

Week 7 | The Jesus Personality Test

Key Scriptures: Luke 12:48, Matthew 25:14-30, Matthew 25:31-46

Objectives:

- Understand the gifts you have been given
- Understand that Jesus expects you to use what you've been given
- Understand how you can use the gifts you have been given

Scripture References:

Luke 12:48 (NLT) | 48 *But someone who does not know, and then does something wrong, will be punished only lightly. When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required.*

Matthew 25:14-30 (NLT) | 14 *"Again, the Kingdom of Heaven can be illustrated by the story of a man going on a long trip. He called together his servants and entrusted his money to them while he was gone. 15 He gave five bags of silver to one, two bags of silver to another, and one bag of silver to the last--dividing it in proportion to their abilities. He then left on his trip. 16 "The servant who received the five bags of silver began to invest the money and earned five more. 17 The servant with two bags of silver also went to work and earned two more. 18 But the servant who received the one bag of silver dug a hole in the ground and hid the master's money. 19 "After a long time their master returned from his trip and called them to give an account of how they had used his money. 20 The servant to whom he had entrusted the five bags of silver came forward with five more and said, 'Master, you gave me five bags of silver to invest, and I have earned five more.' 21 "The master was full of praise. 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!' 22 "The servant who had received the two bags of silver came forward and said, 'Master, you gave me two bags of silver to invest, and I have earned two more.' 23 "The master said, 'Well done, my good and faithful servant. You have been faithful in handling this small amount, so now I will give you many more responsibilities. Let's celebrate together!' 24 "Then the servant with the one bag of silver came and said, 'Master, I knew you were a harsh man, harvesting crops you didn't plant and gathering crops you didn't cultivate. 25 I was afraid I would lose your money, so I hid it in the earth. Look, here is your money back.' 26 "But the master replied, 'You wicked and lazy servant! If you knew I harvested crops I didn't plant and gathered crops I didn't cultivate, 27 why didn't you deposit my money in the bank? At least I could have gotten some interest on it.' 28 "Then he ordered, 'Take the money from this servant, and give it to the one with the ten bags of silver. 29 To those who use well what they are given, even more will be given, and they will have an abundance. But from those who do nothing, even what little they have will be taken away. 30 Now throw this useless servant into outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'*

Matthew 25:31-46 (NLT) | 31 *"But when the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. 32 All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. 33 He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. 34 "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. 35 For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. 36 I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.' 37 "Then these righteous ones will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? 38 Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? 39 When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 "And the King will say, 'I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were doing it to me!' 41 "Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. 42 For I was hungry, and you didn't feed me. I was thirsty, and you didn't give me a drink. 43 I was a stranger, and you didn't invite me into your home. I was naked, and you didn't give me clothing. I was sick and in prison, and you didn't visit me.' 44 "Then they will reply, 'Lord, when did we ever see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and not help you?' 45 "And he will answer, 'I tell you the truth, when you refused to help the least of these my brothers and sisters, you were refusing to help me.' 46 "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life."*

Last Week | Jesus is a Beaver. Beavers may not be the most glamorous or fun personalities, but they have characteristics that are vital to success. A healthy beaver will listen to the voices around them and be patient even though they may already have a clear picture of what needs to be done. An unhealthy beaver will isolate themselves and get it done “the right way” without the help of others. Jesus knew exactly what needed to be done, but he always used others to help him accomplish his goals.

This Week | The Jesus Personality Test

What if Jesus gave a personality test? What kind of questions would he ask?

We’ve had a lot of fun with the animal personality test. Hopefully, you’ve learned a little more about yourself and people who are different than you (everybody). Hopefully you understand that when you connect with others, combining your strengths and weaknesses, the sum of the parts is greater than the whole (Aristotle). That statement doesn’t make sense mathematically, but what it’s really saying is that we all have things to contribute as individuals, but there is something additional produced when we come together. Aristotle was just reinforcing the principles Jesus himself set into motion during His teachings.

So what GIFTS have you been given?

There are two groups of people - those who understand what their gifts are and are using them and those who don’t understand their gifts and feel that they have none.

Let’s talk about the ones who don’t understand their gifts and feel that they have none (hang on gifted ones, we’ll come back to you).

Why do you think some people don’t feel like they have any gifts?

1. **Where are you looking?** It’s possible that we aren’t looking in the right place. Maybe we’re looking at the gifts of others and comparing ourselves. Maybe we are trying to replicate what we admire in others in ourselves. When we fall short, then we throw our hands up in frustration and declare, “We can’t do anything.” This is why Jesus told us not to compare ourselves to others.

2 Corinthians 10:12 (NLT) | 12 Oh, don't worry; we wouldn't dare say that we are as wonderful as these other men who tell you how important they are! But they are only comparing themselves with each other, using themselves as the standard of measurement. How ignorant!

2. **What is a gift?** It’s possible that we’ve given the word *gift* a limited definition. What does Jesus call a gift? He has given us the gift of the Holy Ghost (*Acts 2:38*). That gift produces 9 different fruits: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (*Galatians 5:22-23*). There are also gifts of the Spirit (*1 Corinthians 12*). Too often we look at specific talents such as singing, preaching, a winning personality, or wealth as gifts. These are not so much gifts as tools that allow their gifts to be used. This is why they can easily be used in a way that defeats the purpose in which they were meant to be used. One of the greatest gifts we’ve been given is God’s grace. It saves us, it frees us, it was freely given even though we didn’t deserve it or earn it. To whom much is given, much is required.

So you have gifts. But what do we do with them?

After Paul spends a whole chapter talking about spiritual gifts and how the body of Christ works together, he sums it up like this:

1 Corinthians 12:29-31 (NLT) | 29 Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? 30 Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not! 31 So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts. But now let me show you a way of life that is best of all.

He goes on to describe how love is the most important thing of all (1 Corinthians 13). It doesn't diminish what he said about gifts and unity in chapter 12, but it gives those gifts *purpose*. Jesus gifts you generously and freely, but he expects you to do something with what you've been given.

Luke 12:48 (NLT) | 48 But someone who does not know, and then does something wrong, will be punished only lightly. When someone has been given much, much will be required in return; and when someone has been entrusted with much, even more will be required.

How much God's gift of grace means to you will determine how much you feel is required of you.

Read: Matthew 25:14-30.

In this parable, we can look at "talents" as life resources like time, money, abilities, or authority. Each servant was given an amount that suited him best. Our pride/insecurity or greed may drive us to envy the talents of others, but we have to trust that God has given us exactly what's best for us. We may not be able to handle what someone else has. More importantly, we may not be able to accomplish the specific purpose we were given the talent to accomplish in the first place.

The master judged each of the servants *individually*. If they were judged as a group, they did very well: 8 talents given and 15 talents returned. Yet each one was judged on their individual faithfulness and effort. When Jesus returns he will not ask you what your church did. Notice that when the 3 servants were judged, the first two received exactly the same award. It's easy to look at what they were given and what they accomplished with it and decide that the first servant deserved a greater reward, but that's not the way God works. If the third servant would've done something with his talent, he would've received a reward equal to the first. The third servant was cursed because he did *nothing* with what he was given (well, he *did* bury it, but that wasn't good). The master even said that if he'd given his talent to the bank it would've earned interest. This could mean joining your talent (as small as it may be) to what others are doing so that we increase the "interest" in what they're doing (i.e. financing a mission work, opening your home to someone who needs a place to stay). *The main point of this parable is clear: our readiness for Jesus' return is determined by our stewardship of the resources that He has given us. Some think that readiness for Jesus' return is a very spiritual and abstract thing. It really isn't – it is a matter of being about our business for the Lord. In light of this parable, we must ask ourselves: What have we done with our knowledge? Our time? Our money? Our abilities? The sins of omission [what we don't do] may ultimately be more dangerous than the sins of commission [what we do]. (Guzik)*

Read: Matthew 25:31-46.

Jesus describes His personality test here. He has two animals - sheep and goats. Sheep were known to love deeply with no regard to who, what, when, or how. Goats did not. If Jesus came up with a personality test, it would ask all about how we love sacrificially.

We must first understand God's love for us. That will help us begin to understand how great His gift of grace is to us. Once we begin to grasp that, it will become vital for us to share that same love. Once we love God, we will love people. Once we love people, we will naturally begin using whatever gifts we can come across to serve them in love. It will be a sacrifice that is freely given (although not always easily). In the parable of the sheep and goats, Jesus didn't judge them on sins they committed, but for what they *didn't* do. While He does care about the sins we commit (mostly because it causes us to separate ourselves from him in shame), He also cares very deeply about what we are NOT doing.

So, what are we doing? What feels uncomfortable inside you as you think about going all in with Jesus?

Until Next Week | Become truly thankful for God's love and grace. Allow that thankfulness to fuel your desire to love as you have been loved. Look for ways to use your talents (life resources). Explore the gifts you've been given (spiritual gifts, fruit of the spirit, etc). Find ways to use them for the Kingdom. Begin to think of a group project to "impact the kingdom".