

1 CORINTHIANS 12 – SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Q: Why do we have gifts at all?

A: Purposes of spiritual gifts:

- Doxological (to glorify God: John 2:11; 9:3; 11:4; 11:40; and Matt. 15:29-31)
- To fulfill the great commission Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8
 - This has both evangelical and discipleship elements
 - Discipleship elements: Pastoral (as an expression of compassion and love and care for the sheep: Matt. 14:14; Mark 1:40-41); Edifying (to build up and strengthen believers: 1 Cor. 12:7 and the “common good”; 1 Cor. 14:3-5, 26).
- CCC Vision: We desire to be a loving, intentional, and discipleship driven community that joyfully serves one another in order to know Christ and make Christ known.
- John 14:12; Joel 2:28-29

12:1-3

- “The phrase used here could refer generically to “spiritual things” or to “spiritual people.” Context tells us he’s talking about things.
- You can’t have a gift empowered by God, and use it to curse him.

12:4-11 – Various gifts for the common good.

- Gifts: charisma; a gift of grace, a gracious and free gift
- V4-6 – The Trinity at work. V4 Lord, v5 Spirit, v6 God. We have the entirety of the Godhead working with and through us for his glory and for our good.
 - Gracious/free gifts, ministry/service, activities/effects.
- V7 - “The possession of specific gifts is not so important as the way in which the gifts are exercised.” Gifts, like muscles, need to be exercised and used regularly. Eph. 2:10
- Everyone is in full-time ministry. Remember who his audience is: aristocrats, former or current slaves, laborers, etc. Statistically, ministry happens outside the walls of the church far more often than any other time. We need people who are exercising their gifts in the professional and blue collar world. 1 Peter 4:10; Eph. 4:11-16

12:12-26 – One body, many members. A call to unity and service.

- Have you ever gotten a tooth ache? Have you ever broken a bone? Have you ever stubbed your toe or gotten something stuck in your eye?
- Imagine if one the following items were missing a piece or two: amusement park rides, cars, buildings, bridges, furniture. Romans 12:1-8
- Don’t be a spiritual leech. Avoid the 80/20 phenomenon (20/80 for giving). Let’s reverse it! Come to serve. How can you make this Sunday the best Sunday for someone else? Matthew 25:14-30; John 15:8

12:27-31 – All do not have all gifts.

- V27 – Restating the main point. God is all about unity.
- V28 – Offices and ministries. The language of “First, second, and third” indicate that these are more leadership oriented roles and gifts.
- V31, “But earnestly desire the higher/greater gifts.” What he’s saying is, “seek the gifts which benefit the people the most for the glory of God.”
- As one commentator put it, “The point of these gifts is to unify believers around a common purpose, each with individual parts to play. The church offices are for the purpose of leading the community in spreading the gospel and growing in faith.”

How to discover and use your gifts

- Pray then Ask others.
- Start serving somewhere/anywhere. Stick it out, do it with excellence – then ask for feedback. (Leaders – take a chance on someone)
- “Be faithful, bold and humble. Faithfully serve in the small things and allow God to work in and through your life at His pace. Boldly use your spiritual gifts whenever needed, and humbly seek after His kingdom and righteousness.”
- Take a spiritual gifts test: spiritualgiftstest.com
- Remember, it’s all for God. Colossians 3:16-17, 23-24
- God equips the called. Be obedient to that call. Train one another. 2 Tim 2:2