

## 5-24-26 Consumer - What A Contributor Looks Like

### Overview

This sermon uses everyday technical descriptions (paperclip, zipper, aglet) to show how we often struggle to understand important concepts without clear context or visuals—just as Jesus used parables. It challenges believers to become “contributors” in God’s Kingdom *outside* the four walls of the church by addressing three major barriers: sin, ignorance, and fear. The core message is that contributing is the natural byproduct of obedience, proximity to God, learning, and stepping out in faith.

### Main Points

- **Sin Issues:** Sin separates us from God (Isaiah 59:2), making contribution impossible because God is the source of everything good. Solution: confess, repent, and stay close to God as a “conduit,” not an empty cup. A contributor lives a lifestyle of obedience and displays the fruit of the Spirit.
- **Ignorance Issues:** Ignorance (not knowing) destroys through fear or inaction (Hosea 4:6). A contributor is a proactive learner—first about the things of God, then about the needs of people in their sphere of influence (Paul’s example).
- **Fear Issues:** Fear paralyzes us into weakness and inaction (2 Timothy 1:7). We reach a “threshold of scary” where we must step into the unknown. A contributor lets faith lead, chooses obedience over comfort, and trusts God is waiting on the other side.
- **Conclusion:** A contributor looks like *you*—willing to deal with sin, keep learning, and say “yes” to whatever, wherever, and whenever God asks.

### Reflection Questions

1. Which of the three barriers (sin, ignorance, fear) most often keeps me from contributing right now?
2. Am I living as a “conduit” or an “empty cup”? How close am I to God’s voice?
3. What specific area of ignorance (about God or the needs around me) do I need to address?
4. What is my current “threshold of scary,” and what would saying “yes” to God look like there?
5. When have I seen God use ordinary people (like Peter or Paul) despite their flaws?

### Application

- **This week:** Identify one barrier and take one concrete step—confess/repent of a sin, read/study one passage or listen to a message about God’s character, or ask someone in your sphere of influence how you can serve them.
- Daily practice: Put on the “oxygen mask” first—spend time with God before trying to pour out.
- Prayer: Use the sermon’s closing prayer to commit: “Jesus forgive me... Holy Spirit teach me... Help me say yes.”
- Long-term: Become a proactive learner and look for everyday opportunities to contribute in your workplace, neighborhood, or family.

### Group Discussion Prompts

1. Share a time when a story, illustration, or visual helped you finally “get” a spiritual truth. How does this relate to Jesus’ parables?
2. Which barrier (sin, ignorance, or fear) do you think most holds back people in our church or community from contributing? Why?

3. How can we practically help each other become “learners” about both God *and* the needs around us?
4. What does your personal “threshold of scary” look like right now, and how can the group pray for and encourage you to step across it?
5. Brainstorm one practical way our group (or each person) can contribute *outside* the church walls this month.