



Presents



#CGSMALLGROUPS

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## WEEK 4: Abilities

**KEY VERSE** Matthew 25:14-15 NLT

“Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last—dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip.

God has given the gifts of Jesus for our salvation, and the Holy Spirit so that we might live, move and become everything He has shaped us to be. The Holy Spirit gives us spiritual gifts and the heart of the Father. We reside in a temporal and physical world—the natural realm—therefore we are also equipped with **natural abilities**.

**Definition: Natural Abilities:** a gift from God that we can choose to offer back to God to join Him at work.

God instructed Moses to appoint certain individuals, Bezalel and Oholiab, who possessed abilities in craftsmanship—those skilled in carpentry and had worked with gold, and tapestry—to serve using their strengths. The Bible reads, “*The Lord has given them special skills as jewelers, designers, weavers... They excel in all crafts needed for the work*” (Exodus 35:35 NLT). They handcrafted the Ark of the Covenant and all other articles of worship for the Tabernacle, as well as the tapestries in and around the tent.

**Discussion 1:** When you are good at something, oftentimes, you love to do it. What elements are involved in the activity you love doing?

Natural abilities can either be innate (born with it), or learned. You might have inclinations to work with your hands, or memorize images, words or phrases, or be a mathematical genius. You may pick up linguistics or have a green thumb. Whatever your natural ability, know God put it in you. You may, however, have to practice in order to hone your abilities so that they are useful, productive, and/or marketable.

### Unfair Comparisons

Have you ever compared yourself to others—what you can do versus what they have done—and held back from contributing your abilities? The truth is, the abilities you have are unique to you, because no one but you is able to express your strengths, skills, talents, and abilities quite like you. No one else can take your abilities coupled with your spiritual gifts, filtered through your heart, in order to accomplish something. You are “*fearfully and wonderfully made*,” (Psalm 139:14): God’s masterpiece.

**Discussion 2:** Share something you do well that you no longer do.

Perhaps it has been a while since you picked up your \_\_\_\_\_.

What made you stop? Is a restart possible?

In Jesus' Parable of the Talents (Matthew 25:14-30), talents (Gr. *talanton*) refer to money. Metaphorically however, we can refer to a talent as, well, a talent or ability. The idea behind the parable is that God gives the talents as He sees fit, to those whom He knows will utilize them for His glory. Each person has the potential to use them in significant ways: ways that fulfill God's purpose and His plan

**Consider this Scripture:** *"So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God"* Romans 14:12

Michelangelo said, "The greater danger for most of us is not that our aim is too high and we miss it, but rather it is too low and we reach it."

When it comes to our abilities, we must first recognize that God gave us our abilities. Second, God has a plan for each of us to use our abilities in a manner pleasing to Him. Third, we are fulfilling our purpose by using what we've been given for a greater good (by God's standards), and not only for ourselves.

## **SHAPING UP**

To the right is an assessment containing several abilities. Take time now to go through the list and see which resonates with you. Once you have identified your abilities, be mindful if you:

- Love it (heart)
- Like it (plus)
- Leave it (minus) Indicate your ranking for each using a heart, plus or minus.

**Discussion 3:** In the time remaining, consider what you are involved in today. How can any of your abilities be plugged into the ministry activities at your Church? How can you get started

## **SHAPE: Abilities Assessment**

WHAT GOD-GIVEN ABILITIES HAVE SURFACED YOUR LIFE?

Checkmark the abilities that apply to you:

ARTISTIC ABILITY: conceptualize, draw, paint, photograph, etc.

ATHLETIC ABILITY: coach or participate in a sport

CLASSIFYING ABILITY: systematize and file books, data, records, and materials

COOKING ABILITY: prepare meals for large and small groups

COUNSELING ABILITY: listen, encourage, and guide with sensitivity

COUNTING ABILITY: work with numbers, data or money

DECORATING ABILITY: beautify a setting for a special event

DEVELOPING ABILITY: improve, tinker, make better, modify

EDITING ABILITY: proofread or rewrite

ENTERTAINING ABILITY: perform, act, dance, speak

EVALUATING ABILITY: analyze data and draw conclusions

GRAPHICS ABILITY: layout, design, create visual displays or banners

HOBBY-RELATED ABILITY: work with hands in a certain activity

INTERVIEWING ABILITY: talking with people and discovering what people are like

LANDSCAPING ABILITY: gardening and work with plants

LEADERSHIP ABILITY: coordinate, cast vision, direct, lead, inspire

LEARNING ABILITY: observe, practice, research, study

LINGUISTIC ABILITY: speak and write in various languages

MANAGING ABILITY: supervise people to accomplish a task or event

MECHANICAL OPERATING ABILITY: operate tools or machinery

MUSICAL ABILITY: sing or play a musical instrument

ORGANIZATIONAL ABILITY: bring order and organization to people and programs

PLANNING ABILITY: strategize, design, and organize programs or events

PROMOTING ABILITY: advertise or promote events and activities

PUBLIC RELATIONS ABILITY: handle complaints and unhappy people with care and maturity

RECRUITING ABILITY: enlist and motivate people to get involved

REPAIRING ABILITY: fix, restore, maintain

RESEARCHING ABILITY: read, gather information, collect data

RESOURCEFUL ABILITY: search out and find resources at a lower cost

SEWING/NEEDLEWORK ABILITY: work with a needle and thread or with a sewing machine

TEACHING ABILITY: explain, train, demonstrate, tutor

TECHNICAL ABILITY: operate or repair various equipment

VISUALIZING ABILITY: conceptualize, picture, dream

WELCOMING ABILITY: convey warmth, develop rapport, making others feel welcome

WRITING ABILITY: write articles, papers, letters, books

OTHER: \_\_\_\_\_

