

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 1ST, 2022 // BOOK OF 1 CORINTHIANS

HOLY SPIRIT (1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-3) WE CAN IDENTIFY WHAT IS OF GOD

Because of their pagan backgrounds, the Corinthians were easily led astray by "spiritual manifestations."

- Paul wanted to teach them how to identify those who operated under the influence of the Holy Spirit and those who did not. **Signs and miracles are not enough evidence to assume that they are of God** (2 Thessalonians 2:9).

A DIFFERENT EXPERIENCE

Paul pulled from the Corinthian's past experiences in a pagan religion to be able to distinguish the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

- He pointed out that their idols never spoke to them, they were mute, but **God speaks to them through His Spirit**. They were once led astray by their idols but are now being **directed by the Holy Spirit**.

HOLY SPIRIT

Jesus said, "When the Counselor (Holy Spirit) comes, the one I will send to you from the Father – the spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father – **he will testify about me**" (John 15:26).

- **The ministry of the Holy Spirit does not promote Himself or any man, but only to glory and represent Jesus.**

JUDGE THE FRUIT

If a religious experience does not honor Christ as Lord, then it is not from the Spirit.

- The believer is always in control of himself when the Holy Spirit is at work. Any "spiritual manifestation" that robs a person of self-control is not of God. **We must look for evidence of the Spirit's work, and the fruit of the Spirit is self-control** (Galatians 5:22-23).

TAKE AN OBJECTIVE LOOK

Just like the Corinthians, we can allow our past teaching and experiences to dictate our understanding of the Holy Spirit and the supernatural gifts.

- The challenge we are faced with is: are we "open-handed" with our belief on these things enough to see what Scripture says about them?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-11)

"THE SAME SPIRIT, LORD, AND GOD"

Paul will list nine spiritual gifts here in this section and mentions two more in verse 28.

- He points out that the gifts, ministries, and activities are all different, yet there is only one who gives them as He sees fit and works through the recipient of the gifting. Gifts are given according to His will and not earned or taught through human effort.

"MANIFESTATION OF THE SPIRIT"

The Holy Spirit is present in and among believers. Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would be with us forever (John 14:16), and the Spirit's presence will manifest and become more apparent at times.

- As believers, we have been sealed by the Holy Spirit until the day of redemption and must seek to be continually filled by the Spirit.

SPIRITUAL GIFTS DEFINED

- The gift of **Wisdom** - the gift to make choices and give leadership that is according to God's will.
- The gift of **Knowledge** - the gift to have a comprehensive understanding of a spiritual issue or circumstance.
- The gift of **Faith** - the gift to trust God and inspire others to trust God, no matter the conditions.
- The gift of **Healing** - the wondrous gift to use God's healing power to cure a person who is ill, wounded, or suffering.
- The gift of **Miracles** - the gift to display signs and miracles that give credibility to God's Word and the gospel message.
- The gift of **Prophecy** - the gift to declare a message from God.
- The gift of **Discerning Spirits** - the gift to recognize whether something is truly from God and in accordance with righteousness.
- The gift of **Tongues** - the gift to communicate in a foreign language that you do not have experience with, in order to converse with those who speak that language.
- The gift of **Interpreting Tongues** - the gift to interpret the speech/writings of a different language and translate it back to others in your own language.
- The gift of **Administration** - the gift to keep things orderly and in agreement with God's principles.
- The gift of **Helping** - the gift of a desire and capacity to always help others, to do whatever it takes to get a task achieved.

UNITY IN DIVERSITY (1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-31)

WE ARE NO LONGER DIVIDED

Paul says, "we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body and given one Spirit to drink."

- In context, he is using baptism and communion, which was an assumed practice of Christians, to symbolize our union with one another in the Spirit and in the body of Christ.

This union is what breaks any dividing lines which once separated us!

DIVERSE YET UNIFIED

Paul uses the illustration of the human body to draw a comparison to the function of a community of Christians.

- The individual members are diverse. They look different, function different, and accomplish different purposes, yet **each member is part of the body and shares a common goal**.

WE ARE ALL NECESSARY

One member should not view themselves as being any lesser of importance because their gifting may place them in a more "behind-the-scenes" role. Likewise, a more predominant role should not look down on other members.

- Diversity is a good thing. **Without each member doing its part, the body cannot function properly.**

NOT EVERYONE HAS THE SAME GIFT

If the body consisted of the same parts, then the body would lose the function of the missing parts.

- This further communicates the necessity of diversity in the body. **Different parts are necessary to accomplish what only a certain part was designed to do.**

GOD DISTRIBUTES AS HE PLEASES

Each gifting has been carefully arranged by God. Since everything has been distributed just as He pleased," we should not be prideful or ashamed of our gifting.

- Since every part has a purpose, regardless of each person's gifting, **no one can look down at another member of the body and say that there is no need for them.**

LESS HONORABLE PARTS

Culturally there were certain parts of the body that were considered dishonorable if uncovered, so there was special care given to ensure that those parts were covered.

- Paul says that God has taken great care to honor all members of the body, and **we should show the same kind of concern for one another so that no one feels dishonored.**

RHETORICAL QUESTIONING

Paul rhetorically asks if every member of the body has the same gift and same calling. It was understood that the answer is no, not everyone will receive the same gift of the Spirit.

- **The belief or practice of everyone displaying the same gifting is simply not biblical.**

THERE IS A BETTER WAY

While we should desire to utilize the gifts that the Holy Spirit has given us, Paul indicates there is a better way than just seeking gifts.

- **Are our motives in seeking the gifts selfish, or do we seek to utilize our gifts to better love God and to love those around us?**

UNITY IN DIVERSITY

- The individual parts of the body work for the good of the whole body and not to only serve themselves.
- **Have we used what was meant to unify to cause division?**
- **Are we seeking wisdom about our giftings?**
- **Are we using our giftings to love God and to love people?**