

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

APRIL 30TH - MAY 1ST, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

THE SPIRIT (1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-3)

THE PROBLEM

Paul has already talked about the problem with communion in worship services. Now he focuses on the misuse of the spiritual gifts, or gifts of the Holy Spirit, in church.

- Paul begins by educating the church on the work of the Spirit because **giftings without knowledge, maturity, and discipline can be extremely destructive.**

EMOTIONS CAN EASILY TAKE OVER

The new Christians in Corinth had come out of Roman paganism that played heavily on idols and emotions and even seemed similar to some miraculous displays of God.

- Emotions are good, but they must be balanced with truth. **Christians must learn to check their feelings based on the truth of the Word or we will get confused.**

THE SPIRIT WILL NOT CONTRADICT THE WORD

V3 is basically saying that the true spiritual gifting and experiences will honor God and align with His Word. Paul is also alluding to the fact that all miraculous signs are to point to the gospel.

- **Any supposedly supernatural situation must be able to be held into account by the Word. If it cannot, there's a problem.**

THE PURPOSE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The Spirit is 1/3 of the Trinity of God. The purpose of us possessing the Spirit is **to build up** (1 Corinthians 14:26), **for the common good** (1 Corinthians 12:7), **to counsel** us (John 14:25-26), and **to strengthen and guide** us (1 Corinthians 1:7).

- **The Spirit is God with us all the time. He produces fruit in our lives and manifests gifts meant to guide and bless.**

THE GIFTS (1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-11)

IT ALL COMES FROM ONE SOURCE

Paul says that different gifts, ministries, and activities come from the same source and that God administers these gifts as He sees fit.

- The gifts and ministries of the Spirit mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12-14, Ephesians 4, and Romans 12 are connected in how they work and what they accomplish. **The point is to build us up and illuminate the gospel to others.**

WITH POWER COMES RESPONSIBILITY

Joel 2 tells of a time when the Spirit of God would be available for all people. This came to fruition in Acts 2.

- The church in Corinth was experiencing the Holy Spirit and seeing Him manifest in their lives, but **without proper doctrine they had begun to grow arrogant and chaotic** with their gifts, especially "tongues."

THE GIFTS MENTIONED IN CHAPTER 12

- **Wisdom:** the gift to make choices and give leadership that is according to God's will.
- **Knowledge:** the gift to have comprehensive understanding of spiritual issues or circumstances.
- **Faith:** the gift to trust God and inspire others to trust Him regardless of the situation.
- **Healing:** to use God's healing power to cure a person who is ill, hurt, or suffering.
- **Miracles:** to display signs and miracles that give credibility to God and His Word.
- **Prophecy:** to declare a message from God.
- **Discernment:** the gift to be able to recognize if something is from God or in accordance with righteousness.
- **Tongues:** the supernatural ability to speak in a foreign or "angelic" tongue.
- **Interpretation of Tongues:** the gift to miraculously translate a foreign or "angelic" tongue.
- Tongues and interpretation have 3 different variations or uses mentioned in Acts 2, 1 Corinthians 13, and 1 Corinthians 14. These were also the gifts most often abused by the church in Corinth and many churches today.

OTHER KINDS OF GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

Gifts of Administration and Help (Romans 12, Ephesians 4): gifts of serving, teaching, exhortation, generosity, leading, mercy, apostleship (church planting), evangelism, and pastoring.

- **All good gifts come from God (James 1:17).**
- **Though all good gifts come from God, that doesn't mean that one is always saved or working in alignment with the Spirit.**

"ONE AND THE SAME SPIRIT IS ACTIVE"

Not only do all of these gifts come from the same source, they may also be used at different times and in different ways throughout our Christian walk.

- It isn't so much about pinpointing our single gift as it is **trusting God and being open to when and how He chooses to work through us in various ways.**

THERE SHOULD BE NO FEAR IN THIS

If we are knowledgeable and biblical about the gifts, we will operate appropriately, and it will be a blessing to us, others, and God. The gifts work on **relational, spiritual, and practical** levels.

- **We have no reason to fear the Spirit, we just need to be theologically stable when given such a powerful opportunity.**

UNIFIED (1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-31)

ONE BODY

Paul makes it clear that regardless of color, race, gender, social or economic status, and even our spiritual giftings and talents, we're one body meant to work in unison because we've been "given one Spirit to drink."

- **We must work to be unified because the church is the visible image of an invisible God on earth until Christ returns.**

"IF THE WHOLE BODY WERE AN EYE..."

The analogy about every body part's importance is profound. Though people may have different gifts or churches may be different sizes, we're all serving the same King for the same goal.

- **Diversity not only honors God, it is necessary to advance His Kingdom. We must stop comparing ourselves to others and live in our God-given potential.**

THE "WEAKER ARE INDISPENSABLE"

In church, we often honor parts of the "body" that are more attractive while putting down "weaker" parts that are essential to the health of the church and our faith.

- Paul is simply reminding us **to honor all people, especially those that serve with little recognition. We should have equal concern for everyone serving Jesus.**

THERE ARE SOME VERY IMPORTANT ROLES

Paul mentions "first apostles, second prophets, third teachers" then 5 groups that display these roles in an order to show their importance.

- The original apostles were the 12 (minus Judas) and Paul, who knew Jesus and were sent by Him, prophets shared special revelations of God, and teachers were called to teach the Scripture.

SOME RHETORICAL QUESTIONS

Paul then asks a series of rhetorical questions about the gifts with an implied "no" to each. His point was to further teach that God distributes the gifts as He chooses.

- **Christians are designed to be diverse in our roles and spiritual gifts in order to reach more people and build one complete body, the church.**

THE ROOT IS A LOVE OF GOD AND OTHERS

Some believe the gifts are listed in order of importance, but we don't know for sure. We do know that not all gifts are equal (14:1) and we are to pursue the ones that edify others first.

- **We will also learn next week that it must all be grounded in a love of God and other people. The "greater" gift we should pursue is biblical love.**

PURSUING LOVE

- No amount of giftings, talents, or knowledge can replace the necessity for love.
- The root of the pursuit of God must be grounded in love and a desire to know Him.
- If we truly love God, then we must also grow to love those around us. **True, biblical, and unconditional love is only possible if we are full of God's Spirit.**

BEING FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT

- At salvation we're "sealed by the Spirit," but we must also seek to be filled with His Spirit. **In order to be filled with His Spirit we must make room by removing sin from our lives and living in obedience.**
- God gives us His Spirit **for the common good and to guide, equip, and counsel** us. We need to walk intimately with God!

BEING OPEN TO GOD LEADING US

- He gives us various gifts of the Spirit to **edify the church body, build our personal relationship** with Him, and to support and **spread the gospel.**
- **Are we open and vulnerable to being used by God however He sees fit? Are we seeking God in prayer and study? Are we living exclusively in the natural?**