

## “Spiritual Gifts in the Life of the Church”

CPC Spring 2020 Adult Sunday Studies

Leader’s Guide

March 8, 2020

### Lesson Seven - “Discerning a Call, part 1: Personal Inventory”

\*\*Quotes, unless otherwise noted, are from Kenneth Berding, *What are Spiritual Gifts: Rethinking the Conventional View*

From Last Week: “We can discern God’s calling when three factors come together for us: Affinity (What human needs do I “vibrate” to? What interests me? What are my passions?); Ability (What am I good at? What do people say I am effective in?); and Opportunity (What doors for service are open? What needs to be done?). When all three factors come together, you can see God has equipped and called you to do something or to move in a certain direction. This process can be applied to finding a job and making major life decisions, but how do we apply it to service in the church? I propose that in the church you start with the third aspect—Opportunity. In other words, find the jobs in the church that need to be done and then do them. Just serve. Don’t ask too much about whether it fulfills you.” - Tim Keller

**HOOK:** Much of this class has been about re-thinking the conventional view and its focus on self-expression. Today we’ll actually be discussing the proper place of personal inventories and how best to work them into the biblical view of spiritual gifts.

*“Those who hold to the conventional view have to ask two questions, whereas those who follow the spiritual-ministries view need to ask only one question. Someone who holds to the spiritual-gifts-as-abilities view must ask, (1) Which ministry should I serve in? and (2) Which special ability do I have or not have? That person then must try somehow to correlate the answers. The person who follows the spiritual ministries approach need ask only a single question—a question asked repeatedly throughout the history of Christianity: ‘Lord, where do you want me to serve?’” (200-201)*

This question basically means making decisions according to biblical wisdom.

**BOOK: Read Proverbs 2:1-5**

Foundational to the “wisdom” model of decision-making is the belief that God sanctifies us into people who can make wise decisions. Rather than waiting around for a decision to drop down from heaven, we make decisions according to the way God is conforming us into the image of Christ, by use of the ordinary means of grace (Word, Prayer, Church). In this passage wisdom is sought and treasured as we become the sorts of people who love God and the knowledge about Him in His Word; hence, all the different verbs that are used to describe the process.

**LOOK:**

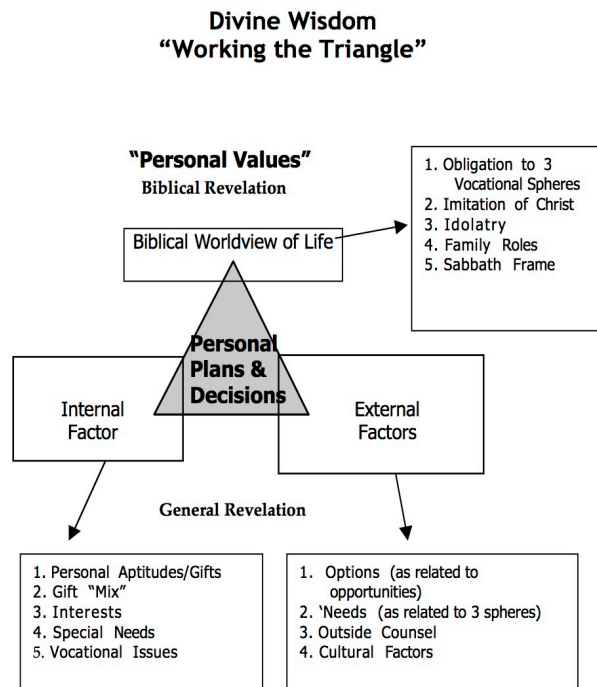
*Some notes of caution:* In decision-making, don’t rely on worldly wisdom, like the pursuit of comfort, to define biblical wisdom for your situation. Also, don’t always expect clear direction, which can simply be looking for a false sense of security, or adding to the revelation God has already provided in Scripture.

*“In the end, Christians who are faithful in seeking biblical principles, searching out mature counsel, and submitting their requests to God, should not worry about whether they’ve missed doing what God wants them to do. These Christians would miss it only if God had made clear to them what he wanted and they had not done it. I maintain, however, that God in his sovereignty doesn’t always communicate his plan, but often allows us to choose the wisest path or pray for an increase in wisdom. Thus, we should move forward with confidence, along with humility, as we pray about and consider which ministries the Lord would have us do. Finally, we will often have greater insight on where to serve in the future as we minister in the present. It is in the midst of service that we often find opportunities and spiritual desire to take the next steps into whatever areas of ministry God may have for us.” (203)*

Discuss all the actions Berding encourages here and what every Christian can do in order to determine in which ministries she/he can serve.

## *Making Decisions Biblically*

Using the Triangle below, discuss how decisions are to be made in light of the three angles of a Biblical Worldview, Internal Factors, and External Factors.



*The human mind **plans** the way, but the LORD directs the steps.*  
Prov. 16:9

### **TOOK:**

1. Take practical steps to gain wisdom in these ways.
2. To discover more about the "internal factors" that should impact our decisions, share these options:
  1. <http://ebcrochester.org/misc/php/LifeWaySpiritualGiftsSurvey.php>
  2. DISC Personality Test

3. Enneagram - [shorturl.at/eoxU6](http://shorturl.at/eoxU6)
  1. Ask if anyone in the group has taken 1 of these tests or something like it. If so, have them discuss how best their result should be integrated into the spiritual ministries view of this class (or how it has been misapplied according to the conventional view).
3. Regardless of which test each person chooses, encourage them to do 2 things: 1. Pick a partner in the group to discuss the results of the test some time this week. 2. Make sure to discuss how understanding their God-given personality should be understood in light of the biblical view of spiritual ministries, as opposed to the “conventional view” of spiritual abilities. It is also important to understand all of these tests as fallible tools dealing with general revelation. They are not perfect, nor inspired by God; and yet understanding how God has “fearfully and wonderfully made” you, despite the effects of the Fall, can be important for understanding how you can serve the church.