

REVIEW

Jonathan opens the session by disclosing that, as a child, he had a particular talent for being argumentative – a talent he generously shared with anyone in earshot. Not everything we’re good at is necessarily helpful to those around us. **Do you agree? Why, or why not? Are you good at something bad? Do you think it’s possible to channel destructive tendencies into constructive strengths? If so, how?**

One of our challenges as disciples is to understand and practise the gifts God has generously given us. We all have talents that reflect whatever is true, honourable, just, pure, pleasing, and commendable (Philippians 4:8). **Off the top of your head, list your top three gifts or talents. Pick one of them and share how you’ve used it to reflect what is true, honourable, just, pure, pleasing, and commendable.**

Paul tells us there is one body (the church), made up of many different parts (1 Corinthians 12:12). To grow effectively, the body needs every part: the various gifts and talents of every member (1 Corinthians 12:22–23). **What challenge does this present for the church? Do you feel your church recognises a diversity of gifts and talents? Are some talents prized more highly? If so, why? What’s the solution? Is there a space in your local community for you to exercise your gifts? Have you caught yourself feeling either superior or inferior to someone else in your church, because of opportunities, or lack thereof, to use your gifts?**

Jonathan emphasises the importance of understanding Paul’s teaching in 1 Corinthians 12. We need to be so careful to celebrate and encourage all gifts and talents if we are to be the generous church we aspire to be. **What’s your next step?**

Individually, we also need to know ourselves, and value ourselves. We each have a unique contribution to bring, for the glory of God and the good of others. **Do you believe there are you-shaped gaps in this world that only you can fill? If so, have you discovered the best way to look for them? What shape do they take? Which you-shaped gaps are you currently filling?**

Jonathan points out that Mary was better at exercising her talents than the disciples were at valuing them. Mary’s talent was the tender and caring way she anointed Jesus’ feet, which would within days be nailed to a cross (Mark 14:8). Mary felt compelled to use a

Lined writing area for reader responses.

LAST WORD

May you grow in confidence as you recognise all the ways God has wondrously gifted you, and may you begin generously sharing your gifts with those around you. Let's also look for ways to honour and encourage people whose talents don't demand a stage or a spotlight but are crucial for the building up of the body of Christ.

DEEPER WALK

Select at least one activity below to complete before watching the next session.

Read: Read Ephesians 2:10 in a few different Bible translations. What strikes you? Look up the Greek word translated *masterpiece* or *workmanship*. What is your response to the truth that you are a poem God is writing and reciting for the first time in human history?

Write: Doodle some drawings depicting the things you're good at and love doing. Or bullet point them if that's more your vibe. If someone close to you looked at your list or your sketches, would they say, 'Absolutely! That's so *you!*' Or would they say, 'Really? I had no idea you could do that.' What would either response tell you about the way you're investing your talents in the lives of those around you?

Pray: Set a phone reminder for your lunch hour every day this week and use the prompt to pray that God would open your eyes to all the ways you can generously share your talents with a world in need of His good gifts channelled through you.