

TOOL: Assessing Where Your Gifts Intersect with Your Compassion

Embodying mercy in the margin • Weekly



Many of us long to make a difference in the world, we just don't know where to begin. This week's tool is to help you identify a sweet spot for serving. A disclaimer: At times, God calls us to serve where we feel *least* equipped and prepared. Our calling to serve is ultimately just that: a calling – one that is birthed in the heart of God and not from our desires, agenda, and comforts. On the other hand, God uses our experiences, passions, empathy, and history to be utilized as we embody mercy in the margin. There is a sweet spot where God can powerfully use our unique experiences to make a difference in this world.

What is this sweet spot? It is the intersection of our giftings and our compassion. This tool will guide you in identifying where that might be.

CONSIDER YOUR GIFTINGS

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms. (1 Pet. 4:10)

Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. (Romans 12:4-6a)

A spiritual gift is a special ability given by the Holy Spirit to serve others and to strengthen the Body of Christ and the world. There are many online tools and assessments you may take (including <https://www.freeshapetest.com>) to help you identify your spiritual gifts. Take some time and consider the following questions. Journal your answers.

1. What do people say you are good at?

2. What role do you typically fill in group settings?
3. What activities, when you do them, you feel as if you are well used?
4. What comes naturally to you that you are surprised to find are difficult for others?
5. Based on other personality assessments (Myers-Briggs, Enneagram, StrengthFinder), what do you know about yourself?
6. Ask or text a couple friends or relatives for their feedback about you. Specifically ask questions #1 and #2.
7. In summary, what are some gifts/unique abilities you have?

CONSIDER YOUR COMPASSION

A contemporary worship song gives the prayerful invitation, "Break my heart for what breaks Yours." There are burdens and areas of deep compassion that are uniquely felt in each of us. It has been said that God's heart is so big that God had to give each of us a piece of it. Just as we have been gifted with abilities, we have also been gifted with compassion.

Use the following questions to consider what your particular areas of compassion are.

1. What would you do for God if you knew you couldn't fail?
2. Is there an issue in the world that has kept you awake at night?

3. Who are the people you most want to help?

4. Is there an age range or a group of people you feel most drawn to?

5. What are the top two needs you love to meet for people? Why do you love meeting those needs?

6. Do any of these needs stir your heart?

- Homelessness
- Drug abuse/ Alcoholism / Recovery
- Marriage/family issues
- Parenting
- Poverty/hunger
- Financial stewardship
- Abuse/violence
- Survivors of trafficking
- Educational
- At-risk children
- Children in the foster care system
- Racial reconciliation
- Divorce
- Health/fitness
- Immigrants and refugees
- Care for the elderly
- Any other that come to mind?

7. How would you summarize the areas of your compassion?

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

Consider these two concepts now side-by-side. What are the ways in which your compassion can intersect with your gifts. For instance, if you are gifted at details/event planning and you have compassion for survivors of trafficking, could you offer to help a non-profit with their fundraiser? If you are gifted at hospitality and you have compassion for those who have immigrated to America, could you organize a monthly meal with a non-profit? Spend some time considering the potential intersection of your area of compassion and gifts. Write what comes to mind here:

Finally, come up with some next steps, and share your thoughts with friends, loved ones, or your Praxis Group. Allow them to speak into your reflections and next steps.

Debrief your experience

After practicing with this tool, debrief your experience with your Praxis Group. Below are some questions to process together:

- Check in on life. (Where are you experiencing Christ's presence this week? What burdens are you carrying?)
- What did you learn from this practice?
- Describe your experience with this practice. (What feelings came up, what went well, what got in the way? How has it impacted your relationship with God?)
- What is the next step for you?