Serving With Your Gifts: Acts 2:42–47

HOUSE GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE — IN (LOOKING BACK) · UP (LOOKING UP) · OUT (LOOKING FORWARD)

Before You Meet: Serving is not a way to earn a place; it is the fruit of a heart already won by Christ. We are saved first, then we belong, then we serve out of gratitude. The real question is not "Am I contributing enough?" but "Do I trust that I am already accepted?"
UP (Gospel) is one third of the night. Give real time to IN and OUT too.

IN — Looking Back *(Community)*

Care · Worship · Celebrate Faithfulness · Motivation & Encouragement

Care. Check in — highs, lows, and needs for prayer or practical help.

Worship. Praise together: a song, silence, or naming one thing you're thankful for.

Celebrate Faithfulness. Follow up on last week's step and celebrate it out loud.

Motivation & Encouragement. Name a gift you see in someone and encourage them by name.

UP — Looking Up *(Gospel — Sermon Discussion Guide)*

Reword or skip questions as needed. Pray first and aim for genuine conversation.

Key Takeaways

1. **Acts 2 does not happen on its own.** The early church's picture exists because people actively served one another with their gifts.
2. **Serving has an order.** Saved first, then belong, then serve out of gratitude. Flip it and the thinking turns dangerous.
3. **Every believer has a gift.** God determines it, and the body works best when each person operates in their lane.
4. **Gifts need community.** Every gift in Acts 2 is practiced on someone else, for the common good (1 Cor. 12:7).
5. **Gifts are not hobbies.** A gift is something you are both drawn to and effective at.
6. **Two motivations.** Jesus served us first, and we aim to build up the faith of those around us.
7. **Grace is the foundation.** Our standing never rests on our contribution. Ask daily: "How can I strengthen someone else's faith today?"

Opening (Choose One)

- Think of a Thanksgiving meal or similar gathering. Were you the one who showed up and enjoyed it, or the one who made it happen? What does that reveal about you?
- When someone asks what you do at church, what is your honest first answer?

Read Acts 2:42–47. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.

Digging In

1. **Order.** In what ways might you subtly slip into thinking your belonging or standing with God depends on how much you contribute? What does it feel like when that creeps in?
2. **Community.** Gifts only make sense in community. How does your current involvement affect your ability to use your gifts? What does "common good" stir up in you?
3. **Awareness.** In the body-carrying-groceries picture, which part are you right now? Is something you serve in more a hobby than a gift, and where might your real gifting lie?
4. **Excuses.** Which is most honestly yours: "I'm too busy," "I shouldn't have to," or "Maybe someone else will"? When does it show up?
5. **Next step.** Which feels more accessible for finding your gifts, a spiritual gifts assessment or asking someone who knows you well? What has kept you from it?

Going Deeper

6. Jesus washed his disciples' feet, serving outside any "gifting" because love called for it. When have you served outside your comfort zone or gifting? What happened?
7. Read Romans 1:11–12. Have you felt the two-way dynamic where serving someone strengthened your own faith? Does saying out loud that you hope to strengthen someone's faith feel natural or awkward?

Closing Reflection

8. If you took "How can I strengthen someone else's faith before today is done?" seriously tomorrow morning, what one thing might God be nudging you toward? Instead of resolving to serve more, what would it look like to rest in being saved and belonging first?

OUT — Looking Forward *(Mission)*

Preparing for the Mission · Going on Mission · Praying for the Mission

Preparing for the Mission

- **Discover your gifts.** Take the spiritual gifts assessment on the church app (weekly resource tab) and email your results to Pastor John.
- **Examine your heart.** Journal on where you tie serving to belonging or approval. Bring one honest observation to share.

Going on Mission

- **Ask someone.** Ask a person who knows you well what gifts they see in you, and whether anything you do seems a poor fit.
- **Ask the daily question.** Write "How do I strengthen someone else's faith today?" where you'll see it each morning, and log your answer.
- **Serve together.** Sign up as a group for an upcoming opportunity, such as the city serve day.

Praying for the Mission

Have each person name one gift they see in someone else in the room and why. Then pray together: thank God for the gift in each person; confess "too busy," "I shouldn't have to," and "maybe someone else will"; and ask that your group would look more like Acts 2:42–47, not because people showed up expecting it, but because people chose to serve.

Closing

Jesus did not serve us to make us worthy; he served us when we had nothing to contribute. Pray for hearts that serve from gratitude, not to earn a place.

Group Notes & Prayer Requests