



SHARING SCRIPTURE

Discover • Jesus • Together

Unlimited Possibilities

For use: August 2 - 8

Texts: 1 Corinthians 12:12; Matthew 3:16, 17; 1 Corinthians 12:7; 1 Corinthians 1:4-9; Matthew 25:14-30

Tavinya Taylor has a passion for crocheting. It is an ability that the 16-year-old uses to bless others. She crafts baby hats, booties and tiny teddy bears and packs them into gift baskets with other essentials for families of babies in the neonatal intensive care unit at her local hospital where she is now in her own fifth cycle of chemotherapy. She was diagnosed with Hodgkin's lymphoma in March.

She initially used crocheting as a way to pass the time while suffering the effects of the chemo, but then thought, "Why not do something fun that could bless others?"

Allie Jones, a child-life specialist at the hospital says, "I marvel at Tavinya's ability to think about others despite her own trials and circumstances. She made each baby item out of such love, selflessness and compassion—all while fighting cancer." Tavinya's family credits her faith and the support of her church, family and friends for her positive attitude. [1]

Gifts, by their very nature, can bless in two ways: when we give gifts and when we receive gifts. With spiritual gifts, we are blessed both when we receive them from God and in turn, when we use them to bless others. This week's lesson explores the ways that the gifts we receive from God, through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, can unleash unlimited possibilities when it comes to blessing others. The more we share our gifts with others, the more God blesses us with these precious gifts.

When we know and use our gifts in God's service, it brings us a deep sense of humility. We recognize that these gifts, as true gifts from God, are different from talents that we develop on our own. We depend on God to receive and

use spiritual gifts. It also gives us a sense of our interdependence on each other.

No one of us has all the gifts of the Spirit listed in Scripture. We need each other. We need the gifts, life experiences, and cultural diversity that each person brings to our congregation. True unity comes when we recognize the call to ministry that God extends to each believer, and then provide the opportunity for each person to unleash his or her unlimited possibilities for ministry.

~Chuck Burkeen

[1] <https://www.msn.com/en-us/tv/celebrity/16-year-old-with-cancer-crochets-gift-baskets-for-nicu-babies-as-she-undergoes-chemo/ar-BB16PkEv>

For Reflection

Connecting: What is one of the most practical gifts you've ever received? Were you able to use it in ways that benefited others?

Sharing: How do you understand the differences between spiritual gifts and talents?

1. I can develop a talent on my own, but only God gives spiritual gifts
2. A talent can become a source of pride for me, but I know that my spiritual gifts come from God, apart from anything I have done
3. If I don't use my talent for a while I can pick it back up, but if I neglect my spiritual gifts God will give them to someone else who will use them
4. My talents can also bless others as long as I dedicate them to God
5. There is no difference; gifts and talents are just different words for the same ministry abilities
6. Other:

Applying: How well do you know the gift-abilities of your group as a whole? Perhaps you'd benefit from taking a gifts inventory as a class (or as a church). Contact your pastor to explore what inventory options are available to you and plan a strategy to go through the gift-discovery and activation process.

Valuing: Do you have a gift or talent that you haven't been able to put to use for ministry? By phone, email, text, Zoom, or whatever safe way you meet, share your experience with one other person who knows you well, and pray together for God to open the doors for both you to put your gifts to work.

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