St Paul’s Kogarah Anglican Church

Discovery Course



1. God is generous!

# Prayer

# Bible passage: Romans 8:28-32

## A Sovereign Father

Christians believe in a sovereign God. We believe a God who is in charge of all things and puts all things together. Nothing is outside of God’s control. But our God is more than a divine programmer. We believe that our God is a loving God. We believe that our God puts things together according to his good purpose for us.

1. What do Christians know about the purpose of how all things work?
2. What can Christians look forward to as their destiny?
3. What’s the process for Christians in God’s scheme of things?

## A Greatest Gift – The Son

Because Christians know that our loving Father is in control of all things and we know where he’s taking us, we have a blessed assurance and an unshakable confidence.

1. What’s the greatest Gift that God the Father has given us?
2. What does God’s greatest Gift show us about himself?

Far too often, many people, even Christians, think about how much they’ve given God. They think about how much time they’ve given to God; they think about how much money they’ve given to God. Even though it might not be much, some even demand that God should be good to them because of the little that they’ve given to God! They have forgotten that it was God who has given them everything that they have in the first place. When they demand that God should give them more, they have devalued His Greatest Gift, namely, the Gift of His One and Only Son. The Bible calls this generosity of God his grace.

1. How have the people below shown that they’ve misunderstood God’s grace?
2. I have come to Church all my life, why can’t God give me good health?
3. I have already given $20 to God last week, that’s enough because I have an expensive holiday coming up.
4. I can’t afford to give God more time this week because of I’m busy.

## The Gift that keeps giving – the Holy Spirit

As well as giving us his Son, Jesus Christ, God has given us His Holy Spirit.

# Bible passage: 1 Corinthians 12:1-3

1. What does the someone who has the Holy Spirit say?
2. How does this focus from the Holy Spirit help us distinguish the true Holy Spirit from those who pretend to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit points people to Jesus. He inspired prophets and apostles in the past to write the Bible in order to point people to Jesus. Today, he’ll use people with different gifts to continue to point people to Jesus.

# Bible passage: 1 Corinthians 12:12-24

1. How does the Apostle Paul describe the Body of Christ?
2. Should one part be jealous of other parts?
3. Should one part be proud of their part over other parts?
4. How should each part treat the other parts? (See verse 22-24)

God has arranged the body of Christ so that there are many parts but there is one body. Each part of the body is important, no matter how they might look to the other parts. For a body to function healthily, each part needs to do their part for the good of the body.

## Discovering where we belong in the Body of Christ

Our Church’s vision is:

We gather to build and to nurture a nation which lives and breathes the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

To build a nation is not the work of one person but the work of a community, under the headship of Christ. God has given many gifts to his Church through the Holy Spirit and by faith, we trust that he will use us to build his kingdom.

The idea of teamwork is a common one which may be found outside the Church. For example, a volunteer association may require people to volunteer their time and resources for the good of the association. They might classify people according to the different talents they possess and then to group them accordingly for maximum efficiency. However, while there may be some similarities between a Church and a volunteer association, there is one fundamental difference: The Church is the Body of Christ. We believe that it’s the spiritual work of Christ that has made the Church possible, not merely a gathering of volunteers. We believe those who serve in the Church are believers who have been gifted with God the Son and God the Holy Spirit and not just people with talents.

1. What difference would it make if we simply hire non-believing people to do the various jobs at Church?

We believe that God has given many gifts to his Church in the form of the believers of the Church. But how do we know what kind of gifts we have?

While there are a few lists of spiritual gifts that the Bible has listed in the New Testament, they are not exhaustive. We’ll look at one list in particular next week. For this week, look at the list below to think about what gifts God has given to the Church through you:

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| General | Specific | Reason | Second opinion |
| Word Ministries | Teaching the word |  |  |
|  | Teaching youth and Children |  |  |
|  | Music |  |  |
|  | Evangelism |  |  |
|  | Sending missionaries |  |  |
| Work ministries | Hospitality |  |  |
|  | Administration / Finance |  |  |
|  | Design / Art |  |  |
|  | Building / Maintenance |  |  |
|  | Electronic / Computer |  |  |
| Others |  |  |  |

As well as considering what your gifts may be, ask another Christian to see what they think your gifts are.

Prayer for Guidance

为神的引导祷告

我们天上慈悲的父，

我们向祢祈祷，

愿祢以福音的真理，指引、洁净和掌管我们的心和身体。

天父，我们的生命只不过像雾气，

转眼消失，

但祢是自有永有的神！

愿祢借着祢的灵，

引导和祝福我们的计划

和手所做的工，

透过我们以信心所献上的服侍，

使多人来荣耀祢的圣名！

靠着我主耶稣基督祈求，阿们！

“Our heavenly Father,

we pray that you will direct, sanctify, and govern our hearts and bodies in the way of the Gospel.

Father, our lives are but a mist but you are from everlasting to everlasting.

By your Spirit, guide and bless what we plan and do,

that through our services offered in faith,

many will give glory to your holy name;

through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.”

1. Be good stewards of God’s gifts

# Prayer

# Bible passage: 1 Peter 4:7-11

# Conviction

# Christians are believers of our Lord Jesus Christ. This doesn’t simply mean that we understand intellectually that what Jesus said is true; we are also convicted that what Jesus said is true. We don’t simply believe who Jesus is as a historical fact in history, as true as it is. We also believe that it’s the most important truth that forms the basis of all of our being. It’s a truth that governs all of our decisions, all of our resources, all of our relationships and all of our time. It’s a conviction.

1. According to the Bible, what period of time are we in now?
2. What are Christians to do now in response?
3. What should our relationship with each other be?
4. What should we do with the gifts God’s given us?
5. What gifts are listed in verse 11 (two categories)?
6. What’s the goal of these gifts?
7. Take a look at the list below. Which gifts belong to the first category and which gifts belong in the second category?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Teaching the word |  |
| Teaching youth and Children |  |
| Music |  |
| Evangelism |  |
| Sending missionaries |  |
| Hospitality |  |
| Administration / Finance |  |
| Design / Art |  |
| Building / Maintenance |  |
| Electronic / Computer |  |
| Others |  |

Hopefully over the past week, you had an opportunity to look through a list of gifts and spoke with others about your gifts. These gifts that God’s given you are not just for your own enjoyment; God’s given you these gifts for his glory. Does this mean that anyone with these gifts should be put on the service roster? No, at least not yet. Before we serve the Lord at Church, we need to consider the following: Character, Competence, teams and goals.

# Character

# God doesn’t just want to use people with gifts at Church; he wants servants who are good and faithful stewards of what He’s given them. God doesn’t want volunteers who gives their spare time at Church; he wants servants who obey him and who give of their lives sacrificially.

# Bible passage: 1 Timothy 3:1-7

1. What are the characteristics of God’s leader listed in this passage?
2. What would happen if a person serving at Church has a questionable character?

There are often times at Church when we have great needs to fill and it’s tempting to find someone, anyone, to fill in these positions as quickly as possible. However, we must exercise godly wisdom when we find people to serve at Church, lest we choose people who are disobedient to God and lead others astray. This doesn’t mean that someone must be perfect before they serve at Church. However, it does mean that we want servants who recognise their dependence on God and their need to come to him daily for wisdom, forgiveness and strength.

# Competence

# Once we have thought through our gifts in the context of our conviction and our character, we can think about how we can develop the competence necessary to develop these gifts. In God’s sovereignty, he has raised each one of us in a certain environment, provided each one of us with unique opportunities and gave each one of us a unique set of gifts. For example, he might have given a person the opportunity to learn music when they’re young and after many years of practice they become accomplished pianist. For another person, God might have developed in that person a love for cooking and the person is naturally inclined to prepare meals for people. We thank God for the way he has developed different people in his sovereignty. However, even though a person may be naturally ‘gifted’ in a certain area, they still need to work to develop their skills in these areas so that they can grow and glorify God with these gifts.

# Furthermore, in the Church, we want to ensure that we provide the best and safest environment for God’s people to minister and so there are certain prerequisites in ministries that a person needs to have before exercising their gifts in these ministries.

While there are many gifts and ministries that we can speak on in a Church, we’ll focus on the following ten. Vital to each ministry is that each person who serve need to be a committed Christian and a person of good godly character. Once they have the conviction and character, the following prerequisites are needed as part of their competence.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Teaching the word | Trained under the Minister to a satisfactory level or have equivalent training elsewhere approved by the Minister. |
| Teaching youth and Children | Safe Ministry Qualified. Has WWCC. Trained under a person assigned by the Minister to a satisfactory level or have equivalent training elsewhere approved by the Minister. |
| Music | Ideally have preliminary to second grade qualification. Trained under a person assigned by the Minister to a satisfactory level or have equivalent training elsewhere approved by the Minister. |
| Evangelism | Trained under a person assigned by the Minister to a satisfactory level or have equivalent training elsewhere approved by the Minister. |
| Sending missionaries | Have done required research on missionaries and have a willingness to provide ongoing support for missionaries as a representative of the Church.  |
| Hospitality | Understood the importance of providing food safety. |
| Administration / Finance | Have access to and have read relevant sections of the Ordinance for Parish Administration |
| Design / Art |  |
| Building / Maintenance | Have access to and have read relevant sections of the Risk Management Paper |
| Electronic / Computer |  |

1. Why do you think it’s necessary to have perquisites for people performing ministries at Church?

To ensure that these ministries are developed well within the Church, there are teams that help each member of the ministry develop these gifts. The leaders of these teams will provide training opportunities for these gifts and will provide regular review of how each person had been developing in these gifts.

# Teams

# There are five teams that look after the five key areas of our Church:

1. Growth: This group is tasked to help with the growth of the members in the Lord Jesus across all our congregations, including the children and youth.
2. Go: This group is tasked to help with equipping our members for the task of evangelism in our area and among our friends and families. They will also help with organising evangelistic activities and promoting various events at Church.
3. Gather: This group is tasked to help with the running of our Church services on Sundays, including the provision of music, the welcoming process and the provision of a clear pathway for people to integrate into the Church.
4. Giftedness: This group is tasked with helping to identify and develop the gifts that God has given to each gospel partner at Church.
5. Governance: This group is tasked with ensuring the properties, the finances and the general governance of the Church is in order.

There are two leaders in each of these teams and each leader is responsible to the Minister.

# Goals

# In order to work towards the vision of our Church, we have four goals:

# We want to reach 150 families in our 150th Year

# We want to produce a campus feasibility masterplan

# We want to have an exemplary intergenerational ministry in 2020

# We want to become a Chinese Discipleship Centre in the south.

# We’re very excited to see God honoured as we reach for these goals. The leaders in each team will constantly revise and update shorter term goals to help us reach these four goals.

# What have you discovered?

Over the course of the past few weeks, we hope that you have discovered the gifts that God’s given you. God has been incredibly generous to us in giving us his Only Son! He’s also given us his very own Holy Spirit! And he’s given each one of us a gift for the benefit of His Church.

Take a few moments to write down the gifts that God’s given you:

Gift 1:

Gift 2:

Please pray to see whether God wants us to use these gifts at Church. If you want to develop these gifts that God’s given you and use them at Church for God’s service, please see the relevant leader who will help you think through what it might mean for you to serve at Church.

As we think about how we can use our gifts for God’s glory, we’ll do well to pray with the songwriter using the words of this song:

“When I survey the wondrous cross

On which the Prince of glory died

My richest gain I count but loss

And pour contempt on all my pride

Were the whole realm of Nature mine

That were an offering far too small

Love so amazing, so divine

Demands my soul, my life, my all!”

**Prayer for Guidance**

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我们向祢祈祷，

愿祢以福音的真理，指引、洁净和掌管我们的心和身体。

天父，我们的生命只不过像雾气，

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