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# Use it or lose it!

## Studies in Stewardship

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### Introduction

In our first study we looked at the principle of using our Time, Talents and Treasure for God. We use all for Him because:

- It all belongs to God anyway;
- We are accountable to God for what we do with 'it';
- When we follow Christ, we surrender our lives completely to him; and,
- There is great reward in 'using it' well.

In this study, we are looking particularly at how we can use our time and talents for God.

### Using our Time and Talents

Take some time to individually fill out the following inventory:

- Roughly how much time have you got to use in week? .....hours  
(that is, how much time do you have a choice about how you use it?)
- Do you think you are too busy? .....
- How do you determine what to do with time you have?

Briefly discuss your answers

### Read Romans 12:1-8

1. What does Paul urge his readers to do in verse 1?
2. What do you make of the apparent contradiction of being a 'living sacrifice'?  
What do you understand this expression to mean?
3. What motivation does Paul give his readers to offer their bodies as living sacrifices?
4. Verses 2-8 explain what it means to offer yourself as a living sacrifice, which is 'Spiritual worship'. Specifically, how is it done?

*"The person who does not prioritise their time likely wastes much of it"*

*"I've never really thought of 'spiritual worship' as something I do with my body! It just sounds so ordinary..."*

5. What principle(s) informs the use of 'gifts'? What are gifts for? (see also Eph 4:12-13 and 1 Cor 12:4-6)

6. Are there any 'gift's on this list that you are unsure about? If so, see if your group can develop a short definition for each<sup>1</sup>.
  
7. Do you know what gifts you have? If unsure, how should a Christian find out what gifts they should seek to exercise in the body of Christ?

*"Jesus has a great project: to build his church. Gifts are like tools in the hands of a craftsman. Faith is the 'muscle' that uses the tools. If you find you have a hammer, then start looking for some nails."*

What do you think of the various questionnaires and personality tests designed to help people discern their own gifts?

What role ought the rest of the body of Christ have in directing an individual towards a particular area of ministry?

8. *"Spiritual Gifts are just natural abilities empowered by the Holy Spirit"*  
Discuss. (Leaders: this question is optional)
  
9. What opportunities are available at St Marks and St Davids to use your gifts/abilities for God by building his Church? How might you find out more?

Pray for one another, guided by Rom 12:1.

*Homework for next week:* There are many Christian 'causes' and organisations. Which ones are worth my attention and why?

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1. *This is not an exhaustive list of 'gifts'. Other lists can be found in Eph 4:1-13 and 1 Corinthians 12:7-11. There may be other 'gifts' (such as singing?) not on these lists, but which are also used for building the body of Christ. Paul's most expansive teaching on the nature and use of gifts is found in 1 Corinthians 12-14. See D.A. Carson, Showing the Spirit (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987).*