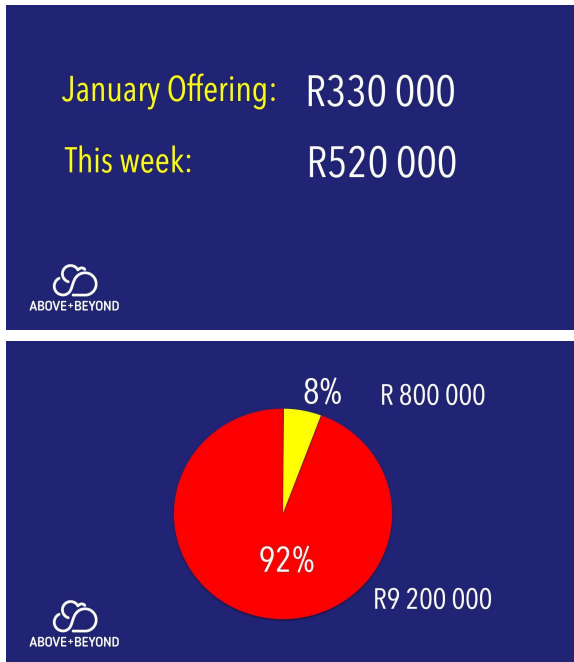


The Gifts of Service & Mercy

Date: 28 Feb
Series: GIFTED
Week: 3
Text: Romans 12:6-8

Doing this once a month – note)
Above & Beyond (before video) offering:



If you are joining for the first time!

Gifted series:

- 6 x Sunday messages
- 6 x Midweek Videos (streamed or on our website)
- 6 week devotional book - tomorrow is Week 3 Day 1

Place on P8 to write notes for today's message. P9 – fill in words for the mid-week video.

Coffee at Stretta – Angela asking for a book.

Last week – Gift of Prophecy. Today and next week we are covering 2 gifts per week to make the course fit into 6 weeks – gift of service & mercy.

⁶ We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift ... is serving, then serve ... if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.
Romans 12:6-8

Service Practical (i3)

Mercy Responders (i3)

Out of interest – who of you have these in your Top 3? And if not – where do they appear on your list of 7?

No matter where they are – we are trying to understand them and strengthen them!

1. What are these gifts?

Service: Getting involved in practical tasks that need doing

When people operate in this gift they will see gaps that need filling and step up to the plate to use the resources available (often their own energy and time) to fill the gaps and help accomplish the desired goal.

There are so many examples of this that I can think of, but one that stands out to me is our annual Flourish Women's Conference. A huge number of people are involved serving before the conference with all the planning and preparation. And then a few years ago we asked the men of the church to come and serve during the conference. To see up to 250 men behind the scenes, helping making the plan become a reality has been a truly inspiring thing! It is pretty back-breaking work – carrying tables, food, chairs, labels, boxes etc and being on their feet most of the time – but what was astonishing to me was how much fun and joy there was amongst the men doing the work! And then I would overhear men at the end saying to one of the organisers – please sign me up for next year – that was phenomenal.

People that are strong in this gift will be able to look back and see that the times that they were most fulfilled was when they were getting stuck in to help, often with others, achieving a goal that some might have said was unattainable! They often don't even need to be asked to volunteer – when they see a need, they find joy in helping meet it.

Mercy: Showing compassion, empathy and kindness to others, particularly those in need.

The i3 assessment uses the alternative word "Responder" for this gift. And that is what people who use this gift well do – they respond to others.

They look out for different ways to connect with others and make a difference in their world. They are often focused on the individual – perhaps the most people-centered of all of these 7 gifts. But just before you mistakenly think that this gift is all about being soft and slushy and trampled all over – you should know that people who have this as one of their strongest gifts are often gifted by God to defend the cause of the defenceless and stand up for those who cannot stand up for themselves! They regularly want to be a voice for the marginalized and have a strong sense of justice.

Jax has both of these in her Top 3 – many of the things I appreciate most about her link back to how she outworks these gifts in a healthy way.

2. Jesus is the Supreme Example of Service & Mercy

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” Mark 10:45

Matthew 20:30-34

³⁰ *Two blind men were sitting by the roadside, and when they heard that Jesus was going by, they shouted, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!”*

³¹ *The crowd rebuked them and told them to be quiet, but they shouted all the louder, “Lord, Son of David, have mercy on us!”*

³² Jesus stopped and called them. “What do you want me to do for you?” he asked.

³³ “Lord,” they answered, “we want our sight.”

³⁴ *Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes. Immediately they received their sight and followed him.*

If you have put your faith in Christ – you are a Jesus follower. And if we are following we need to do what He does – He serves and He shows mercy.

It doesn’t matter if these is No 1 or No 7 on your list – we need to serve others and have compassion on others. Compassion starts by listening rather than dispensing advice!!

Through this COVID pandemic, and in particular the second wave we have just had, two ladies in our church – without any knowledge of each other – feel nudged by God to do something to bless all the nursing staff of the hospital here in Hillcrest. First one phones a lady there to organize, second one phones – gets told about the first one! They are good friends and decide to partner. Nation Changers gets to hear about this, and offers to get involved as well. Today a team is handing out gift packs to all 302 nursing staff at the hospital. Here are some pics!

Another team handed out gifts to the staff at Crompton Hospital last week and had an incredible time of prayer there!

3. These gifts are dynamite ... handle with care!

Interesting story in the Gospels of Jesus sending 2 of His disciples to do something for Him (Matt 21). He tells them to go into the next village, and that they would find a donkey tied up there – they were to untie the donkey and bring it to him.

If you were one of those 2 what would you be thinking?! They had walked everywhere over their years with Jesus (or been on a boat). Why would He want a

donkey now all of a sudden? And donkeys are renowned for being stubborn. They need food, water and they produce dung. Why on earth are we doing this?

Jesus ends up riding on the donkey into Jerusalem. Turns out that He was crucified shortly after that.

- He was fulfilling a prophecy (Zech 9:9) that said that the king would come in gentle and riding on a donkey.
- But He was making a strong political statement – I am not a horse-riding conqueror.

Their act of service became a way of making Jesus great – that's dynamite!

Every act of service and every act of mercy is an opportunity for Jesus to be made great. Let them be like the humble donkey that the King of glory can use to show His presence!

...handle with care!

Mountain – Sunny side and shadow side

Both of these gifts can become huge drivers into frantic activity

If we are not careful – can end up like little hamsters on the hamster wheel!

1 Peter 4:11

If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ.

There is a right and a wrong way to serve. Can end up feeling burnt through their acts of service or mercy. Feeling fatigued or hurt. Make a decision – I am never doing that again!

Call to people