

**Big Idea:** Don't try to be someone else... Be you!

**Primary Scripture:** 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

**Supporting Scripture:** Psalm 139:1-4

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### **CAPTURE (Why should students pay attention to and care about your message?)**

- Picture this: You're auditioning for the school orchestra. You've practiced violin for months, you know your piece perfectly, and you're confident and ready to go.
- You walk into the audition room and panic. You see the other people auditioning, and you decide "*what this orchestra really needs is another oboe player.*"
- You grab an oboe... which you've **never** played before... and try to perform your violin piece on an instrument you don't even understand, let alone know how to play.
- How do you think that audition would go? Not so great, right?
- That's exactly what so many of us do every single day.
- God has wired us with specific gifts, personalities, and ways of seeing the world—like giving us a violin and teaching us how to play it beautifully.
- We compare ourselves to others and decide we should be playing oboe instead.

### **SCRIPTURE (What does God's Word say?)**

- One of the first stories in the Bible tells us about two brothers, Cain and Abel.
- They both wanted to honor God, so they each brought Him an offering.
- God accepted Abel's offering and not Cain's,
- Cain started comparing himself to his brother and eventually it spiraled so far that he attacked and killed his own brother!
- You'd think that after all the time since Cain and Abel we'd stop comparing ourselves to others and find healthier ways to deal when life doesn't go our way.

- But the truth is, comparison has continued to be a struggle for us, and it was especially difficult for the earliest followers of Jesus as they tried to figure out how to be the church.
- Things in the Corinthian church were messy.

***<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. (1 Corinthians 12:4-6 – NLT)***

- The Corinthian church needed to be reminded that they were all on the same team (*or in the same orchestra!*).
- The Corinthian church had started using the unique gifts that God had given to each of them as a way to make themselves superior to others.
- Thankfully, Paul stepped in to say, “Stop. You don’t need to compare. You don’t need to outdo each other. God made you different on purpose. It’s okay for everyone to use their gifts in different ways.”

***<sup>7</sup> A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. <sup>8</sup> To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. <sup>9</sup> The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. <sup>10</sup> He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. <sup>11</sup> It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have. (1 Corinthians 12:7-11 – NLT)***

- Paul knew this was where the Corinthian church would end up if they kept playing the *comparison game*.
- It’s where we usually end up, too.
- We decide we’d rather be wired like someone else instead of how God made us.
- God designed the church—and He designed you—very intentionally.
- The gifts He’s given you aren’t random, they’re not accidental, and they’re definitely not inferior to anyone else’s.

## **INSIGHTS (What might this Scripture mean?)**

### **1. God has wired us each differently... and that's a good thing.**

- Paul rattles off this list of gifts: wisdom, knowledge, faith, healing, miracles, prophecy, discernment, and even speaking in and interpreting unknown languages.
- Notice Paul doesn't rank them, say one is better, or say everyone should have the same gift.
- It's like God looked at the church and said, "You know what this needs? A bunch of ***different*** people who are good at a bunch of ***different*** things."
- If everyone in your friend group had the exact same personality, how boring would that be?
- You need the friend who makes everyone laugh, the friend who always knows what to say when someone's upset, the friend who can plan the best hangouts, and the friend who remembers everyone's birthday.
- When everyone brings something different to the table, the whole group is stronger.
- God didn't mess up because the church—and the world—needs exactly what you bring.

### **2. We don't get to pick how we're wired... and that's also a good thing.**

- Did you catch the very last verse of our passage?

***<sup>11</sup> It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have. (1 Corinthians 12:11 – NLT)***

- This isn't a menu where you get to order what you want. God chooses.
- Maybe you wish you were good at something that you're not. Maybe you look at someone else and think, "Why did they get that gift, but I didn't?"
- God knows you better than you know yourself.

***<sup>1</sup> O Lord, you have examined my heart and know everything about me.***

***<sup>2</sup> You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. <sup>3</sup> You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You***

***know everything I do. <sup>4</sup> You know what I am going to say even before I say it, Lord. (Psalm 139:1-4 – NLT)***

- God knows exactly what the world needs from you and what gifts will help you make the biggest difference.
- If we all got to pick our own gifts, what would happen if everyone picked the same one?
- We'd have a bunch of people teaching, but nobody to learn... or we'd have a bunch of people leading, but nobody to follow. It wouldn't be very effective at all.
- God knows that for His church to work the way He designed it, we need people with all kinds of different gifts.
- He's given you exactly the gifts He wants you to have because He has a specific plan for how He wants to use your life.
- What if you got excited about discovering the amazing things God wants to do through the gifts that He's already given you?

### **ACTION (How could we live this out?)**

#### **1. Take the Spiritual Gifts Quiz.**

- Sometimes we need a little help identifying our gifts.
- That's why we've created a ***Spiritual Gifts Quiz*** for you to take tonight.
- Grab your phone, scan the QR code that will come up on the screen, and answer 10 quick questions.
- At the end of the quiz, it'll give you a snapshot of what your spiritual gifts might be.
- This quiz is not going to tell you exactly what your calling is for the rest of your life.
- It's not going to limit what God can do through you.
- Think of it more like a compass—it's designed to point you in the right direction so you can start exploring.
- Take the quiz honestly. Don't answer based on what you think you *should* be good at, or what gifts you *wish* you had.
- Answer based on what's true about you—what you actually enjoy doing, what comes naturally to you, and what energizes you rather than drains you.

- Approach this with curiosity rather than anxiety. You're not trying to prove anything or live up to anyone else's expectations. You're simply trying to discover more about how God has already wired you.

## **2. Share your results with your small group.**

- Share your results with your small group.
- Everyone else in the group is going to have the opportunity to affirm what they see in you!
- Sometimes the people around us can see our gifts more clearly than we can see them ourselves.
- Today your small group is going to be that mirror, helping you see the ways God has uniquely wired you that you might have missed.
- Remember, this quiz is just a starting point, not the final word on how God has gifted you.
- If something doesn't seem to fit, talk about it. Ask your group what they see in you.
- We'll spend the next few minutes taking this quiz together before heading to our small groups.