

Empowered
“A Shift in Perspective”
1 Corinthians 14:26-40
Growth Group Discussion Guide

Opening Questions (get everyone involved in discussion):

- ❖ What is one thing you look forward to about your church experience each week?
- ❖ Prepare your minds with a moment of silence, then pray and ask for God’s Spirit to shape you all through his word.

1. Read 1 Cor. 14:26-33, then discuss:

- In v. 26, Paul claims that every member of the church body has some gift to contribute to the life of the body.
 - Please share one or more spiritual gifts that you believe you have been given. How did you discover them?
 - To what degree are you currently using those gifts in the life of the church?
 - Pastor Erik, several weeks ago, distinguished between “residential gifts”—which the Spirit gives you and you tend to have for the rest of your life—and “circumstantial gifts”—which you could practice in certain circumstances, but are not necessarily permanent. In Paul’s list of v. 26, what are the “circumstantial” gifts? Have you ever experienced any of these?
- What factors motivate your regular involvement with church life? In other words, share one or more regular church practices you are involved with, and what motivates your involvement with them.
- At the end of v. 26, Paul states the perspective which is to motivate our shared life as Christians. How would you summarize it, in your own words?
- Pastor Josh said, **God meets your needs through the church when you come to church for the good of the others.**
 - Why is this statement ironic?
 - Are there other areas of life where you see this paradoxical reality?
 - Please share an example of how you have been built up by someone else’s use of their spiritual gifts.
- In vv. 27-32, Paul addresses two specific uses of gifts. What principles can you draw out from his instructions, which we can apply?
 - What is the underlying principle (stated in v. 33)?
 - Do you see areas where our church needs to apply this principle?
- Josh mentioned that it’s not possible for hundreds of people to use their gifts on Sunday mornings in our church environment. What do you make of this observation? In what ways can we practice and encourage the use of our spiritual gifts in this growth group environment?

2. Read 1 Cor. 14:34-38, then discuss the following.

- What is your initial reaction upon reading these words?
- On Sunday, Pastor Josh explained the theory that verses 34-35 are a “marginal gloss”— in other words, a scribe inserted them, and they were not originally written by Paul.
 - What did you think of that explanation? Did it raise more questions?
 - How do you plan to handle or respond to these verses?
- How do verses 36-38 make more sense if Paul did not write vv. 34-35?

3. Read 1 Cor. 14:39-40, and discuss the following.

- Why do you think Paul says to be *eager* to prophesy? Why is prophecy so valuable?
- Has anyone in your group ever experienced the gift of prophecy, either as the messenger or the recipient? Please share.
- What would it look like for your group to seek this gift together? For example, could you take some prayer time to simply listen for God’s Spirit to impress messages on your spirit for one another?

4. Series wrap-up:

- What principle(s) will stay with you from this “Empowered” series?
- What practical changes do you think you will make as a result?

Prayer:

- Take a moment to share, and pray for any other needs that exist among your group members.
- If you are comfortable, try the “prophecy” exercise mentioned above.