

# Another Day

Biblical reflections for busy teachers



## My church wants too much

***“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service but the same Lord.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-5***

It was a ‘team building’ teacher training day that all the staff were dreading. Even the head was unsure why the ‘expert’ had been booked to come and lead ‘an exciting day of self-discovery and team enrichment’, as it said in the advertising blurb. Some teachers had dreamed of a day paintballing, whilst for others, ice-breakers and team games were the stuff of nightmares that caused them to consider calling in sick!

As it happened, the focus was on ‘knowing your strengths’. Those quick on the uptake began to fantasise about refusing to do tasks ‘outside their comfort zone’. There were some who felt affirmed in their calling to teach and their particular subject interests. But as always in a diverse group of people, inevitably one or two began to question their role in life.

And then came the altogether liberating bombshell! The facilitator flashed up onto the screen the quotation above from 1 Corinthians 12. The Christians smiled and felt a trifle embarrassed. The atheists frowned and began to rehearse arguments in their mind. The majority were bemused.

“Play to your strengths and do your best with the rest,” intoned the speaker. “After all, as the Apostle Paul writes to the Corinthian Christians, everyone has gifts, talents, acts of service to offer. For the Christian, this is intrinsically bound up in their relationship with God. For all of us, it is a reminder of what it means to be human and offer the best of who you are as a highly gifted and skilled person for the team, the children and therefore, this school.”

For one participant this was even more meaningful. This was not just about their part in the school but in their church community as well. Already overstretched as a teacher, the demands of the church to be involved in a whole variety of activities were increasingly proving too much. Lesson preparation and marking were suffering and patience running thin through tiredness. Clearly it was time to take stock and consider what ‘playing to one’s strengths’ means in church life as well as at school.

Not only is this vital for the good of both church and school but, as Paul in the context of 1 Corinthians 12 teaches, Christians bringing this kind of order to their lives best model what it means to say, *“Jesus is Lord, by the Holy Spirit”* (v.3).

*Lord Jesus, help me to be wise in the use of the gifts you have given me at home, school and in the Church. Be Lord of all of my life. Amen.*