

From Sinners to Saints

1 Corinthians 12:15-31

- We left off with Paul saying that the gifts of the Spirit are distributed not according to the will of man but as the Spirit of God wills, and its not to give anyone some sense of superiority regarding their gifts, but to help unify the body through the administration of the gifts.
- No doubt upon reading about the gifts the question will be asked “are some of these gifts of The Holy Spirit no longer given to the church today”? As this issue has greatly divided the body of Christ both theologically and spiritually, for you who believe all the gifts are for today you will be called charismatics or Pentecostals, and not in a good way but for derogatory purposes, others will think those who believe some of the gifts are no longer given are simply unspiritual and dead in their walk with God.
- I believe first we must understand the issue: Virtually no Christian believes all the gifts have ceased in the Church today, as all Christians believe the gifts of teaching and administration are given and needed desperately, it is those gifts that have a miraculous nature which are in dispute, and therefore have stopped they say. I want to bring up a point that for me helps settle this seemingly very unsettling issue.
- We spoke about the gifts being divided into three categories > speaking, serving, and sign, or communicative, administrative, miraculous, then scholars say the sign or miraculous has died out with the Apostles or when the Canon of scripture was finished. Yet it’s important to note that nowhere in scripture are the gifts categorized or given divisions, man did that, and since man did that, he now believes he can say when one of the categories or divisions is unnecessary while the others remain.
- But what have we read since we started this chapter, that the gifts are distributed not by man but by The Holy Spirit, man has nothing to do with who gets what gift and how many we get, that is totally up to God. So how can man say when something he had nothing to do with no longer exists, or can only be used in a certain way and at certain times? Yes, the categories we mention do help us understand them, but that doesn’t give me the right to define when they can operate and when they cannot.

- **V15-20** Paul elaborates on his previous statement of the need for unity in the body of Christ through diversity of the distribution of the gifts of The Spirit. He uses our bodies to prove his point showing that it would be absurd for the foot to feel unimportant because it can't do the work of a hand, after all it can stand, walk, run, climb, and kick, all that benefit the whole of the body. The ear saying because it is not the eye its not as important, we take our ears for granted unless we can't hear.
- This proves diversity doesn't disqualify one from being useful within the body, as we see three distinct, separate body parts with different functions on the body all being used as one functioning unit. If any one part declares themselves independent from the body, then the entire unit suffers, hindering the greater purpose as a whole.
- **V21-24** he even uses the less glamorous parts of the body that we might deem less important until its hurt, then we realize how important it is. Take the thumb it seems to only get in the way when typing or writing until you need to grip or grab something try doing it without your thumb, or don't hurt it, the pain and discomfort, but also the annoyance of trying to do things without it, like your big toe try standing without it.
- Every part of our bodies have been designed by God for a purpose, and Paul illustrates for us that's exactly how you and me and each of our gifts are essential for the proper functioning of body of Christ > **Eph 4:11-16**- gifts help people fulfill positions within the body that edify and build up character in people so that they can exhibit love to those in need and expose truth from error to those in danger.
- **V25-26** all these things are needed and essential if we are to be unified and built up to fulfil the purposes that God has for the body of Christ. Unfortunately because many ignore these truths and would rather infight and argue which produces strife and divisions, thus the schisms, rather than come and reason it out together.
- **V27-31** in reading this list we see a couple of gifts not mentioned yet > **Helps**- a person who gives assistance or support where needed, I would be in the serving gifts category. **Administration**- someone who doesn't mind taking the lead and bringing order to a situation or problem, they'll also be adapt at raising others up to do the same, this is also considered a serving gift.

- When we go down this list we see diversity, need, and most importantly the Author, in reading this list do we see anywhere that some are more important than the other, or less needed?
- All of what we just read should never be used to divide but always to build up and unify for as **V26** says if one member suffers we all suffer and if one member is honored all of us should rejoice for we are one body, serving one Lord, for one purpose, to glorify Him Amen!