

*If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing-* 1 Corinthians 13:3

What if God gave us a new body? Last week I mentioned Mark 2:22 *“And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, they pour new wine into new wineskins.”* This verse is pivotal in knowing the intricacies of Spiritual gifts. Where do I use them? Why do I have them? Why my gifts? One of the greatest questions is just that: why are mine special? It comes back to the body. God in his wisdom made the church community a new body. One that can't die. One that could hold new wine. That wine is you and me and our new spiritual gifts. The answer to all the questions is found within the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 6:19 *“Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.”* Would it be a hard sell to tell you that your special. Your gifts are unique, and that you are needed. Then how do you explain the above verse? I am not my own? It comes back to who created you. We are owned by the creator. God in his wisdom decided to make us with talent. This talent is to be used within the body of Christ: The Church. When we make a decision for Jesus, he bestows gifts on us that work within the body. Ephesians 4:11 *“And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers.”* Those gifts tend to work in conjunction with our born talents. Hence, God gives the body of Christ all that we are.

We are individuals. Our talents, character, and design are unique. However, the church body needs you to be complete. A preacher is good but he or she is practically worthless without worship, ushers, accountants and elders. Each person plays a role. Before I get too deep into what this body means to you and me, I'd like to talk about passion. Each one of us is passionate

about a great many things. I am willing to say that those passions relate closely to our talents. You love skiing? So, winter fuels your passion. You can't stop writing, it's your passion. Then write books or blog passionately. Chances are your talent level and passion work hand in hand.

Passion in the dictionary means *strong and barely controllable emotion*. I love that description of the word. When we have passion for something, look out! There is a movie called *The Passion of the Christ*. I am reading a book on Jesus that calls the death of Jesus *The Humiliation of the Christ*. These words were meant to describe Jesus in a specific way. Each one of us could be described in different ways. I am a lover of sports, Hallmark movies, and music. I am also a Bible connoisseur. If we saw you using your three Spiritual gifts, would they describe you accurately? I bet they would. Why and how would we see your gifts being used? It's in your passion. If someone has the gift of preaching then they must preach. When they are in-front of people: they display passion in preaching. A lady made magnificent roses out of radishes. A guest speaker was totally impressed. She could see the passion of the woman in the roses. We were meant to display our gifts before God with passion.

Yet, we must separate feelings from passion. A sports star is called a pro. Why? It's because win or lose they display their talent to the best of their ability. We are to be pro Christians within the body of Christ. That means no matter how you feel, your passion for God needs to shine through. We serve with a smile. We notice the needy and love them. At times we might be tired or sad but our gifts from God are supernatural enough to make us a pro. These gifts are not primarily made to make you happy. Yet, they are made to display God's purpose for you. To make you shine in an overcast world.

The idea of passion is to help us use these gifts with enthusiasm. Nobody does something they hate with passion. They just might passionately hate it! That's why feelings should not be

part of the equation. The gifts God gives to you are not for you. No, they are for the church body around the world. A carpenter is talents in wood work. They find pleasure in making things with wood. Yet, they might love bowling too. No one thing defines us. God has however, given us fuel (passion) to do certain things better than others. The body of Christ has many parts. What part of that body has God entrusted you with to passionately do? Something that is uniquely you.

*Acts 20:25 “In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’”*

Sometimes we want to be our own God. To be given something that makes us special so that we feel special. A cake maker bakes to give their talents to others. Yes, it makes them happy and proud to bake. Yet, there is joy found in seeing others eating good cake. We need to find passion in serving others. It’s not about ourselves. It’s about making the body of Christ a wonderful place to be. It’s about taking the unique person you are and adding that to the ministry of Jesus. Imagine your passion for Jesus rubbing off on those in need? Let’s think about motive for having gifts as we wait until next week.

*Matthew 5:16 “In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”*