

The Familiar Stranger: Empowered by the Spirit March 15, 2026

⁴ There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. ⁵ There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. ⁶ God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us.

⁷ A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other. ⁸ To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. ⁹ The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. ¹⁰ He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. ¹¹ It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.

— 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Discussion/Journal Questions

Have you ever had an encounter with a celebrity? Who was it and where did you meet them?

Have two or three people read 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 out loud slowly. After some time of reflection, ask each other what words, phrases, or ideas stand out to everyone. What questions come to mind as you meditate on this scripture?

How would you summarize what this passage says about spiritual gifts?

Do you believe that the Holy Spirit has empowered you? Why or why not?

Read 1 Corinthians 1:26-29. Why does God prefer ordinary people? Is anyone too ordinary for God to use? Why or why not?

How are you currently using your gifts to serve in God's Kingdom (inside or outside the church)?

If you are not currently using your gifts, what do you need to do to start? How can your group help you get started?

What can your group do to serve together?

Close out your group time with listening prayer.

- Start by meditating on something you are grateful to God for.
- Ask God to reveal His will regarding His gifts and His calling for you to serve.
- Pay attention to any thoughts, feelings, images, or words of scripture that come to mind.
- Share with the group anything that you believe to be from God.
- Together weigh everything according to the three tests:
 - The Test of Scripture – Does it align with what God has already said?
 - The Test of Community – Do others agree that it is from God?
 - The Test of Jesus – Does it align with what we know of the character of Jesus?