

Reaching FORWARD – #4 Willing to Serve

[Slide 1] Discipleship #4 Willing to Serve!

[Slide 2] What is a Disciple? We have defined it as following Jesus wherever He leads us.

[Slide 3] And we have added this invitation: As a part of the Seventh-day Adventist movement, and recognizing our prophetic role in history, a disciple of Jesus Christ is one who is growing in an authentic relationship with God and others. I will commit to: REACHING FORWARD

[Slide 4] Following God through daily spiritual practices

[Slide 5] Opening myself to God by participating in regular corporate worship

[Slide 6] Returning time, talents, and resources to God

[Slide 7] Willingly serve my church and community in the context of my spiritual gifts

A story is told that after WWII ended, a group of German students volunteered to help rebuild an English Cathedral in London. It had been severely damaged by bombing. They did well with most of the Cathedral, except 1 statue that had been shattered into many pieces...a marble statue of Jesus Christ. It once stood, with Christ in a standing position with arms outstretched. The inscription under it read, “Come unto me.” They were able to find and reconstruct all of the statue, except for the hands, which had been completely demolished. And so, when finished, they had a statue of Jesus with outstretched arms, and no hands.

They couldn’t decide what to do...make new hands? Or leave it as it was. They decided to leave it be...and I am told that you can go to London today and see that marble statue of Jesus standing there with no hands...but the inscription they DID change...it now says, “He has no hands but ours.”

[Slide 8] Romans 12:1 describes our call to be disciples in a very deep and all encompassing way.

¹ *“Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.”*

This is the language of the Old Testament priesthood. The priest would make a “drink offering” and pour it upon the altar. Which is what we are to do with our life... lay it on the altar; make a total commitment to God and His work in our world.

When we answer God’s call and accept His salvation, He transforms us. We surrender our lives to Him.

He gives us a new heart that thrills to follow Him, to “shew forth all thy marvellous works” (Psalm 9:1 KJV). Our heart response becomes the same as prophet Isaiah, “Here I am, send me!” (Isaiah 6:8).

[Slide 9] When Yoido Full Gospel Church in South Korea was building its prayer mountain, they struggled in raising the funds for its construction. Pastor David Cho challenged the people again and again and still they could not raise the funds they needed for the project. Then, an elderly woman went to Pastor Cho. She gave him her rice bowl and chopsticks, her only earthly possessions. She told him that he could sell those and give the money for the prayer mountain. That selfless act touched the entire church. Donations flooded in until the prayer mountain became a reality. Now, that church is the biggest evangelical church in the whole world. Our selfless act of unwrapping and using our spiritual gifts to serve people can trigger such a powerful impact.

[Slide 10] Romans 12:4-8 describes the function of the human body as a parable of the church.

⁴ *“Just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, ⁵so in Christ we who are many form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. ⁶We have different gifts, according to the grace given us. If your gift is prophesying, let us use it in proportion to our faith. ⁷If it is serving, let us serve; if it is teaching, let us teach; ⁸if it is encouraging, let us encourage; if it is contributing to the needs of others, let us give generously; if it is leadership, let us govern diligently; if it is showing mercy, let us do it cheerfully.”* (NKJV “let us use them”)

We are called to salvation and called to witness! We are a priesthood of ALL believers; the young, young adults, and older ones; men and women.

[Slide 11] In a parallel passage, Ephesians 4:11,12 describes spiritual gifts.

¹¹ *“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, ¹²to prepare God’s people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.”*

[Slide 12] 1 Corinthians 12:20-26 also shares the impact and extent of spiritual gifts.

²⁰ *“As it is, there are many parts, but one body. ²¹The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” ²²On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.”*

[Slide 13] Our calling of service for God is a core part of our fundamental belief statement titled Spiritual Gifts. “God bestows upon all members of His church in every age spiritual gifts which each member is to employ in loving ministry for the common good of the church and of humanity. Given by the agency of the Holy Spirit, who apportions to each member as He wills, the gifts provide all abilities and ministries [Slide 14] needed by the church to fulfill its divinely ordained functions. According to the Scriptures, these gifts include such ministries as faith, healing, prophecy, proclamation, teaching, administration, reconciliation, compassion, and self-sacrificing service and charity for the help and encouragement of people. Some members are called of God and endowed by the Spirit for functions recognized by the [Slide 15] church in pastoral, evangelistic, apostolic, and teaching ministries particularly needed to equip the members for service, to build up the church to spiritual maturity, and to foster unity of the faith and knowledge of God. When members employ these spiritual gifts as faithful stewards of God’s varied grace, the church is protected from the destructive influence of false doctrine, grows with a growth that is from God, and is built up in faith and love.”

[Slide 16] I would like to show you a picture of what vibrant discipleship looks like in a human life. In a Mongolian village, Naleck, population of 30,000 there were two 1000 Missionary Movement (an NSD initiative to train young adults and send them out as missionaries for one year) witnesses. Their names are Shin, Sung Eun (Korean, Sahmyook Health College student), and Tchomoo (Mongolian).

[Slide 17] They planted a church in Naleck and were able to see nine people baptized. They accepted and used their spiritual gifts and were fruitful in helping others meet Jesus.

Here are some definitions: Spiritual gifts are a divine enabling or ability, given by the Holy Spirit in the life of a believer that equips them to do ministry; a gift of the Holy Spirit freely given - a blessing of God, graciously bestowed; a gracious divine endowment; an extraordinary gift of the Holy Spirit dwelling and working in a special manner in the individual.

[Slide 18] Here is a list of some Speaking Gifts

Word of Knowledge	Pastor
Word of Wisdom	Apostle
Evangelism	Missionary
Teaching	Leadership
Exhortation	Prophecy
Tongues	Interpretation of Tongues

[Slide 19] And, here a list of some Serving Gifts

Faith	Giving
Healing	Hospitality
Discernment	Serving
Helps	Miracles
Administration	Mercy

In *Acts of the Apostles* p. 9, the prophet, Ellen White, says,

“The church is God’s appointed agency for the salvation of men. It was organized for service, and its mission is to carry the gospel to the world. From the beginning it has been God’s plan that through His church shall be reflected to the world His fullness and His sufficiency. The members of the church, those whom He has called out of darkness into His marvelous light, are to show forth His glory.”

[Slide 20] Called to Salvation Called to Witness

It is so important! Jesus is coming! We are called to use our spiritual gifts. True humility will keep us from magnifying or minimizing or misplacing our gifts. We are called use them as God directs.

1 Peter 4:7a, 10 ⁷ *The end of all things is near. Therefore...¹ Each one should use whatever gift he or she has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms*

[Slide 21] At my house I have a prism that sits on a shelf near the window. A prism can be used to break light up into its constituent [spectral colors](#) (the colors of the [rainbow](#)).

Isaac Newton described prisms and the nature of light. In his time, it was believed that white light was colorless, and that the prism itself produced the color. Newton's experiments convinced him that all the colors already existed in the light in a heterogeneous fashion, and that "corpuscles" (particles) of light were fanned out because particles with different colors traveled with different speeds through the prism.

The prism makes possible the visible manifestation of light's wavelengths.

When I pick up my prism and hold it near the window so the light can shine through, I see beautiful rainbows shining on the walls in the room. Jesus speaks to us each, personally, saying, "You are My witnesses. He invites us to willingly serve as His brightness in our world. Unless we discover our spiritual gifts and use them, we will be like my prism, sitting, gathering dust. *Through the Holy Spirit's anointing we become a visible rainbow of witness to our community; compelling others to come and see His goodness as it shines beautifully through our lives and witness!*

[Slide 22] Activity #5 Spiritual Gifts Inventory

Let's take a moment with the Activity Sheet: Spiritual Gifts Inventory. We will spend 20 minutes individually completing the survey. Please don't hesitate to ask any questions you may have.

[Slide 23] Now let's spend some time together as a larger group. Were you surprised by what you discovered? (Facilitate a discussion that affirms each participant in who God has made them to be and the spiritual gifts He has given them. Tell participants: If you are from a church, you will want to meet with your pastor to ask Him for ministries where you can effectively serve in the context of your spiritual gifts.)

[Slide 24] Here is a website where you can find wonderful discipleship materials to help equip your congregations to serve as witnesses.

[Slide 25-29] You might have chosen a chorus that has become the theme song for your study time during the discipleship series or have been singing #330 "Take My Life and Let It Be." Conclude with a group benediction.