

## I Love My Church

(Serving)

Let me pose this question to you this morning. What do superheroes and Christmas presents have to do with church? I will attempt to answer this question as we continue in the series "I love my church."

When you were growing up what was your favorite superhero? Let the people answer.

I looked up the definition of "Superhero" in Webster's Dictionary. It says, "A fictional hero having extraordinary or superman powers; an exceptionally skillful or successful person."

I would like to add a little to that definition. Superhero's are superhero's because they utilize their abilities within a specific context to help in a specific way. For example, who is the superhero of Metropolis? Superman. Who is the superhero of Gotham? Batman.

I think part of loving your church is being the hero God has made you to be. Let's take a look at those superpowers that I was talking about earlier.

The superpowers I was referring to is called spiritual gifts. 1 Corinthians 12: 4-7 Look at Verse 6. God gives each one of his followers at least one, and sometimes more than one, spiritual gift. A spiritual gift is a Holy Spirit empowered ability that is given to serve others. It is given to you to use in a specific context to help in a specific way.

These spiritual gifts could be exhortation, leadership, giving, mercy, service, teaching, administration, discernment, faith, helps, knowledge, and wisdom.

There are two really important things to remember about spiritual gifts:

1. God is the one who picked yours. The Word says it's God who empowers us. Romans 12:6 "We have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us." God knew what gifts were best suited for you. So don't waste your time being jealous of someone else's gift when you should be spending time developing your own.

2. It is a Spirit empowered gift. What does that mean? As much as we would like to believe that our love is without limits, it would be foolish to think that. We need a love that has originated from Christ that has been received in our lives so that we can operate in that same love supernaturally.

You have been given an amazing ability to be used by God! Some of you may be wondering, what is my gift? Here are three ways you can discover your gifting:

1. Experiment in serving. Get involved in the church somewhere. Try out a ministry for a little while. You may ask, what if I fail? Then you fail, it doesn't mean you aren't gifted. It just means you need to try again!
2. Ask others. Ask someone that you trust that knows you and will speak the truth to you. Ask that person, what do you see in me that I don't see? Or what spiritual gifts do you see at work in me? Sometimes it's hard to see past our own opinion of ourselves to get a true read on our gifting's.
3. Check your energy level. If working in the toddler room wears you out, then that may not be your thing. Maybe your gift is helps or being behind the scenes. Then by all means do your best. I asked Ross to come by and move a flat screen television in the kid's room to a different spot on the wall and he came by and did that for me. That is called serving and doing your part.

Use that spiritual gift that God gave you for the benefit of others. Know that you are not alone in this. You have a team called the church.

How many have seen the movie the Avengers? The cool thing about them is it wasn't one person. The Avengers is a team made up of many parts. Look at  
Romans 12: 3-8

You and I need each other! Remember 1 Corinthians 12:7 says that our gifts were given for "the common good." We are many parts functioning together to form the Body of Christ. God made the DNA of this church to be supernaturally infused with all of these gifts. Think what would happen if your legs decided on their own that they weren't going to cooperate with the rest of the body today. Your body

would be dysfunctional. That is what's happening with the church. Many people have decided that they don't want to use their spiritual gifts or they are too afraid. It's important that we all function together to move forward and make Christ known in this community!!

We have a community and city in need. This church needs you, this neighborhood needs you. This city needs you. Not because they need you personally but because they need the God that operates in you!!

Can you imagine with me for a second what this church, this city, this community would look like if all of us were operating in our gifting?

Remember what I opened up with? What do superheroes and Christmas presents have to do with the Church? Let's look at the Christmas present side of it.

Do you remember the excitement on Christmas morning when you would get up and seeing all of the presents under the tree? Think about how crazy it would be if all you did with your presents was pick them up, shake them and then put them back under the tree and go back to bed never having opened one of them.

When you're given a gift you open it!! You don't leave it sitting there. If you are a follower of Christ and you are not utilizing the spiritual gift that God has given you for the betterment of the church and community, then you are like the kid who never opened his gift on Christmas morning!!!

Here is my final question for you this morning: Why did God give you to our church? Most of the time we ask what we can get out of the church. Wrong question!! Why did God give this community the gift of you?

Don't be an unopened gift! Discover the gift or gifts that God has empowered you with and make an impact.