

LESSON 5 Being A Worker

Kim is rejoicing. As he has studied the Bible and spent time praying and seeking the Lord, the Holy Spirit has been showing him how he can minister to others.

He was asked to go to the home of a sick man and pray for him. As he prayed he felt the precious anointing and presence of the Holy Spirit. A week later he prayed for a child who had a fever. The child was healed. One Sunday he went with another believer who goes each week to preach in a nearby town. He led the believers in singing and sharing with each other what God had done for them. He also taught a class of boys.

Kim is excited as he thinks how God gives everyone gifts for his work. Now that Kim has learned that he can be a worker, he wants to know more about just what kind of worker he should be and how he should develop his gifts.

Perhaps you, too, would like to know more about these things. As you study this lesson, see what the Bible says about being a Christian worker. And you will find out more about how to develop your ministry gifts.

The Plan

- A. Follow Christ's Example
- B. Develop Your Gifts

The Goals

1. Describe the qualities of a Christian worker.
2. State several ways to develop your ministry gifts.

A. FOLLOW CHRIST'S EXAMPLE

Goal 1. Describe the qualities of a Christian worker.

Be a Servant

What kind of person was Jesus when He lived on the earth? The Bible shows Him as a man who cared much for people and their needs. He was unselfish.

In Matthew 14:13–14, we read that Jesus was grieved when He heard that John the Baptist had died. Jesus wanted to be alone, but the people followed Him. Did He reject them when they found Him? No. He empathized with the people and met their needs. He did the will of His Father even though He was sad and perhaps weary. In the same way, the Christian worker will not always be able to do what he wants to do. He is the servant of the Lord; a servant does what his master wants.

In John 13:1–17, Jesus served His disciples by washing their feet. He said, “I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet” (v. 14). To be successful Christian workers we must emulate Jesus: “Just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Matthew 20:28).

Application

1 Read John 13:1–17. In your notebook, write one or two sentences telling what lesson Jesus was trying to point out to His disciples in verse 16.

Have the Fruit of the Spirit

When we follow the example of Christ, His qualities are seen in us. The Bible refers to these qualities as *fruit*. The person who is filled with the Holy Spirit has a responsibility to make sure that the fruit of the Spirit is seen in his or her life.

God not only gives gifts for ministry but also gives us power to control ourselves so that we are effective witnesses. People can be helped by our gifts but hindered by our personalities. We must be careful not to let pride or any other vice disqualify us.

For this study we are going to consider the fruit of the Spirit found in Romans 12:9–21. This portion has been chosen to help you understand more about working for the Lord. It shows what the person who ministers must be like. You can help yourself as a worker by studying the list, praying about your own life, and asking for the Holy Spirit's help. Do not be discouraged. No worker is perfect, but we can become like Christ as we love and serve Him.

The Christian worker should . . .

have love that is honest.
hate what is wrong.
hold on to what is good.
love other believers.
show honor and respect.
not be lazy.
be earnest in spirit.
serve the Lord.
be joyful.
be patient in trouble.
pray always.
share what he has.
open his home to the needy.
bless those who persecute the believers.
weep with those who weep.
have equal concern for all.
not be proud or arrogant.
accept humble tasks.
not repay wrong with wrong.
try to do what is right before all people.
try to live in peace with everyone.
feed his enemy.
overcome evil with good.

Application

2 Read the Bible verses below. Then match each of them (left side) to the quality of which it is the best example (right side).

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| ... a John 11:32–36 | 1) Be patient in trouble |
| ... b Acts 16:22–25 | 2) Share what he has |
| ... c Philippians 4:14–16 | 3) Weep with those who weep |
| ... d Revelation 1:9 | |

3 Are the qualities given in the above list a part of your life? Underline each one that is.

B. DEVELOP YOUR GIFTS

Goal 2. State several ways to develop your ministry gifts.

We may not always know every gift that God gives us, but we can be aware of God's leading. We already know that our gift will be right for us. Anyone does better work when he feels he can do it well. Know, too, that God can give us a gift that has nothing to do with our natural talents. What kinds of ministries are possible for us?

Discover Your Gifts

The Holy Spirit can make even timid people to be bold. Yield your life and talents to God, and you will enjoy ministry. Do not be afraid to try new kinds of work, especially as you feel God drawing you to those things. Do not force yourself into doing things, but allow the Spirit to direct you.

You may receive a word from an elder or a leader in the church, which may help you know what your ministry is. Often those who have served the Lord in leadership can sense ministry gifts in others. Whether you receive a definite gift or feel the urging of the Spirit as you serve God, know that you do have a ministry and there is help for you in using that ministry.

Application

- 4** In discovering your gifts it is best to
- a)** concentrate on doing things you already know how to do.
 - b)** try doing anything you have not done before.
 - c)** try doing things you feel the Spirit directing you to do.
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Appreciate Your Gifts

Your ministry is God's gift to you. Always honor it. This does not mean for you to be proud. To be proud is to think too much of yourself. To honor your gift is to realize that God gave it to you and to give the glory to God for it.

People who work in the church often get praise from those with whom they work. Praise is encouraging, but we must be careful not to take the glory for our ministry. We must honor God, and Him only, with our gifts (1 Corinthians 4:7).

Use Your Gifts

Romans 12:6 teaches that we should use whatever faith we have in manifesting our gift. If that gift is to speak out the message from God, then we should do just that. It would seem that we are being told to find our ministry or gift and then use it.

Already we have seen that there are two ways to develop our ministry once we have discovered what it is. We exercise our faith and we study. What shall we study? Think of your gift. If you are a minister of God's Word, your first responsibility would be to know what it says. This knowledge would come by prayerfully reading and studying it.

Application

- 5** According to 1 Corinthians 4:7,
- a)** all gifts are the same.
 - b)** our gifts come from God.
 - c)** we can earn God's gifts.
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The Spirit of God is your helper (John 16:13). Ask Him to teach you what the Word really means so you will teach truth. You may use books about the Bible as well, but remember that not all books written about the Bible give the truth. If a book does not teach the same truth as the Bible, do not use it.

Any work in the church is to be a spiritual ministry. Remember that the first deacons were men full of the Holy Spirit even though their work was to take care of the money that was given to the widows. It is desirable that every worker be filled with the Holy Spirit.

So these are the ways you can develop your gifts: exercise faith, study, pray, and use your gifts. This is what Paul meant when he said that you should teach, if teaching is your gift. You should serve, if serving is your gift. And you should give, if giving is your gift (Romans 12:6–8). Use your gift, else the body will suffer. Exercising your gift will require your time and energy, but it will bless the entire body and make you stronger.

The apostle Paul wrote to Timothy encouraging him to use his gift: “I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you” (2 Timothy 1:6). We, too, must keep our gifts alive!

Application

6 Match each description (left side) to the step in developing gifts of which it is an example (right side).

- ... **a** Mabel has the ability to show kindness to others. So she looks for needy people and finds practical ways of helping them.
- ... **b** Arthur is interested in teaching the Bible though he has never taught. So he prepares himself and tries teaching a class in his church.
- ... **c** Jane praises and thanks the Lord that she is able to encourage others in their walk with the Lord.
- ... **d** Donald has the gift of sharing. So he often shares with those who need the kind of help he can give.



Now that you have completed the first unit, you are ready to answer the questions in your student report for UNIT ONE. Review the previous lessons, then follow the instructions in your student report. Send your answer sheet to the address given on the copyright page of your study guide.

Check Your Answers

5 b) our gifts come from God.

1 Your answer should say something like this: He was trying to point out that just as no disciple or slave is greater than his teacher or master, they as His disciples were not greater than He. Therefore they should follow His example. (Your answer may be different, but the idea should be the same.)

2 a 3) Weep with those who weep

b 1) Be patient in trouble

c 2) Share what he has

d 1) Be patient in trouble

6 a 3) Use

b 1) Discover

c 2) Appreciate

d 3) Use

3 I hope you were able to underline several of them. Pray that God will help you to begin practicing the others.

4 c) try doing those things you feel the Spirit directing you to do.



Lessons

- 6 Teamwork**
- 7 Working in Love**
- 8 Working With Leaders**
- 9 Finishing With Joy**