what they have been doing, both the positive and the negative. Offer suggestions on what they might improve. Don't be afraid to steer a young person gently away from something that is clearly not their gifting.

### E. MENTORING

There may be people in your church or community that could act as a mentor or role model to any of your young people in a particular spiritual gift. It is essential for young Christians to see God at work in them and through the lives of others, and matching up a mature Christian with a young person of a similar gifting will do much to encourage and accelerate the young person's spiritual development. This could be as simple as one conversation together, through to time spent shadowing the older Christian during their ministry work.

You could also 'buddy up' young people with the same giftings to work together, or those with complementary giftings.



### RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

- **Congratulations... You're Gifted** by Doug Fields and Eric Rees
- **Spiritual Gifts by Jim Burns and Doug Fields**
- **Discover Your Gifts and Learn How To Use Them** by Ruth Vander Zee. (Student and Leaders booklets)
- **Spiritual Gifts: Life Builder Series** by R. Paul Stevens
- **Christianteens.com** <http://christianteens.about.com/od/christianliving/a/What-Are-Spiritual-Gifts.htm>
- **Spiritualgiftstest.com** <http://www.spiritualgiftstest.com>

# SMALL GROUP

## Discussion Guide

Space for notes...

1. Introducing Spiritual Gifts
2. What are the Spiritual Gifts?
3. Discovering my Spiritual Gifts
4. Putting my Gifts into Action

The small group discussion guides work best when used in conjunction with the Gifts booklet. You can obtain a copy of this booklet for your young people free of charge from ALOVE UK, or you can download/view the booklet from the ALOVE website.

Please read the booklet before you run any of these small group discussions and use any of the material as required to teach your young people about spiritual gifts. Any content included in the booklet is not repeated here!

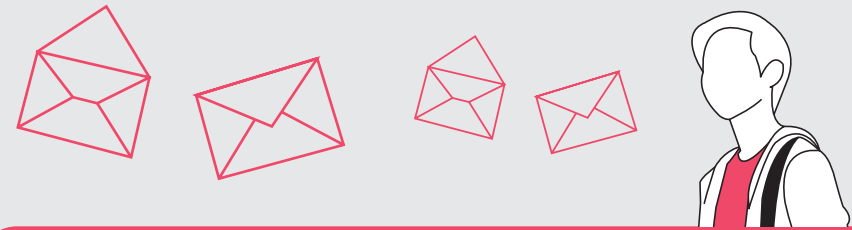
Please note that some of these activities have been adapted from Discover Your Gifts and Learn How To Use Them by Ruth Vander Zee. (Student and Leader's Books)



# Session one

# INTRODUCING

# Spiritual Gifts



## WELCOME ACTIVITY

Provide a selection of gingerbread biscuits shaped like people, along with some writing icing and sweets / Smarties for decorating. Allow group members some time to decorate one or two gingerbread biscuits. As they decorate, ask them to include something on their biscuit that represents themselves, eg, it could be using icing in their favourite colour, creating a similar hairstyle to their own, or depicting a favourite T-shirt

Use this activity to introduce the topic of spiritual gifts by emphasising how God has made us all unique. We are each different and special; we each have a specific purpose for our lives, something that only we can do... a special contribution to this world that only we can make. God gives us each spiritual gifts so that we can stay close to him and outwork his purpose for our lives more effectively.

The Spirit has given each of us a special way of serving others. (1 Corinthians 12:7 CEV)

Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well. (1 Peter 4:10 CEV)

## DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 1

Using a large piece of paper, ask your group members to come up with as many spiritual gifts as they can. You can do this by appointing one 'scribe' who will note down everybody's suggestions, or allowing all participants to have a pen and write their ideas on the paper themselves. It is of course possible that the suggestions will be very varied and many will be outside the scope of what we usually consider to be spiritual gifts, but write these down anyway. As we know, there are many ways we can be gifted by God and serve him!

**!** Explain that at this point we are not going to discuss each gift in detail as we will do that in the next session.

## DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 2

There are many spiritual gifts listed in Scripture, most often by Paul. These are five key Bible passages to read: Romans 12:6–8; 1 Corinthians 12:8–10; 1 Corinthians 12:28–30; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Peter 4:8–11. These five passages mention 20 spiritual gifts. (The list could vary though, according to the translation you use.)

Split your group into five smaller groups (or individuals can work on their own if your group is small). Give each small group / person one of the following Bible passages to read. Ask them to write down all the spiritual gifts that are mentioned in the Scripture.

- Romans 12:6–8
- 1 Corinthians 12:4–11
- 1 Corinthians 12:27–31
- Ephesians 4:11–12
- 1 Peter 4:8–11

Feed back and collate all your lists together – how many different gifts do you have?

## DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 3

Look again at 1 Corinthians 12:7–31

Use any of the following questions as you feel helpful to unpack Paul's teaching on spiritual gifts. (For a more creative approach, print each question on a slip of paper and wrap in a colourful envelope. Take in turns for each group member to pick an envelope and unwrap the question, read it aloud and give their answer, then discuss.)

- What does this Scripture passage teach us about spiritual gifts? eg, all gifts come from the Spirit; all gifts are given for the spiritual benefit of others.
- Where in these verses does it say that we do not all have the same gifts, but that there is an amazing diversity of gifts among believers?
- How do these words show that we need to value each other's gifts?
- What happens to a group of believers when all people and their gifts are valued?
- How does God regard the gifts that we may see as less important?



## CLOSING PRAYER

If your group know each other well, you could ask them to pray together in pairs.

Ask each person to pray for their partner, thanking God for the unique person that he/she is and for the special gifts that he has given him/her.

If you don't feel that your group would be comfortable with this, then you can close in prayer for the group as above.



## FOR NEXT TIME

Ask each person to think of one talent or ability that they have. Ask them to bring something to demonstrate/display this gift to the group. If it is not something that can be demonstrated practically in front of the group, then encourage the young people to bring something, such as an award or commendation, to show as they tell others about their talent.

It may also be helpful to ask group members to read through the description of each of the spiritual gifts in the Gifts booklet before the next session.

# Session two

# WHAT ARE THE Spiritual Gifts

## WELCOME ACTIVITY

Allow some time for each person to share their talent or ability with the group, as described at the end of Session One. Encourage group members to be confident about their unique gifts and achievements!

## DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 1

The gifts that have been included in the Gifts booklet are:

- Helping/Serving
- Prophecy
- Teaching
- Encouragement
- Giving
- Leadership
- Mercy
- Knowledge
- Wisdom
- Faith
- Healing
- Miracles
- Discernment
- Tongues
- Interpretation
- Apostleship
- Administration
- Evangelism
- Pastoring/Shepherding
- Hospitality

In this session you should allow plenty of time to discuss each of these gifts in turn, ensuring that your group members have a good understanding of each one. There is a detailed description in the Gifts booklet, and you may find it helpful to allow your group members to follow along with their copy of the booklet. (It would perhaps be helpful if group members have already read the descriptions before this session.) Remind the group that these are only 20 gifts; there are loads of other ways that God may have gifted them and ways in which they can make a difference for him.

**As you discuss, ask group members to think about any gifts that may 'jump out' at them as being gifts that they think they have been given or would really like to have.**

## DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 2

After you have discussed each gift in the above activity, you could try the following fun exercise.

Split the group into two or three smaller groups and provide a variety of props. Give each group one minute to think of a real-life situation in which the gift could be demonstrated, and ask them to arrange themselves in a tableau that represents that gift. (A tableau is all the group members arranged in a still position, not moving or talking.) Groups should hold the tableau for 30 seconds, without laughing or talking. Choose which you think is the best tableau and award a point. The group with the most points at the end of the exercise is the winner! You could also take a photo of each winning tableau and then make a photo display of spiritual gifts for your group and/or in your church.

## DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 3

Read the last sentence of the last verse of 1 Corinthians 12  
'And now I will show you the best way of all.'(NCV)

Do the group know what is coming next in Chapter 13? What is the greatest gift of all? The apostle Paul discusses spiritual gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and 1 Corinthians 14, but sandwiched in the middle – in Chapter 13 – he talks about love.

Read 1 Corinthians 13 together in a translation of your choosing (The Living Bible is recommended).

Ask the group why would such magnificent gifts be nothing without love? Why is love the greatest gift?

We may have the most impressive or valuable of spiritual gifts, but without love the gifts mean nothing. Love supersedes the gifts because it outlasts them all. Without love the gifts could even cause more harm than good. Spiritual gifts are given to serve, help and bless others, not to be used out of selfishness in order to gain something for ourselves. We may be tempted to get a little smug or boastful about all that we seem to achieve with our gifts, but this is not love! Spiritual gifts are to be used to demonstrate the love of God to the world.



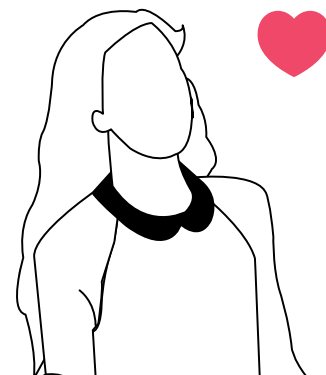
## CLOSING PRAYER

Ask each person to tell the group one gift that they feel they may have, or would really like to have. Then all gather round that person and thank God for them and ask that God would bless them with his gifts and with opportunities to use his gifts too.



## FOR NEXT TIME

Ask group members to think about the gifts during the time before the next session and consider which gift(s) they feel they may have. Encourage them to discuss with their friends or family what their opinions are too. Ask them to come to the next session with at least one suggestion of a gift that they may have and why they think that.





# Session three

## IDENTIFYING MY Spiritual Gifts

### WELCOME ACTIVITY

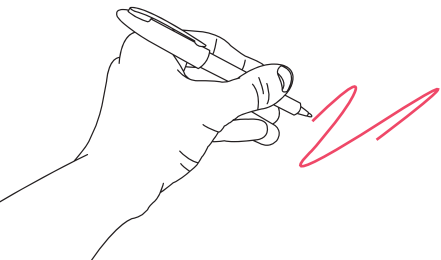
Give each person one of the spiritual gifts written on a piece of paper, which must be kept secret from the rest of the group. The rest of the group may then ask seven questions in total to try to guess what the gift is. The person with the gift may only answer yes or no to the questions. When all seven questions have been asked, the group may have one guess to see if they have worked out which gift it is. (Feel free to adjust the number of questions/guesses to make this game easier or harder as needed.)

Alternatively, split into pairs and give each pair a gift in secret as above. Each pair must then either act out their gift, or describe a scenario in which the gift is being used. The rest of the group have to guess which gift it is.

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 1

Write the names of the 20 spiritual gifts spaced out on a large piece of paper. Ask the group to gather round and to write their names next to any of the gifts that they think they have. (They should have been thinking about this during the time since the last session.) Tell them to be confident in what they think and not embarrassed or think they are being boastful by doing this exercise. (If they really can't do this activity, ask them instead to write their name beside one or two gifts that they would really like to have.)

Discuss or comment as you feel appropriate, but ensure this is an affirming exercise and do not allow any negative comments about group members' gifts. Make a point to affirm the group on its strengths and on the diversity of the gifts.



### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 2

Use a spiritual gifts questionnaire with your group, as described in the Leader's Guide section 4b.

A good test to start with is on a website called Spiritual Gifts Test.Com. <http://www.spiritual-giftstest.com> Make sure you choose the test specifically for young people.

This test includes 15 spiritual gifts, but does not include the spiritual gifts of healing, speaking in tongues, interpretation of tongues, miracles (as it is felt that these will be self-evident) or hospitality.

There are 77 statements that each person must rate about themselves, and then the results are calculated and a score given against all 15 gifts, with a description of the top three.

In order to do an online test you will obviously need to have access to the internet, and also ideally a printer to print each person's results.

(If you don't think you can do this during the session, then you could ask group members to complete the test at home and then bring in their printed sheets.)

### DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 3

When everyone has completed the test and obtained their results, take some time to share them together. Answer any questions that individuals may have about their gifts. Remind the group that it's OK if they want to disagree with their result – the tests do not really know them, after all; it just adds up scores of the response that they make! They should always share their results with a trusted Christian leader or family member who knows them well and evaluate them together.

Look back at the sheet you did in discussion activity 1 and see if group members got the same or different gifts that they indicated on the paper. Add/edit the sheet as appropriate.

If your group know each other well you could ask them to encourage each other. If one person shares that they have a particular gift, the others could encourage that person about times when they have witnessed that gift in action and benefited from it.



### CLOSING PRAYER

Ask everyone to write their gifts on a Post-it Note and then stick the notes on a wall or on a piece of paper in the centre of the group.

Remind the group again that we are each unique and God has gifted us all in different ways. No one gift is more valuable than another.

'There are different ways to serve but the same Lord to serve. And there are different ways that God works through people but the same God. God works in all of us in everything we do. Something from the Spirit can be seen in each person, for the common good.' (1 Corinthians 12:5-7 NCV)

Pray together and thank God for all the gifts he has given you, and commit to using those gifts to serve God and others in the best way that you can.

If you are leading this prayer time you could name each person and one of their gifts in prayer, and ask God to help each person use his or her gifts in an attitude of love.



### FOR NEXT TIME

Ask group members to use one of their gifts in some way before the next session if possible. You may need to help them think of how they could do this.

If anyone has a mentor they could also discuss the results of the spiritual gifts test with him/her.

# Session four PUTTING MY GIFTS into action



## WELCOME ACTIVITY

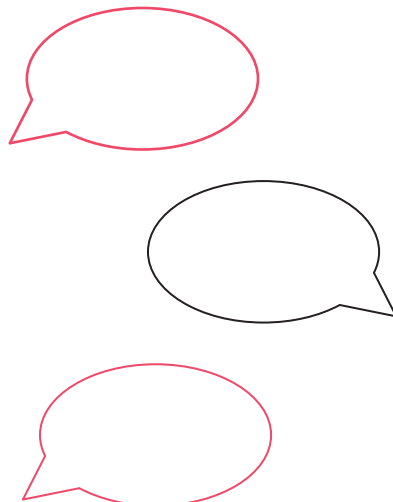
Place a pile of washed unpeeled potatoes in the centre of the group. Invite group members to pick up a potato from the pile and examine it thoroughly – contours, blemishes, colour, size, smell, bumps, etc. When each person indicates that she/he knows her/his potato well, gather all the potatoes back in a pile and mix them around (you could add some extra potatoes to the pile to confuse the game a little more!). Pass the potatoes back around the circle of participants. Each is to claim his/her potato as it comes by. (Not all will be able to recognise theirs! Some potatoes may have to go around the circle a number of times.) The point of this game is to remind the group that just as no two potatoes are exactly alike, neither are two people exactly alike! We are all unique individuals with our own gifts and talents. Our gifts are personal and individual, exercised in ways that express our personalities and circumstances.

## DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 1

Each of you has been blessed with one of God's many wonderful gifts to be used in the service of others. So use your gift well. If you have the gift of speaking, preach God's message. If you have the gift of helping others, do it with the strength that God supplies. Everything should be done in a way that will bring honour to God because of Jesus Christ, who is glorious and powerful forever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:10–11 CEV)

Ask if any group member would like to share how they have been putting their gifts into action already. Explain how vital it is that we use the gifts that God has given us.

'You are a manager of the gifts God has given to you. They may be great or small in your eyes, but they matter to God. 'Now it is required that those who have been given a trust must prove faithful' (1 Corinthians 4:2 NIV). When God made you, he made an investment in you, and he expects a return on that investment... Are you using what he's given you for the benefit of others to make the world a better place? Or are you just using those talents to benefit yourself?'



## DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 2

Read Romans 12:1–13

Just as there are many parts to our bodies, so it is with Christ's body. We are all parts of it, and it takes every one of us to make it complete, for we each have different work to do. So we belong to each other, and each needs all the others. God has given each of us the ability to do certain things well. (Romans 12:4–6 TLB)

Your love must be real. Hate what is evil, and hold on to what is good. Love each other like brothers and sisters. Give each other more honour than you want for yourselves. Do not be lazy but work hard, serving the Lord with all your heart. (Romans 12:9–11 NCV)

Emphasise again how we are all different and how each person's 'gift mix' is different from another. Yet our gifts are also part of a bigger picture. God uses us together, as part of one body. Our gifts can be strengthened and multiplied when we work together to serve him for the good of others.

So since we find ourselves fashioned into all these excellently formed and marvellously functioning parts in Christ's body, let's just go ahead and be what we were made to be, without enviously or pridefully comparing ourselves with each other, or trying to be something we aren't. (Romans 12:4–5 MSG)

Ask group members to pair up and discuss how their gifts can complement each other and work together. Swap the pairs around so that everyone gets chance to chat with everyone!

Discuss the kind of attitudes that we should have when we use our gifts, as described in this Scripture passage. Perhaps group members could pick one that best describes the way they want to be when they use their gifts.

## DISCUSSION ACTIVITY 3

For a creative activity you could design and make some business cards advertising each of your gifts. They should include your name and contact details and then list at least three activities related to their gift to do at home, school/college, church or in the community.

You could also invite your church/corps leader to chat to your group members about the role that they can play within the church community and the opportunities that there may be for service.

## ADDITIONAL IDEA

Your group may be ready to organise an activity or service together. This of course will require a bigger commitment outside of these four group sessions. Perhaps you could plan a community event, or take part in a church service. Assign each group member a role based on their gifts if possible, and ensure that each person contributes with the right attitude and is doing their job. This would be a great way of showing the young people just how valuable their gifts are and will help them learn how to use them in co-operation with other people, to serve others and to honour God.

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# Session four

## PUTTING MY GIFTS

### into action



#### CLOSING PRAYER

If you have anyone in your group with the gift of intercession, you could invite them to lead your final time of prayer! Use the old hymn 'Take My Life and Let It Be' in your final time of prayer (New SASB 623). This song talks about giving God every part of ourselves in worship and service.

If you would prefer a more modern version, you could try Chris Tomlin's 'Take My Life', which uses the same lyrics.

You could ask group members to try to rewrite one or two of the verses in more modern language, and use them to create a prayer or new song expressing your thanks to God for all that he has made you to be, offering all back to him.

For a more modern song on the same theme try 'Life Song' by Casting Crowns.



#### TAKE MY LIFE

1. Take my life and let it be  
Consecrated, Lord, to thee;  
Take my moments and my days,  
Let them flow in endless praise.

2. Take my hands and let them move  
At the impulse of thy love;  
Take my feet and let them be  
Swift and beautiful for thee.

3. Take my voice and let me sing,  
Always, only for my King;  
Take my lips and let them be  
Filled with messages from thee.

4. Take my silver and my gold,  
Not a mite would I withhold;  
Take my intellect and use  
Every power as thou shalt choose.

5. Take my will and make it thine,  
It shall be no longer mine;  
Take my heart, it is thine own,  
It shall be thy royal throne.

6. Take my love; my Lord, I pour  
At thy feet its treasure-store;  
Take myself and I will be  
Ever, only, all for thee.