



the spiritual gifts

Small Group Guide: The Spiritual Gifts, Week 17

Key Takeaways:

1. **Decency is defined by Scripture, not personal preference** - God's Word determines what is appropriate in public worship
2. **All spiritual gifts are necessary and valuable** - Being "indecent" in public doesn't mean a gift is less important
3. **One-on-one ministry is often more effective** - Private ministry through spiritual gifts can be incredibly powerful
4. **Order doesn't mean rigidity** - Planning our services honors God while still allowing room for the Spirit to move

Discussion Questions:

Understanding "Decently"

1. What did you learn about the Greek words "eschemon" (indecent) and "euschemon" (decent)? How does

understanding these terms change your perspective on spiritual gifts in public worship?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 12:21-24. How does Paul's analogy of the human body help us understand which spiritual gifts should be exercised publicly versus privately?
3. Pastor Allen gave examples of necessary ministries that aren't appropriate for public settings (intercessory prayer, deliverance, etc.). Do you agree with these examples? Why or why not?

Two Key Principles

1. **Principle #1** : "If it's decent, it edifies the whole church." Can you think of examples where a spiritual gift edified everyone present versus only benefiting one person?
2. **Principle #2** : Manifestations shouldn't cause unbelievers to think we're crazy. Have you ever witnessed something in a church service that might have confused or alienated a visitor? How could it have been handled differently?
3. **Read 1 Corinthians 14:24-25**. What makes one-on-one ministry through spiritual gifts so powerful? Have you experienced this personally?

Understanding "In Order"

1. What does it mean for services to be "in order" (Greek: taxis)? How do we balance having a plan with being sensitive to the Holy Spirit's leading?
2. Pastor Allen mentioned that some people are "charismatic fanatics" who don't care if something is indecent. How do we avoid both extremes—quenching the Spirit and being disorderly?

Practical Application:

1. How do you personally define what is “decent” in worship, and does it match Paul’s teaching on doing things decently and in order? Are there areas in your spiritual life where you need to make adjustments to better honor this?
2. Do the spiritual gifts expressed in your church build up the whole body and feel welcoming to newcomers? How can you help create an orderly, inviting environment during worship?
3. What spiritual gift do you have—or hope to develop—and how can you use it in a way that honors decency and order? What steps can you take to discern the right time and place to use this gift effectively?
4. **Study Time:** Study and Pray
 1. Study 1 Corinthians 12-14 in its entirety this week.
 2. Ask God to show you which spiritual gifts He has given you.
 3. Pray for wisdom about when and where to exercise those gifts.
5. **Seek Private Ministry**
 1. If you need prayer or ministry, schedule time with a pastor or mature believer for one-on-one ministry rather than expecting it only in public settings.
 2. Consider how God might use you to minister privately to someone else.
6. **Evaluate Your Approach**
 1. Honestly assess: Have you been either too restrictive or too loose with spiritual gifts?

2. If you've never believed in or pursued spiritual gifts, study what Scripture actually says.
3. If you tend toward excess, ask God to give you wisdom about appropriate times and places.

7. Invite with Confidence

1. Pastor Allen mentioned people being afraid to invite neighbors because services might get "crazy".
2. Pray about inviting someone to church, knowing that services are conducted decently and in order.

Closing Prayer:

Heavenly Father, we thank You for the guidance of Your Spirit in our church. We ask for wisdom for our leaders as they plan services that honor and glorify You. Bless those who visit our church, especially unbelievers and the unlearned, with understanding and open hearts. Help us to properly exercise the spiritual gifts You've given us, ensuring they are used effectively and respectfully. Grant us balance, Lord, so we may neither quench Your Spirit nor descend into disorder. May everything we do be for the edification of Your body. In Jesus' name, Amen.

5-Day Devotional

Day 1: Understanding Our Place in the Body

Reading: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Devotional: Just as our physical body has many members working together, so does the body of Christ. Every believer has a unique role, and no part is unnecessary. The eye cannot dismiss the hand, nor can the head reject the feet. God has deliberately placed each of us where we are needed most. Today, reflect on your specific calling within the church. Are you honoring other members whose gifts differ from yours? Remember,

unity doesn't mean uniformity. Your contribution matters, but so does everyone else's. Ask God to help you appreciate the diversity of gifts He has distributed throughout His body and to work in harmony with others for His glory.

Day 2: Public and Private Ministry

Reading: 1 Corinthians 14:1-19

Devotional: Not everything beneficial is appropriate for public display. Paul teaches that edification of the entire church body should guide our public worship. Some spiritual gifts build up the whole congregation, while others are meant for private ministry or one-on-one encounters. This isn't about superiority but appropriateness. Consider how your spiritual expressions impact others, especially visitors and new believers. Does your public worship draw people toward Christ or confuse them? Seek wisdom to discern when to exercise your gifts publicly and when to minister privately. The goal is always building up the body, not showcasing our spirituality. Let love and edification guide your spiritual expression in corporate worship.

Day 3: Ministering to the Individual

Reading: 1 Corinthians 14:20-25

Devotional: God's heart beats for the individual. When an unbeliever or someone unfamiliar with spiritual things enters your gathering, targeted prophetic ministry can pierce their heart like nothing else. Revealing secrets of the heart demonstrates God's intimate knowledge and personal care. This is why one-on-one ministry through spiritual gifts often proves more effective than public displays. The unbeliever falls on his face, declaring "God is truly among you!" not because of chaos or confusion, but because of precise, personal revelation. Today, pray for sensitivity to minister individually rather than always seeking the spotlight. Ask God for opportunities to speak His words directly into someone's life, revealing His personal love and knowledge of them.

Day 4: The Principle of Edification

Reading: 1 Corinthians 14:26-33

Devotional: Everything in corporate worship should edify the entire church. This is Paul's non-negotiable principle. When we gather, whether someone brings a hymn, teaching, revelation, tongue, or interpretation, the question must always be: "Does this build up everyone present?" If a spiritual expression only benefits one person, it belongs in private prayer, not public worship. This doesn't diminish the gift's value; it simply recognizes appropriate context. Reflect on your participation in church gatherings. Do your contributions strengthen others' faith? Are you seeking attention or genuinely building up the body? Let edification be your filter for public ministry, trusting that God honors order and consideration for others.

Day 5: Decency, Order, and the Holy Spirit

Reading: 1 Corinthians 14:33-40

Devotional: God is not a God of confusion but of peace. Decency and order aren't restrictions on the Holy Spirit; they're expressions of His character. Having a plan for worship services doesn't grieve the Spirit. It honors Him and those He brings through your doors. Structure creates space for genuine Spirit-led moments without descending into chaos that drives seekers away. The Spirit who inspired Scripture's order also desires order in our gatherings. Today, examine your understanding of Spirit-led worship. Have you confused spontaneity with spirituality or mistaken disorder for freedom? Ask God for wisdom to create environments where His presence is evident, visitors feel welcomed, and believers are genuinely edified. Let everything be done decently and in order.