Discussion Questions



Overview

This week's sermon challenged us to think carefully about the purpose of the church and the purpose of each individual within it. Using Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12, we explored how God places leaders in the church to equip people for ministry, and how every member of the body has been gifted and placed by God for a specific purpose. The most excellent way to exercise all of it, as Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 13, is love.

Key Takeaways

- Christ gives leaders to the church not to do all the ministry themselves, but to equip the rest of the body to do the work of ministry.
- God placed every member of the church with intention. You are not an accidental attendee. You are a part of the body.
- No single person is expected to have every gift. Every member's weakness is the space where another member's gift is meant to serve.
- Maturity without unity produces a consumer-driven church. Unity without maturity produces a church that cooperates but does not grow. Both are needed together.
- Love is not a sentimental addition to the conversation about spiritual gifts. It is the most excellent way in which every gift must be used.

Discussion Questions

Think of a time you were part of a team where everyone genuinely contributed. What made that experience different from one where only a few people carried the load? How did it feel to be part of something where your role actually mattered?

Digging Into the Text

1. The sermon described two images: a restaurant and a gym. In the gym illustration, the trainer does all the work while the client sits on the sideline and complains about not getting results. In what ways have you seen this pattern show up in church life, either in others or in yourself?
2. Ephesians 4:11-13 describes leaders being given to the church in order to equip God's people for works of service. How does it shift your understanding of church leadership when you see the pastor or teacher not as the one doing all the ministry, but as the one preparing you to do it?
3. In 1 Corinthians 12:27, Paul says "*you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it*." He does not say you attend the body or belong to an organization that has a body. What is the difference between seeing yourself as an attendee versus seeing yourself as an actual part of the body? How does that distinction change the way you think about your involvement?
4. The sermon pointed out that God did the placing. You are in this church because God brought you here with your specific gifts for a specific purpose. How does that land with you? Does it feel encouraging, uncomfortable, or challenging? Why?
5. Two often-overlooked gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:28 are *helping* and *guidance*. The sermon noted these are rarely seen on a stage, yet Paul mentions them alongside miracles and healing. What gifts do you tend to overlook or undervalue in yourself or in others? Why do you think we are tempted to rank certain gifts as more important than others?
6. The sermon drew a careful distinction between maturity and unity. A church can be doctrinally sharp but fail to work together, or it can be highly cooperative but lack depth and

direction. Which of these two tendencies do you think is the greater temptation for you personally? For this group?

7. Paul ends 1 Corinthians 12 by saying he will show the church the most excellent way, and then opens into what we know as the love chapter. The sermon argued that 1 Corinthians 13 was written to the church about spiritual gifts, not primarily as a passage about marriage. How does reading it in that context change the way you hear it? What does it mean for love to be the most excellent way to exercise a spiritual gift?

Personal Reflection Questions

8. The sermon closed with three questions. Take a few minutes to work through them as a group:
    - Where has God placed you right now, not where you wish you were, but where you actually are?
    - What burden keeps stirring in your heart for others? Is it possible that God placed it there as a sign of your gifting?
    - Is love leading your service, or are other motivations driving it, such as obligation, recognition, or habit?
9. Pastor Ike said, "Maybe the reason I've lost some of my passion for serving is because I need to renew my love for Christ." Has your passion for serving ever faded? What do you think was at the root of it? What has helped, or what might help, to renew it?

Practical Applications

This week, choose at least one of the following:

- **Identify your gift.** If you are unsure what spiritual gifts God has given you, spend time this week praying and asking him to make it clear. Consider asking two or three people who know

you well what they see in you. Pay attention to what burdens keep returning to your heart.

- **Name an overlooked contribution.** Think of someone in your church or small group whose gift rarely gets recognized, someone who helps behind the scenes, organizes, or quietly serves. Reach out to them this week and specifically tell them what their contribution means to the body.
- **Examine your motivation.** Before you serve in any capacity this week, whether it is at church, at home, or at work, pause and ask yourself: is love leading this, or is something else? Let that question shape how you show up.
- **Fill a gap.** Is there a need in your church community that you have noticed but assumed someone else would handle? Prayerfully consider whether God is calling you to step into that space, even in a small way.
- **Read 1 Corinthians 12-13 together as a unit.** Read both chapters in one sitting and notice how Paul moves from the gifts to love without a break in his argument. Let the connection between the two shape how you think about your own gifts.