

FORWARD IN FAITH
“Acknowledging the Gifts of God’s People”
Philippians 1:4-6

Partnership Ministry (Stewardship of Gifts)
“People of Faith Work Together”

God has designed His church and His mission with a simple concept in mind: a working partnership. We work together because we have a big job to do, and we need each other in order to succeed. Gifts from God are invaluable to the Kingdom.

I. WE WORK TOGETHER BECAUSE GOD PLACED US TOGETHER

1. God is glorified when we work together (1 Corinthians 3:7-9).
2. Working together requires an attitude of joy (Philippians 4:4).
3. God has placed us together so that we can succeed in accomplishing His mission (Philippians 1:25).

II. WE WORK TOGETHER BECAUSE WE ACCOMPLISH MORE

1. Every child of God is unique (1 Peter 2:9).
2. God uses our unique character to benefit His Kingdom (Ephesians 4:11-12).

III. WE WORK TOGETHER BECAUSE THE JOB IS TOO BIG TO DO ALONE

1. The greatest mission we have in the world is the salvation of souls (John 3:17).
2. The greatest need in the Church is for workers (Matthew 9:38).

“Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much.”
—Helen Keller



ACKNOWLEDGING THE GIFTS OF GOD'S PEOPLE

In Branson, Missouri, Ripley's Believe It or Not Museum pictures a plain bar of iron worth \$5. If you transformed the bar of iron into horseshoes it would be worth \$50. If you processed it into needles, it would be worth \$5,000. But if you used the block of iron to create balance springs for fine Swiss watches, it would be valued at \$500,000! The principle to be learned is that the value of the raw material is not nearly as important as how you use it.

God gives spiritual gifts to each believer, but as with iron, we must develop them for maximum productivity. The potential lies in the development. God provides the raw material, but we must develop and use them for His Kingdom.

Regular exercise builds our muscles. The more we use them, the stronger they become. So it is with spiritual gifts. God gives them so we might reach the lost and become stronger in our faith. Never forget—inactivity hinders, exercise strengthens.

No one person has all of God's spiritual gifts, but no one is without at least one. We know this because God says so: "We have different gifts, according to the grace given us" (Romans 12:6). In His wisdom, God gives us the gift (or gifts) that best fit our personalities. Rather than questioning God's wisdom in the giving of gifts, we should seek to discover our gifts and exercise them for His glory.

The beauty of the Church is in the blending together of individual gifts for team ministry. Like colors in a work of art, our gifts are intended to complement the gifts of others.

Without every gift working together, the final product is less than it could have been. God needs everyone to use his or her gift and to do it in a spirit of unity. We will give an account to God concerning how we used our gifts.

God gives us numerous opportunities to exercise our spiritual gifts. While we often think of the Church as the prime place for this, we must remember our gifts are to be used in the regular routine of daily living. The challenge is to be sensitive to the leadership of the Holy Spirit so we don't miss opportunities to exercise our gifts.

Let's identify our spiritual gifts and move *Forward in Faith!*