



emPower Evening - “Gifts’r’Us – Gifts For Speaking”

The Aim of the Session

To build on the idea that God works through us when we don't realise it and in the same way as he is encouraging them, he speaks through us. God can do more through us if we are ready to let him.

- **Welcome**

Opera or Rock? Sinatra or Jethro Tull? Carpenters or Nickelback? Why?

- **Worship**

Use some music (which most of you might like!) to focus your thoughts on God and read Psalm 65:1-11. Worship God for his goodness.

- **Word**

Music is something which touches people at an incredibly deep level: it can make us laugh, it can make us cry, it can depress us or it can take us to the mountain top.

- ❖ Why is it that we all like different music?
- ❖ Is it possible to rationalise the matter?
- ❖ Is one style “better” than another?
- ❖ Why does worship involve music as a significant element?

Music is one way that we engage with our Soul or Spirit. It is like love in that we cannot fully rationalise it or understand why we like or dislike it – we just do. It is in this same place in our lives that we experience God – and where he speaks to us.

- ❖ What is your favourite topic of discussion?
- ❖ What don't you like to talk about? Why?
- ❖ Do you find it easy to talk about yourself?

Read Jeremiah 1:1-14

- How do you think Jeremiah might have heard God speaking to him?
- In what ways does speak to us? List them!
- Why does God begin with telling Jeremiah what God knows about him (v5a)?
- The fact that God has appointed Jeremiah (v5b) – does that mean Jeremiah has to do it?
- In what manner does Jeremiah respond (v6a) – how do you hear him saying it?
- Is his excuse (v6b) reasonable? Note the word reasonable!!
- Who else can you think of who has responded similarly to God's call (Exodus 4:10)?
- Which word is important in God's reply: “only” or “child”?
- How would Jesus have responded (Matthew 18:2-3)?
- What does God note is Jeremiah's problem (v8)?
- And what is God's solution (v7b)? Note the order in which these appear!
- What does God give Jeremiah in verses 9 and 10?
- What does Jeremiah then do (vv 11-14)?

God deals with Jeremiah, being aware of his fear and answering it.
God gives him authority to use the Gift he is giving him.
Jeremiah is then asked to use the Gift.

Gifts are tools not toys – they are given for a purpose.

The Gift of Tongues is quite a common Gift in the Church – one that God gives to some (but not all) Christians. There are some amazingly Gifted and spiritual people who have not been given the Gift and it should never be used (as it has sometimes been) used as a measure of someone's spirituality. In its simplest terms, the Gift of Tongues enables people to speak in either another human language (that they haven't learned) or in the language of God and the angels. It enables people to pray for others – about things which they do not need to know about, or as a means to speak directly to another person in their own language – or to speak to God himself. It has become divisive in some Churches because of misunderstanding and occasionally misuse. Many people in our Churches have this Gift and use it – and it is not something to be afraid of, but to be used properly and at the right time and in the right place. This is the issue Paul was dealing with ...

Read I Corinthians 14:1-12

- Which does Paul say is the important thing (v5)?
- Why (vv 2,3,4,6 etc !!!)?
- Where should our priority be (v12)?
- What does Paul desire (v5)?
- What does this say about what we see in Jeremiah?

Paul effectively says that we all have the capacity to speak God's words to each other. Some have a particular Gift (eg Jeremiah) and a long term "ministry" but everyone has the capacity to speak God's words (prophecy) to each other.

God gives all sorts of Gifts to His Church (I Corinthians 12, Romans 12) for the purpose of building it up. James 3:5-8, speaks of the power of the human tongue and its ability to build up or destroy. Read these verses and spend a short time in silence pondering them.

• **Works**

In this study, we have looked at the human capacity for speech (remember our pre-Ester study on James 3?) and the way that God can take our words and use them for his purposes – think back to last week and the way God takes our attempts at encouragement and uses them, often without us realizing. We pointed out how much more he could do, if only we were to actively ask him to use us! In the same way, God wants to use us to speak to those around us – to encourage, to challenge, to support, to love – and he can do it through us simply opening our mouth. He does it through our natural talents, he does it subtly without us realizing it – what could he do if we were to be willing to let him do it his way?

Next session ... Week 4 – Week Beginning 22nd May

Week 4 - Beginning 22nd May

"Gifts'r'Us - Gifts For Everyone"