



Sermon Series: Confusion in Corinth, Part 1

Sermon Title: No Non-Essential Part

Speaker/ Date: Armin Sommer, February 7, 2021

Paul labored in the city of Corinth for 18 months to share the gospel and plant a church there. The city was an important commercial and sports crossroad. The Corinthian church was a network of house gatherings, and the church was wracked by division.

1 Corinthians 12

Chapter 12 speaks of the church as a body.

Big Idea: Every part of the body is essential.

The Roman Empire expected its citizens to declare “Caesar is Lord.” meaning “Caesar is God.” But many Christians refused and would go to their deaths declaring, “Jesus [not Caesar] is GOD.” **1 Corinthians 12:1–3**

Paul then describes the Body of Christ, and offers four encouragements.

Encouragement #1. You are gifted

1 Corinthians 12:4–6, The word for gifts is means “grace gift,” a God-empowered ability to build up Christ’s Church.

1 Corinthians 12:8–11 - What are the gifts he lists here?

Messages of wisdom and knowledge (8). These are gifts of supernatural insight for specific people or situations.

Faith (9). The ability to trust God for things that may seem impossible to others.

Gifts of Healing (9). Not necessarily the power to heal indiscriminately; rather, the instances of healing themselves.

Miraculous Powers (10). The ability to perform a wondrous sign by God’s power.

Prophecy (10). The declaration of a message from the Lord.

Distinguishing between spirits. The ability to discern if someone speaking by God’s power or a counterfeit power.

Speaking in Tongues. The ability to speak or pray in other languages. Known or unknown.

Important fact: It is the HS, not the recipient, who determines who gets what gift.

Encouragement #2. You have an important role

1 Corinthians 12:12–14 - Jews and Gentiles (Greco-Romans) led completely separate lives, and they despised each other, yet they were one body, and were not to disregard or avoid one another.

1 Corinthians 12:15–20 - Don't waste your time lamenting the gift(s) you do not have. Your gift-giver is God. A balanced and healthy body requires a variety of gifts.

Encouragement #3. Honor, but don't envy other gifts

1 Corinthians 12:21–26 - Value is not a function of visibility. The visible and dramatic gifts get attention, but the unseen parts are equally important. The “weaker” body parts may be the eyes. The “less honorable” parts may refer to unseen internal organs like heart and lungs - without them, we die. The “unpresentable” parts may be our “private parts (23b) that we clothe in public.

Your gift often corresponds with God-given areas of interest.

Encouragement #4. Seek Your “Sweet Spot,” Not the Spotlight

1 Corinthians 12:27–30 - Each question here in the original language is intended to prompt an answer of, “*No, of course not.*”

Some of the gifts were not included in the earlier list. Like the apostolic gift. There is no one alive today who is an apostle in the same sense as the original “Twelve”. So, if different from “the Twelve,” what kind of apostles were they? They were gospel missionaries and delegates to meetings. The word “apostle” simply means “sent one”, not someone who was “apostolic” in their authority. For example...

Philippians 2:25 refers to Epaphroditus a “messenger” of the church, but the word in the Greek New Testament is ἀπόστολος, or apostle.

Romans 16:7 speaks of **Andronicus and Junia** (a woman), referring to them as apostles.

1 Corinthians 12:31a Paul is saying, seek and cultivate the gift that build up others instead of yourself.

Discussion Questions:

- What about the sermon stuck with you this week? What part challenged your thinking?
- Do you think the Holy Spirit bestows our gifts haphazardly or strategically? How does this impact how a Christian views his or her gift?
- Can a person's spiritual gifts change?
- How would you encourage a Christian who is not satisfied with his or her spiritual gift?
- Have you ever personally witnessed the gift of healing? Explain
- What spiritual gift of gift do you have?

BIBLE VERSES

1 Corinthians 12:1–3 Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:4–6 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

1 Corinthians 12:8–11 To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the

work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

1 Corinthians 12:12–14 Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

1 Corinthians 12:15–20 Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

1 Corinthians 12:21–26 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

1 Corinthians 12:27–30 Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

1 Corinthians 12:31a Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you the most excellent way.