

DEEP SIX STUDY

September 14th, 2025

Engage – “The 3rd Chair”

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS *(You can view the full message online at capecodchurch.com)*

Opening: Last week we introduced “3 chairs” – the Chair of Discovery, the Chair of Belonging, and the Chair of Serving. This week we focus on the 3rd chair – the chair we move to when we decide to use our own gifts and talents to partner with God in what he’s doing at Cape Cod Church. Sliding into that chair is a decision that will change your life, and the lives of those you serve – because the 3rd chair is a chair of *blessing*.

1. You Will Find Your People (1 Corinthians 12:22-26)

- As Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12 (continuing his metaphor of the church being like a human body), the church is made up of many parts (members) specifically designed to serve one another. Sometimes one “part” might need the support and assistance of others, but the “body” is beautifully designed so that, when functioning properly, “all the members care for each other.”
- When we decide to serve in our church, we meet and get to know people in a unique way – “strong” people, struggling people, people who have it all together, people who are just trying to figure things out. As we serve together on a team, we find community in our shared purpose; we find “our people.”

2. You Will Find Purpose for Your Gifts and Talents (1 Corinthians 12:27-30)

- Paul continues his “body” metaphor with a description of how God has “appointed various spiritual gifts” in his church. He points out that God has given each member of the church body gifts to be used for the benefit of his Kingdom, and it’s our calling to use them that way.
- For clarification, “gifts” and “talents” within the church body are different things; a spiritual gift is something God gives a believer at their salvation that is specifically meant for building the Kingdom. A talent is a natural skill/ability that *can* be used for the Kingdom, but also for other (worldly) purposes.
- The point: God has equipped each of us with gifts and/or talents that we’re called to use for the good of “the body” – and when we choose to use them that way, we find a unique sense of purpose and a unique sense of satisfaction that we’re “doing what we were made for.”

3. You Will Grow Your Greatest Gift: Love (1 Corinthians 12:31; 13:1,13)

- Paul wraps up chapter 12 (his long metaphor of the body) – and his discussion of how we’re called to use our gifts and talents in serving others – with a challenge and a cliff-hanger. He challenges us to “desire the most helpful gifts” so that we can serve others well – but then teases the cliff-hanger: “let me show you a way of life that is best of all.”
- Turning the page to chapter 13, Paul famously describes the “greatest gift” we can have and use as members of Jesus’ Church: love. While gifts and talents are useful and are certainly meant to be used for the benefit of God’s Kingdom, love is the true catalyst for the good that God wants to do – both in our own lives as well as in his Church.
- Only love has the ability to transform us – making us patient, kind, humble, forgiving and caring – the kind of people we want to be, the kind of people who gladly serve others, the kind of people who God will use to build his Kingdom. And *that* is the true blessing of sitting in “the 3rd chair.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

These passages may provide additional insights related to the subject of this week's message. All verses are NLT unless otherwise noted.

Matthew 25:14-30; John 13:34-35; Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 13:4-7; Ephesians 4:11-16; 2:8-10

Video of the Week: [The Last Will Be First](#) by the Bible Project

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. In your experience, how does serving alongside other people (either inside or outside the church) lead to a sense of community? Do you think that's always the case? Why or why not?
2. The message pointed out the distinction between "gifts" and "talents" – gifts being spiritual abilities that are specifically given for the benefit of the church, while talents are skills/abilities that we might use for the Kingdom or for "worldly" purposes. Why do you think that distinction matters?
3. In your experience, how does using our God-given gifts and talents for the benefit of his Kingdom bless *us*?
4. Conversely, how might we waste the gifts and/or talents God has given us?
5. Read 1 Corinthians 12:31 again. Paul seems to be saying that using our gifts and talents for the Kingdom by serving others is a great thing, but... there's a better "way." Do you think he's implying that just serving others isn't enough? Why or why not?
6. As the message said, "only love has the ability to transform us." In your experience, how does that process work – how does "love" actually make us into different (i.e., better) people?