

# NOW ABOUT SPIRITUAL GIFTS...

1 Corinthians 12:1-31

## THE HOLY SPIRIT DISTRIBUTES THE DIVERSE SPIRITUAL GIFTS AS HE DETERMINES FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF THE CHURCH

- **God has uniquely designed you and gifted you for the purposes He created you for.**
- *“Now there are different gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 There are different ministries, but the same Lord. 6 And there are different activities, but the same God works all of them in each person. 7 A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good: 8 to one is given a message of wisdom through the Spirit, to another, a message of knowledge by the same Spirit, 9 to another, faith by the same Spirit, to another, gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another, the performing of miracles, to another, prophecy, to another, distinguishing between spirits, to another, different kinds of tongues, to another, interpretation of tongues. 11 One and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each person as He wills.” (1 Corinthians 12:4-11)*
- **The purpose of spiritual gifts is for the “common good” of the Church as a whole.**
- **The necessity of diversity in spiritual gifts in the Church is what strengthens its effectiveness.**
- **Because God has predetermined how He will gift us, we do not decide what gifts we will have.**

## UNITY IN DIVERSITY IS AT THE HEART OF GOD AND HIS EXPECTATION FOR THE CHURCH

- **Too many people are in love with the gifts when they should be focusing their love on the Giver of gifts.**
- *“For just as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body—so also is Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and we were all given one Spirit to drink. 14 Indeed, the body is not one part but many. 15 If the foot should say, ‘Because I’m not a hand, I don’t belong to the body,’ it is not for that reason any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, ‘Because I’m not an eye, I don’t belong to the body,’ it is not for that reason any less a part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But as it is, God has arranged each one of the parts in the body just as He wanted. 19 And if they were all the same part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body. 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’ Or again, the head can’t say to the feet, ‘I don’t need you!’ 22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that are weaker are indispensable. 23 And those parts of the body that we consider less honorable, we clothe these with greater honor, and our unrespectable parts are treated with greater respect, 24 which our respectable parts do not need.*

*Instead, God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the less honorable, 25 so that there would be no division in the body, but that the members would have the same concern for each other. 26 So if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it” (1 Corinthians 12:12-26)*

- **If our actions cause confusion, or diminish others, we are not being led by the Spirit.**
- **A body without certain parts has limitations; in the same way a church without diversity in spiritual gifts will never reach its maximum potential.**

## NO ONE PERSON HAS ALL THE SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND NO ONE GIFT IS FOR ALL CHRISTIANS

- *“Now you are the body of Christ, and individual members of it. 28 And God has appointed these in the church: first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, next miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, leading, various kinds of tongues. 29 Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all do miracles? 30 Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? 31 But desire the greater gifts. And I will show you an even better way.” (1 Corinthians 12:27-31)*
- **Spiritual gifts are not a sign of spiritual superiority, but a Holy Spirit endowed gift, or gifts, of His choosing to build up the Church and advance the mission.**
- **Loving God involves loving His Church, and we love the Church by identifying and using our God-given gifts for His glory, His mission, and service to one another.**

## CONNECT GROUP DISCUSSION

### Observation:

- In vs 4-11, Who distributes spiritual gifts, and for what purpose?
- What repeated phrase in vs 4–6 highlights the source of the gifts?
- In verses 12–26, what comparison does Paul use to describe the church, and what point is he making?
- What do verses 27–31 make clear about whether every believer has the same gifts?

### Understanding

- Why did Paul begin this section by saying he doesn’t want believers to be “unaware” about spiritual gifts?
- What challenges arise in a church that includes different ages, cultures, backgrounds, and spiritual maturity levels?
- How does Paul’s “body” illustration help us value differences instead of competing with one another?
- What might be preventing you from fully using your gifts in the church (fear, uncertainty, comparison, busyness)?
- In what ways can you actively contribute to building up the “body” instead of just attending or observing?