

## **God's Growth Plan - 1 Corinthians 12-13 4-23-17**

Did you know that if you are a follower of Jesus, then you have the Holy Spirit dwelling inside of you and He has blessed you with spiritual gifts? It's true! You didn't do anything to deserve it, just like the two of you who got the \$10! You just got a gift. Do you know what your spiritual gift is? You need to know! The Lord wants you to use the gifts He's given you to reach the lost and build up the church.

You know, there's a lot of thoughts out there on who is the Holy Spirit...like He is...a force with a dark side and a light side, He's pure energy, or He's an Asian woman...no. He's God!

I first met the Holy Spirit when I surrendered my life to Jesus Christ on May 10<sup>th</sup>, 1980, and He came and took up residence inside me and started the process of making me more like Jesus...He's still got a long way to go on me.

### **I. Who is the Holy Spirit?**

He is the Third Person of the Trinity. Coequal with the Father and the Son. He is not an impersonal force or energy or an Asian woman. God has revealed Himself as One God in Three Persons – God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. Not Three gods, One God in Three Persons. The Holy Spirit indwells every follower of Jesus at the moment of their salvation. Friday night 67 of us joined 50,000 plus other believers from all over the world in the Secret Church Simulcast with David Platt...and

a cool thought is that the same Spirit that dwells in me, is in believers all over the world simultaneously...and it's not even hard for Him! So I'd like to take you back into 1 Corinthians where we've been learning to grow together and look at chapters 12-13.

**1 Corinthians 12-13 Listen close to this!**

## **II. So Why is Paul addressing Spiritual gifts?**

1 Corinthians 12 begins with Paul pointing out that they needed to understand how the Holy Spirit gives gifts to us. You see a lot of these people once served idols...a lot of self-effort and futile striving to please unpleasable gods. They were obviously bringing their old ways into the church and Paul was saying, "Guys, that's not you anymore" That's not how the church rolls! You've been delivered to Spirit given, Spirit empowered, Spirit dependent ministry that you grow in with other believers. It's not you doing stuff on your own and God blessing your effort and passion and devotion. You have been delivered from that! You have been brought into a family and gifted by the Holy Spirit to function in and through this family! And yes...every church family is dysfunctional in one way or another! Including us!

### III. What are the gifts He gives?

a. **Spiritual Gift - Charismata** – a gracious gift given freely and generously (Did you know we can be in fellowship with other believers who do not practice the spiritual gifts the same way we do? And this without judgment on each other?! There are denominations who don't practice some of the gifts and some denominations that practice all of them. Its excellent to have strong convictions alongside of strong grace and discernment) That is where love comes in...more about that later!

b. **A Quick Listing of Spiritual Gifts (from here and from a few other places in the N.T.).**

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|---|--------------------------|
| 1. Apostleship  | 1 Cor. 12:28; Eph. 4:11; |
| 2. Prophecy   | 1 Cor. 12:10; Rom. 12:6  |
| 3. Miracles   | 1 Cor. 12:28             |
| 4. Healing  | 1 Cor. 12:9, 28, 30      |
| 5. <b>Tongues (Rick will address this next week!)</b> | 1 Cor. 12:10             |
| 6. Interpretation of tongues                          | 1 Cor. 12:10             |

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 7. Knowledge                     | 1 Cor. 12:8             |
| 8. Wisdom                        | 1 Cor. 12:8             |
| 9. Discerning of spirits         | 1 Cor. 12:10            |
| 10. Giving                       | Rom. 12:8               |
| 11. Ministering                  | 1 Cor. 12:28; Rom. 12:7 |
| 12. Exhortation                  | Rom. 12:8               |
| 13. Showing of mercy             | Rom. 12:8               |
| 14. Ruling, or<br>administration | Rom. 12:8               |
| 15. Faith                        | Rom. 12:3               |
| 16. Teaching                     | Rom. 12:7               |

**c. A Comic Conversation of Body Parts. 1 Corinthians 12:14-24 (Read it).** When you were saved, the Lord gave you a place in the church...you were made a family member. On top of that the Holy Spirit gave you spiritual gifts with which to serve others.

No one is unimportant. You will not meet an unimportant nonvaluable part of the body of Christ! If you know any unimportant nonvaluable people, chances are, that you...might have some humility issues! You aren't meant to grow alone! We need each other! No exceptions. **Look at Verse 22** the word "necessary" – it means indispensable...intimate connection, you gotta have it...like your liver! You need your liver! We need you!!!

Liver of Colonial Hills we need you! Spleen we need you!  
Kidneys rise up! Ear stop talking to the eye like that!

Do you know what spiritual gift(s) the Holy Spirit has given you? What if you started asking Him to reveal those to you so you can function in the body as the Lord intends? There are a ton of spiritual gift inventories out there, but I wouldn't go there first...some are geared to Baptists, Charismatics, Methodists...you name it. I would suggest first reading and studying the Bible fervently and seeking the Lord in prayer before you do any inventories. Who knows, He might do something crazy like just showing you what it is!

Another good way to find your spiritual gift is to ask Him to help you recognize the passion He's been forming in you to move toward something that needs to be done, and then go do it!!! Which corner do you need to grab and help carry? Grab it and let's go!

In this last group that just joined our church was a man named Houston...he showed up at Rebound and just started helping!!!

#### **IV. What is the purpose of His gifts? 1 Corinthians 12:7 (read it)**

a. The Common Good...to profit all – guess what? Your spiritual gifts are not about you, they are about the rest of us too! When the Holy Spirit saved you He gave you gifts! Your Spiritual birthday presents! But they are not for you to keep! They are to give away, just as freely as they were given to you! For the benefit of all!

I've tried to get several young parents to try something really crazy when their kids are little...an experiment - like on their 1<sup>st</sup> birthday give them a gift to give away. Yes, give them one they can keep, but give them something else to give away...start training them to function as a disciple who lives like that!

When someone in the body is actually practicing their spiritual gift in love, then the body benefits...like my friend **Mark Bixler** who serves alongside me in student ministry for many years now, and **David Brumley**, and **Steve Lee** and **James Carson** and **Brent Lightsey**, and other guys, and **a host of godly ladies** who help me tremendously! Your teenagers are blessed to have these walking alongside you and them.

**Brother Thomas**...quietly ministering to those whom we never see for the most part. Encouraging me and others, And the joy of the Lord is on that man so strongly! And **the other Prayer Warriors in this body gifted in multiple ways!!! THANK YOU!!!!** There's a bunch I didn't name, but your gifts are so needed appreciated!

Maybe you've been hurt and are on the sidelines, maybe by someone in church...I remember when I was a lot younger I had a really bad church experience in a small church and so I just hid out for nearly two years in a big Baptist church in Fort Worth Texas, hiding my spiritual gifts and basically just blending in and being miserable...I had to let the Lord heal my heart and send me back into the fray!

Maybe that's you this morning...you came in this big ol church building trying to be invisible, but the Lord sent me to remind you, He loves you and would love for you to rejoin Him in what He is doing in and around you. Would you consider letting Him start to heal you and giving your joy back. We need you!

a. **Another huge purpose for your spiritual gifts is the unity of the Body** [1 Corinthians 12:25-27 \(Read it\)](#)

The Holy Spirit gifts you to bring unity as we grow together!

**From Downline Summit** this past February- The local church is the only group of people made up of natural enemies. Jesus

turns foes into family, and you have a real responsibility to them. Armies and sports teams are efficient and you cut

whoever doesn't measure up. Not so in the body of

Christ...they are family, and family is inefficient. You don't cut

off people because they are different from you. The Holy Spirit

enables you to love and embrace them, because they are your

family. Is there anyone you have discarded? Anyone you find

yourself looking down on or avoiding? You need them and they

need you. The hand cannot say to the foot I don't need

you...that is ridiculous. Your giftings are for the unity of body of

Christ! Are you holding back?



## V. **Finally, how are these spiritual gifts to be used?**

**In Love! 1 Corinthians 13:1-3 (Read it)** Without love, we are just making religious noise.

1. I can do all kinds of great stuff, but if I miss doing it in love, it's just guilt driven religion with no lasting fruit. The worldwide spread of the gospel is not finished yet...there are still many unreached brothers and sisters out there to be brought into the body of Christ. When we bring them in, they need to experience the love of Christ in how we treat them and each other. (You know they're watching how we treat each other to see if its real or not)

2. Your spiritual gift is meant to be used not buried. Real life needs are met when we are functioning in the gifts of the Holy Spirit! People's lives are changed and transformed as we walk in the love of the Holy Spirit.

3. Jesus said in John 13 that the world would know us by our love for each other. The challenge today for you is this – Are you willing to humble yourself and ask the Lord to use you as He has gifted you? If you've been wounded, would you consider letting Him begin to heal you and lead you by His Spirit back into serving Him with the gifts He gave you? They are presents waiting to be opened and shared freely.

Would you please consider this your invitation to join us here at CHC in what the Lord is doing?