



GIFTS TO SERVE

(1 CORINTHIANS 12)



BIG IDEA – The Holy Spirit gives us gifts so that we can use them to serve the body of Christ

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-27

OBSERVE

- 1) What does verse 7 tell us about why spiritual gifts are given?
For the common good of the church.
- 2) What do verses 25-26 tell us should be the results of using these gifts?
We should be unified. There is to be no division amongst Christians.

INTERPRET

- 3) What is the significance of having **one** Holy Spirit, **one** Lord and **one** God? (verses 4-6)
No gift is more important or significant than any other. All gifts are used for the same ultimate outcome.
- 4) Explain the illustration in verses 14-17.
Each part of the body needs to perform its own function in order for the body to operate as one. The whole body cannot be a single part or it wouldn't function.
 - a. What is this an illustration for? (verses 18-20)
Members of the church with one gift should not complain that they don't have some other gift, as all gifts are equally needed for a church to function properly. God has organised the 'parts of the body' in the way in which he wants them (us).
- 5) Explain the illustration in verses 21-24.
The various organs of our body rely on each other to function – they cannot operate independently. Even the least attractive or more humble parts require attention in some way. We look after all our parts so that our body can function.
 - a. What is this an illustration for? (verses 25-26)
We require all gifts within the church, and can't go off using our gift independent of others. The more inconspicuous members of our church are still to be looked after and encouraged. We are to operate in unity – responding to one another.

APPLY

6) Who or what is the body of Christ?

We are all a part of it (as Christians)! This means that we all have gifts, and need to ensure that we are using them for the common good of the church.

7) In light of this passage, and thinking about your own gifts – what is your part in the body of Christ? How can you be actively using your gift(s) at church, FNL, bible study, school etc?

Make sure they draw out some good practical ways in which they can be using their gifts – not only areas in which they already are, but also looking to what else they could / should be doing.

HOW DO I KNOW WHAT MY GIFT IS?

Purpose: The primary aim of spiritual gifts is so that the church is able to continue the ministry of Jesus. Our goal is to do God's work, God's way, with God's results. The fruit of the Spirit is the character of Jesus being formed within us. The gifts of the Spirit are the ministry of Jesus being accomplished through us. As these gifts are exercised by each person within their local church, that church is being built up, matured, and thus becomes stronger in character and maturity.

How do I discover my gift(s)?

- **Acceptance** – Accept and believe that God has given you the gift of the Holy Spirit, and that you have been called to serve Him through the powerful gifts that the Holy Spirit may activate in your life.
- **Prayer** – Pray that God will specifically reveal these gift(s) to you. Also invite other people to pray about this for you as well.
- **Awareness** – Know that ignorance is a liability (1 Cor 12:1) – therefore read and study relevant parts of the bible.
- **Submission** – Surrender to the sovereignty of the Holy Spirit by not imposing conditions and boundaries about what is / is not acceptable to you...be open!
- **Passion** – Your passion for certain areas of ministry will help guide you in discovering your gift.
- **Formation** – What experiences have been shaping your life so far? (Natural abilities, personality types etc)
- **Affirmation** – What do others see in me? What am I often asked to do? What am I never asked to do?
- **Practice** – Be willing to experiment – to take a risk and have a go. Your gift will be confirmed in the doing / action – not just in the theory!

The spiritual gifts that we are talking about do not come fully matured in our lives, and so our first attempts will often be clumsy and awkward – but be patient and persevering (like lots of other stuff to do with our faith – keep trying to understand and grow!)