

SERMON STARTER

HUMAN RELATIONS DAY



This sermon starter is part of the Human Relations Day pastor and leader kit and connects with the theme “The Importance of All Gifts in the Community.” It can be adapted for your context and integrated into your worship service with the other material in the kit. It is based on the lectionary readings for **January 19, 2025: Psalm 36:5-10 and 1 Corinthians 12:1-11.**

In the passage from 1 Corinthians 12, Paul teaches about Spiritual gifts that God bestows on all his children. Living out our faith in the community is so important because not one of us is commanding all spiritual gifts, but through the community, all gifts are present, and the church becomes whole. We are at our best in the church when we are giving thanks and praise for the gathering of persons offering their gifts to Christ’s church.

When we are talking about growing our churches, the conversation should include how we identify a person’s spiritual gifts and how we help them understand how their gift is needed for the realization of God’s kingdom here on earth. Here are important things to remember as we help people discover their gifts:

1. Spiritual gifts are given to all God’s children.

Especially in this day when there are such divisions in our culture, we need to remind ourselves that God gives spiritual gifts to all, not just those who think like us, who speak like us, or worship like us. Neighborhoods are better places when residents hear and see their neighbors.

2. Knowing your spiritual gifts and using them brings satisfaction.

When followers of Christ identify their gifts and then connect with roles that utilize those gifts, it breeds feelings of satisfaction and purpose, instead of weariness and burnout.

3. Every spiritual gift is important in helping churches fulfill God’s purposes.

Paul tells us, “A word of wisdom is given by the Spirit to one person, a word of knowledge to another according to the same Spirit, faith to still another by the same Spirit, gifts of healing to another in the one Spirit, performance of miracles to another, prophecy to another, the ability to tell spirits apart to another, different kinds of tongues to another, and the interpretation of the tongues to another. All these things are produced by the one and same Spirit who gives what he wants to each person” (1 Corinthians 12: 8 – 11 CEB).

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4. When we use our spiritual gifts well, it draws others to God

When someone is serving in harmony with the spiritual gifts God has given them, we often react by saying, “They were made for that role.” When you talk to persons who have learned their Spiritual Gifts, you’ll often hear, “Now I understand how I am wired.” Naturally, our attention is shifted to the Creator! Utilizing our gifts in the church work feels good for us, but ultimately it will bring glory back to God!

On Human Relations Day Sunday, we focus on how we can support the strengthening of communities beyond our walls, beyond our communities, and sometimes right outside our doors. Our gifts are used to build relationships and can be the cord that draws communities closer together.

Note:

Discipleship Ministries has a Spiritual Gifts Inventory that can be completed online or downloaded as a PDF for printing and scoring manually.

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/spiritual-gifts>

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