

1 Corinthians 12 Commentary

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1 CORINTHIANS - PROBLEMS OF A LOCAL CHURCH
Click chart to enlarge
Charts from [Jensen's Survey of the NT](#) - used by permission

FROM CHART: Note 2 major divisions:

- **FIRST DIVISION** - Chapters 1-6 = Problems of Congregation - Divisions & Depravities
- **SECOND DIVISION** - Chapters 7-16 = Personal Problems, Worship Problems

1 Corinthians 12:1 Now concerning spiritual *[gifts]*, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.

- **spiritual:** 1Co 12:4-11 14:1-18,37 Eph 4:11
- **I do not want you to be unaware** 1Co 10:1 2Co 1:8 1Th 4:13 2Pe 3:8
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

1 Cor 1:4-5 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given you in Christ Jesus, 5 that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all knowledge,

Romans 1:11 For I long to see you so that I may impart some spiritual gift to you, that you may be established;

IGNORANCE IS NOT BLISS IN REGARD TO SPIRITUAL GIFTS!

To help understand what prompted ("inspired") Paul to give more "space" (more verses) to the issue of spiritual gifts than any other problem in the Corinthian church, I would suggest you take a moment to listen to **Dr John MacArthur's** introduction to a multi-part sermon series on **spiritual gifts**. As you may know Dr MacArthur is a [cessationist](#) but in this message that viewpoint does not come up, as he focuses on setting the context for this controversial topic. The last part of the sermon is more historical (extra-biblical for the most part) but will help you better understand what Paul is writing in chapters 10-12. MacArthur quotes extensively from a 1924 work by Samuel Angus entitled "[The Mystery-Religions](#)," ([available online](#)), in order to give us a sense of the religious background from which many of the Corinthian saints had been supernaturally "extracted." In short, MacArthur's introductory sermon would be a great preface before you studied 1 Cor 10-12 and I do not think it would significantly bias your own objective reading and study of these chapters. Here is the link to the sermon - [1 Corinthians 12:1 Concerning Spiritual Gifts, Part 1 \(May 23, 1976\)](#).

Now concerning - Paul uses this phrase 5 times to begin a new subject - 1 Cor 7:1 1 Cor 7:25 1 Cor 8:1 1 Cor 12:1 1 Cor 16:1

Spiritual gifts, brethren, I (present tense) **do not want you to** (present tense - continually) **be unaware** - While **brethren** does not always refer to fellow believers, it does appear that in this letter Paul is using **brethren** to refer to those individuals in the church at Corinth who were genuine believers and that fit the context here for only believers possess spiritual gifts (note "*gifts*" is added by the translators because that fits the context - see 1 Cor 12:4). The word **spiritual** is [pneumatikos](#) which is almost always "used in relation to the work of the Holy Spirit and thus refers to a Christian pattern of life which is controlled or directed by the Spirit. In this context it specifically refers to the gifts the Spirit gives believers to be used for the building up of the body to the glory of God. **I do not want you to be unaware** is another way of saying "I want you to know about spiritual gifts and have an intimate, experiential knowledge of them." **Unaware** is [agnoeo](#) which gives us "[agnostic](#)" so Paul is saying he does not want them to be "functional agnostics" regarding spiritual gifts. Someone has quipped that when Paul begins a sentence with "**do you not know**" (or a similar phraseology as in this passage) concerning the saints, it often turns out that they were ignorant!

Spiritual ([4152](#)) [pneumatikos](#) from [pneuma](#) = wind, spirit <> in turn from [pneo](#) = to blow) is an adjective which means pertaining to the wind and then relating to the realm of the spirit referring to the inner, invisible sphere of a human being. Note that whenever you see an "-ikos", "-ika" or "-ikon" ending on a Greek word, it means characterized or controlled by. And so [pneumatikōs](#) means to be controlled by or characterized by the Spirit. Almost 50% of the uses are in 1 Corinthians. As **Barclay** says "the man who is **pneumatikos** is the man who is sensitive to the Spirit and whose life is guided by the Spirit." Vine has an interesting note that **pneumatikos** "always connotes the ideas of invisibility and of power...the purposes of God revealed in the gospel by the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 2:13, and the words in which that revelation is expressed, are 'spiritual,' 1 Corinthians 2:13...The **spiritual man** is one who walks by the Spirit both in the sense of Galatians 5:16 and in that of Galatians 5:25, and who himself manifests the fruit of the Spirit." **Pneumatikos** refers to Jesus (1Cor 15:47), but primarily is used of impersonal things - law (Ro 7:14), gift (Ro 1:11), blessing (Eph 1:3), songs (Eph 5:19, Col 3:16), food (1Cor 10:13), understanding (Col 1:9 - as given by the Spirit). Believers are a spiritual (pneumatikos) house and offer spiritual sacrifices (1Pe 2:5). Pneumatikos - total 26x in 21v - Rom. 1:11; Rom. 7:14; Rom. 15:27; 1 Co. 2:13; 1 Co. 2:15; 1 Co. 3:1; 1 Co. 9:11; 1 Co. 10:3; 1 Co. 10:4; 1 Co. 12:1; 1 Co. 14:1; 1 Co. 14:37; 1 Co. 15:44; 1 Co. 15:46; Gal. 6:1; Eph. 1:3; Eph. 5:19; Eph. 6:12; Col. 1:9; Col. 3:16; 1 Pet. 2:5.

Vine goes on to add that ""According to the Scriptures, the 'spiritual' state of soul is normal for the believer, but to this state all believers do not attain, nor when it is attained is it always maintained. Thus the Apostle, in 1 Corinthians 3:1-3, suggests a contrast between this spiritual state and that of the babe in Christ, i.e., of the man who because of immaturity and inexperience has not yet reached spirituality, and that of the man who by permitting jealousy, and the strife to which jealousy always leads, has lost it. The spiritual state is reached by diligence in the Word of God and in prayer; it is maintained by obedience and self-judgment. Such as are led by the Spirit are spiritual, but, of course, spirituality is not a fixed or absolute condition, it admits of growth; indeed growth in 'the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior

Jesus Christ,' 2 Peter 3:18, is evidence of true spirituality."

Brother (80) **adelphos** From **a** = denotes unity + **delphus** = a womb) means brother or near kinsman. "Adelphós generally denotes a fellowship of life based on identity of origin, e.g., members of the same family (Mt. 1:2; Lk 3:1, 19; 6:14); members of the same tribe, countrymen, and so forth (Acts 3:22; 7:23; Ro 9:3)." (Zodhiates) Figuratively, **adelphos** describes members of the Christian community, spiritual brother, fellow Christian, fellow believer (Ro 8:29). Jews used adelphos to describe fellow countrymen (Acts 3:22). One of the same nature, a fellow man was regarded as a brother (Mt. 5:22–24, 47). Adelphós also came to designate a fellowship of love equivalent to or bringing with it a community of life (Matt. 12:50; Mark 3:35; 10:29, 30; Acts 12:17). In this manner Jesus speaks of His brethren (Mt. 25:40; 28:10; John 20:17; Rom. 8:29; Heb. 2:11, 17). The members of the same Christian community are called brothers (Jn 21:23; Acts 9:30; Rom. 16:14; 1 Cor. 7:12). **Adelphos in 1-2 Corinthians** - 1 Co. 1:1; 1 Co. 1:10; 1 Co. 1:11; 1 Co. 1:26; 1 Co. 2:1; 1 Co. 3:1; 1 Co. 4:6; 1 Co. 5:11; 1 Co. 6:5; 1 Co. 6:6; 1 Co. 6:8; 1 Co. 7:12; 1 Co. 7:14; 1 Co. 7:15; 1 Co. 7:24; 1 Co. 7:29; 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 8:12; 1 Co. 8:13; 1 Co. 9:5; 1 Co. 10:1; 1 Co. 11:33; 1 Co. 12:1; 1 Co. 14:6; 1 Co. 14:20; 1 Co. 14:26; 1 Co. 14:39; 1 Co. 15:1; 1 Co. 15:6; 1 Co. 15:31; 1 Co. 15:50; 1 Co. 15:58; 1 Co. 16:11; 1 Co. 16:12; 1 Co. 16:15; 1 Co. 16:20; 2 Co. 1:1; 2 Co. 1:8; 2 Co. 2:13; 2 Co. 8:1; 2 Co. 8:18; 2 Co. 8:22; 2 Co. 8:23; 2 Co. 9:3; 2 Co. 9:5; 2 Co. 11:9; 2 Co. 12:18; 2 Co. 13:11

Unaware (not understanding, uninformed, ignorant) (50) **agnoeo** from **a** = not + **noéo** = perceive, understand) not have information about, to not know, to not understand (Mk 9:32; Lk 9:45), to be unaware of, to not recognize (Ac 13:27), to be ignorant of (to lack information concerning something). Agnoeo conveys the nuance of lacking the ability to understand in He 5:2 and of inexcusable moral/ethical ignorance (even disregard) in Ro 10:3). Agnoeo in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 10:1+ = "For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all passed through the sea;" ; 1 Co. 12:1; 1 Co. 14:38; 2 Co. 1:8; 2 Co. 2:11; 2 Co. 6:9

Believer's Study Bible has a chart on "Spiritual Gifts"

gifts

SPIRITUAL GIFTS (from [Believer's Study Bible](#))

Believer's Study Bible - The gifts are called in the Greek pneumatikon, "spiritual gifts," charismaton, "grace gifts" (v. 4), or simple domata, "gifts" (Eph. 4:8). Paul mentions about 20 different gifts. The four lists in the N.T. differ according to purpose: (1) Rom. 12:6-8, in which Paul speaks of gifts in a general way; (2) Eph. 4:11, in which Paul deals with the gifts that most further the unity of the body of Christ; (3) 1 Pet. 4:10, 11, where Peter emphasizes the service the gifts render; (4) 1 Cor. 12 (1 Cor 12:28-30), in which Paul is concerned with an order of importance, and again this passage (1 Cor 12:8-10), in which he has to speak of the more spectacular, extraordinary gifts or "manifestations of the Spirit" (1 Cor 12:7) because they were abused by the Corinthians. The gifts are supernatural rather than natural endowments. The Holy Spirit gives each Christian one or more gifts "as He wills" (1 Cor 12:7, 11). The purpose of the gifts includes the common good (1 Cor 12:7), the proper functioning of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:14-26), edification (14:3-12), and the confirmation of the preached word (1 Cor 14:24, 25; Acts 1:8; Heb. 2:3, 4). Each believer needs the contribution of every other member of the body of Christ (1 Cor 12:14-26). The outline which Paul follows is this: (1) gifts and the unity of the body (ch. 12), (2) gifts and love (ch. 13), and (3) gifts and edification (ch. 14).

Related Resource:

- [Ron R. Ritchie's List of the Spiritual Gifts](#)

1 Corinthians 12:2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led.

- **that:** 1Co 6:11 Ga 4:8 Eph 2:11-12 Eph 4:17-18 1Th 1:9 Tit 3:3 1Pe 4:3
- **mute idols:** Ps 115:5,7 135:16 Hab 2:18,19
- **however you were led:** Mt 15:14 1Pe 1:18
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 6:11 Such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

Psalm 115:5; 7 They have mouths, but they cannot speak; They have eyes, but they cannot see; 7 They have hands, but they cannot feel; They have feet, but they cannot walk; They cannot make a sound with their throat.

THEIR PATHETIC PLIGHT AS PAGANS

You know ([eido](#) in perfect tense = knew beyond a shadow of doubt) **that when you were pagans** - Here Paul speaks primarily to the Gentiles who would have been considered pagans (See [Concerning Spiritual Gifts](#) for this pagan background). Lest they think too highly of themselves, this would also been a timely and hopefully humbling reminder to them of how God had delivered them out of the kingdom of darkness (Col 1:13-14) and into the kingdom of God.

Pagans (Gentiles) ([1484](#)) **ethnos** gives us our word "ethnic") in general refers to a multitude (especially persons) associated with one another, living together, united in kinship, culture or traditions and summed up by the words nation, Gentiles (especially when ethnos is plural), people (much like "people groups" in our modern missionary vernacular). In somewhat of a negative sense ethnos conveys the meaning of godless (generally idol worshipping) pagans (heathens, cp Eph 4:17, Mt 6:32), foreign nations not worshipping the true God (Mt 4:15). Often ethnos stands in clear contradistinction to Jew (Ioudaios) (Gal 2:14). Uses in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:23; 1 Co. 5:1; 1 Co. 10:20; 1 Co. 12:2; 2 Co. 11:26;

Lenski - The majority of the Corinthians had been Gentiles. The first basic fact which these former Gentiles must bear in mind in connection with the subject of spiritual gifts and their proper use is that in their former life all spiritual manifestations were utterly unknown to them. All they knew were "the dumb idols." Paul places "dumb" in contrast with the Holy Spirit, who not only himself speaks but makes us speak what no man could ever say on his own initiative. He makes it possible for us to confess Christ as Lord, yea, he enables us to speak "the word of wisdom" and "the word of knowledge," v. 8, and even divine "prophecy," 1 Cor 14:1. ([Commentary](#))

You were (continually being) **led astray to the mute idols, however you were** (present tense - continually) **led** - **NRSV** has "*you were enticed and led astray.*" **NAB** = "*you were constantly attracted and led away to mute idols*" **NJB** = "*you were irresistibly drawn to inarticulate heathen gods.*" As has been said God made man with a "God shaped vacuum" and if it is not filled with the true God it will be filled with false gods. **Were led astray** is in the present tense and passive voice (influence or power from without, could be their fallen flesh or demonic influences) indicating these pagans were continually being led into false worship of gods what were no gods and behind which were demonic spirits (1 Cor 10:20+). **Were led** (apago) has the idea of being led away by force rather than by persuasion and was often used to describe prisoners being taken away to prison or execution! Talk about the bondage and futility of the godless people of this world (and that's our lost family, neighbors, friends, etc) who were in essence captives of sin and of Satan (cf 2 Ti 2:25-26+)! Their lives before they were brought by the Spirit to Christ were ~~are~~ for our unsaved associates) tragically nothing but "**vanity** and **striving after wind** and there was **no profit** under the sun." (Eccl 2:11) Formerly most of these Gentile saints had eaten "things sacrificed to idols" as an act of worship. (1 Cor 8:4+). **However you were led** conveys the idea that they had no choice in the matter.

Lenski on **however you were led** - helplessly led at any time by those who had you in hand....By leading the Corinthians to the dumb idols their religion led them away, i.e., misled them. Instead of receiving anything from these dumb and lifeless idols they were miserably cheated....The question is raised: "By whom were the Corinthians thus led and misled?" The answer then names either Satan and his evil spirits or the pagan priests. The better observation is that in this connection Paul lays no stress at all upon the agents; he intends that the Corinthians should think only of the dumb idols to which they were led. ([Commentary](#))

MacArthur - I often think of a man to whom I have witnessed for many years. Each time I ask him to believe in Christ and confess Him as Lord he says, in one way or another, "I would become a Christian, but I don't want to give up my freedom. I don't want to be restricted. I want to do what I want." I have shared with him 1 Corinthians 12:2 and other texts that teach the same truth. I remind him that all unbelievers are "slaves of sin" (Rom. 6:17), that they are not free at all. But he is convinced that he is doing entirely what he wants and refuses to give up his delusion. Unbelievers not only are bound but blinded. They cannot see their chains. They live "in the futility of their mind, being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart" (Eph. 4:17-18). Unbelievers think they are free because they are "deceived," unknowingly "enslaved to various lusts and pleasures" (Titus 3:3). It is true, of course, that most people are quite content to be in sin; they like it and want to stay there (John 3:19). But the point is that, even if they wanted to do so, they could not escape.....Tragically, many of the Corinthian Christians had fallen back into some of their old idolatrous beliefs and practices. They could no longer distinguish the work of God's Spirit from that of demonic spirits, God's true spiritual gifts from Satan's counterfeits, or true worship of God from the perverted worship of idols. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Lead astray (520) **apago** from **apó** = from + **ágō** = to carry, lead) means to carry or lead away, leading from one place to another. Leading an ox or donkey to water (Lk 13:15). In the figurative sense (passive voice) it meant to be deceived or be influenced "by mute idols" before they became believers (1 Cor 12:2) **Apago** was used as a legal term meaning to lead one from one point to another in legal proceedings (to trial, punishment, prison or execution), just as Jesus was "**led...away** to Caiaphas, the high priest." (Mt 26:57), "to Pilate" (Mt 27:2) and finally to be crucified (Mt 27:31, cf prison guards who were led away [to execution] Acts 12:19). **Apago** meant to lead away a prisoner or condemned man (Mk 14:44; 15:16; Rev 13:10). **Apago** (intransitively) is used by Jesus to refer to a way which leads either to eternal punishment or eternal life (Mt 7:13-14+). Apago - 16v - Matt. 7:13; Matt. 7:14; Matt. 26:57; Matt. 27:2; Matt. 27:31; Mk. 14:44; Mk. 14:53; Mk. 15:16; Lk. 13:15; Lk. 21:12; Lk. 22:66; Lk. 23:26; Acts 12:19; Acts 23:17; Acts 24:7; 1 Co. 12:2

Mute ("dumb") (880) (**aphonos** from **a** = negates + **phone** = voice, sound) means speechless, without a voice. In 1 Corinthians 14:10 Paul used **aphōnos** in a peculiar way not referring to speech per se, but the meaning conveyed by the speech stating that none of the languages in the world are "**without meaning**." In 2 Pe 2:16+ it refers to the "**dumb** donkey" incapable of speech. In classical Greek aphōnos is basically used to refer to something that is "silent" or "dumb." It can refer to inanimate objects, animals, or humans. **Aphōnos** is also used to refer to those who are "unable to speak," such as children, and those who could speak but with a poor voice. Ironically the one use in the Septuagint is a prophecy of Messiah who was "like a sheep silent (aphonos) before its shearers, so He did not open His mouth." (Isa 53:7+ quoted in Acts 8:32+). Also in the Septuagint the ungodly will be "speechless" before God (Wisdom of Solomon 4:19; see 2 Maccabees 3:29). **Aphonos** - 4x - mute(2), silent(1), without meaning(1). Acts 8:32; 1 Co. 12:2; 1 Co. 14:10; 2 Pet. 2:16

Idols (1497) **eidolon** from **eidos** = that which is seen, what is visible, figure, appearance) is primarily a phantom, form, image, shadow or likeness. A cultic image/representation of an alleged transcendent being. Eídōlon means "picture" or "copy," whether artificially made, self-reproduced, or simply present. It might mean "figure of a man," in the sense of a copy of the man depicted, but not the man himself. An idol may be an image to represent a false god. We have an illustration of this in Acts 7:41+. For the Jews, idols and heathen deities are identical, and they prove that the heathen have images but no true God. These idols are imaginary gods whom you have reduced to visual representations to give you a sense of reality. Eidolon - 11v in NT - Acts 7:41; Acts 15:20; Rom. 2:22; 1 Co. 8:4; 1 Co. 8:7; 1 Co. 10:19; 1 Co. 12:2; 2 Co. 6:16; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 Jn. 5:21; Rev. 9:20

1 Corinthians 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

- **no one speaking:** Mk 9:39 Joh 16:14,15 1Jn 4:2,3
- **accursed:** 1Co 16:22 De 21:23 Ga 3:13
- **no one can say:** 1Co 8:6 Mt 16:16,17 Joh 13:13 15:26 2Co 3:5 11:4
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Mark 9:39+ But Jesus said, "Do not hinder him, for there is no one who will perform a miracle in My name, and be able soon afterward to speak evil of Me.

1 John 4:2; 3+ By this you know the Spirit of God: every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God; 3 and every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of the antichrist, of which you have heard that it is coming, and now it is already in the world.

Therefore I make known - On account of. Since they were previously pagan idolaters they could not have known anything about communicating to the true God. And apparently some of the church members were reverting to their pagan ways they had practiced when worshipping idols. And from this passage it appears that they were even allowing some in the assembly to say "Jesus is accursed!" And so Paul gives them in essence two principles (negative then positive) by which to judge the declarations about Jesus in their worship services.

Robertson writes "Seeing that in their heathen state they could know nothing about spiritual gifts, nor how to discern whether a person was speaking by the Spirit or not, he must tell them by what kind of spiritual power God makes revelations to man." ([1 Corinthians 12 Commentary](#))

R C H Lenski explains it this way writing that "On this first fact (Previous verse -**you were led astray to the mute idols** 1 Cor 12:2) rests the second fact which Paul wants the Corinthians to bear in mind when they are considering the subject of spiritual gifts. "**Therefore**" links the two facts together: "Because it is true that you were once misled and cheated by your old religion, for this very reason I want you to know that in the Christian religion everything is entirely different." In what way? **In the church the Holy Spirit is active.** The **Spirit** is twice mentioned with emphasis. ([Commentary](#)) (Bolding added)

I (present tense - continually) **make known to you that** (absolutely) **no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"** - **NLT** = "no one speaking by the Spirit of God will curse Jesus." **By the Spirit** is literally "in the Spirit" (see locative of sphere), in the sphere of, power of or influence of the Spirit. In other words it appears that they were saying **Jesus is accursed**" ([anathema](#) - severe condemnation) and attributing this to the fact that they were doing so **by the Spirit of God!** This is interesting for frequently today we hear Jesus' great Name used as curse word, indicating clearly the source is not the Spirit of Christ, Who has been sent to glorify Christ, not denigrate Him (Jn 16:14). Although Paul will deal extensively with "tongues" the utterances he refers to in this verse were not necessarily tongues because they appear to have been spoken in the language known to all. Conceivably it is possible they were "tongues" that had been interpreted by others. Whatever the source of the utterance clearly it was ANOTHER SPIRIT, almost certainly an evil spirit and clearly not the Holy Spirit Who prompted these blasphemous utterances!

Ronald Trail asks " **What is the point of this verse?** What marks something as *spiritual* is not that it is an inspired utterance, but that its content is intelligible and able to stand the test of the Lordship of Jesus [NIC2]. [Ecstasy](#) does not indicate the working of the Spirit. It is the declaration that Jesus is Lord that indicates it [Herm, NCBC]. The confession that Jesus is Lord is the critical test of spiritual gifts [Ed]. ([Exegetical Summary](#))

MacArthur on "**Jesus is accursed**" - Nothing should have been more logical and obvious, but the Corinthians had come to judge the nature and use of gifts on the basis of experience rather than content. The more impressive, showy, unusual, and bizarre, the more a practice was accepted and respected. They had fallen back so deeply into ecstasy and enthusiasm that their judgment was completely warped. As long as it took place in the church and was presented by someone who claimed to be a Christian, any teaching or practice was accepted without question. Content was ignored, even to the extent of disregarding that which was obviously immoral and blasphemous. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Robertson - It is not improbable that Saul himself used it in his persecuting days, and strove to make others do so (Acts 26:11). Unbelievers, whether Jews or Gentiles, were admitted to Christian gatherings (1 Cor 14:24), and therefore one of these might suddenly exclaim in the middle of public worship, $\alpha\theta\epsilon\mu\alpha \eta\sigma\omicron \varsigma$. To the inexperienced Corinthians a mad shout of this kind, reminding them of the shrieks of frenzied worshippers of Dionysus and the Corybantes, might seem to be inspired. Paul assures them that this anti-Christian utterance is absolutely decisive: it cannot come from the Spirit. **Fifty years later, those who denied that they were Christians were required to blaspheme Christ: this was the crucial test.** Qui negabant esse se Christianos aut fuisse, cum praeunte me deos appellarent et imagini tuae ture ac vino supplicarent, praeterea male dicerent Christo, quorum nihil posse cogi dicuntur qui sunt re vera Christiani, dimittendos esse putavi (Means something like "Those who denied that they were or ever had been Christians, who repeated after me with incense and wine to your image, called on the gods, and moreover cursed Christ; none of which, to be able to force those who are really Christians, it is I have thought,")

Speaking (2980) laleo is the Greek verb meaning to make a sound and then to utter words. **Laleo** originally meant just sounds like the chatter of birds or the the prattling of children..As a result it has a broad range of meaning and import (e.g., "to say, to chatter [especially of animals], to babble, to sound [a musical instrument]" or "to chirp" [of locusts]) In classical Greek the meanings "to babble" (as an infant) and "to croon" (as a nurse) (cf. English lullaby) or "to whisper" were common. **Laleo** later became significant in philosophical discussions. Most authorities agree that laleō points to the external sound more than to the content of what is said. The Gospels and Acts are responsible for about two-thirds of the occurrences in the New Testament. The emphasis of laleō upon the physical nature of speech is apparent in some texts (e.g., Matthew 15:31; Luke 1:20; 7:15; Acts 2:6,11; cf. above), but the message of what was spoken is more important (e.g., Luke 24:25; Acts 3:24; 9:6). **Vincent** contrasts laleo with the other Greek word for speak (lego) explaining that laleo "contemplates the fact rather than the substance of speech. Hence it is used of God (Heb 1:1), the point being, not what God said, but the fact that he spoke to men. On the contrary, **lego** refers to the matter ("content") of speech. The verb **lego** originally meant to pick out, and hence to use words selected as appropriate expressions of thought, and to put such words together in orderly discourse." Laleo in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 2:6; 1 Co. 2:7; 1 Co. 2:13; 1 Co. 3:1; 1 Co. 9:8; 1 Co. 12:3; 1 Co. 12:30; 1 Co. 13:1; 1 Co. 13:11; 1 Co. 14:2; 1 Co. 14:3; 1 Co. 14:4; 1 Co. 14:5; 1 Co. 14:6; 1 Co. 14:9; 1 Co. 14:11; 1 Co. 14:13; 1 Co. 14:18; 1 Co. 14:19; 1 Co. 14:21; 1 Co. 14:23; 1 Co. 14:27; 1 Co. 14:28; 1 Co. 14:29; 1 Co. 14:34; 1 Co. 14:35; 1 Co. 14:39; 1 Co. 15:34; 2 Co. 2:17; 2 Co. 4:13; 2 Co. 7:14; 2 Co. 11:17; 2 Co. 11:23; 2 Co. 12:4; 2 Co. 12:19; 2 Co. 13:3;

Make known (1107) **gnorizo** from **ginosko** = acquire information by whatever means but often with the implication of personal involvement or experience) means to cause information to be known by someone. Spoken of a teacher who unfolds divine things, communicating things before unknown or reasserting things already known (Jn 15:15, Acts 7:13). **Gnorizo** is used especially of something unknowable by natural means but communicated by divine initiative (Eph 1:9).

No one (3762) (**oudeis** from **ou** = not + **dé** = but + **heis** = one) Literally "but absolutely not one" no one, nothing, none at all; emphasizes not even one, not the least. **Oudeis** is used as a negating adjective (not even one) to negate a noun, denying absolutely and objectively (e.g., Lk 4:24) Note that **oudeis** differs from **medeís** which also is often translated "no one" as the negative particle **o u** differs from **me**. Thus **o u** = absolutely NOT and is objective while **me** = conditionally NOT and is subjective. For example Paul uses **oudeis** twice in 1 Cor 12:3 "Therefore I make known to you that **NO ONE** speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and **NO ONE** can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit."

Accursed (331) (**anathema** from **anatithemi** = to place, lay up) means strictly speaking something set up or placed so as to be kept, such as a votive [free will] offering which is "set up" in the temple (eg, see Lk 21:5 but see note below). Most of the NT uses are by Paul who uses **anathema** in a negative sense of delivering ("setting up" or "placing") someone under divine wrath or a curse.

Related Resource:

- [What is blasphemy? What does it mean to blaspheme? | GotQuestions.org](http://www.gotquestions.org/What-is-blasphemy-What-does-it-mean-to-blaspheme/)

And (absolutely) **no one** (present tense - continually) **can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit**- Of course a non-believer could simply mouth these words, but here Paul says the person uttering these words means that Jesus is in fact the **Lord**, the Master, the Possessor. And fallen flesh will not acknowledge Jesus as Lord unless it has been redeemed and regenerated and has a new spirit sensitive to the Holy Spirit. Obviously, simply confessing the words "Jesus as Lord" by itself does not save anyone. In fact Jesus Himself warned that many would fall into this deception declaring

Not everyone who says to Me, **Lord, Lord,** will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who (present tense - not perfectly but habitually) does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. 22 "**Many** (DON'T MISS THIS ADJECTIVE - NOT FEW BUT **MANY**!) will say to Me on that day, **Lord, Lord,** did we not prophesy in Your **Name**, and in Your **Name** cast out demons, and in Your **Name** perform many miracles?' (NOTE JESUS DOES NOT DISPUTE THEY DID THESE THINGS) 23" And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; **DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO** ((present tense - habitually) **PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS (AKA "SIN" - 1 John 3:4+).**' (Mt 7:21-23+)

Robertson on Jesus is Lord - This comprehensive utterance is as wide as Christendom: every loyal Christian is inspired. Those who have received special gifts, such as those which are mentioned below (1 Cor 12:4-11), must not regard those who have not received them as devoid of the Spirit. This is one of the ways in which the Spirit glorifies Jesus (John 16:14), by enabling many to confess Him as Lord. Comp. the similar double test, negative and positive, given in 1 John 4:2-4; but while St John has in view those who denied the humanity of Christ, St Paul has in view those who denied His Divinity. In Gal. 4:6 we have the parallel cry, 'Abba, Father,' as a mark of Christian adoption; and in Acts 8:16, 19:5 we have the formula, baptized 'into the name of the Lord Jesus.'

Lord (master, owner) (2962) **kurios** from **kuros** = might or power, related to **kuroo** = to give authority) primarily means the possessor, owner, master, the supreme one, one who is **sovereign**. Uses in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:2; 1 Co. 1:3; 1 Co. 1:7; 1 Co. 1:8; 1 Co. 1:9; 1 Co. 1:10; 1 Co. 1:31; 1 Co. 2:8; 1 Co. 2:16; 1 Co. 3:5; 1 Co. 3:20; 1 Co. 4:4; 1 Co. 4:5; 1 Co. 4:17; 1 Co. 4:19; 1 Co. 5:4; 1 Co. 5:5; 1 Co. 6:11; 1 Co. 6:13; 1 Co. 6:14; 1 Co. 6:17; 1 Co. 7:10; 1 Co. 7:12; 1 Co. 7:17; 1 Co. 7:22; 1 Co. 7:25; 1 Co. 7:32; 1 Co. 7:34; 1 Co. 7:35; 1 Co. 7:39; 1 Co. 8:5; 1 Co. 8:6; 1 Co. 9:1; 1 Co. 9:2; 1 Co. 9:5; 1 Co. 9:14; 1 Co. 10:9; 1 Co. 10:21; 1 Co. 10:22; 1 Co. 10:26; 1 Co. 11:11; 1 Co. 11:23; 1 Co. 11:26; 1 Co. 11:27; 1 Co. 11:32; 1 Co. 12:3; 1 Co. 12:5; 1 Co. 14:21; 1 Co. 14:37; 1 Co. 15:31; 1 Co. 15:57; 1 Co. 15:58; 1 Co. 16:7; 1 Co. 16:10; 1 Co. 16:19; 1 Co. 16:22; 1 Co. 16:23; 2 Co. 1:2; 2 Co. 1:3; 2 Co. 1:14; 2 Co. 2:12; 2 Co. 3:16; 2 Co. 3:17; 2 Co. 3:18; 2 Co. 4:5; 2 Co. 4:14; 2 Co. 5:6; 2 Co. 5:8; 2 Co. 5:11; 2 Co. 6:17; 2 Co. 6:18; 2 Co. 8:5; 2 Co. 8:9; 2 Co. 8:19; 2 Co. 8:21; 2 Co. 10:8; 2 Co. 10:17; 2 Co. 10:18; 2 Co. 11:17; 2 Co. 11:31; 2 Co. 12:1; 2 Co. 12:8; 2 Co. 13:10; 2 Co. 13:14;

Answer: Anathema, as used in the New Testament, comes from the Greek ana'thema, meaning "a person or thing accursed or consigned to damnation or destruction." Used only six times in the Bible, the word anathema is usually translated as "accursed," "cursed," or "eternally condemned" in the more modern translations. Young's Literal Translation, the American Standard Version, and the King James Version transliterate it as "anathema."

The NIV translates Romans 9:3 as "For I could wish that I myself were cursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my brothers, those of my own race." Here, the meaning conveyed has to do more with one being consigned to eternal condemnation. It carries with it the idea of complete separation from Christ and His salvation.

Another example of the use of the word anathema is Galatians 1:8–9. The American Standard Version (1901) renders this passage as "But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema." In the NIV, the words "eternally condemned" replace "anathema."

Another use of the word anathema has to do with placing an oath or a vow upon oneself. For example, in Acts 23:12 we read of certain Jews who had "banded together, and bound themselves under a curse, saying that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul" (ASV). These Jews had determined that Paul was to be killed and believed it was their duty to put him away. As such, they "anathematized" themselves or, as the NIV renders it, "bound themselves with an oath" to fast until they had done the deed.

Anathema is also used in conjunction with the word maranatha, found only in 1 Corinthians 16:22: "If anyone does not love the Lord, he is to be accursed. Maranatha" (1 Corinthians 16:22, NASB, 1995 Update). Maranatha expresses the hope of Christ's second coming. Other modern versions translate this passage as "If anyone does not love the Lord—a curse be on him. Come, O Lord!" (1 Corinthians 16:22, NIV). The word anathema is related to the Old Testament Hebrew word haram or herem, which was often used in referencing the total annihilation of idolatrous people or nations (Numbers 21:2–3; Joshua 6:17). Haram sometimes pertained to a person or object forever devoted to God (Leviticus 27:21).

Generally speaking, most Bible scholars agree that the word anathema is best understood to mean that which is to be accursed, condemned, or destroyed. When the Lord says something is "anathema," it is a serious matter. GotQuestions.org

1 Corinthians 12:4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit.

- **there:** 1Co 12:8-11,28 Ro 12:4-6 Eph 4:4 Heb 2:4 1Pe 4:10
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

V

MANY GIFTS, ONE SPIRIT

While Paul does not specifically state it, there is no doubt that in his 18 months in Corinth, he had taught the saints about spiritual gifts because such knowledge would have been crucial for the building up of the body by the Spirit as He worked through each believer's specific gifts. But clearly they had largely forgotten these vital truths which had resulted in much perversion and confusion.

Note the **key words** in vv4-6 - **varieties** and **same**. **Staton** comments on the table below "The point is that diversity within the church comes from the same divine source. Consequently, conformity is not necessary for unity. What is necessary for unity is the Lordship of Jesus Christ." ([1 Corinthians](#))

Different Results	Same Source
Gifts	Spirit
Service	Lord
Working	God.

MacArthur reviews the context of why abuse of spiritual gifts was such a problem in the Corinthian church - Because the Corinthian Christians were behaving in response to the flesh rather than the Spirit, they quarreled, became factious, took each other to court, fell back into immoral and idolatrous practices, corrupted marriage relationships, abused their Christian liberty, and became self-centered, overconfident, and worldly. Their misunderstanding and misuse of spiritual gifts was a major result of their carnal

divisiveness. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit - (see [chart of Spiritual gifts](#)) **NLT** = "the same Spirit is the source of them all." In 1 Cor 12:1 Paul used [pneumatikos](#) for **Spiritual** (gifts) and now uses a synonym for **gifts** ([charismata](#) - "gift of grace," "free gift"), [pneumatikos](#) emphasizing the Spirit as Source and [charismata](#) emphasizing the gifts were the result of grace, not merit and not earned. The **gifts** are each representative of the divine enablement of believers to minister in the power of the Holy Spirit and for the glory of God. **But** is a term of contrast which highlights the different gifts **but** the unified Source (and the same purpose - edification). So while there is diversity, there is also unity because all gifts are from the same Spirit Who energizes unity (Eph 4:3) and enables edification of the Body. As Paul says in Ephesians "There is one body and one Spirit" (Eph 4:4). In other words what Paul is emphasizing here with the word "**varieties**" (used also in the next two verses) is the fact that there is variety and diversity in the gifts, ministries, and effects, but there is only one Source, the Holy Spirit and one purpose, edification. While the Corinthians considered the more "spectacular gifts" as more important, Paul is making it clear from the outset that they are all important, for they all originate from the same Holy Spirit and all are necessary for edification.

Peter summarizes the two general varieties of spiritual gifts, speaking and serving gifts...

As each one has received a special gift, employ it in **serving one another as good stewards** (NOTE: THESE GIFTS ARE "ON LOAN" SO TO SPEAK AND WE WILL BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR OUR USE OF THEM!) of the manifold grace of God (NOTE: GIFTS ARE NOT FOR SELF BUT FOR SERVING OTHERS!).
11 Whoever **SPEAKS**, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever **SERVES** is to do so as one who is **SERVING** by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. (1 Peter 4:10-11+)

Comment - Did you see the repeated verb "**serve** ([diakoneo](#))"? Our gift are to serve the body, build up the saints and bring great glory to God. And notice we do not have to exert self-effort to exercise our gifts for we serve by the "strength which God supplies," using our Spirit given spiritual gifts in the supernatural power of the Spirit. It's God from beginning to end! That way He Alone gets the glory! Amen!

MacArthur adds that "The Spirit gives gifts (capacities for spiritual ministry) to believers to express and strengthen the unity they have in their Lord Jesus Christ. But misuse of those gifts shatters unity, divides believers, ruins their testimony before the world, and short-circuits their growth and effectiveness in the Lord's service. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Varieties ([1243](#)) (**diairesis** from **diaireo** = to divide) means (1) what is apportioned out division, allotment, distribution (2) as a state of difference in the nature of things variety, diversity, distinction. **Diairesis** is used in modern Greek to designate the mathematical operation of division.

Used only 3x in NT - 1 Co. 12:4; 1 Co. 12:5; 1 Co. 12:6.

Uses in the Septuagint - Jos. 19:51; Jdg. 5:15; Jdg. 5:16; 1 Chr. 24:1; 1 Chr. 26:1; 1 Chr. 26:11; 1 Chr. 26:12; 1 Chr. 26:19; 1 Chr. 27:1; 1 Chr. 27:2; 1 Chr. 27:4; 1 Chr. 27:5; 1 Chr. 27:6; 1 Chr. 27:7; 1 Chr. 27:8; 1 Chr. 27:9; 1 Chr. 27:10; 1 Chr. 27:11; 1 Chr. 27:12; 1 Chr. 27:13; 1 Chr. 27:14; 1 Chr. 27:15; 2 Chr. 8:14; 2 Chr. 35:5; 2 Chr. 35:10; 2 Chr. 35:12; Ezr. 6:18; Ps. 136:13

Discovery Bible has a slightly different definition - **diá**, "through, reaching across," intensifying **hairéomai**, "making a personal choice") – properly, God's choice to impart His [sovereign](#) endowments of grace to His people for them to reach out ("across") to others as His hand extended (cf. 1 Jn 4:17). ("varieties of grace-endowments") are never "determined" by people, nor are they ever earned. 1243/diaíresis ("distributions") are grace- enablements from the Lord for His people to carry out His plan (particularly in ministering to the body of Christ).

Complete Biblical Library - In classical Greek **diairesis** means "divisibility." It is used as a medical term to refer to "dissection," "surgical operation," and "wounds." In the economic sense diairesis means a "dividing" or "distributing" of money. In technical usage of speech, rhetoric, and grammar, diairesis refers to the "division" of a composition into outline form, "separation" of the sentences into parts of speech, and the resolution of diphthongs into syllables. The papyri sources follow the basic meanings of diairesis indicated by the classical writings. Referring to agriculture diairesis is used to mean the "surveying" of land, the "division" of wheat land to farmers, and the proper "period" of time to plant crops. In the **Septuagint** **diairesis** occurs 32 times. The basic meaning is "division" or "distribution." Joshua 19:51, for example, states that the land of Canaan was "distributed" by lot at the tent of meeting. In Judges 5:16 diairesis means "division" in referring to the clans of Reuben. Most Septuagint references of diairesis bear the meaning of "divisions" of gatekeepers, and "households" of Levites or priests. In Psalm 136:13 diairesis is rendered "divided."

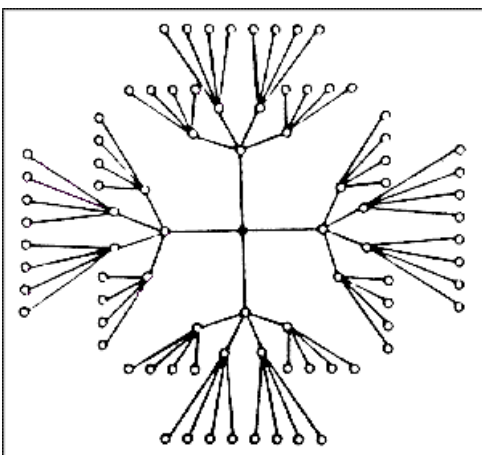
Gifts (5486) (**charisma** from **charis** = **grace** + **-ma** = the result of something, in this case result of grace) is a Pauline word (with exception of 1 Pe 4:10) which literally means a **gift of grace** or a free gift. The idea of **-ma** is illustrated by the difference between a snow-blower and the removal of the snow. The first is **charis**; the second is **charisma**—the result of the grace. **Charis** is the means or cause, **charisma** the result or effect. Considering that the root is **charis** (**grace**) the gift which one receives is without any personal merit. Stated another way, whatever spiritual gift a man or woman has comes from God, and should be no cause for personal pride or praise. It is something given by God which the individual could not have acquired or attained. **Thayer** writes that **charisma** "in the technical Pauline sense of extraordinary powers distinguishing certain Christians and enabling them to serve the church of Christ, the reception of which is due to the power of divine grace operating in their souls by the Holy Spirit." **Richards** - **Charisma** is a special term for grace gifts. It focuses attention on how we are called to function within the body of Christ. God has given each believer a special endowment of the Spirit, so that he or she can make a distinctive contribution to individuals and to the community of faith. Living together, united by the bonds of brotherly love, each of us is used by God to enrich our brothers and sisters and to stimulate their growth to Christian maturity. ([Expository Dictionary of Bible Words](#))

Charisma - 17x in 17v with **God the Giver** in 16/17 - Ro 1:11; Ro 5:15; Ro 5:16; Ro 6:23; Ro 11:29; Ro 12:6; 1 Co. 1:7; 1 Co. 7:7; 1 Co. 12:4; 1 Co. 12:9; 1 Co. 12:28; 1 Co. 12:30; 1 Co. 12:31; 2 Co. 1:11; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:10

MacArthur points out the difference between spiritual gifts and talents, etc - Spiritual gifts are not talents. Natural talents, skills, and abilities are granted by God just as everything good and worthwhile is a gift from Him. But those things are natural abilities shared by believer and unbeliever alike. An unbeliever can be a highly skilled artist or musician. An atheist or agnostic can be a great scientist, carpenter, athlete, or cook. If a Christian excels in any such abilities it has nothing to do with his salvation. Though he may use his natural talents quite differently after he is saved, he possessed them before he became a Christian. **Spiritual gifts come only as a result of salvation.** Spiritual gifts, however, are not natural, but rather are supernaturally given by the Holy Spirit only and always to believers in Jesus Christ, without exception (v. 7). Spiritual gifts are special capacities bestowed on believers to equip them to minister supernaturally to others, especially to each other. Consequently, if those gifts are not being used, or not being used rightly, the body of Christ cannot be the corporate manifestation of its Head, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the work of God is hindered. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

R. A. Torrey described the **Spirit's ministry** in his book *The Person and Work of the Holy Spirit*: "Not infrequently the Holy Spirit takes the one who seems to give the least natural promise and uses him far beyond those who give the greatest natural promise. Christian life is not to be lived in the realm of natural temperament, and Christian work is not to be done in the power of natural endowment, but Christian life is to be lived in the realm of the Spirit, and Christian work is to be done on the power of the Spirit."

William MacDonald illustrates Ephesians 4:11-12 schematically as shown below and explains it as follows: "The circle in the center depicts, let us say, the gift of a teacher. He ministers to those in the circle around him so that they are equipped, that is, built up in the faith. Then they go forth and minister to others according to the gifts God has given them. In this way the church grows and expands. It is the divine method of producing growth in the body of Christ, both in size and spirituality. Limitation of Christian service to a select class of men hinders the development of God's people, stifles the cause of world evangelism, and stunts the growth of the church. The distinction between clergy and laity is unscriptural and perhaps the greatest single hindrance to the spread of the gospel." ([Ibid](#))



THE BODY OF CHRIST SCHEMATICALLY

Related Resources:

- Spiritual Gifts chart on site
 - [Gifts of the Holy Spirit - Craig Blomberg](#)
 - [Spiritual Gifts - Definitions and Kinds](#) - James F. Stitzinger (34 page article)
 - [1 Corinthians 12:1 - Spiritual Gifts](#) - Piper
 - [What is the role of the Holy Spirit in our lives today?](#)
 - [What does it mean to walk in the Spirit?](#)
 - [Spiritual gifts survey - what are the different spiritual gifts the Bible mentions?](#)
 - [How do I identify my spiritual gift?](#)
 - [How do I know what my spiritual gift is?](#)
 - [Is there any value to a spiritual gifts test/inventory/assessment?](#)
 - [How does God distribute spiritual gifts?](#)
 - [Is there any value to a spiritual gifts test/inventory/assessment?](#)
 - [Is there a biblical spiritual gifts list?](#)
 - [What are the spiritual gifts of the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge?](#)
 - [What is the difference between a talent and a spiritual gift?](#)
 - [What is continuationism? What is a continuationist?](#)
-

We're A Community

[The Lord] gave some . . . for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. — Ephesians 4:11-12

Today's Scripture & Insight: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

A pastor's wife was diagnosed with Parkinson's disease. That put the family in a difficult, stressful situation. The pastor wondered how he was going to be able to take good care of her while he still had responsibilities for his church family. But he needn't have worried because church members stepped up and volunteered to assist him with meals and some of her care.

The apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthian church about the purpose for which the Lord gave them their spiritual gifts. Before he listed the diversity of gifts in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, he reminded them that "a spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other" (v.7 nlt). God does not give His spiritual gifts for our own selfish use but to serve others, and in so doing, we serve Him.

We are all given different gifts to be used at different times and in different ways. But they are all to be used in love for the "edifying of the body of Christ" (Eph. 4:12). Wherever God has placed us, we can use what He has gifted us to do as we see the need, remembering that we are all part of the church—the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13-14). By: C. P. Hia ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thank You, Father, for the wonderful gifts You have given Your church. Help me to understand how You have gifted me to encourage other believers, and to spread the message of Your love to the world.

Use your gifts to exercise care for others.

What Good Is A Rubber Tree?

There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. —1 Corinthians 12:4-5

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

On one of his voyages to the New World, Christopher Columbus came across a remarkable tree. It had round fruit that bounced like a ball. Its Indian name was caoutchouc—"the weeping wood."

The tree was given that name because it emitted a sap that looked like the tree's tears. Eventually, inventors discovered that the sap could be harvested and allowed to harden into an eraser that rubbed out pencil lead—hence the name "rubber."

In the 1830s it was found that rubber could withstand very cold temperatures when sulfur was added to it. This led the way to a huge demand for rubber when the automobile was invented. Later it was discovered that the sap could be used to make latex surgical gloves. The rubber tree had multiple uses that needed only to be discovered.

Likewise, when we consider the spiritual gifts taught in the Bible, we may find that we have more than one. If we try out new avenues of ministry, we may find that we have abilities previously unknown to us.

Whatever your spiritual gifts may be, they come to you from the Lord (1 Corinthians 12:4-6). What new ministry should you try out? You may discover a spiritual gift you never knew you had. By: Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, please give me the willingness to explore the
spiritual gifts You have planted within me.
Give me the desire to use them in ways
that would please You and help Your people. Amen.

Discover your spiritual gifts by using the talents God has given.

1 Corinthians 12:5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord.

- **ministries**, 1Co 12:28,29 Ro 12:6-8 Eph 4:11,12
- **and**: 1Co 8:6 Mt 23:10 Ac 10:36 Ro 14:8,9 Php 2:11
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

V

MANY MINISTRIES, ONE LORD

And there are varieties ([diairesis](#)) of ministries, and the same Lord ([kurios](#)) - **The same Lord**, the second Person of the Trinity, joins the Spirit in "distributing" different functions to members of His body. The point of this passage is that one spiritual gift can be used in a variety of ministries. For example, I began teaching children and later taught Sunday School and then more formal Bible classes, each being a different ministry.

THOUGHT - As we each exercise our spiritual gift in ministry or in serving we do well to continually be reminded of the words of Jesus - "For even the Son of Man did not come to be **SERVED** ([diakoneo](#) related to word "ministries" - diakonia), but to **SERVE** ([diakoneo](#)), and to give His life a ransom for many." (Mk 10:45+). Jesus left each of us as His disciples "an example for you to follow in His steps." (1 Pe 2:21+) Are you using your spiritual gift? Are you serving? Or are you just "sitting and soaking" (the message from the pulpit as you sit in the pew)? If the latter, then you need to get busy using your gift, for you are a steward of that gift (cf 1 Cor 4:1-2+) and will one day be held accountable and rewarded for God glorifying use of your gift! (2 Cor 5:10+)

Steve Lewis - In the Corinthian church, spiritual gifts were used as opportunities for comparing, boasting, and attracting a following. But this verse emphasizes that spiritual gifts should be used as opportunities for humble service to others. The verse also implies that even if several believers were to have the same exact spiritual gift, they may be led to use that gift in many different forms of service or ministry. ([The True Source & Purpose of Spiritual Gifts](#))

John MacArthur has a great practical point (I have been in churches where they advocated "spiritual gifts testing") - One should be careful not to over define the gifts. Because they may resist over-classification, there is not much value in taking tests, formal or informal, to determine what spiritual gifts we have. A believer's gifts can be an overlapping combination, taken in different proportions from the categories of gifts. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Ministries ([1248](#)) ([diakonia](#)) means the rendering or assistance or help by performing certain duties, often of a humble or menial nature. Diakonia speaks especially of humble, submissive, personal, active service performed willingly (with a voluntary attitude). For the believer, **diakonía** ("ministry") specifically refers to Spirit-empowered service. Diakonia gives us our word deacon. **Diakonia** - 32v - Lk. 10:40; Acts 1:17; Acts 1:25; Acts 6:1; Acts 6:4; Acts 11:29; Acts 12:25; Acts 20:24; Acts 21:19; Rom. 11:13; Rom. 12:7; Rom. 15:31; 1 Co. 12:5; 1 Co. 16:15; 2 Co. 3:7; 2 Co. 3:8; 2 Co. 3:9; 2 Co. 4:1; 2 Co. 5:18; 2 Co. 6:3; 2 Co. 8:4; 2 Co. 9:1; 2 Co. 9:12; 2 Co. 9:13; 2 Co. 11:8; Eph. 4:12; Col. 4:17; 1 Tim. 1:12; 2 Tim. 4:5; 2 Tim. 4:11; Heb. 1:14; Rev. 2:19

Bicycle Riders

We are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. —1 Corinthians 3:9

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

I remember the first time I tried to ride a bicycle. I thought I would never learn!

I pulled the bike alongside the porch and then jumped on and began pedaling, only to end up bumping smack into a maple tree. I had been so intent on pedaling that I forgot to steer. So I tried a second time and concentrated on steering but forgot to pedal, and of course I fell over. I had to learn to use my feet to pump the pedals and my hands to steer at the same time. It was a lesson on what it means to work together.

A bicycle built for two or more people is a different sort of challenge. The trick to riding one of these is for the people in back to concentrate on pedaling while the person in front does the steering. All can ride, all must help in pedaling, but only one can steer.

So it is in the church. There are some things all must do, while there are other things that only certain ones are entrusted to do. How sad that so many want to steer and so few want to pedal!

Have you found a place of service in your church? Don't try to do a task that belongs to someone else. Ask God to help you find the job He's gifted you to do (1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 1 Peter 4:10), then do it faithfully. —M. R. De Haan, M.D. ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Use now what God has given you,
Count not its worth as small;
God does not ask of you great things,
Just faithfulness—that's all!
—Bosch

It is better to be faithful than to be out in front.

The Bible Guy

Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, let us use them. — Romans 12:6

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

When the youth group in Rich's church needed Bibles for study, he went on a search for more than 70 copies. He got what they needed, but he never stopped collecting and distributing Bibles.

People and businesses donate money; others give him new and used Bibles to share. The motto on the side of the van he uses for this ministry explains his simple desire: "Need a Bible? Ask me for one." Rich is an ordinary guy, a heating and plumbing technician, who carries on this ministry in his spare time. His nickname around his church is "the Bible guy."

Do you ever wish you could have a special ministry like Rich's? The Lord has given each of us at least one spiritual gift to use for His kingdom purposes. The apostle Paul lists several in 1 Corinthians 12 and Romans 12, and some are mentioned in 1 Peter 4:9-11.

If you don't know what gifts you have, volunteer for a ministry in your church that interests you, or meet a need you learn about. Then ask yourself if you saw God work through you and if you had joy as you served. Ask fellow believers if they think you're gifted in that area. And ask the Lord to help you determine where you fit in His plans.

The Lord wants to use you too. By: Anne Cetas ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Help us, Lord, to work together
With the gifts that You bestow;
Give us unity of purpose
As we serve You here below.
—Sper

Christians who bury their gifts make a grave mistake.

You Don't Need a Pulpit

There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. — 1 Corinthians 12:5

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4-25

Champion figure skater Paul Wylie is a cum laude Harvard graduate and a born-again Christian. His mother always wanted him to be a minister, but he has decided to study law. He believes he does not possess the gifts required for pastoral ministry. But he insists—and rightly so—that whether he’s performing on the ice or reading in the library of Harvard Law School, he can serve his Savior Jesus Christ.

“I think that every Christian is called to be a minister in his place of work,” he says. “So I try to be a minister wherever I am. When people come up to me and ask questions, I tell them the truth.”

Whether we are figure skaters, law students, homemakers, mechanics, nurses, bankers, or have some other job, we can serve Jesus Christ. The New Testament doesn’t assign the task of ministry only to those who are officially recognized as pastors. First Corinthians 12 indicates that every believer is spiritually equipped for some kind of service (v.7).

We don’t have to stand behind a pulpit to function as ministers for our Savior. The task of ministering and the privilege of serving have been assigned to everyone who has been born again. By: Vernon Grounds ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

I want, in this short life of mine,
As much as can be pressed
Of service true for God and man—
Help me to be my best!
—Simpson

No matter how small it may seem, your work for Christ has great value.

1 Corinthians 12:6 There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.

- **works:** 1Co 12:11 3:7 Job 33:29 Joh 5:17 Eph 1:19-22 Col 1:29 Php 2:13 Heb 13:21
- **all:** 1Co 15:28 Eph 1:23 Col 3:11
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

V

MANY EFFECTS, ONE GOD

There are varieties ([diairesis](#)) **of** (supernatural) **effects** ([energema](#) in the plural), **but the same God Who**(present tense - continually) **works** ([energeo](#)) **all things in all persons** (all believers) - **Wuest** = "And there are different distributions of divine energy motivating these gifts in their operation, but the same God who by His divine energy operates them all in their sphere." 1 Cor 12:4-6 suggests the Trinity - Spirit, Son, Father, are all engaged in the spiritual working of the Body. The same God works within believers to effect "varieties" of results. **Effects** (here and 1 Cor 12:10+) describes the results of the supernatural energy of God in the believer. In the phrase **God Who works...** Paul is saying that it is **God** Who exerts effective, energetic, supernatural power in **all** believers. In using the adjective **all** (without exception), Paul is saying in essence that no believer can exhibit these **effects** ("outworkings") without the supernatural enworking of God. This also points out that the exercise of our gift does not always produce the same effect. "God's people and God's gifts are like snowflakes; no two are exactly alike." (MacArthur)

MacArthur - The One who provides the spiritual gifts also provides the energy and power, as well as the faith (Rom. 12:3b), to make them effective. Christians, no matter how well trained and experienced or how unselfishly motivated, cannot exercise their gifts in their own power. We may exercise our talents, skills, intelligence, and other natural abilities in our own power, but only the Giver of spiritual gifts can empower them and make them effective. Just as God gives no commands for which He does not also give the ability to obey (**ED**: See [our need to depend on the Holy Spirit to obey](#)), He does not give spiritual gifts for which He does not also give the power to use. We must be pure from sin and be willing to be used, in order that the Holy Spirit can make our gifts productive. Both the bestowing and the empowering are the Lord's exclusive domain. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

God's work, done in God's way, for God's glory, will never lack God's supply!

Note that In 1 Corinthians 12:6 **effects** parallels **gifts** (1 Cor 12:4) and **ministries** (1 Cor 12:5), the net result being that these three items reflect a unity in the "*spirituals*" just as "**Spirit**" (verse 4), "**Lord**" (verse 5), and "**God**" (verse 6) reflect a unity in the Trinity.

Zodhiates - What a beautiful trio of verses we have in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6! First we have [charismata](#) the results of the grace of God's Spirit. These are His enablements in us, through the indwelling Spirit, enriching us in all things with the initial gift of salvation

(see 1 Cor. 1:5-7). Second, we have **diakoníai** (1248), "ministries," practical uses of the gifts to benefit all, the body of Christ in particular. We now have gifts in action. But what makes them resultful; what causes our use of these gifts to become effective in the lives of others? Is this effectiveness automatic? By no means. We may be gifted preachers, teachers, evangelists. We may minister to others. But the work of our hands and the words we utter can only become effective and bring forth fruit in the lives of others by the energy of God working in them to produce the results He desires. That is what **energēmáta**, "operations," means. It is the energy of the Triune God, which He allows us as human instruments to use, and which He applies in the lives of others to produce what the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Father accomplish according to His [sovereign](#), eternal, and infinite will.

MacArthur draws an interesting conclusion to this section - Neither are God's children replaceable or the ministries He has given them replaceable. No other believer can take our place in God's heart, and no other believer can take our place in God's work. He has given no one the exact gift He has given us and He has given no one the exact ministry He has given us. If we do not use our gift no one else will; if we do not fulfill our ministry it will not be fulfilled. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Effects (1755)(**energema** from **energeo** - to effect) means what has been done, that which is worked out, that which is energized. In the NT, the idea is whatever has been effected is the result of divine energy or activity. **Energema** refers to that which was accomplished through energy and in Scripture reflect the results or effects of the working given by God's "energy" (power) in people living in dependence on Him. **Enérgēma** ends in **-ma**, just like [charisma](#), "gift," this **-ma** ending indicating the result of an action. **Zodhiates** adds that "The suffix **-ma** refers to the result of **energeia** —energy. It is illustrated by the difference between a snow-blower and the removal of the snow. The first is **energeia**—energy; the second is **enérgēma**—the result of energy. The same is true of **cháris**, grace, and [charisma](#), the result of grace, the gift itself. One is the means or cause, the other the result or effect." **Energema** is found only in 1 Cor 12:6 and 1 Cor 12:10.

Works (1754)(**energeo** from **en** = in + **érgon** = work. English = energetic) means to work effectively to cause something to happen. To energize, to operate, to work effectually in. It means power in exercise, and is used only of superhuman power. It is used again in 1 Cor 12:11 = "one and the same Spirit **works** all these things."

Gifted To Serve

There are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. —1 Corinthians 12:6

Today's Scripture: Romans 12:3-13

It occurred to me one day that my right foot does all the pedal work when I'm driving my automatic transmission car. It alone works the accelerator and the brake. The left foot is idle. What happens if I decide that to be equitable, my left foot ought to replace my right foot half the time when I am driving? If you have never done so, please don't try it!

If we don't require such equality of the members of our own body, why is it that we sometimes expect it of people in the church? That seems to be an issue that the first-century church at Rome faced. Some were thinking more highly of themselves than they ought (Rom. 12:3) just because they were doing some things others were not doing. But Paul reminds us that "all members do not have the same function" (v.4). We've been gifted according to God's grace (v.6). He gave us those gifts to serve others, not ourselves (vv.6-13). Our service is to be marked by diligence and fervor, for we are serving the Lord, not man (v.11).

So, let's not look over our shoulders to see what others are doing or not doing. Look at how God may be able to use you in His kingdom today. He has gifted you just as He has pleased (v.3). By: C. P. Hia ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, lead me today as You see best. Use the gifts You
have given me to encourage others on their journey.
Help me not to compare myself with others
but to be content with who You have made me to be.

We can't all play the same part in God's band of service, but we should all play in harmony.

1 Corinthians 12:7 But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

- 1Co 14:5,12,17,19,22-26 Mt 25:14-30 Ro 12:6-8 Eph 4:7-12 1Pe 4:10,11
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

ONE SOURCE ONE PURPOSE

Lenski - From the gifts and their connection with God Paul advances to the persons who are endowed with these gifts. ([Commentary](#))

Gordon Fee - Having grounded his appeal for diversity in the Triune God Himself, Paul proceeds to articulate how that diversity is worked out in the life of the church. This sentence states his thesis, which is then illustrated by the representative examples in vv. 8–10 and concluded in v. 11 by a restatement of the concern of this sentence, but with a slightly different emphasis. ([NICNT- 1 Cor](#))

But - Term of contrast.

To each one is given the manifestation (clearly seen operations) **of the Spirit for the common good** - **Each one** means each and every believer, so no believer is left out. Note the fact that **each one** is involved stresses diversity because the believers are different personalities. Don't miss the word **given** indicating that these are gifts we receive, not gifts we merit, earn or deserve. They are gifts of God's amazing grace. **Given** is in the passive voice which reflects the divine passive. And while it does not specifically state it here, clearly these gifts in effect cannot be refused. We can refuse to exercise them or we can misuse them but when we become believers we are given these gifts. At the end of this verse Paul explains why the gifts were given to each one and that is for the spiritual benefit of all believers.

Manifestation of the Spirit indicates He gives particular manifestations to each and every believer. In context, the manifestations are virtually synonymous with His gifts. The idea is that each gift possessed by each one is a **manifestation** or an evidencing, a making known of the Spirit's activity in and through the individual believer.

And all of this is done for the **common good** of everyone, of all the believers in the body. The idea of **common good** is for the spiritual benefit or profit of all. Paul will go on to enumerate the gifts in 1 Cor 12:8-10. **Common good** is a Greek word ([sumphero](#)) which literally means to bring together, which is a beautiful picture of the various "parts" of the body of Christ brought together for the benefit the whole! Looked at from another way "our differences are to help us be brought together into a united whole." (Staton [1 Corinthians](#))

MacArthur says it this way "Spiritual gifts are to be edifying and helpful to the church, to God's people whom He **brings together** in His name. Not only does the exercise of our spiritual gifts minister to others but it also helps them to better use their own gifts (ED: THIS SOUNDS LIKE "**SPIRITUAL SYNERGY**," THE RESULTS OF THE PARTS")....On the other hand, as we fail to minister our own gifts we hinder others in ministering theirs. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Synergy is an interaction or cooperation giving rise to a whole that is greater than the simple sum of its parts. The term synergy comes from the Attic Greek word συνεργία synergia from synergos, συνεργός, meaning "working together".

Manifestations of the Spirit is an intriguing description, for the Spirit is invisible, but here Paul says His supernatural effects are clearly seen, clearly observable and thus evidence of the reality of His existence and His working in their midst.

Zodhiates asks and answers "What is "the manifestation [[phanerosis](#)] of the Spirit"? This Greek word is a verbal noun, indicating that these gifts become the instruments of conveying the knowledge of salvation to the people of God. This is the active sense of the word. If we take phanérōsis in its passive sense, which we can do here in addition to its active sense, then we see that these gifts themselves become the evidence that the Spirit of God has been at work in the recipients of these gifts. As an example, take the incident in Acts 10. "**And they of the circumcision [i.e., the Jews] which believed were astonished... because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit.**" How did they know? How was that made manifest? The next verse tells us: "**For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God**" (Acts 10:45, 46+). They spoke in languages other than the ones they naturally knew. The spiritual gift of thus speaking in languages not previously known to them was a manifestation of its proper cause. It was evidence of the working of the Holy Spirit in these Gentiles.

Manifestation ([5321](#)) (**phanerosis** from [phaneroo](#) - make apparent) means a bringing to light, a making clear, a disclosure, an evidencing, a manifestation, a making visible or observable, an indication of the existence, reality or presence of something. TDNT says phanerosis "means revelation, appearance. In 1 Cor. 12:7 it is the revelation imparted by the Spirit and consisting of the charisms listed in 1 Cor 12:8ff. **It entails acts in which the Spirit manifests Himself.**" Only other use is 2 Cor 4:2 = "but we have renounced the things hidden because of shame, not walking in craftiness or adulterating the word of God, but by the **manifestation** (phanerosis - the open proclamation) of truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God." In other words "Paul describes true proclamation as a manifestation of the truth in contrast to the

falsification of God's word by his opponents."

Common good (advantage, expedient, profitable)([4851](#)) **sumphero** from **sún** = together + **phéro** = bring) means literally to bring together (literally - as in Acts 19:19). Then sumphero comes to mean to confer a benefit, to be profitable, advantageous (Mt. 5:29, 30; 18:6; 19:10; John 11:50; 16:7) or useful. The idea is to bring together for the benefit, profit or advantage of another. For the apostle Paul the spiritual benefit became the touchstone for all experience (1 Corinthians 6:12; 1 Cor 10:23). Whether it was knowledge, divine discipline, teaching and preaching, or **gifts of the Spirit**, it was all for the "highest good," not for temporal powers or favors (Acts 20:20; 1 Corinthians 12:7; 2 Corinthians 8:10; Hebrews 12:10).

Sumphero - 15x in 15v - Matt. 5:29; Matt. 5:30; Matt. 18:6; Matt. 19:10; Jn. 11:50; Jn. 16:7; Jn. 18:14; Acts 19:19; Acts 20:20; 1 Co. 6:12; 1 Co. 10:23; 1 Co. 12:7; 2 Co. 8:10; 2 Co. 12:1; Heb. 12:10

Don't Just Sit There

The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. —1 Corinthians 12:7

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

A well-known coach was once asked, "How much does college football contribute to the national physical-fitness picture?"

"Nothing," the coach replied abruptly.

"Why not?" the startled interviewer asked.

"Well," said the coach, "the way I see it, you have 22 men down on the field desperately needing a rest and 40,000 people in the stands desperately needing some exercise."

A similar situation exists in many churches today. When you compare the members who merely attend with those who actively participate, you often find a rather pathetic situation. It's not unusual to have a small group of diligent Christian workers struggling "down on the field" while others in the congregation are acting like spectators, "sitting on the sidelines, eating hot dogs and popcorn."

God's strategy for the accomplishment of His program is not like a sports event. It does not call for the job to be done only by the "professionals." In the game of life, all believers have their own positions and spiritual gifts that they must exercise "for the profit of all" (1 Cor. 12:7).

My friend, if you've been sitting in the stands, you're badly needed down on the field! By: Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God calls into action today
All those who are children of light;
Whatever our hand finds to do,
Let's do it with all of our might.
—Hess

Christians should be on the frontlines, not the sidelines.

The Gifted Church

The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. —1 Corinthians 12:7

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

Are you using your gift? According to 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, the Holy Spirit gives every follower of Christ at least one spiritual gift. These God-given abilities are bestowed so that the church can function effectively and grow strong.

We are to use our gifts—whether teaching, encouraging, or helping others—all in service to Christ. When we don't, His church suffers, its ministry is incomplete, and its outreach and effectiveness are crippled.

I know of a church where this happened. Just before the fall programs were to begin, several people resigned or took a leave of absence from their ministries. A couple of key families experienced job transfers and moved away. A longtime, faithful worker suffered a heart attack; two others were undergoing cancer treatment. The Sunday school superintendent asked to be relieved of his responsibility, and the nursery chairman resigned.

This church had many gifted and capable members. They were informed of the needs and asked to pray about filling the empty positions. But very few responded, and several key roles remained unfilled. The church's ministry suffered.

In Christ you're gifted. So use your gift for Him. By: David C. Egnor ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

All Christians have been gifted
By grace from God above,
Equipped to build and strengthen
The church in faith and love.
—Fitzhugh

A church can become a graveyard if its members bury their gifts.

Refusing Help

The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. — 1 Corinthians 12:7

Today's Scripture: 2 Kings 5:9-14

In 1869, John Roebling dreamed of building a massive bridge over the East River from Brooklyn to Manhattan. Unfortunately, at the outset of the project, his foot was crushed in an accident. In the recovery process, Roebling insisted he knew best and took charge of his own medical care. After refusing help, he began to show signs of tetanus. Before long, Roebling's jaw had locked into a permanent smile. Seizures and dementia plagued him until his death weeks later.

The Bible records a story about an independent person who balked at the help offered him. Naaman, a great warrior of Syria, suffered from leprosy. He sought out the prophet Elisha for healing but had preconceived ideas about how the healing should take place. So when Elisha sent his messenger to tell him to dip in the Jordan River seven times, Naaman was enraged. But Naaman's own servants gave wise advice: "If the prophet had told you to do something great, would you not have done it?" (2 Kings 5:13). And so Naaman followed the prophet's simple instructions, and his leprosy was cured.

God gives us gifts to aid each other (1 Cor. 12:7). But self-sufficiency shuts the door on much-needed help. Let's be open to the helping hand He provides. By: Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The Lord extends His gracious hand
To those in desperate need,
He lifts them up, He helps them stand
Through caring saints and loving deed.
—D. De Haan

The first step in getting help is humility.

We Need One Another

The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. —1 Corinthians 12:7

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:4-11

The Peterson ranch in Wyoming is framed by mile after mile of fencing. Not only is the entire spread fenced in, Clyde Peterson has it subdivided with barbed-wire so he can move the cattle from section to section. A single grazing spot may be bordered by as many as 600 fenceposts. Each cedar post is important. If one is knocked down, the entire herd can escape over the fallen section.

The same principle holds true in other areas of life. If one machine breaks down, the whole assembly line grinds to a halt. If one screw drops out of a carburetor, the car runs erratically. If a single microchip fails, an entire computer system may malfunction.

A local church is no different. Every worker is vital: the Sunday school teacher, the organist, the sound-system operator, the nursery worker, the greeter. If one slacks off, the entire effort suffers.

Are you feeling unimportant—as if you're just one more fencepost in a long row? Does it seem that what you're doing is hardly worth the effort? Remember what the apostle Paul wrote: No matter what your capacity, if you are working for the Lord, it is "for the profit of all" (1 Cor. 12:7).

As one single fencepost is crucial to the rancher, you too are important to God—and to the rest of us! By: David C. Egner [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We need each other as we serve the Lord,
With all the workers equal to their tasks,
No matter if the jobs are large or small,
For faithfulness is all the Savior asks.
—Hess

Even the smallest work done for Christ has great value.

Unused Muscles

The manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all. — 1 Corinthians 12:7

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:14-27

My wife recently visited a physiotherapist to seek relief for her neck and shoulder pain. When the problem did not go away after several visits, she asked why. She was told that her pain was because of some “lazy neck muscles.” Apparently, the neck muscles that were supposed to hold her head upright were not doing their job. As a result, her shoulder muscles had to take over the function of holding up her head. This caused unnaturally stiffened shoulder muscles. The solution? Exercises were prescribed to train her neck muscles to do what they were designed to do.

In a way, her problem depicts what happens in the body of Christ. God has given each believer gifts that are to be exercised for the common good of the church (1 Cor. 12:7). But when some don't pull their weight, others far less gifted in those areas must pitch in. Although the body of Christ continues to function, it is not functioning at its best. There are some overworked Christians around!

God wants us to use our spiritual gifts to benefit others in the church. When we work together, we keep the body strong. What has God gifted you to do so that you can help relieve the strain the church is suffering? By: C. P. Hia ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

All Christians have been gifted
By grace from God above,
Equipped to build and strengthen
The church in faith and love.
—Fitzhugh

Teamwork divides the effort and multiplies the effect.

1 Corinthians 12:8 For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

- **given:** 1Co 1:5,30 2:6-10 13:2,8 Ge 41:38,39 Ex 31:3 1Ki 3:5-12 Ne 9:20 Job 32:8 Ps 143:10 Pr 2:6 Isa 11:2-3 50:4 59:21 Da 2:21 Mt 13:11 Ac 6:3 2Co 8:7 Eph 1:17,18
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Isaiah 11:2-3 The Spirit of the LORD will rest on Him, The **spirit of wisdom** (Lxx = [sophia](#)) and understanding (Lxx =) [sunesis](#)), The spirit of counsel and strength, The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. 3 And He will delight in the fear of the LORD, And He will not judge by what His eyes see, Nor make a decision by what His ears hear;

WORD OF WISDOM & WORD OF KNOWLEDGE

For ([gar](#)) Term of explanation. Paul explains how the manifestations of the Spirit are parceled out individually, describing nine gifts in the next 3 verses. In essence this is how the Spirit manifests Himself in the Body -- by His gifts to the Body.

To one is given the word ([logos](#)) of wisdom through the Spirit - Why does Paul use **word**? **Word** is a term that speaks of communication. **Robertson** says "In each case it is the [logos](#) which is divinely imparted, the power of communicating to others." Recall that Christ Himself is the personification of wisdom Paul writing "But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us **wisdom** from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption, (1 Co. 1:30+) Of course every believer has some degree of wisdom, but this verse speaks of "inspired" wisdom, wisdom God gives, not facts believers accumulate to gain wisdom.

Gotquestions ([see below](#)) - The word of wisdom – The fact that this gift is described as the "word" of wisdom indicates that it is one of the speaking gifts. This gift describes someone who can understand and speak forth biblical truth in such a way as to skillfully apply it to life situations with all discernment.

The ultimate gift of **wisdom** by the Spirit was on the Messiah (see Isa 11:2-3+ above) Who in His matriculation on earth "kept increasing in **wisdom** and stature, and in favor with God and men." (Lk 2:52+).

One recalls God's martyr Stephen with whom his enemies "were unable to cope with **the wisdom** and the Spirit with which he was speaking." (Acts 6:10+)

James teaches that (in the context of trials) "if any of you lacks **wisdom**, let him ask of God, who gives to all generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him. But he must ask in faith without any doubting, for the one who doubts is like the surf of the sea, driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that man ought not to expect that he will receive anything from the Lord, 8 being a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways. (James 1:5-8+)

Kistemaker - The gift is the ability to speak divine wisdom which believers receive through the Holy Spirit (compare 1 Cor 2:6–7). Divine wisdom is contrasted with human wisdom (1 Cor 1:17, 20, 25). ([1 Corinthians Commentary](#))

Word (matter, message, news, reason, saying, statement, utterance) ([3056](#)) ([logos](#) from [légō](#) = to speak with words; English = logical) means something said and describes a communication whereby the mind finds expression in words or reasoning expressed by words. **Logos** is the word or outward form by which the inward thought is expressed and made known, or 'the inward thought or reason itself' **Lógos** means the word or outward form by which the inward thought is expressed and made known. It can also refer to the inward thought or reason itself. **Logos** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:5; 1 Co. 1:17; 1 Co. 1:18; 1 Co. 2:1; 1 Co. 2:4; 1 Co. 2:13; 1 Co. 4:19; 1 Co. 4:20; 1 Co. 12:8; 1 Co. 14:9; 1 Co. 14:19; 1 Co. 14:36; 1 Co. 15:2; 1 Co. 15:54; 2 Co. 1:18; 2 Co. 2:17; 2 Co. 4:2; 2 Co. 5:19; 2 Co. 6:7; 2 Co. 8:7; 2 Co. 10:10; 2 Co. 10:11; 2 Co. 11:6;

Wisdom ([4678](#)) [sophia](#) compare [saphes](#) = clear) is the ability to judge correctly and to follow the best course of action, based on knowledge and understanding. For the believer, [sophía](#) ("God's clarity, wisdom") conveys the Lord's solution for problem-solving, i.e. what He reveals is His preferred-will. **Vincent** says "**Sophia** is mental excellence in its highest and fullest sense." **Trench** - In Scripture [sophia](#) is ascribed only to God or to good men, though it is used in an ironic sense by adding "of this world" (1Cor 1:20), "of this age" (1Cor 2:6), or similar words (2Cor 1:12). **Sophia** emphasizes understanding of ultimate things—such as life and death, God and man, righteousness and sin, heaven and hell, eternity and time. Wisdom (a subset of faith) manifests God's persuasion about solving problems (challenges) by His solutions. **Sophia** is a KEY WORD in the first letter to the Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:17; 1 Co. 1:19; 1 Co. 1:20; 1 Co. 1:21; 1 Co. 1:22; 1 Co. 1:24; 1 Co. 1:30; 1 Co. 2:1; 1 Co. 2:4; 1 Co. 2:5; 1 Co. 2:6; 1 Co. 2:7; 1 Co. 2:13; 1 Co. 3:19; 1 Co. 12:8; 2 Co. 1:12

And to another the word ([logos](#)) of knowledge - Earlier Paul had commended the saints at Corinth "that in everything you were enriched in Him, in all speech and all **knowledge**." (1 Co. 1:5) However he then pointed out to their misuse of **knowledge** writing "Now concerning things sacrificed to idols, we know that we all have **knowledge**. **Knowledge** makes arrogant (PUFFS UP), but love edifies." (1 Cor 8:1). In 1 Cor 13:8 Paul predicted the fate of this knowledge writing that "if there is **knowledge**, it will be done away."

Staton - this is **inspired** speaking. **Knowledge** normally refers to facts. Evidently this person was inspired by the Holy Spirit with facts that the person himself had not learned or memorized. Remember the New Testament had not been completed by this time, so there was a need for the Holy Spirit to inspire new Christians to be leaders of others with facts concerning God's will, plan, and redemptive message. Most of the pagans had never seen a Jewish Old Testament; so they did not have the advantage of the Scriptural preparation for the coming of the Messiah. ([1 Corinthians](#))

Gotquestions ([see below](#)) - The word of knowledge – Also a speaking gift that involves understanding truth with an insight that only comes by revelation from God. Those with the gift of knowledge understand the deep things of God and the mysteries of His Word.

Kistemaker - This **knowledge**, given by God through his Spirit, must be put to use within the Christian community for the benefit of all the members. It comes to expression in knowing, understanding, and explaining to his people God's revelation in the Scriptures

and in creation. ([1 Corinthians Commentary](#))

Robertson has an interesting note on relationship between wisdom and knowledge - The λόγος σοφίας (logos sophias) is discourse which expounds the mysteries of God's counsels and makes known the means of salvation. It is a higher gift than λόγος γνώσεως (logos gnoseos) ,and hence is placed first, and is given by the instrumentality (διὰ τοῦ - dia tou) of the Spirit, whereas the latter is given in accordance with (κατὰ τὸ - kata to) the Spirit (NOTE: OTHERS THINK DIFFERING PREPOSITIONS ONLY REFLECT VARIETY BY PAUL). Commentators differ as to the exact differences between sophia and gnosis; but sophia is the more comprehensive term. By it we know the true value of things through seeing what they really are; it is spiritual insight and comprehension (Eph. 1:17). By gnosis. we have an intelligent grasp of the principles of the Gospel; by sophia a comprehensive survey of their relations to one another and to other things. Contrast the shallow σοφία λόγου, so valued at Corinth (1 Cor 1:17). ([1 Corinthians 12 Commentary](#))

Knowledge (1108)(**gnosis** from **ginosko** = to know especially experientially) in simple terms is the possession of information of what is known and describes the comprehension or intellectual grasp of something. **Gnosis** refers to knowledge gained by experience in contrast to intuitive knowledge. Stated another way **gnosis** is experientially known, functional ("working") knowledge gleaned from first-hand/personal experience which in turn connects theory to application. E.g., [the Gnostics](#) boasted of their "applied knowledge" gained by their personal spiritual experiences – which was (is) disastrous! **Gnosis** in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:5; 1 Co. 8:1; 1 Co. 8:7; 1 Co. 8:10; 1 Co. 8:11; 1 Co. 12:8; 1 Co. 13:2; 1 Co. 13:8; 1 Co. 14:6; 2 Co. 2:14; 2 Co. 4:6; 2 Co. 6:6; 2 Co. 8:7; 2 Co. 10:5; 2 Co. 11:6

According to the same Spirit - This emphasizes that the same Source gave diverse gifts.

Kistemaker has a practical consideration concerning these two gifts - When individual Christians claim to have received either a **word of wisdom**, a **word of knowledge**, or a prophecy from the Lord, fellow believers are not always convinced. If someone declares that the Lord has told him or her what to do or what to say, this person can use a word from the Lord to silence a challenger and sway an audience. We acknowledge that the assertion of having received a word of either wisdom or knowledge is highly subjective. The reception of a word of wisdom or knowledge always occurs in the privacy of the human heart and cannot be examined objectively by others. In addition, personal messages often are influenced by human emotions. ([1 Corinthians Commentary](#))

Question: [What are the spiritual gifts of the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge?](#)

Answer: There are three [spiritual gifts lists](#) in Scripture ([Romans 12:6–8](#); 1 Corinthians 12:4–11; and 1 Corinthians 12:28), but only one of them mentions the gifts referred to as the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge (1 Corinthians 12:8). There is much confusion as to exactly what these two gifts are. Perhaps the best way to approach it is to describe what these gifts are not.

Some Charismatics/Pentecostals view the **word of knowledge** and **word of wisdom** spiritual gifts as the Holy Spirit speaking from one believer to another, giving revelation regarding a decision or situation. Those who use these gifts in that way will often say something to the effect of, "I have a word from the Lord for you." In doing so, they claim to be speaking on behalf of God and claim that their words are to be strictly obeyed.

This understanding of the **word of knowledge** and **word of wisdom** gifts comes dangerously close to denying the doctrine of the [sufficiency of Scripture](#). If God continues to reveal His will and wisdom through special revelation to individuals, then can His Word truly be sufficient to make us "complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work" (2 Timothy 3:17)? Has God truly given us everything we need for life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3), if we require other individuals to give us special revelation from God? This is not to say that God never uses another person to speak to us, but if we often need direct messages from God through other people in order to live our lives, is God's Word truly sufficient, as it declares itself to be?

So, if the word of wisdom and the word of knowledge are not prophetic/revelatory gifts, just what are they? We know one thing for sure: these gifts are given by the Spirit to build up (edify) the body of Christ, for the "common good" (1 Corinthians 12:7). The havoc that so often ensues in churches that practice the word of knowledge and word of wisdom as revelatory gifts clearly is not for the common good. Confusing, nebulous, and sometimes contradictory "words from the Lord" do not come from God, for He is not a God of confusion or disorder (1 Corinthians 14:33). Nor do they tend to bring Christians together for their edification; on the contrary, they tend to cause division and strife in the body. Often the word of knowledge and/or word of wisdom gifts are used to gain power and influence over other people, to make others dependent on the one who claims to possess those gifts. This misuse of the two gifts is clearly not of God.

With that in mind, we offer these definitions of the word of knowledge and word of wisdom spiritual gifts:

The word of wisdom – The fact that this gift is described as the "word" of wisdom indicates that it is one of the

speaking gifts. This gift describes someone who can understand and speak forth biblical truth in such a way as to skillfully apply it to life situations with all discernment.

The word of knowledge – Also a speaking gift that involves understanding truth with an insight that only comes by revelation from God. Those with the gift of knowledge understand the deep things of God and the mysteries of His Word. GotQuestions.org

1 Corinthians 12:9 to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,

- faith: 1Co 13:2 Mt 17:19,20 21:21 Mk 11:22,23 Lu 17:5,6 2Co 4:13 Eph 2:8 Heb 11:33
- the gifts: Mt 10:8 Mk 6:13 16:18 Lu 9:2 10:9 Ac 3:6-8 4:29-31 5:15 10:38 Ac 19:11,12 Jas 5:14,15
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SPIRIT'S GIFTS OF FAITH AND HEALING

To another faith by the same Spirit- Not faith to believe in Christ, for they were already born again. And not faith to carry out progressive sanctification, for that is faith every believer must exercise to become more like Christ throughout their short time on earth. This refers to exceptional faith, but the specific object or goal is not stated. Most commentators feel it refers to faith to perform miracles such as are indicated in Matthew 17:20 or 1 Corinthians 13:2.

Gotquestions - The gift of faith may be defined as the special gift whereby the Spirit provides Christians with extraordinary confidence in God's promises, power, and presence so they can take heroic stands for the future of God's work in the church. The spiritual gift of faith is exhibited by one with a strong and unshakeable confidence in God, His Word, and His promises. Examples of people with the gift of faith are those listed in Hebrews chapter 11.. ([See below](#))

Henry Alford on faith - This seems to be the meaning here; a faith, enabling a man to place himself beyond the region of mere moral certainty, in the actual realization of things believed, in a high and unusual manner.

Charles Hodge has an interesting analysis of the gift of **faith** - It is generally supposed to mean the faith of miracles to which our Lord refers, Mt. 17:19, 20 and also the apostle in the following chapter, "Though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains," 1 Cor 13:2. But to this it is objected, that the gift of miracles is mentioned immediately afterwards as something different from the gift of faith. Others say it is that faith which manifests itself in all the forest enumerated under this class, that is, in miracles, in healing, in prophecy, and in discerning of spirits. But then it is nothing peculiar; it is a gift common to all under this head, whereas it is as much distinguished from them, as they are from each other. Besides, no degree of faith involves inspiration which is supposed in prophecy. In the absence of distinct data for determining the nature of the faith here intended, it is safest, perhaps, to adhere to the simple meaning of the word, and assume that the gift meant is a higher measure of the ordinary grace of faith. Such a faith as enabled men to become confessors and martyrs, and which is so fully illustrated in Heb. 11:33-40. This is something as truly wonderful as the gift of miracles

Robertson on faith - This cannot mean the first faith of a convert's self-surrender to the truth, nor the saving faith which is permanently possessed by every sincere Christian, but the wonder-working faith (1 Cor 13:2; Mt. 17:20) which manifests itself in *πῶς* rather than in *λόγος*; potent faith; ardentissima et praesentissima apprehensio Dei in ipsius potissimum voluntate (In the present perception of his most ardent desire) (Beng.); *πίστιν οὗ τινος τοῦ δογματῶν, ἀλλὰ τινος τοῦ σημείων* (Chrys.); the faith which produces, not only miracles, but martyrs.

Faith (4102) **pistis** is synonymous with trust or belief and is the conviction of the truth of anything, but in Scripture usually speaks of belief respecting man's relationship to God and divine things, generally with the included idea of trust and holy fervor born of faith and joined with it. 1 Co. 2:5; 1 Co. 12:9; 1 Co. 13:2; 1 Co. 13:13; 1 Co. 15:14; 1 Co. 15:17; 1 Co. 16:13; 2 Co. 1:24; 2 Co. 4:13; 2 Co. 5:7; 2 Co. 8:7; 2 Co. 10:15; 2 Co. 13:5;

And to another gifts (charismata) of healing - Gifts is **charismata** the plural form. This word for **healing** is only in 1 Cor 12, each time, it occurs in the phrase "gifts of healings" but does not refer to the act of healing. This gift is not given equally to all members of the church body as we discern from the uses in (1 Cor 12:28, 30). Unfortunately the NT says nothing more about this gift (i.e., this specific word) or how it is exercised.

This recalls Acts 4:29-30+

"And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and grant that Your bond-servants may speak Your word with all confidence, while You extend Your hand to heal, and signs and wonders take place through the name of Your holy servant Jesus."

Gotquestions - The spiritual gift of healing is the supernatural manifestation of the Spirit of God that miraculously brings healing and deliverance from disease and/or infirmity...the miraculous gift of healing, as a spiritual gift, does not seem to be functioning today. ([See below](#))

Healing is literally *healings*, the meaning of which is debated and included the idea "that different gifts are necessary to heal different kinds of sickness [Thomas Edwards, Lenske, NIC, Leon Morris]. It signifies that each gifted person has a disease or group of diseases which he or she could cure, not that one person could cure all diseases [ICC-Robertson]. The word '**healings**' is plural to emphasize the many kinds of afflictions that needed healing [MacArthur NTC, Groscheide - New Intl IC]. (Trail - [Exegetical Summary](#))

MacArthur feels "It was a gift possessed by the apostles who instantaneously healed people with a word or with a touch." (Trail - [Exegetical Summary](#))

Gilbrant - Like the verb, it is very clear the noun is to be taken in its literal meaning of "physical healing." But it also includes, to some extent, the figurative meaning of classical Greek and the spiritual sense of the word in the Septuagint. While the primary Biblical meaning is "healing of the body," much more is accomplished: the entire fullness of spiritual restoration given in Christ. Each use of the word in 1 Corinthians 12 is in the plural, *charismata iamatōn*, "gifts of healings." The plural form of the word indicates either different kinds of healings or different gifts for the healing of each individual sick person. Taken together they are one of the nine supernatural "gifts" or manifestations of the Holy Spirit given to the Church. The healing is the power of God at work through the believer and is not related to psychic or mental powers. All nine of the spiritual gifts are distributed and operate as the Spirit wills (1 Corinthians 12:11). They are all by grace through faith (primarily the faith of the believer who is being used to minister the gift to a member of the local body, though faith should be stirred and become active in the one who is ill as well).

Healing (2386) (*iama* from *iaomai* = to heal) means healing, the prevention and cure of disease. The "-ma" ending signifies that this is the result of healing or curing. [Gilbrant](#) adds that "In classical Greek the most common meaning of *iama* is "physical healing." The word is also used for the remedy, the medicine or cure that brings healing. These literal uses of the word are predominant, but the word is also used figuratively and metaphorically of restoration from evil—spiritual or mental. In the **Septuagint** various forms of the word are used for the Hebrew *rāpha'*, "heal, cure." Even if demon powers are connected with illness, in the final analysis God is the supreme ruler over sickness and health, and He alone is the true source of all **healing**. "I am the LORD that healeth thee" (Exodus 15:26) may also be translated, "I am the Lord your Physician." The Hebrew participle used here draws attention to the fact that it is the Lord's nature to heal. The **healing** God brings is connected with the acknowledgment and correction of sin and injustice (Isaiah 58:1,7,8). The idea of spiritual **healing** also underlies Jeremiah 30:17, "For I will restore health (healing) unto thee" (*iama*) (cf. 33:6 [LXX 40:6]). The apocryphal Wisdom of Solomon reflects a spiritual understanding of *iama*, "healing." The water from the rock in the wilderness at Rephidim was a "**healing**" for the thirst of the people (Wisdom of Solomon 11:4; cf. 16:9)." **iama** - 3x - 1 Co. 12:9; 1 Co. 12:28; 1 Co. 12:30. **Septuagint** - 2 Chr. 36:16; Eccl. 10:4; Isa. 26:19; Isa. 58:8; Jer. 30:17; Jer. 33:6; Jer. 46:11;

F Graber adds that "All the apostles were given gifts of healing as well as being commissioned to preach the gospel (*therapeuō* is used in Matt. 10:18; Mk. 6:13; Lk. 9:1; *iaomai* in Lk. 9:2; see also Acts, e.g. 2:43). But Paul here makes it clear that healing can also be carried out by individuals whom God has expressly endowed with a spiritual gift for this purpose. The gift of healing is one function among others, all of which are co-ordinated with one another in the church as the body of Christ." (NIDNTT)

By the one Spirit - Parallels the same Spirit in 1 Cor 12:8, speaking of the same Source, again emphasizing the unity (and order) inherent in the diverse spiritual gifts.

Question: [What is the spiritual gift of faith?](#)

Answer: The spiritual gift of faith is found in the list of the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12. 1 Cor 12:9 says that some people are given the gift of faith, but the gift is not specifically explained. All believers have been given [saving faith](#) by God as the only means of salvation (Ephesians 2:8-9), but not all believers are given the spiritual gift of faith. Like all the gifts of the Holy Spirit, the spiritual gift of faith was given for the "common good," which means the edifying of the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:7).

The gift of faith may be defined as the special gift whereby the Spirit provides Christians with extraordinary confidence in God's

promises, power, and presence so they can take heroic stands for the future of God's work in the church. The spiritual gift of faith is exhibited by one with a strong and unshakeable confidence in God, His Word, and His promises. Examples of people with the gift of faith are those listed in Hebrews chapter 11. This chapter, often called "the hall of faith," describes those whose faith was extraordinary, enabling them to do extraordinary, superhuman things. Here we see Noah spending 120 years building a huge boat when, up to that time, rain was non-existent and Abraham believing he would father a child when his wife's natural ability to do so had ended. Without the special gift of faith from God, such things would have been impossible.

As with all spiritual gifts, the gift of faith is given to some Christians who then use it to edify others in the body of Christ. Those with the gift of faith are an inspiration to their fellow believers, exhibiting a simple confidence in God that shows in all they say and do. Extraordinarily faithful people show a humble godliness and reliance on God's promises, often so much so that they are known to be quietly fearless and zealous. They are so convinced that all obstacles to the gospel and to God's purposes will be overcome and so confident that God will secure the advancement of His cause, that they will often do far more in the promotion of His kingdom than the most talented and erudite preachers and teachers.

To sum it up, God gives all Christians saving faith. The spiritual gift of faith is given to some, who exhibit extraordinary amounts of faith in their Christian walk and who, by their faith, are a joy and an encouragement to others. GotQuestions.org

Question: [What is the spiritual gift of healing?](#)

Answer: The spiritual gift of healing is the supernatural manifestation of the Spirit of God that miraculously brings healing and deliverance from disease and/or infirmity. It is the power of God that destroys the work of sin and/or the devil in the human body, such as the healings that Jesus and the disciples performed (Matthew 4:24; 15:30; Acts 5:15-16; 28:8-9). The gift of healing given to the church is primarily noted in 1 Corinthians 12, where the [spiritual gifts are listed](#).

Spiritual gifts are powers, skills, abilities, or knowledge given by God through the Holy Spirit to Christians. Paul tells the church that the purpose of the spiritual gifts is to edify other believers and, ultimately, to glorify God. God gives these gifts for His use, but in the Corinthian church, they were apparently a type of status symbol or being used to indicate superiority. Interestingly, 1 Corinthians 12:9 refers to "gifts" of healing in the plural, which may indicate that there are different gifts of healing. The gifts of healing could mean a very wide range of skills or abilities. This could be from the power to do miraculous or dramatic healing, like making the lame walk, or the use or understanding of medicine. It could even be the ability to empathize and show love to others to the point of healing an emotional wound.

There has been much debate about the usage of the spiritual gift of healing among Christians. Some believe the gift of healing and some other sign gifts are no longer operative today, while others believe the miraculous gifts are still in use today. Of course, the power to heal was never in the gifted person himself/herself. The power to heal is from God and God alone. Although God does still heal today, we believe His healing through the gift of healing belonged primarily to the apostles of the first-century church to affirm that their message was from God (Acts 2:22; 14:3).

God still performs miracles. God still heals people. There is nothing preventing God from healing one person through the ministry of another person. **However, the miraculous gift of healing, as a spiritual gift, does not seem to be functioning today.** God can certainly intervene in whatever manner He sees fit, whether in "normal" fashion or through a miracle. Our salvation itself is miracle. We were dead in sin, but God entered our lives and made us new creatures (2 Corinthians 5:17). That is the greatest healing of all. GotQuestions.org

Related Resources:

- [What is divine healing? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What does the Bible say about healing? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Why doesn't God heal everyone? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is a healing room? Are healing rooms biblical? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [Is there a biblical spiritual gifts list? | GotQuestions.org](#)

1 Corinthians 12:10 and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.

- the working: 1Co 12:28,29 Mk 16:17,20 Lu 24:49 Joh 14:12 Ac 1:8 Ro 15:19 Ga 3:5 Heb 2:4
- prophecy: 1Co 13:2 14:1,3,5,24,31,32,39 Nu 11:25-29 1Sa 10:10-13 19:20-24 2Sa 23:1,2 Joe 2:28 Joh 16:13 Ac

2:17,18,29,30 11:28 21:9,10 Ro 12:6 1Th 5:20 2Pe 1:20,21

- discerning: 1Co 14:29 Ac 5:3 1Jn 4:1 Rev 2:2
- divers: 1Co 12:28-30 13:1 14:2-4,23,27,39 Mk 16:17 Ac 2:4-12 10:46,47 19:6
- to another the: 1Co 12:30 14:26-28
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And to another the effecting of miracles - "Those in the early church who had the gift of miracles had the ability, by the Spirit, to do miraculous things of a different, more powerful kind: the casting out of demons (Acts 16), the striking of Elymas blind (Acts 13), and the raising of Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9) are possible examples." ([Gotquestions](#))

Hodge - This is more comprehensive than the preceding gift. Some had merely the gift of healing the sick, while others had the general power of working miracles. This was exemplified in the death of Ananias, in raising Dorcas, in smiting Elymas with blindness, and in many other cases.

And to another prophecy - Prophecy in this context refers primarily to speaking forth the Word of God, not telling the future.

Gotquestions - A pastor/preacher who declares the Bible can be considered a "prophet" in that he is speaking forth the counsel of God. With the completion of the New Testament canon, prophesying changed from declaring new revelation to declaring the completed revelation God has already given. Jude 1:3+ speaks of "the faith which *was once delivered* unto the saints" (emphasis added). In other words, the faith to which we hold has been settled forever, and it does not need the addition or refinement that comes from extra-biblical revelations. (See [below](#))

Related Resource:

- [Are there prophets in the church today? | GotQuestions.org](#)

Hodge - The nature of this gift is clearly exhibited in the 14th ch. It consisted in occasional inspiration and revelations, not merely or generally relating to the future, as in the case of Agabus, Acts 11:28, but either in some new communications relating to faith or duty, or simply an immediate impulse and aid from the Holy Spirit, in presenting truth already known, so that conviction and repentance were the effects aimed at and produced; comp. 14:25. The difference, as before stated, between the apostles and prophets, was, that the former were permanently inspired, so that their teaching was at all times infallible, whereas the prophets were infallible only occasionally. The ordinary teachers were uninspired, speaking from the resources of their own knowledge and experience.

And to another the distinguishing of spirits - Gift of discernment, "the spiritual gift of discerning spirits—that is, the God-given ability to distinguish between the truth of the Word and the deceptive doctrines propagated by demons." (See [below](#))

Hodge - It appears, especially from the epistles of the apostle John, that pretenders to inspiration were numerous in the apostolic age. He therefore exhorts his readers, "to try the spirits, whether they be of God; for many false prophets are gone out into the world," 1 John 4:1. It was therefore of importance to have a class of men with the gift of discernment, who could determine whether a man was really inspired, or spoke only from the impulse of his own mind, or from the dictation of some evil spirit. In 14:29, reference is made to the exercise of this gift. Compare also 1 Thess. 5:20, 21.

To another various kinds of tongues - The ability to speak various foreign languages, "speaking in a language a person does not know in order to minister to someone who does speak that language." ([See below](#))

And to another the interpretation of tongues - Interpretation of foreign languages which one did not know.

Tongues ([1100](#))(glossa)

Gotquestions - A person with the gift of interpreting tongues, then, could understand what a tongues-speaker was saying even though he did not know the language being spoken. This lack of prior knowledge of a language is what distinguishes the spiritual gift from the natural gift of being able to understand and speak a variety of languages. The tongues-interpreter would hear the tongues-speaker and then communicate the message to anyone present who could not understand the language. The goal was that all could understand and benefit from the truth being spoken. ([see below](#))

Tongues ([1100](#))(glossa) (see another similar discussion of glossa) in the NT is used literally to refer to the tongue as a part of the body, and figuratively to refer to speech (1Jn 3:18, in Lxx of Pr 25:25, Pr 31:26) particular languages or dialect as spoken by people group (Acts 2:11 referring to the language of Cretans and Arabs, in Lxx of Ge 11:7 where God confused man's language at Babel because they had the same language Ge 11:6 and self-centered motives Ge 11:4). "Glōssa in classical Greek had basically three meanings: (1) the

“tongue,” that bodily organ of taste and speech (or an animal’s tongue); (2) a “language, dialect, speech”; (3) anything tongue-shaped, such as land or the “tongue” (= “reed”) of a pipe (Liddell-Scott). Moulton-Milligan note that “tongue” figured prominently in magical documents, being an ingredient in spells.” ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#)) **Glossa** in 1 Corinthians - 1 Co. 12:10; 1 Co. 12:28; 1 Co. 12:30; 1 Co. 13:1; 1 Co. 13:8; 1 Co. 14:2; 1 Co. 14:4; 1 Co. 14:5; 1 Co. 14:6; 1 Co. 14:9; 1 Co. 14:13; 1 Co. 14:14; 1 Co. 14:18; 1 Co. 14:19; 1 Co. 14:22; 1 Co. 14:23; 1 Co. 14:26; 1 Co. 14:27; 1 Co. 14:39;

Interpretation (2058) (hermeneia from [hermeneuo](#) = to interpret) means interpretation, explanation, translation. The explanation of what is said more or less clearly by others. The capacity of doing translation. In Scripture it speaks of the Spirit Who supernaturally enables one to make words intelligible that would otherwise not be understood Only in 1 Cor 12:10 and 1 Co 14:26. In Daniel 5:1. In the Apocrypha - Sip. 1:20; Sirach 47:17 **Gilbrant** - This term denotes the interpretation of words in a different language. Another derivation, Hermes (see 2044), is the Greek name for the pagan god Mercury who was heralded as the messenger of the gods. It is used in 1 Corinthians 14:26 to teach the importance of disciplined interpretation of speaking in tongues. It also occurs in 1 Corinthians 12:10 as one of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit. The meaning of this word carries with it more than the cognitive task of literal translation; implicit in the “interpretation” is the idea of “explanation.” This idea can further be seen in the development of hermēneia in the modern Greek Velvendos dialect where hormēnia means “counsel, advice” ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

Question: [What is the spiritual gift of miracles?](#)

Answer: The spiritual gift of miracles is one of the spiritual gifts listed in [1](#) Corinthians 12:10, where the NIV calls it “miraculous powers” and the ESV and KJV list it as “the working of miracles.” The gift of miracles, or miraculous powers, is different from the gift of healing, which is listed separately in verse 9. Those in the early church who had the gift of miracles had the ability, by the Spirit, to do miraculous things of a different, more powerful kind: the casting out of demons (Acts 16), the striking of Elymas blind (Acts 13), and the raising of Tabitha from the dead (Acts 9) are possible examples. Some in the early church, besides the apostles, who had the gift of miracles were Stephen and Philip (Acts 6:8; 8:6–7, 13). Some scholars understand the specific gift mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:10 to be unique to the apostles, a power they used to confer the miraculous gifts of the Holy Spirit to others through the laying on of hands (see Acts 8:17 and 2 Timothy 1:6). The ability to transfer gifts, peculiar to the apostles, would have been something that set them apart from others and greatly aided in the spread the gospel everywhere. Paul speaks of his showing “the marks of a true apostle, including signs, wonders and miracles” (2 Corinthians 12:12).

Miracles are supernatural events that occur outside the bounds of what is natural. By definition, they are rare and out of the ordinary. The apostles certainly had the gift of miracles as they laid the foundation of the church (Ephesians 2:20) and bore witness to the veracity of their message.

The spiritual gift of miracles is mentioned again in 1 Corinthians 12:28. In this context, Paul emphasizes the fact that all gifts have the same source, the Holy Spirit, and he encourages equality and unity among the believers. Paul compares each believer to a part of a larger whole, like parts of the body (verse 12). Not every part of the body can do everything—not everyone had the gift of miracles (verse 29). We need one another.

The gifts Paul mentions in 1 Corinthians 12 are as follows: apostleship, prophecy, teaching, miraculous powers (miracles), [healing](#), guidance ([messages of wisdom and knowledge](#)), [faith](#), [prophecy](#), [distinguishing between spirits](#), speaking in [tongues](#), [interpretation](#) of tongues, and helping ([1](#) Corinthians 12:7–10,28). Paul goes on to show in 1 Corinthians 13 how love is “the most excellent way” and the greatest gift (1 Corinthians 12:31; 13:13).

The question arises as to whether or not the spiritual gift of miracles is [still active today](#) in the church. **We believe that the specific gift of miracles ceased with the office of apostle.** There were only twelve apostles (Revelation 21:14), and the apostolic gifts are no longer needed to verify the apostles’ message. This in no way limits God’s power or ability to work miracles as He sees fit. We absolutely believe that God still heals and works miracles today. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Question - [What is the spiritual gift of prophecy?](#)

Answer: The spiritual gift of prophecy is listed among the gifts of the Spirit in 1 Corinthians 12:10 and Romans 12:6. The Greek word translated “prophesying” or “prophecy” in both passages properly means to “speak forth” or declare the divine will, to interpret the purposes of God, or to make known in any way the truth of God which is designed to influence people. Many people misunderstand the **gift of prophecy** to be the ability to **predict the future**. While knowing something about the future may sometimes have been an aspect of the gift of prophecy, it was primarily a gift of proclamation (“forth-telling”), not prediction (“fore-telling”).

A pastor/preacher who declares the Bible can be considered a “prophet” in that he is speaking forth the counsel of God. With the completion of the New Testament canon, prophesying changed from declaring new revelation to declaring the completed revelation God has already given. Jude 3 speaks of “the faith which *was once delivered* unto the saints” (emphasis added). In other words, the faith to which we hold has been settled forever, and it does not need the addition or refinement that comes from extra-biblical revelations.

Also, note the transition from prophet to teacher in 2 Peter 2:1: “There *were* false prophets among the people, even as there *shall* be false teachers among you” (emphasis added). Peter indicates that the Old Testament age had prophets, whereas the church will have teachers. The spiritual gift of prophecy, in the sense of receiving *new* revelations from God to be proclaimed to others, ceased with the completion of the Bible. During the time that prophecy was a revelatory gift, it was to be used for the edification, exhortation, and comfort of men (1 Corinthians 14:3). The modern gift of prophecy, which is really more akin to teaching, still declares the truth of God. What has changed is that the truth of God today has already been fully revealed in His Word, while, in the early church, it had not yet been fully revealed.

Christians are to be very wary of those who claim to have a “new” message from God. It is one thing to say, “I had an interesting dream last night.” However, it is quite another matter to say, “God gave me a dream last night, and you must obey it.” No utterance of man should be considered equal to or above the written Word. We must hold to the Word that God has already given and commit ourselves to [*sola scriptura*](#)—Scripture alone. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Question - [What is the spiritual gift of discerning spirits?](#)

Answer: The gift of discerning spirits, or “distinguishing” spirits, is one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit described in 1 Corinthians 12:4-11. Like all these gifts, the gift of discerning spirits is given by the Holy Spirit, who disperses these gifts to believers for service in the body of Christ. Every believer has a spiritual enablement for a specific service, but there is no room for self-choosing. The Spirit distributes [spiritual gifts](#) according to the sovereignty of God and in accordance with His plan to edify the body of Christ. He gives His gifts “just as he determines” (1 Corinthians 12:11).

When it comes to the gift of discerning spirits, every born-again believer has a certain amount of discernment, which increases as the believer matures in the Spirit. In Hebrews 5:13-14 we read that a believer who has matured beyond using the milk of the Word as a babe in Christ is able to discern both good and evil. The maturing believer is empowered by the Spirit of God through the Scriptures to tell the difference between good and evil, and, beyond that, he can also distinguish between what is good and what is better. In other words, any born-again believer who chooses to focus on the Word of God is spiritually discerning.

There are certain believers, however, who have the spiritual gift of discerning spirits—that is, the God-given ability to distinguish between the truth of the Word and the deceptive doctrines propagated by demons. We are all exhorted to be spiritually discerning (Acts 17:11; 1 John 4:1), but some in the body of Christ have been given the unique ability to spot the doctrinal “forgeries” that have plagued the church since the first century. This discernment does not involve mystical, extra-biblical revelations or a voice from God. Rather, the spiritually discerning are so familiar with the Word of God that they instantly recognize what is contrary to it. They do not receive special messages from God; they use the Word of God to “test the spirits” to see which line up with God and which are in opposition to Him. The spiritually discerning are diligent to “rightly divide” (2 Timothy 2:15) the Word of God.

There are diversities of gifts in equipping the body of Christ, but those diversities are meant for the edification and building of that body as a whole (Ephesians 4:12). And the success of that body is dependent upon all parts of the body faithfully fulfilling their tasks as God has enabled them. No spiritual gift should be used to domineer others or claim for oneself a special anointing from God. Rather, the love of God is to guide our use of the spiritual gifts to edify each other in the Lord. [GotQuestions.org](#)

Question: [What is the gift of speaking in tongues?](#)

Play Video - [What is the Gift of Speaking in tongues?](#)

Answer: The first occurrence of speaking in tongues occurred on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2:1-4. The apostles went out and shared the gospel with the crowds, speaking to them in their own languages: “We hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues!” (Acts 2:11). The Greek word translated tongues literally means “languages.” Therefore, the gift of tongues is speaking in a language a person does not know in order to minister to someone who does speak that language. In 1 Corinthians chapters 12–14, Paul discusses miraculous gifts, saying, “Now, brothers, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction?” (1 Corinthians 14:6). According to the apostle Paul, and in agreement with the tongues described in Acts, speaking in tongues is valuable to the one hearing God’s message in his or her own language, but it is useless to everyone else unless it is interpreted/translated.

A person with the [gift of interpreting tongues](#) (1 Corinthians 12:30) could understand what a tongues-speaker was saying even though he did not know the language that was being spoken. The tongues interpreter would then communicate the message of the tongues speaker to everyone else, so all could understand. “For this reason anyone who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret what he says” (1 Corinthians 14:13). Paul’s conclusion regarding tongues that were not interpreted is powerful: “But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue” (1 Corinthians 14:19).

Is the gift of tongues for today? First Corinthians 13:8 mentions the gift of tongues ceasing, although it connects the ceasing with the arrival of the “[perfect](#)” in 1 Corinthians 13:10. Some point to a difference in the tense of the Greek verbs referring to prophecy and knowledge “ceasing” and that of tongues “being ceased” as evidence for tongues ceasing before the arrival of the “perfect.” While possible, this is not explicitly clear from the text. Some also point to passages such as Isaiah 28:11 and Joel 2:28-29 as evidence that speaking in tongues was a sign of God’s oncoming judgment. First Corinthians 14:22 describes tongues as a “sign to unbelievers.” According to this argument, the gift of tongues was a warning to the Jews that God was going to judge Israel for rejecting Jesus Christ as Messiah. Therefore, when God did in fact judge Israel (with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in A.D. 70), the gift of tongues would no longer serve its intended purpose. While this view is possible, the primary purpose of tongues being fulfilled does not necessarily demand its cessation. Scripture does not conclusively assert that the gift of speaking in tongues has ceased.

At the same time, if the gift of speaking in tongues were active in the church today, it would be performed in agreement with Scripture. It would be a real and intelligible language (1 Corinthians 14:10). It would be for the purpose of communicating God’s Word with a person of another language (Acts 2:6-12). It would be in agreement with the command God gave through the apostle Paul, “If anyone speaks in a tongue, two—or at the most three—should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and God” (1 Corinthians 14:27-28). It would also be in accordance with 1 Corinthians 14:33, “For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints.”

God can most definitely give a person the gift of speaking in tongues to enable him or her to communicate with a person who speaks another language. The Holy Spirit is [sovereign](#) in the dispersion of the spiritual gifts (1 Corinthians 12:11). Just imagine how much more productive missionaries could be if they did not have to go to language school, and were instantly able to speak to people in their own language. However, God does not seem to be doing this. Tongues does not seem to occur today in the manner it did in the New Testament, despite the fact that it would be immensely useful. The vast majority of believers who claim to practice the gift of speaking in tongues do not do so in agreement with the Scriptures mentioned above. These facts lead to the conclusion that the gift of tongues has ceased or is at least a rarity in God’s plan for the church today. GotQuestions.org

Question: [What is the spiritual gift of interpreting tongues?](#)

Answer: Along with the gift of speaking in tongues is another spiritual gift mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:10—the gift of interpreting tongues. The gift of interpreting tongues is the ability to translate a foreign language into the language of the hearers. The gift of interpreting tongues is a separate gift, but it seems to have been used in conjunction with the gift of speaking in tongues.

The gift of tongues was the supernatural ability to speak a foreign language that the tongues-speaker had never learned. We see this gift in use in Acts 2:4–12, as the Jews in Jerusalem heard the gospel preached in a wide variety of languages. A person with the gift of interpreting tongues, then, could understand what a tongues-speaker was saying even though he did not know the language being spoken. This lack of prior knowledge of a language is what distinguishes the spiritual gift from the natural gift of being able to understand and speak a variety of languages. The tongues-interpreter would hear the tongues-speaker and then communicate the message to anyone present who could not understand the language. The goal was that all could understand and benefit from the truth being spoken. According to the apostle Paul, and in agreement with the tongues described in Acts, the gift of tongues was meant to communicate God’s message directly to another person in his or her native language. Of course, if those present could not understand the language being spoken, the tongues were useless—and that’s what made the tongues-interpreter, or tongues-translator, necessary. The goal was the edification of the church (1 Corinthians 14:5, 12).

One of the problems in the church of Corinth was that tongues-speakers were speaking out in the service, exercising their gift of tongues *with no interpreter and with no one present who spoke that language*. The result was that the tongues-speaker was commanding attention, but his words were meaningless, since no one could understand him. Paul strongly advised that all use of tongues in the church must be interpreted: “In the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue” (1 Corinthians 14:19). There was no benefit to other church members in hearing something they could not understand. Exercising the gift of tongues in church, simply for the sake of showing everyone that you had the gift, was conceited and unprofitable. Paul told the Corinthians that, if two or three tongues-speakers wanted to speak in a meeting, then a spiritually gifted tongues-interpreter must also be present. In fact, “if there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the church and speak to himself and to God” (1 Corinthians 14:28).

The temporal nature of the gift of tongues implies that the gift of interpretation of tongues was also of a temporal nature. If the gift of speaking in tongues were active in the church today, it would be performed in agreement with Scripture. It would be a real and intelligible language (1 Corinthians 14:10). It would be for the purpose of communicating God's Word to a person of another language (Acts 2:6–12), and it would be done "in a fitting and orderly way" (1 Corinthians 14:40), "for God is not a God of disorder but of peace—as in all the congregations of the Lord's people" (1 Corinthians 14:33). GotQuestions.org

1 Corinthians 12:11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

Amplified - All these [gifts, achievements, abilities] are inspired and brought to pass by one and the same [Holy] Spirit, Who apportions to each person individually [exactly] as He chooses.

NET 1 Corinthians 12:11 It is one and the same Spirit, distributing as he decides to each person, who produces all these things.

NLT 1 Corinthians 12:11 It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.

ESV 1 Corinthians 12:11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

NIV 1 Corinthians 12:11 All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

GNT 1 Corinthians 12:11 π ν τ α δ τ α τ α ν ε ρ γ ε τ ν κ α τ α τ π ν ε μ α δ ι α ρ ο ν δ κ σ τ καθ ρ βο λεται.

KJV 1 Corinthians 12:11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

YLT 1 Corinthians 12:11 and all these doth work the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each severally as he intendeth.

ASV 1 Corinthians 12:11 but all these worketh the one and the same Spirit, dividing to each one severally even as he will.

CSB 1 Corinthians 12:11 But one and the same Spirit is active in all these, distributing to each person as He wills.

MIT 1 Corinthians 12:11 All these gifts operate by the one identical spirit, distributing to each one individually as per his discretion.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 12:11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

NRS 1 Corinthians 12:11 All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

NAB 1 Corinthians 12:11 But one and the same Spirit produces all of these, distributing them individually to each person as he wishes.

NJB 1 Corinthians 12:11 But at work in all these is one and the same Spirit, distributing them at will to each individual.

GWN 1 Corinthians 12:11 There is only one Spirit who does all these things by giving what God wants to give to each person.

BBE 1 Corinthians 12:11 But all these are the operations of the one and the same Spirit, giving to every man separately as his pleasure is.

- **all:** 1Co 12:4 7:7,17 Joh 3:27 Ro 12:6 2Co 10:13 Eph 4:7
- **as:** 1Co 12:6 Da 4:35 Mt 11:26 20:15 Joh 3:8 5:21 Ro 9:18 Eph 1:11 Heb 2:4 Jas 1:18
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SPIRIT'S SOVEREIGN CONTROL

OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

Note that verse 4 ends with "the same Spirit" and here begins with "the same Spirit," in between being sandwiched the list of gifts, thus emphasizing the same source.

But one and the same Spirit (present tense - continually) **works** ([energeo](#)) **all these things** - The NAS is not the best translation for it does not reflect the order of the Greek words. The ESV is more accurate rendering it "All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit." All these things to all nine gifts listed in 1 Cor 12:8-10 which are the result of the **works** of the Spirit. Works speaks of the supernatural power of the Spirit put into operation.

MacArthur on **works all these things** - **Works** is the same term as in verse 6, and means "*energizings*." In the deepest sense a believer does not even use his gift, but allows God to work through it by the power of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is the messenger of the Head of the church, giving and energizing the spiritual gifts as deity has designed. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Staton - While many people try to pit these gifts against one another for positions of status and superiority, the purpose of Paul's sharing them is to show that they all come from the same Spirit. Paul's primary purpose in this chapter is to head off the kind of competition that is going on within the body. He wants the members to know that every member is important. Nobody is a nobody in Christ's body, and he moves to expand on that thought in the next section. ([1 Corinthians](#))

William MacDonald - "This is another important point—the Spirit sovereignly apportions the gifts. If we really grasp this, it will eliminate pride on the one hand, because we don't have anything that we didn't receive. And it will eliminate discontent on the other hand, because Infinite Wisdom and Love decided what gift we should have, and His choice is perfect. It is wrong for everyone to desire the same gift. If everyone played the same instrument, you could never have a symphony orchestra. And if a body consisted only of tongue, it would be a monstrosity. " ([Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments](#))

Zodhiates on **all these things** - Strictly speaking, they are exclusively "**gifts of the Spirit**." They are the results of God's activity in the life of the believer. All three Persons of the Triune God are actively responsible in producing them. In 1 Cor 12:4 it is the Spirit that is mentioned; in 1 Cor 12:5, the Lord, referring to the Lord Jesus Christ; and in 1 Cor 12:6, God, obviously referring to the Father. Yet in one sense we are correct in calling these the **gifts of the Spirit**, for the Holy Spirit is the One who immediately imparts them. God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit are in full and absolute concurrence in any activity of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. The Holy Spirit does not act independently or diversely from the will and purpose of the Father and the Son. They are One God and therefore of one mind in all things. (**ED**: I like to think of the Spirit as the "Chief Operating Officer.")

(present tense - continually) **Distributing** (dividing) **to each one individually** (separately) **just as He** (present tense - continually) **wills** (deliberately decides) - It is by the will of the Holy Spirit that the [charismata](#) are "dispensed" or "distributed" among members of the body of Christ. Note the phrase **each one individually** indicates all are gifted just as willed by the Spirit.

Distributing ([1244](#))([diaireo](#) from [dia](#) = between or denoting the channel of an act + [haireomai](#) = choose, prefer, decide) part in two, distribute, apportion, divide (out), distinguish, decide, disperse. NT - 1 Cor 12:11 and Lk 15:12 "'The younger of them said to his father, 'Father, give me the share of the estate that falls to me.' So he **divided** his wealth between them.'" How interesting that he divided his wealth to his son, just as God distributed His wealth to His spiritual sons and daughters (all of us who were also prodigals!).

Wills (wishes, intends) ([1014](#))([boulomai](#) refers to a settled desire, one born of or springing from **reason** and not from **emotion**. **Vine** writes that **boulomai** means "to wish, to will deliberately, and expresses more strongly than **thelo**, the deliberate exercise of the will. In the NT **boulomai** is used primarily of men and conveys the senses mentioned above. **Boulomai** is also used of God meaning to will, to purpose, to wish as in (Lk 22:42; Heb 6:17; Jas 1:18; 2Pe 3:9, of Jesus - Mt 11:27; Lk 10:22, of the Holy Spirit - 1Co 12:11)

MacArthur - **When the Spirit of God rules and energizes a church at least eight evidences will be manifested:**

1. The Spirit-controlled church is **unified**. The Holy Spirit is the source and preserver of unity, a unity that does not crush individuality.
2. The Spirit-controlled church is characterized by **fellowship**. Its fellowship is deep and wide, honest and intimate, inclusive of every believer who cares and participates.
3. The Spirit-controlled church is **worshipful**. Its worship is meaningful, genuine, God-centered, and shared by all, as it honors God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It sings praise, talks praise, and lives praise.
4. The Spirit-controlled church is **evangelistic**. The Holy Spirit is the true instrument of every conversion, every new spiritual birth, and a church that is responsive to Him wins souls spontaneously and joyfully. Bringing unbelievers to new life in Christ is the top priority and natural outflow of its own life.

5. The Spirit-controlled church is **loving**. It is an assembly of people who care and help, a body of believers where selflessness and sacrifice are normal.
6. The Spirit-controlled church is **obedient**. It walks in the path that God prescribes, and only in that path. What the Bible teaches it believes, and what the Bible commands it does.
7. The Spirit-controlled church is **submissive**. Submissiveness is willing obedience, obedience that comes gladly from the heart. It submits to its Lord because it loves its Lord and seeks to please only Him.
8. The Spirit-controlled church **ministers**. Like its Lord Jesus Christ, its call and its goal is not to be served but to serve. It is a community of believers in which each one ministers by the gifting and empowering of the Holy Spirit. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Related Resource:

- A Spirit Filled Church

[Wayne Barber](#) has an interesting illustration of **unity among diversity** in the realm of spiritual gifts - "Remember in chapter 2 (sermon series on Ephesians) we are told we are of God's household and also His Temple. We are living stones being fitted into His Temple, each one of us with different sizes, shapes, gifts, personalities and individualities, but every one of us under the control of the Spirit of God. If someone played a middle C on the piano for a while, it is a pretty note. If he played it for a long time, you would say, "Will you quit? You are driving me crazy!" Isn't it great that unity doesn't mean uniformity? It doesn't mean we are all alike. Wouldn't that make church the most boring place you have ever been in your life? If that fellow added an E and a G and a high C, all of a sudden you would say, "Whew, that sounds good! Now that blends." You've got more than just one. You've got other diversified notes. But when you put them together played by the same hand, you have **unity** amongst the **diversity**. That is what Paul wants you to see. This is the body. This is how it functions. When we are each functioning under the Spirit's power, letting His ability be ours, then our gifts begin to function. Even though our gifts are different, we are still preserving the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. We are different. Folks, **you need to grasp that and stop coveting somebody else's gift and somebody else's ministry and simply say, "God, anything short of hell is grace. I accept what you have given to me. I receive what you have given to me. Let me just be who I am in your power.** When you do that, the unity of the body is being preserved....The word for grace, **charis**, means that which you don't deserve. It is Christ who is the source of every bit of it. Again, **unity** is not **uniformity**. We are all diversified in our gifts as to the amount and as to the gifts themselves. " (bolding added)

Are You a Good Steward of the Spiritual Gift God has Entrusted to Your Care? The following story by an unknown author gives an interesting illustration of how one believer not exercising their gift in the Body can affect the message produced by the entire Body.

A Brokxn Kxy

Evxn though my typxwritxr is an old modxl, it works quitx wxll xxcxpt for onx of the kxys.

I havx many timxs wishxd that is workxd pxrfxctly.

It is trux that thxrx arx forty-onx kxys that function wxll xnough, but just onx kxy not working makxs thx diffxrxncx.

Somxtimxs it sxxms to mx that our church is somxthing likx my typxwritxr -- not all thx kxy pxoplx arx working propxrlly.

As onx of thxm, you may say to yoursxlf, "Wxll, I am only onx pxrson, I don't makx or brxak thx church."

But it doxs makx a big diffxrxncx, bxcasx a church, to bx xffxctivx, nxxds thx activx participation of vxry pxrson.

So, thx nxxt timx your xfforts arx not nxxdxd vxry much, rxmxmbxr my typxwritxr and say to yoursxlf, "I am a kxy pxrson in thx congrxgation and I am nxxdxd vxry much."

This is what happxns to thx wholx church, and multiply this by many timxs -- thx whole thing just doxs not makx sxnsx!

"Belovxd don't bx like a broken kxy."

You must utilize your spiritual gift.

The local body of Christ where you worship needs you and cannot be the same without you!

Do you really believe that?

Use Your Gift!

Do not neglect the gift that is in you. —1 Timothy 4:14

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

God never gives a person a task without also providing him with what's necessary to perform the responsibility.

W. W. Dawley, referring to this truth, says, "God gave Moses a rod, David a sling, Samson the jawbone of a donkey, Shamgar an oxgoad, Esther the beauty of person, Deborah the talent for poetry, Dorcas a needle, and Apollos an eloquent tongue—and to each the ability to use that gift. In so doing, every one of them did most effective works for the Lord."

Our heavenly Father has given at least one spiritual gift to each of us as believers, and He provides all we need to carry out our individual responsibilities (1 Cor. 12:6-7). We are all essential in the body of Christ (vv.14-27). Acknowledging these truths is not only a source of comfort and encouragement, but it is also a sobering reality, for it places before us an important obligation. God's gifts to us must not be squandered! They must be fully used, because someday "each of us shall give account of himself to God" (Rom. 14:12).

What has the Lord given you? Are you using your spiritual gift for His glory and the blessing of others? Don't waste your gift! Use it!

By: Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord God, I humbly ask of You
The strength to do Your will;
I give to You my talents now
Your purpose to fulfill.
—Bierema

God's call to a task includes His strength to complete it.

1 Corinthians 12:12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

ICC - While all the members of the body, though they be many, are one body, so also is the Christ,' in whose Nature they share, in whom they all form one body

Amplified For just as the body is a unity and yet has many parts, and all the parts, though many, form [only] one body, so it is with Christ (the Messiah, the Anointed One).

NET 1 Corinthians 12:12 For just as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body— though many— are one body, so too is Christ.

NLT 1 Corinthians 12:12 The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ.

ESV 1 Corinthians 12:12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

NIV 1 Corinthians 12:12 The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

GNT 1 Corinthians 12:12 Καθ' ὅσον ἡ ἐκκλησία ἓν ἓστιν καὶ ἡμεῖς μέλη πολλὰ καὶ ὅσον τὸ σῶμα ἓν ἓστιν καὶ ὁ Χριστός·

KJV 1 Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

YLT 1 Corinthians 12:12 For, even as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the one body, being many, are one body, so also is the Christ,

ASV 1 Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.

CSB 1 Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one and has many parts, and all the parts of that body, though many, are one body-- so also is Christ.

MIT 1 Corinthians 12:12 There is a parallel between one body with many components and the one body of Christ, of which many components constitute his one body.

NKJ 1 Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.

NRS 1 Corinthians 12:12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.

NAB 1 Corinthians 12:12 As a body is one though it has many parts, and all the parts of the body, though many, are one body, so also Christ.

NJB 1 Corinthians 12:12 For as with the human body which is a unity although it has many parts -- all the parts of the body, though many, still making up one single body -- so it is with Christ.

GWN 1 Corinthians 12:12 For example, the body is one unit and yet has many parts. As all the parts form one body, so it is with Christ.

BBE 1 Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one, and has a number of parts, and all the parts make one body, so is Christ.

- **as:** 1Co 10:17 Ro 12:4-5 Eph 1:22-23 4:4,12,15,16 5:23,30 Col 1:18,24 Col 2:19 Col 3:15
- **so:** 1Co 12:27 Ga 3:16
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Ephesians 1:22-23 And He (GOD THE FATHER) put all things in subjection under His (CHRIST'S) feet, and gave Him as **head** over all things to **the church, 23 which is His body**, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Colossians 1:18 He (CHRIST) is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, so that He Himself will come to have first place in everything.

Colossians 1:24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of **His body**, which is **the church**, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

Colossians 2:18-19 Let no one keep defrauding you of your prize by delighting in self-abasement and the worship of the angels, taking his stand on visions he has seen, inflated without cause by his fleshly mind, and not holding fast to **the Head (CHRIST), from Whom the entire body, being supplied and held together by the joints and ligaments, grows with a growth which is from God.**

THE UNITY OF THE BODY

Paul compares the spiritual body, the Body of Christ, that is, the human body, which is a well-know and unique illustration of unity in diversity

For ([gar](#)) Term of explanation. Paul elaborates on the previous teaching which discussed the variety of gifts to individual members, but now explains that despite the diversity there is still a basic unity. Paul's analogy implies that the saints at Corinth serve the same Head, the Christ and thus must be united not divided (recall that divisions were rampant in Corinth - 1 Cor 1:9-11).

Paul had alluded to the spiritual unity of the church in Corinth earlier writing "Since there is one bread,**we who are many are one body**; for we all partake of the one bread." (1Co 10:17+)

Even as the body ([soma](#)) **is one and yet has many members** ([melos](#)), **and all the members** ([melos](#)) **of the body** ([soma](#)), **though they are many, are one body** ([soma](#)), **so also is Christ** ([Christos](#)) - Note the key words here are "**body**" and **one** which emphasizes the unity of the individual parts of the one body. The **body** refers to the human body that has many parts (each with its own distinct function - a true he will elaborate on below), but all then for added emphasis says essentially the same thing in reverse (stating that the individual parts still compose only one body. Christ (literally "the Christ") in this context clearly refers to the Body of Christ the church, of whom Christ is the Head. (Eph 1:22-23)

As **Kistemaker** says "Paul uses a figure of speech, called metonymy, in which a part represents the whole unit. In other words, Christ represents the entire church. He identifies himself completely with the church, as is evident from Jesus' question to Paul on the way to Damascus: "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?" (Acts 9:4). Jesus taught that he and his people are one (Mt 10:40; Mt 25:45)....In this **body**, the employment of each gift is designed to serve not the individual member but the entire church." ([1 Corinthians Commentary](#))

Paul taught a similar truth to the saints in Rome writing "For just as we have **many members** in **one body** and all the **members** do not have the same function, so we, who are many, **are one body in Christ**, and individually members one of another.(Ro 12:4-5) Here in Romans he emphasized their interdependence or interconnectivity of one with the another.

Question: [How is the church the Body of Christ?](#)

Answer: The phrase "the Body of Christ" is a common New Testament metaphor for the Church (all those who are truly saved). The Church is called "one body in Christ" in Romans 12:5, "one body" in 1 Corinthians 10:17, "the body of Christ" in 1 Corinthians 12:27 and Ephesians 4:12, and "the body" in Hebrews 13:3. The Church is clearly equated with "the body" of Christ in Ephesians 5:23 and Colossians 1:24.

When Christ entered our world, He took on a physical body "prepared" for Him (Hebrews 10:5; Philippians 2:7). Through His physical body, Jesus demonstrated the love of God clearly, tangibly, and boldly—especially through His sacrificial death on the cross (Romans 5:8). After His bodily ascension, Christ continues His work in the world through those He has redeemed—the Church now demonstrates the love of God clearly, tangibly, and boldly. In this way, the Church functions as "the Body of Christ."

The Church may be called the Body of Christ because of these facts:

- 1) Members of the Body of Christ are joined to Christ in salvation (Ephesians 4:15-16).
- 2) Members of the Body of Christ follow Christ as their Head (Ephesians 1:22-23).
- 3) Members of the Body of Christ are the physical representation of Christ in this world. The Church is the organism through which Christ manifests His life to the world today.
- 4) Members of the Body of Christ are indwelt by the Holy Spirit of Christ (Romans 8:9).
- 5) Members of the Body of Christ possess a diversity of gifts suited to particular functions (1 Corinthians 12:4-31). "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ" (1 Cor 12:12).
- 6) Members of the Body of Christ share a common bond with all other Christians, regardless of background, race, or ministry. "There should be no division in the body, but . . . its parts should have equal concern for each other" (1 Corinthians 12:25).
- 7) Members of the Body of Christ are secure in their salvation (John 10:28-30). For a Christian to lose his salvation, God would have to perform an "amputation" on the Body of Christ!
- 8) Members of the Body of Christ partake of Christ's death and resurrection (Colossians 2:12).
- 9) Members of the Body of Christ share Christ's inheritance (Romans 8:17).
- 10) Members of the Body of Christ receive the gift of Christ's righteousness (Romans 5:17). [GotQuestions.org](#)

Related Resources:

- [What is unity in Christ? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [What is the importance of Christian unity? | GotQuestions.org](#)
- [How can a church achieve a true, biblical unity? | GotQuestions.org](#)

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

- **by:** 1Co 10:2 Isa 44:3-5 Eze 36:25-27 Mt 3:11 Lu 3:16 Joh 1:16,33 3:5 Ac 1:5 Ro 6:3-6 8:9-11 Eph 4:5 5:26 Col 2:11,12 Tit 3:4-6 1Pe 3:21
- **whether Jews:** Ro 3:29 4:11 Ga 3:23,28 Eph 2:11-16,19-22 3:6 Col 1:27 3:11

- **slaves:** 1Co 7:21,22 Eph 6:8
- **to drink:** Song 5:1 Isa 41:17-18 Isa 55:1 Zec 9:15-17 Joh 4:10,14 John 6:63 John 7:37-39
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Romans 6:3-6 Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin;

Isaiah 55:1 "Ho! Every one who thirsts, come to the waters; And you who have no money come, buy and eat. Come, buy wine and milk Without money and without cost.

John 4:10; 14 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water." (4:14) but whoever drinks of the water that I will give him shall never thirst; but the water that I will give him will become in him a well of water springing up to eternal life."

John 7:37-39 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

BAPTIZED BY ONE SPIRIT

The key point in that since they are all baptized with one Spirit, the church at Corinth are all one Body.

For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body ([soma](#)) - Note the repeated word **one** which speaks of unity. Paul continues emphasizing unity in the midst of the diversity of spiritual gifts. Paul is referring to what transpired to each individual when they accepted Christ as Savior. Is this water baptism? Why or why not? Notice Who "performs" (so to speak) the baptism. Is this a pastor, an elder, etc? Paul plainly stated **they were all** (not some) **baptized by one Spirit**. This **not** water baptism but Spirit baptism, when the Spirit brought each believer into the New Covenant and the living, eternal union and oneness with Jesus Christ. So the idea is that each of these believers were identified with one body, the body of Christ (cf Israel identified with Moses - 1 Cor 10:2+). This miracle transpired the moment they accepted Christ. They may have been converted at different times, but they all end up in the same place, **in one body**. Paul keeps emphasizing the unity of the believers as a supernatural work of the Spirit.

It is not true that speaking in tongues is the invariable sign of being baptized by the Spirit (cf 1 Cor 12:30)

-- William MacDonald

MacArthur - It should also be noted that the phrase "baptism of the Holy Spirit" is not a correct translation of any passage in the New Testament, including this one. *En heni pneumati* (by one Spirit) can mean "by or with one Spirit." Because believers are baptized by Christ, it is therefore best to translate this phrase as "with one Spirit." It is not the Holy Spirit's baptism but Christ's baptism with the Holy Spirit that gives us new life and places us into the Body when we trust in Christ. It is not possible to be a Christian and not be baptized by Christ with the Holy Spirit. Nor is it possible to have more than one baptism with the Spirit. There is only one Spirit baptism, the baptism of Christ with the Spirit that all believers receive when they are born again. By this the Son places all believers into the sphere of the Spirit's power and Person, into a new environment, a new atmosphere, a new relationship with others, and a new union with Jesus Christ. The pouring forth of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost also reveals that this baptism was by Jesus Christ (Acts 2:32-33), in fulfillment of John the Baptist's prediction (Matt. 3:11; etc.) and of Jesus' own promise (John 7:37-39; 15:7-15; Acts 1:5). We are not told exactly how this is done, any more than we are told exactly how God can give a person a new heart and new life. Those are mysteries beyond our comprehension. But there is no mystery as to the divine roles in salvation. The Father sent the Son and the Son sends the Spirit. The Son is the divine Savior, and the Holy Spirit is the divine Comforter, Helper, and Advocate. The Son is the baptizer and the Holy Spirit is the agent of baptism. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Baptized (907) ([baptizo](#) from **bapto** = cover wholly with a fluid; stain or dip as with dye; used of the smith tempering the red-hot steel, used of dyeing the hair; of a ship that "dipped" = sank) has a literal and a figurative meaning in the NT. The literal meaning is to submerge, to dip or immerse as in water. A study of the

77 NT uses reveals that most of the uses of **baptizo** in the Gospels and Acts are associated with literal water baptism. Figuratively, **baptizo** pictures the introduction or placing of a person or thing into a new environment or into union with something else so as to alter its condition or its relationship to its previous environment or condition. In this sense baptizo means to be identified with. **Uses** in 1 Corinthians - 1 Co. 1:13; 1 Co. 1:14; 1 Co. 1:15; 1 Co. 1:16; 1 Co. 1:17; 1 Co. 10:2; 1 Co. 12:13; 1 Co. 15:29

whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free - These would have been the two main religious groups and the two main socioeconomic groups. Their former religious and socioeconomic status had led to separation in their lives.

In a parallel passage in Galatians we read

For all of you who were **baptized** into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; for **you are all one in Christ Jesus**. (Galatians 3:27-28)

Jews (2453) **Ioudaios** ultimately derived from Hebrew Yehudi = a member of the tribe of Judah) is an adjective refers to one who belongs to the Jewish race with focus on adherence to Mosaic tradition (Acts 10:28, 22:3, 21:39). A Jew in respect to race or religion (as opposed to Gentiles).

Greeks (1672) (**Hellen**) can refer culturally, to a person of Greek language and civilization (Ro 1.14) and opposite barbaros (foreigner). Here it is used in a religious sense of a Gentile, a non-Jew, a pagan (Jn 7.35).

Slaves (1401) **doulos** from **deo** = to bind) (Click additional notes on **doulos**) was an individual bound to another in servitude and conveys the idea of the slave's close, binding ties with his master, belonging to him, obligated to and desiring to do his will and in a permanent relation of servitude. In sum, the will of the **doulos** is consumed in the will of the master. Doulos in 1-2 Corinthians - 1 Co. 7:21; 1 Co. 7:22; 1 Co. 7:23; 1 Co. 12:13; 2 Co. 4:5;

Free (1658) (**eleutheros**) is an adjective which means freedom to go wherever one likes, at liberty, possessing the capability of movement, exempt from restraint, obligation or liability, unconstrained, unfettered. In the Greek culture this word pictured one who can go wherever they please) (from Homer down). For example, in one secular writing we find this statement "the temple of Artemis at Ephesus is **open** (free) to all". Eleutheros in 1 Corinthians - 1 Co. 7:21; 1 Co. 7:22; 1 Co. 7:39; 1 Co. 9:1; 1 Co. 9:19; 1 Co. 12:13;

And we were all made to drink of one Spirit - Paul uses the metaphor of **made to drink** as an expression of the spiritual refreshing that all four groups experienced as a result of the work of the Holy Spirit. There was no partiality with the Spirit. All four groups received the same Spirit. In Romans 8:9 Paul taught that every believer possesses the Spirit - "However, you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him."

Question: [What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit?](#)

Answer: The baptism of the Holy Spirit may be defined as that work whereby the Spirit of God places the believer into [union with Christ](#) and into union with other believers in the body of Christ at the moment of salvation. The baptism of the Holy Spirit was predicted by John the Baptist (Mark 1:8) and by Jesus before He ascended to heaven: "For John baptized with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 1:5). This promise was fulfilled on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-4); for the first time, people were permanently indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and the church had begun.

First Corinthians 12:12-13 is the central passage in the Bible regarding the baptism of the Holy Spirit: "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Notice that we "all" have been baptized by the Spirit—all believers have received the baptism, synonymous with salvation, and it is not a special experience for only a few. While Romans 6:1-4 does not mention specifically the Spirit of God, it does describe the believer's position before God in language similar to the 1 Corinthians passage: "What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."

The following facts are necessary to help solidify our understanding of Spirit baptism: First, 1 Corinthians 12:13 clearly states that all have been baptized, just as all been given the Spirit to drink (the indwelling of the Spirit). Second, nowhere in Scripture are believers told to be baptized with, in or by the Spirit, or in any sense to seek the baptism of the Holy Spirit. This indicates that all believers have had this experience. Third, Ephesians 4:5 seems to refer to Spirit baptism. If this is the case, Spirit baptism is the reality for

every believer, just as “one faith” and “one Father” are.

In conclusion, the baptism of the Holy Spirit does two things, 1) it joins us to the body of Christ, and 2) it actualizes our co-crucifixion with Christ. Being in His body means we are risen with Him to newness of life (Romans 6:4). We should then exercise our spiritual gifts to keep that body functioning properly as stated in the context of 1 Corinthians 12:13. Experiencing the one Spirit baptism serves as the basis for keeping the unity of the church, as in the context of Ephesians 4:5. Being associated with Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection through Spirit baptism establishes the basis for our separation from the power of indwelling sin and our walk in newness of life (Romans 6:1-10; Colossians 2:12). GotQuestions.org

Related Resource:

- [Is there a second blessing subsequent to salvation? | GotQuestions.org](http://GotQuestions.org) - Excerpt - "**Confusion about the baptism and the filling of the Spirit** ([How can I be filled with the Holy Spirit?](http://GotQuestions.org)) leads to confusion in doctrine. The **baptism of the Holy Spirit** (also known as sealing or indwelling) **happens at salvation and is for all believers** (Romans 8:9; Ephesians 1:13). **We are never commanded to seek it or pray for it. The filling of the Spirit can happen both at and subsequent to salvation, based on our responses to God. We are commanded to be filled with the Spirit** (Ephesians 5:18)"

1 Corinthians 12:14 For the body is not one member, but many.

- 1Co 12:12,19,27,28 Eph 4:25
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

DIVERSIFIED BUT NOT DIVIDED

The illustration/analogy of the physical body is used throughout this next section, and the lessons drawn are based on the application of 1 Cor 12:27 "Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it."

MacArthur Study Bible - By his illustration of how every part of a human body is essential to the function of that body, Paul showed that unity is an indispensable need of the church; but divinely-provided diversity within that unity is also necessary

For ([gar](#)) Term of explanation. Paul proceeds the concept of body he had just described in 1 Cor 12:13.

The body ([soma](#)) **is not one member** ([melos](#)), **but many** - Paul will use the picture of the human body to describe the unity of the body of Christ which has many members, just as a human body has many members. Paul's point is that the church is not one member but many.

Staton - Paul will apply to the parts of our physical body what the members of Christ's body in the Corinthian church are doing to themselves and to one another. What he does is a bit comical at first, but it really gets to the heart of the matter. What would each different part of one's physical body think about and say if each individual part had its own brain and its own mouth? Particularly, what would each part think and say as each compared itself to the other parts of the physical body? The problem is that each person in Christ's body (the church) does have his own brain and can talk. And many times, we think and speak negatively as we compare ourselves with others in the church. ([1 Corinthians](#))

Let's Stick Together

For in fact the body is not one member but many. —1 Corinthians 12:14

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Most regions of the world are familiar with the amazing phenomenon of snow. Snowflakes are beautiful, uniquely crafted ice crystals. Individual snowflakes are fragile, and they quickly melt if they land on your hand. Yet, en masse they create a force to be reckoned with. They can shut down major cities while creating beautiful landscapes of snow-laden trees whose pictures decorate calendars and become the subject of artwork. They provide pleasure on the ski slopes and joy for children as they make snowmen and ammunition for snowball fights. All because they stick together.

So it is with those of us who follow Christ. Each of us has been uniquely gifted with the capacity to make a contribution to the work of Christ. We were never intended to live in isolation but to work together to become a great force for God and the advance of His cause. As Paul reminds us, the body of Christ "is not one member but many" (1 Cor. 12:14). All of us are to use our gifts to serve

one another so that together we can make a significant difference in our world.

Put your giftedness to work, joyfully cooperate with the giftedness of those around you, and let the wind of the Spirit use you for His glory! By: Joe Stowell ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, teach us to use our strengths in cooperation with the strengths of others. Help us to serve as one so that we might know the joy of the power of our togetherness for Your name's sake and the advance of Your kingdom.

We can accomplish more together than we can alone.

The Wooden Rule

The body is not one member but many. —1 Corinthians 12:14

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:14-26

Legendary UCLA basketball coach John Wooden had an interesting rule for his teams. Whenever a player scored, he was to acknowledge the person on the team who had assisted. When he was coaching high school, one of his players asked, "Coach, won't that take up too much time?" Wooden replied, "I'm not asking you to run over there and give him a big hug. A nod will do." To achieve victory on the basketball court, Wooden saw the importance of teaching his players that they were a team—not "just a bunch of independent operators." Each person contributed to the success of everyone else.

That reminds me of the way the body of Christ should work. According to 1 Corinthians 12:19-20, each of us is a separate part of one body. "If they were all one member, where would the body be? But . . . there are many members, yet one body." Is the success of a pastor, a Bible study, or a church program based solely on one person's accomplishments? How many people contribute to the smooth operation of a church, a Christian organization, a family?

Coach Wooden's rule and 1 Corinthians 12 are both rooted in the principle of seeing our need for one another. Let's use our gifts within the body of Christ to build up, strengthen, and help to carry out God's purposes (vv.1-11). By: Cindy Hess Kasper ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

All Christians have been gifted
By grace from God above,
Equipped to build and strengthen
The church in faith and love.
—Fitzhugh

There are no unimportant people in the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:15 If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body.

- Judges 9:8-15 2Ki 14:9
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

MacDonald points out that "When we see that diversity is essential to a normal, healthy body, it will save us from two dangers—from belittling ourselves (vv. 15–20) and from belittling others (vv. 21–25).

If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not a part of the body([soma](#))," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body ([soma](#)). - Paul presents a hypothetical situation where a foot can speak and because it is just a simple foot and not a useful hand, it feels it has no connection with the body. Paul immediately counters that just because it is a foot, indeed a foot with a "low self image" so to speak, that does not mean it does not belong to the body.

Here Paul refutes the self-deprecation of believers who viewed themselves as less useful. He says "Not true!"

THOUGHT - The foot here speaking self-deprecatingly belies the importance of the foot, especially the toe. How many gifted football players have been side-lined by the little injury called "[turf toe](#)!" Is there a believer with a less showy gift in your body who is sidelined by "[turf toe](#)? If so, the spiritual progress of the entire Body will be hindered!

Staton - A foot that compared itself to a hand would surely have an inferiority complex (1 Corinthians 12:15). And why not? We do much for our hands but very little for our feet in the area of cosmetics. ([1 Corinthians](#))

Guzik - If the foot felt or declared itself not part of the body because it was not a hand, the foot would be both foolish and mistaken. Diversity does not disqualify one from the body. Here, Paul puts the question in the mouth of the one who feels excluded from the body. It is as if some of the Corinthian Christians said, "I don't have this certain spiritual gift. I guess I'm not part of the body of Jesus Christ." After all, hands and eyes seem more important and more "glamorous" than feet and ears. So Paul wants these Christians who felt excluded to know they are indeed members of the body, and their sense that they are not is just as foolish as the foot or the ear that feels excluded.. Yet the same principle can be stated towards those who want to exclude others from the body. Paul could have just as well said, "The hand cannot say the foot is not of the body because it is not a hand." Paul wants Christians who might exclude others because they don't appreciate their place in the body to recognize the fact of unity. ([1 Corinthians 12 Commentary](#))

MacArthur- Many of the Corinthian believers were unhappy with their gifts. Envy is a sure sign of carnality, and it seems that everyone wanted a gift that someone else had. Paul's analogy is graphic as he extends the illustration of the human body. The person with a foot thought he could not really be a part of the church body because he was not a hand. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Holman Study Bible - Paul personified body parts as speakers to express the absurdity of envy and self-deprecation among members of the physical human body. Some Corinthians apparently fell into grading the gifts, attaching importance to public, showy gifts (such as the gift of utterance), and relative unimportance to less observable gifts.

NIV Study Bible - Addressed mainly to those who feel that their gifts are inferior and unimportant. Apparently the more spectacular gifts (such as tongues) had been glorified in the Corinthian church, making those who did not have them feel inferior.

Foot-And-Mouth Disease

We dare not class ourselves or compare ourselves with those who commend themselves. — 2 Corinthians 10:12

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Foot-and-mouth disease is highly contagious among cloven-hoofed animals. Blisters form around the mouth, and the feet become extremely painful. The animals will not eat or drink, and they lose weight rapidly. Fortunately, preventive measures have made this infection virtually nonexistent in the US today.

A spiritual kind of foot-and-mouth disease continues in epidemic proportions in the church. In 1 Corinthians 12, believers are likened to the members of a body. This kind of foot-and-mouth disease breaks out when those who belong to the body of Christ, the church, begin comparing themselves among themselves (1 Cor 12:12). A "foot" may become dissatisfied with its inability to express itself like the "mouth." And the "mouth" may feel inadequate because it can't move about and bear the weight of the body. Such Christians lose their spiritual appetite and become ineffective in serving the Lord.

God's children have been sovereignly designed and placed in the body of Christ for specific purposes. Each of us is vital to the well-being of the whole. And when we fulfill our role, there will be harmony, and our Savior will receive the glory. Let's put an end to foot-and-mouth disease in the church. By: Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Christ gives each member of His church
His special gifts to use;
He sovereignly distributes them—
We do not pick and choose.
—Sper

For a healthier church, exercise your spiritual gifts.

The Mighty Toe

If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body," is it therefore not of the body? —1 Corinthians 12:15

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:14-26

Recently, I heard of a sport that challenges my imagination—I can't comprehend why anyone would play it. It's called [Toe Wrestling](#). Every year, people from across the globe gather in England for the world championships. Competitors sit on the ground

facing each other and then lock the big toe of the other's bare foot. The object is to pin the opponent's foot in a manner similar to the way an arm wrestler pins a competitor's wrist. It sounds strange to me. In a way, this unusual competition gives honor to a part of the body that's largely ignored—until we drop something on it. Our toes and feet are vital parts of our anatomy, yet we pay little attention to them unless they hurt.

Perhaps that's why Paul used the foot to remind us that there are no unimportant parts in the body of Christ. In 1 Corinthians 12:15, he said, "If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I am not of the body,' is it therefore not of the body?" The only correct answer: "Of course it's part of the body."

Paul wants us to realize that each person in the body of Christ is important. Even if you think of yourself as the most overlooked and ignored member of the body of Christ, you have value. And you can honor God like a true champion by using your unique skills for God's glory. By: Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Reflect & Pray

God builds His church with different stones,
He makes each one belong;
All shapes and sizes fit in place
To make the structure strong.
—Sper

The Lord uses small tools to perform large tasks.

1 Corinthians 12:16 And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body.

- is it: 1Co 12:16,22 Ro 12:3,10 Php 2:3
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not a part of the body(soma)," it is not for this reason any the less a part of the body (soma) - Paul uses the same picture as described with the foot, the **ear** claiming that it did not belong to the body because it was not the useful **eye**. Paul says that the ear is mistaken!

MacDonald - The ear shouldn't try to become a dropout because it is not an eye. We take our ears for granted till deafness overtakes us. Then we realize what a tremendously useful function they perform. (**ED**: As I have sadly begun to find out at age 75!) ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

Staton - An ear that compares itself to an eye also has an inferiority complex.... While we would not want members of our physical body to feel inferior to other members and then to begin to cop out on function, so Christ does not want members of His body, the church, to do that either. We can have a functioning body precisely because we have different parts of the body that have different kinds of functions. And one part needs the other parts. ([1 Corinthians](#))

MacArthur- Envy is also frequently petulant and pouting. If it cannot have its own way it takes its marbles and goes home, and will not play with the others. That is what some of the immature believers at Corinth were doing. In seeming humility, they said, "I don't have a spiritual gift, so I am not really a part of the church," or "My gift is second-rate and unimportant. I have nothing to offer, so why participate?" But that attitude does not reflect humility. It is self-centered, selfish, and an affront to God's wisdom and love. Disclaiming responsibility does not remove it. Refusing to function as part of the body does not make us any the less a part of the body or any less responsible for ministering within it. We have no right to remove ourselves from our God-given responsibilities just because we are dissatisfied with what we are and what we have. Many Christians have never known the joy of ministry and of pleasing the Lord simply because they do not recognize or refuse to use the gifts and opportunities God has given them. That is disobedience. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

1 Corinthians 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?

- 1Co 12:21,29 1Sa 9:9 Ps 94:9 139:13-16 Pr 20:12

- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

THE ILLOGIC A BODY OF ONE EYE OR EAR

If the whole body ([soma](#)) were an eye, where would the hearing be? - Paul now uses simple logic to point how ludicrous it would be if the body were nothing but an eye. In such a case what part would do the hearing? Everyone in the church could not do the same thing and have a fully functioning body.

Paul is saying in essence can you imagine your body as one big eyeball (possibly alluding to the more "showy" gifts)? How would you get around town? You'd have to roll, wouldn't you? When you rolled, you would be on the ground & you'd get dirt in your eye. You wouldn't have a hand to get the dirt out of your eye. What is Paul's point? The point is that you can't say because I don't have this gift that I'm not part of the body.

If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be- Paul extends the ludicrous picture to a body that is nothing but hearing asking how such a body would be able to smell anything? Of course it could not. And that is the point he is building to, that all the parts of the body are necessary for the body to function like a body.

MacDonald has a somewhat comical comment - If the whole body were an eye, you would have a deaf oddity fit only for a circus sideshow. Or if the body had only ears, it wouldn't have a nose to detect when the gas was escaping and soon wouldn't even be able to hear because it would be unconscious or dead. The point that Paul is driving at is that if the body were all tongue, it would be a freak, and a monstrosity. And yet the Corinthians were so overemphasizing the gift of tongues that they were, in effect, creating a local fellowship that would be all tongue. It could talk, but that was all it could do! ([Believer's Bible Commentary](#))

1 Corinthians 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.

- hath: 1Co 12:24,28
- as it: 1Co 12:11 3:5 15:38 Ps 110:3 135:6 Isa 46:10 Jon 1:14 Lu 10:21 12:32 Ro 12:3 Eph 1:5,9 Rev 4:11
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE MEMBERS

But now - Term of contrast.

God has placed the members ([melos](#)), each one of them, in the body ([soma](#)), just as He desired - Paul is still using the body to illustrate his point about the various parts of the body and their seeming greater or lesser value. He says the body is God's [sovereign](#) design and as the Master Architect He placed each part of the body exactly where He wanted.

Explore the Bible Commentary – Again Paul stressed God's [sovereignty](#) in placing the parts ... in the body. It was His choice to assign hands, feet, ears, and eyes to their respective places and purposes. On the surface this verse refers to the literal human body: God puts the parts of the human body just where He wants. At a deeper level, however, is a reference to the spiritual body of Christ: God puts the gifts of the Spirit just where He desires in the congregation. To deny the importance of certain gifts is really to question God's wisdom in distributing the spiritual gifts. (1, 2 Corinthians Summer 2010).

Pulpit Commentary on just as He desired - Not arbitrarily, but in furtherance of one wise and beneficent design, so that each may be honoured and indispensable, and therefore contented in its own sphere.

MacArthur - By wanting gifts they did not have, the Corinthian believers questioned God's wisdom and goodness by implying He had made a mistake. They also opened themselves up to fleshly and demonic counterfeits. Their primary problem was not intellectual but spiritual. They did not see their gifts rightly because they did not see the [sovereign](#) God rightly. They had not received their gifts by accident or whim.....God has created us, re-created us, placed each of us in His Body exactly where He wants us to be, and equipped us to do exactly what He wants us to do.....We all have what God desires for us (cf. Rom. 12:3b) and are to receive the privileged gift with joyful thanks. It is terribly tragic when believers are discontent with their spiritual gifts, their circumstances, or with anything the Lord has given them. In God's Body, which is also His family, there is no place for discontent, envy, selfishness, or conceit. No Christian would be better off, or happier, with a showier or more prominent gift. We cannot be happy except with what God has given us, because He gives each and every one of His children the very best possible. What He has given another believer would not be His best for us. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

It Takes Two

God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. —1 Corinthians 12:18

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

While visiting Christian workers in the country of Romania, Charlie VanderMeer from Children's Bible Hour went to an orphanage where people with physical and mental disabilities live together.

Misha, a young man of 24, broadcasts music and Christian programs into the orphanage buildings. Although he is paralyzed below the waist, he gets around just fine. A friend, who has Down's syndrome and cannot hear or speak, carries him on his shoulders.

Charlie could tell by the smile on the face of the man who carries Misha that this is his mission in life. According to a worker, when Misha had to be gone for a few weeks, his friend didn't know what to do.

What a picture of members of the body of Christ relying on one another! Each of us is a little like Misha. We are partially equipped to do the work of the Lord, but we need the "legs" of our fellow believers to carry us along.

This example of Misha and his friend reminds us that none of us can do the entire job alone. God designed us to rely on each other as we serve Him. So look for ways you can help others, and learn to appreciate how much you can do together. By: Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We all depend upon the strength
We draw from one another,
For we're connected by the love
That comes from God our Father.
—Sper

Teamwork divides the effort and multiplies the effect.

A Piece Of The Puzzle

God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. —1 Corinthians 12:18

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

At her birthday celebration, the honored guest turned the tables by giving everyone at the party a gift. Kriste gave each of us a personal note expressing what we mean to her, along with encouraging words about the person God made us to be. Enclosed with every note was one piece of a jigsaw puzzle as a reminder that each of us is unique and important in God's plan.

That experience helped me to read 1 Corinthians 12 with new eyes. Paul compared the church—the body of Christ—to a human body. Just as our physical bodies have hands, feet, eyes, and ears, all are part of a unified body. No follower of Christ can claim independence from the body, nor can one part tell another that it is not needed (vv.12-17). "God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased" (v.18).

It's easy to feel less important than others whose gifts are different and perhaps more visible than ours. The Lord, however, wants us to see ourselves as He does—uniquely created and highly valued by Him.

You are one piece of a picture that is not complete without you. God has gifted you to be an important part of the body of Christ to bring Him honor. By: David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Lord, help me not to compare myself with others in Your family. May I seek instead to be the person You've made me to be, and help me to use what You've given me to bless others today.

Your life is God's gift to you; make it your gift to God.

The Right People

God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. —1 Corinthians 12:18

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:7-18

The film *Miracle* tells the true story of the 1980 US Olympic ice hockey team as it marches to an improbable gold medal. At the outset of the story, coach Herb Brooks is shown selecting the players for his team. When he gives assistant coach Craig Patrick a list of names he has chosen, Craig says in surprise, "You're missing some of the best players." Brooks responds, "I'm not looking for the best players, Craig—just the right ones."

Brooks knew that individual talent would take the team only so far. A willingness to fit into his style of selfless play would be far more important than talent. Clearly, team success, not individual glory, was the priority.

The biblical call to service has a similar emphasis. In God's purposes, each believer does his or her part, but the results are team-oriented. After explaining the wide differences in the spiritual gifts of believers, Paul says, "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all" (1 Cor. 12:7). When we use the skills God gives us, His purposes are accomplished, and He gets the glory. In God's service, it's not about being the best, the most talented, or the most gifted. It's about being the right people—the ones God "set . . . in the body" (v.18)—joining together to serve the same team. By: Bill Crowder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Christ builds His church with different stones
And makes each one secure;
All shapes and sizes fit in place
To make His church endure.
—Anon.

There are no unimportant people in the body of Christ.

Be Like A Bee

God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. —1 Corinthians 12:18

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:1-18

The honeybee has one of the most highly developed social structures in the animal kingdom. At the heart of the hive, which may house as many as 80,000 bees, is the queen. Without her, the colony has no future. But the 80,000 don't just sit around watching their queen. Each bee has a specialized duty to fulfill.

The forager bees encounter the perils of the outside world to collect food. The guard bees protect the hive entrance from intruders. The undertakers are responsible for removing dead bodies from the hive. The water collectors bring in moisture to regulate humidity. The plasterers make a kind of cement to repair the hive. And the fanners station themselves at the entrance and fan the scent outward to signal the location of the colony to lost or disoriented bees. The scout bees keep the hive alerted to opportunities and dangers of the outside world. The variety and specialization of the worker bees seem endless.

In a similar way, the Lord has given special gifts and tasks to all the people in His church. No one has been called merely to sit around. Everyone can do something. The work of the church will not get done unless all of us do what God has called us to do. By: Mart DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Christ builds His church and makes it strong
By using you and me,
And if we all will do our part
The world His love will see.
—Sper

The church works best when we see ourselves as participants, not spectators.

Eye-Hand Coordination

God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased. —1 Corinthians 12:18

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:14-22

Airline pilot Alan Cockrell said it wasn't a noble ideal that caused him to roll up his sleeves and help a ground crew clean the interior of his 737 one night in Nashville. He needed a ride home and one of the crew offered to take him. The sooner they finished, the sooner he'd get home. As the pilot helped clean the overhead bins, wipe down the tray tables, and fold the seatbelts, he gained a new appreciation for the people whose role in the airline was much different from his.

There's a lesson here for us as Christians. The Bible describes our relationship to other believers as interdependent members of one body. God has built into His church an essential "eye-hand coordination." "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you; nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you'" (1 Cor. 12:21). Each believer is necessary and worthy of honor and appreciation by the others because "God has set the members, each one of them, in the body just as He pleased" (v.18).

We can improve the appreciation level in the body of believers by taking note of the contribution others make. And that will make for a kind of eye-hand coordination we can all benefit from. By: David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Putting It Into Practice

- Is there a church worker or teacher who might appreciate a note or word of thanks from you?
- What needs to be done in your church? Can you help?

Instead of putting others in their place, try putting yourself in their place.

1 Corinthians 12:19 If they were all one member, where would the body be?

- 1Co 12:14
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

A BODY OF ONE PART IS NO-BODY!

If they were all one member ([melos](#)), where would the body ([soma](#)) be? - The NLT paraphrases it "How strange a body would be if it had only one part!" This is a rhetorical question to get their attention. This would be absurd and they would all recognize that truth.

MacArthur - A body that had only one part would not be a body. A church whose members all had the same gift and the same ministry would not really be a church. It is foolish and immature not to be content with or use what the Lord has given us. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

1 Corinthians 12:20 But now there are many members, but one body.

- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

MANY MEMBERS ONE BODY

But now - Term of contrast.

There are many members ([melos](#)), but one body ([soma](#)) - Paul returns to the thought of many members or parts of the body, but still only **one body**. He is driving home the point of the unity of the body in spite of its many members or parts. He is preparing to show the mutual dependence of one part on the other, which of course applies to the mutual dependence of one believer on another believer. This remind me of the saying "[No man is an island](#)." The idea of that familiar idiom is that a person requires the company and support of others and society as a whole in order to thrive. The line is from John Donne's Devotions upon Emergent Occasions, published in 1624. Human beings necessarily depend on one another. This principle is even more true in the Body of Christ!

In Tune With Christ

Indeed there are many members, yet one body. —1 Corinthians 12:20

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-20

In his book The Pursuit of God, A. W. Tozer wrote, "Has it ever occurred to you that one hundred pianos all tuned to the same fork

are automatically tuned to each other? They are of one accord by being tuned not to each other but to another standard to which each one must individually bow. So one hundred worshipers [meeting] together, each one looking away to Christ, are in heart nearer to each other than they could possibly be were they to become unity-conscious and turn their eyes away from God to strive for closer fellowship."

Although Tozer's comments were written with worship in mind, they reveal the secret of Christian unity. The more we center our thoughts on Christ, the more we will be drawn to one another as His followers and the more our differences will fade into insignificance.

We can have honest disagreements and still have unity, especially if we make it our priority to be in fellowship with Christ. The apostle John wrote, "That which we have seen and heard we declare to you, that you also may have fellowship with us; and truly our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ" (1 Jn. 1:3).

Do you sense unity with other believers? Are you "in tune" with Christ? By: Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love!
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.
—Fawcett

To have harmony with other believers, we must be in tune with Christ.

Real Christians

There are many members, yet one body. — 1 Corinthians 12:20

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

What does the word Yankee mean to you? Robert W. Mayer, in a Wall Street Journal article, writes, "To people in other parts of the world it simply means someone from the United States; to people in the United States it means someone from north of the Mason-Dixon Line; to us Northerners it means someone from New England; to New Englanders it means someone from Vermont; to Vermonters it means someone from the Green Mountains."

The term Christian has taken on a wide range of meaning too. Some have even equated being a Christian with being an American. That's far too wide! But we who believe in Jesus Christ often make the definition too narrow. We describe as "real Christians" only those men and women who believe and worship exactly as we do.

Certainly sound doctrine is vital! There is no room for disagreement over the fundamentals of the faith. But a "real Christian" is anyone who relies on God's grace and puts his trust in Christ alone as his only hope of salvation.

Believers share an enormous common ground with each other because they belong to an uncommon Christ. Don't reject real Christians—brothers and sisters who have accepted Jesus' once-for-all sacrifice for sin. By: Haddon W. Robinson ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Since God receives repentant souls
Who've trusted in His Son,
We too must love and welcome them
Because in Christ we're one.
—Hess

Don't reject anyone whom God has accepted.

1 Corinthians 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

- Nu 10:31,32 1Sa 25:32 Ezr 10:1-5 Ne 4:16-21 Job 29:11

THEIR PRIDE

And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." He again personifies the parts of the body. The point is that one part cannot function without the other part of the body. Some who are more gifted (or have showy gifts) might feel they are more important but Paul's analogy with the body gives them a sharp rebuke. One member of the spiritual Body cannot pridefully say they don't need another part of the Body.

POSB - Too often, there are some who feel they are more important than others in the church. They feel their gifts and contributions are more significant than that of others. The thrust of this point is that such feelings and thoughts are inaccurate, totally inaccurate. Even the lowest and least gifted member (who is using his gift) is as important to the function of the church as the minister or the most gifted person. (Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 & 2 Corinthians)

Pulpit Commentary - A rebuke to the pride of those who thought their own gifts to be exclusively valuable

MacArthur Study Bible - While some in Corinth were bemoaning the fact that they did not have the showy gifts those who did were belittling those with the more quiet and less prominent gifts. The "eye" and the "head," which are highly visible and the focus of all who engage each other, represent the people with public gifts. They so overestimated their own importance that they disdained those whom they perceived as less gifted and less significant. They were apparently indifferent ("I have no need") and self-sufficient. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

It Takes Teamwork!

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you." —1 Corinthians 12:21

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-25

During a rehearsal at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York City, the renowned conductor Arturo Toscanini offered some constructive criticism to the featured soloist. She was too proud to accept his help, however, and expressed her resentment by exclaiming in anger, "I am the star of this performance!" Toscanini responded wisely and firmly, "Madame, in this performance there are no stars."

The maestro had made a strong point. The soloists, the members of the chorus, and the orchestra all had to work together in harmony or there could be no beautiful music.

This is also true of the church. In Paul's first letter to the Corinthians, he likened the parts of our physical body to individuals in the church, the body of Christ. All of us as believers have our own unique traits and individual duties, but taken together we comprise one body. We must therefore recognize how much we need one another. Paul wrote, "The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you'; nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you'" (12:21).

The Lord isn't looking for soloists who want to be stars; He's looking for workers who are willing to be servants. God's work takes teamwork! —By: Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thinking It Over

What are your motives for serving in the church?

How do you respond when your work goes unnoticed?

How does your attitude need to change?

Teamwork divides the effort and multiplies the effect.

Meet The Tates

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." —1 Corinthians 12:21

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Teamwork is essential in business and industry. To underscore this point, Co-op Magazine included this item: "You've heard of the corny Tate family. They pervade every organization. There is Dick Tate, who wants to run everything. Ro Tate tries to change everything. Agi Tate stirs up trouble whenever possible, and Irri Tate always lends him a hand.

"Whenever new ideas are suggested, Hesi Tate and Vegi Tate pour cold water on them. Imi Tate tries to mimic everyone, Devas

Tate loves to be disruptive, and Poten Tate wants to be a big shot. But it's Facili Tate, Cogi Tate, and Medi Tate who always save the day and get everyone pulling together."

A one-man show doesn't get very far. But nowhere is this truth brought to a higher and more powerful fulfillment than in the body of Christ. The Scriptures teach that by God's design all who are in Christ have been made dependent on one another. We may think we can go it on our own, but we can't. We can't fulfill our high calling as members of the body of Christ until we begin to realize that we all have a vital part to play. We are family. We need one another.

Lord, help us to overcome our stubborn pride. Teach us to cooperate—for our sake and for Yours. By: Mart DeHaan [Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

If great and small work side by side
When it comes time to lend a hand,
And if they turn their backs on pride,
Christ's servant-heart they'll understand.
—Branon

Coming together is a start; keeping together is progress; working together is success.

1 Corinthians 12:22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary;

- Pr 14:28 Ec 4:9-12 5:9 9:14,15 2Co 1:11 Titus 2:9,10
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Luke 22:26 "But it is not this way with you, but the one who is the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like the servant.

Romans 12:3 For through the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think more highly of himself than he ought to think; but to think so as to have sound judgment, as God has allotted to each a measure of faith.

1 Corinthians 1:27-29 but God has chosen the foolish things of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen the weak things of the world to shame the things which are strong, 28 and the base things of the world and the despised God has chosen, the things that are not, so that He may nullify the things that are, 29 so that no man may boast before God.

1 Corinthians 4:7 For who regards you as superior? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you had not received it?

1 Peter 5:5 You younger men, likewise, be subject to your elders; and all of you, clothe yourselves with humility toward one another, for GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE.

PARADOX - WEAKER ARE NECESSARY

A **paradox** is "a logically self-contradictory statement or a statement that runs contrary to one's expectation."^{[1][2][3]} It is a statement that, despite apparently valid reasoning from true premises, leads to a seemingly self-contradictory or a logically unacceptable conclusion..^{[4][5]}

On the contrary (Term of contrast)- The Greek conjunction *alla* is a strong adversative and is both where one notion entirely excludes another and where two notions are not mutually exclusive.

it is much truer that the members ([melos](#)) of the body ([soma](#)) which (present tense - continually) **seem ([dokeo](#)) to be weaker ([asthenes](#))** (present tense - continually) **are necessary** (ESV = "indispensable") - Note the phrase **seem to be weaker** . They **seem weaker** to those that are "stronger," but Paul emphasizes again they are necessary for proper function of the body. Small things should not, therefore, be despised (cf Zech.4:10).These members are absolutely **necessary** and indispensable for proper function

of the body. Paul is clearly taking aim at the more visibly gifted saints to remind them of the necessity of the less showy gifts in the body of Christ.

POSB on members which seem to be weaker - The **weaker** members (less gifted) are actually more **necessary**. The word "feeble" ([asthenes](#)) means sick, sickly. It shows that in appearance the lesser members may seem unimportant, but they are not; they are essential. In fact, they are actually more **necessary**. The average layman who serves as a personal worker, although he is never seen by the crowds, is much more essential to decisions for Christ than the evangelist who is in the center of the scene. The dear saint who has become a prayer warrior is much more essential to the strength of the church than the most eloquent preacher who ever fills the pulpit! The point is well made: no believer or group of believers are to look down upon, snub, or by-pass the less gifted in the church. All are important; in fact, the less gifted who are using their gifts for Christ are actually more necessary. They are "where the rubber hits the road"; therefore, they should be treated with greater honor. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

A T Robertson on much truer - So far from the more dignified members like the eye and the head being independent of the subordinate ones like the hands and feet, they are "**much more**" ([argumentum a fortiori](#), "by much more" *pollōi mallon*, instrumental case) in need of them. Things are not always what they seem. The vital organs (heart, lungs, liver, kidneys) are not visible, but life cannot exist without them.

MacArthur - As important as some of the prominent members of the human body are it is possible to live without them. They are important but not absolutely necessary. You can lose an eye or ear, a hand or leg, and still live. But you cannot lose your heart or liver or brain and live. Those organs are more hidden than the others but also are more vital.....The most vital ministries in a church always include some that are not obvious. The faithful prayers and services of a few dedicated saints who hold no office frequently are the most reliable and productive channels of spiritual power in a congregation. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Necessary (more necessary, pressing) (316) [anagkaio](#) from [anagke](#) = a bent/uplifted arm poised to meet a pressing need - necessity, compulsion) describes that which compels or makes something needful or necessary (as meeting a need) (as in Phil. 1:24; Phil. 2:25; Heb. 8:3). That which is indispensable, pressing, what one cannot do without. In Acts 10:24 it describes those who are intimate (friends, relatives). *Anagkaio* - 8v in NT - Acts 10:24; Acts 13:46; 1 Co. 12:22; 2 Co. 9:5; Phil. 1:24; Phil. 2:25; Titus 3:14; Heb. 8:3

Sharing Space

Those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. —1 Corinthians 12:22

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

The number of people who run a business out of their homes is in the millions. But some have found that working alone can be a little too lonely. To give these lonely ones a community, "co-working" spaces have been designed. Large facilities are rented out where people working by themselves can share space with others. They have their own work area but can exchange ideas with fellow independent workers. It's for those who feel they can work better together than they do alone.

Sometimes Christians think they work better alone. But we are meant to work together with others in the church. Every Christian has been placed into "the body of Christ" (1 Cor. 12:27). And the Lord desires that we take part in fellowship with a local community of believers—using our spiritual gifts and working together in His service.

Yet for various reasons, some aren't able to join in. Because of health issues, they may be shut in at home or may not know how to fit in at church. Yet they are a needed part of the body (vv.22-25). That's when others can meet their need for togetherness. Let's do our part so that others may feel they're an integral part of the community of faith. We work better together than alone. By: Anne Cetas ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Thinking It Over

What can you do to help others feel a part of your church community? Visit, pray with them, read Scripture together, drop a note, or invite them to join you in serving others.

Fellowship builds us up and binds us together.

No Nobodies

Those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. —1 Corinthians 12:22

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

A visitor was being shown around a leper colony in India. At noon a gong sounded for the midday meal. People came from all parts of the compound to the dining hall. All at once peals of laughter filled the air. Two young men, one riding on the other's back, were pretending to be a horse and a rider and were having loads of fun. As the visitor watched, he was told that the man who carried his friend was blind, and the man being carried was lame. The one who couldn't see used his feet; the one who couldn't walk used his eyes. Together they helped each other, and they found great joy in doing it.

Imagine a church like that—each member using his or her strength to make up for another's weakness. That's what should be happening in every congregation of believers. Paul likened spiritual gifts to various parts of the human body. Eyes see. Ears hear. Hands work. Feet move the body forward. All are essential. And when each fulfills its function, the whole body benefits.

All of us have weaknesses, but we also have strengths. We are all different, but God has given each of us at least one gift to use for the good of the church. We need one another. In Christ's body there are no nobodies. By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

God can take a lowly vessel,
Shape it with His mighty hand,
Fill it with a matchless treasure,
Make it serve a purpose grand.
—Bosch

There is no such thing as insignificant service for Christ.

Keep The Organ Playing

Those members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary. —1 Corinthians 12:22

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:20-26

Many years ago an accomplished organist was giving a concert. (In those days someone had to pump large bellows backstage to provide air for the pipes.) After each song, the audience applauded heartily. Before his final number, the organist stood and said, "I **shall now play . . .**" and he announced the title. He sat down and adjusted his music. With feet poised over the pedals and hands over the keys, he began with a mighty chord. But the organ remained silent. Just then a voice was heard from backstage: "Say **'We'!**"

In the Lord's work, there is plenty of room for personal achievement. Our abilities are God-given, and the Holy Spirit helps us to excel in what we do best. But a self-sufficient spirit that overlooks the contributions of others can ruin it all. No Christians have ever climbed the ladder of success alone. With them were mothers, fathers, friends, a husband, a wife, or children who prayed, sacrificed, and did what they could to help.

Aware of our deep indebtedness to others, we should be grateful for their vital role in the Lord's work in and through us. A note of sincere thanks, a word of honest recognition, or a thoughtful deed of love will help to "keep the organ playing." By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Two Christians working for the Lord
Should keep this goal in mind:
Give praise for what the other does—
To your success be blind.
—Branon

It's amazing what can be accomplished when you don't care who gets the credit.

1 Corinthians 12:23 and those members of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable,

- **bestow**:, Ge 3:7,21
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Genesis 3:7; 21 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they

sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings. 21 The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife, and clothed them.

LESS HONORABLE PARTS SHOWN MORE HONOR

And those members of the body ([soma](#)) **which we** (present tense - continually) **deem** ([dokeo](#)) **less honorable** ([atimos](#)), **on these we bestow** (*peritithemi* - "clothe with") **more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable** - **NLT** = "And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen." Some parts of the body are less attractive but that does not make them any less value to the proper function of the body. Paul says **on these we bestow more abundant honor**, because while the "attractive" parts of the body are sure to be noticed.

The phrase **our less presentable members** refers to our "private parts" which even most primitive tribes cover and treat with modesty.

POSB - The unrepresentable parts of the body are treated with greater honor. The reference is to clothing. We take more pains to dress the unrepresentable parts of our body, giving them a special nobility. So it should be in the church. The less gifted should be recognized and treated with a very special nobility, for they are actually more necessary. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

MacArthur explains that "When people treat these unseemly members with care and modesty they come to have more abundant seemliness. It is not those parts of the body themselves, but the display of them, that is unseemly and shameful. When they are properly treated they become more decent, just as the less honorable parts, when properly treated, become more attractive."...Those in positions of leadership and prominence not only should not look down on those whose gifts are less noticeable but should take special care to show them appreciation and to protect them when necessary. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

MacDonald - Some members of the body are attractive while others are not so elegant. We compensate by putting clothes over those that are not so beautiful. Thus there is a certain mutual care among the members, minimizing the differences.

NIV Study Bible - Sometimes what we regard as not very important is, in fact, very important indeed. This is true for some of our less visible body parts and is true for some members of the church who have less visible gifts.

Pulpit Commentary - The shelter and ornament of clothing are used to cover those parts of the body which are conventionally regarded as the least seemly. The whole of this illustration is meant to show that rich and poor, great and small, high and low, gifted and ungifted, have all their own separate and indispensable functions, and no class of Christians can wisely disparage or forego the aid derived from other and different classes. The unity of the members in one body corresponds to "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" which should prevail in the Church.

Less honorable ([820](#))([atimos](#) from **a=** negates thus without + **time** = value, honor) means literally without honor, unhonored, dishonored, despised, of low character or reputation, less respectable, more insignificant (1Cor 12:23) **BDAG** - pert. to being considered relatively unimportant, insignificant of things that do not elicit special admiration or attention, comparatively held in less esteem 1 Cor 12:23 (of parts of the body also Aristot., Part. An. 3, 672b, 21 'more esteemed ... less esteemed', a distinction made in terms of dependency, lower members being at the service of upper ones.)

Bestow ([4060](#))(*peritithemi* from **peri** = around + **tithemi** = place, put) literally means to place something on or around (cf Mt 21:33; Lxx Ru 3:3 = "put on your....") and was used of a scarlet robe put on Jesus (Mt 27:28). So in this context it suggests the idea of clothing the body in general. As **MacArthur** observes "We spend more time and money clothing those parts of our body than the ones that are more presentable (such as face and hands), and by doing so, on these we bestow more abundant honor." **Gilbrant** - **Peritithēmi** in classical, Koine, and Septuagint Greek carries the ideas of: (1) "placing (something) around" something or someone and (2) "to invest, give, or bestow" something, e.g., honor or privilege. In the Septuagint Job 38:10 states that "fixed limits (or barriers) are set around" the sea (see Ezek 27:3,4; "set" feast times). **Also, jewelry and clothing are "placed around" those who are specially designated or honored** (Ge 24:47; 41:42; Exodus 29:9; Hosea 2:13). ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

Peritithemi - 8x in 8v - bestow(1), put(5), put...around(2). Matt. 21:33; Matt. 27:28; Matt. 27:48; Mk. 12:1; Mk. 15:17; Mk. 15:36; Jn. 19:29; 1 Co. 12:23.

Uses in **Septuagint** - Ge 24:47; Gen. 27:16; Gen. 41:42; Exod. 29:9; Exod. 34:35; Exod. 40:8; Lev. 8:13;

Lev. 16:4; Num. 27:7; Num. 27:8; Ruth 3:3; Est. 1:11; Est. 1:20; Est. 5:11; Job 4:4; Job 13:26; Job 31:36; Job 38:10; Job 39:19; Job 39:20; Job 41:1; Prov. 7:3; Prov. 12:9; Isa. 5:2; Isa. 49:18; Isa. 59:17; Isa. 61:10; Jer. 13:1; Jer. 13:2; Jer. 27:2; Jer. 51:3; Ezek. 16:11; Ezek. 27:3; Ezek. 27:4; Ezek. 27:7; Dan. 5:7; Dan. 5:16; Dan. 5:29; Hos. 2:13

Less presentable (809)(**aschemon** from **a** = negates + **schema** = form, shape) is an adjective which means unattractive, indecent, unpresentable, of the parts of the body that should be kept private and covered. **BDAG** - freq. of someth. that is not openly done, displayed, or discussed in reserved society because it is considered 'shameful, unpresentable, indecent', or 'unmentionable'. The word is applied esp. to sexual matters." Only in 1 Cor 12:23 in NT. Twice in the Septuagint - Gen. 34:7; Deut. 24:1

Presentable (2157)(**euschemosune** from **euschemon** = comely - from **eu** = good + **schema** = figure, form, appearance) means comeliness. "The focus of this term is the external appearance, conveying the sense of "propriety, decorum, external beauty." Thus it has the sense of "presentability" (of clothing) and "modesty" (in concealment). The unpresentable (shameful, indecent) parts of the human body are given "greater presentability," i.e., are "treated with special modesty" (1 Corinthians 12:23, NIV). In the Septuagint it appears at Proverbs 1:25." ([Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#))

1 Corinthians 12:24 **whereas our more presentable members have no need of it. But God has so composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that member which lacked,**

- Ge 2:25 3:11
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

PRESENTABLE MEMBERS NEED NO "PUBLICITY"

Whereas our more presentable members have no need of it- Those parts of the body that are more comely or of higher standing have no need of bestowal of honor or attempt to make them more presentable. Here Paul is clearly alluding to those believers who have the more showy or attractive gifts.

Presentable (prominent)(2158) **euschemon** from **eu** = good + **scheme** = figure, shape, appearance) means comely (in accord with propriety), prominent (having a quality that thrusts itself into attention, conspicuous in position or importance). Respected - Receiving deferential regard. Euschemon can speak of that which is appropriate for display or presentable (1 Cor 12:24). 5v in NT = Mk. 15:43; Acts 13:50; Acts 17:12; 1 Co. 7:35; 1 Co. 12:24

But God has so composed the body (soma), giving more abundant (perissos) honor to that member which lacked - God made the body and here Paul "balances" out the gaining and receiving of honor of those parts we deem **less honorable** and **less presentable** that is to **that member which lacked** or had less dignity or honor.

Complete Biblical Library on **God has so composed the body** - The idea here is that God has "compounded" or "put together" the Body in such a way as to help create peace in the Body. The word pictures God as a craftsman, structuring the Church intentionally and carefully, and mixing the gifts and personalities of the believers like a metallurgist mixes metals to give strength to the final product.

POSB - God has put both the presentable and unpresentable into one body. The presentable parts of our body have no need for clothing; therefore, we do not clothe them (for example, the face and the hands). God has done the same thing in the church. God has tempered the body together. The word "**composed**" (sunekerasen) means to mix, combine, and blend together. God has arranged the church as it is: the gifted and less gifted mixed, combined, and blended together. And He has done it in such a manner that more honor really belongs to those who are not as gifted. The prayer warrior is much more essential than the soloist who is out before the people. The lay witness for Christ is more necessary than the preacher who stands in the pulpit. The person who ministers to the sick or elderly is more honorable than the committee chairman who leads the whole congregation in administrative matters. All are important, but the more honorable are not necessarily those who stand before the church. Sometimes the more honorable are those who are never seen, those who go about their ministry for the Lord, using their gifts and functioning within the church as He has ordained. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

This make me wonder about how shocked we will be in Heaven at the Judgment Seat of Christ (2 Cor 5:10+) when one of these seemingly less gifted saints comes before Christ and is showered with abundant praise, glory and honor!

Composed (4786) (**sugkerannumi** from **sun** = with + **kerannumi** = to mix) means to mix or blend together and figuratively to join together. The idea is to mingle wine with water or mix spices and by implication, prepare a drink, pour out for drinking, fill one's cup. In regard to the word group of **kerannumi**, note that a **kerameus** is a potter; **keramos** the potter's clay or pottery; and **keramion**, an earthenware vessel or pot. From this group of words we get the English word "ceramic." The observations indicate a very thorough mixing.. Actively it means to mix or mingle together, blend, unite; figuratively, of unifying a group into one body compose, put together, combine; figuratively, of unifying a group into one body compose, put together, combine (as in 1 Cor 12:24). (2) Figuratively and passive be united with (Heb 4:2+) [Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary](#) - The meaning of **sunkerannumi** is "to mix together with" or "to mingle." In classical usage the word is used to indicate when two things are mixed or blended together. The word is sometimes applied in connection with relationships between people suggesting close friendship or personal attachment. Xenophon used the word to suggest that one has become deeply involved in a situation (Liddell-Scott). The papyri use the word similarly. One document uses the word in connection with people joining together in a wedding. Another document uses it in the context of the "mixing of souls" in friendship (Moulton-Milligan). In both cases the idea suggests an intimate joining together of people in love or friendship. Sunkerannumi occurs only twice in the Septuagint, once to refer to the mixing of metals in an earthen pot (Daniel 2:43, LXX only), and once in the noncanonical book of 2 Maccabees where there is a reference to the mixing of water and wine (2 Maccabees 15:39). The word is used only twice in the New Testament. The first is in 1 Corinthians 12:24 where Paul developed the metaphor of the Church as the body of Christ. The idea here is that God has "compounded" or "put together" the Body in such a way as to help create peace in the Body. The word pictures God as a craftsman, structuring the Church intentionally and carefully, and mixing the gifts and personalities of the believers like a metallurgist mixes metals to give strength to the final product. The second use of the word is found in Hebrews 4:2. Here **sunkerannumi** describes the interrelationship between the preaching of the word of the gospel and the reception of the Word in the hearer. In Hebrews 4:2+ it suggests that there must be a mixing or a joining of faith (that is, **faith-obedience**) in the hearer with the preached word. We can translate the phrase in Hebrews 4:2+ something like this, "For the word which they heard did not benefit them, because it was not mingled with faith in the ones that heard it" (see also Hagner, Good News Commentary, Hebrews, p.49).

Spare Change?

God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it. —1 Corinthians 12:24

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

A Washington, DC, couple invited friends to bring their loose change to a party to benefit a charity fund. From what people had at home in boxes, cookie jars, plastic bags, and a few old socks, they brought coins totaling more than \$1,500.

Few individuals have more than \$30 in change around the house, but Americans together have an estimated \$7.7 billion in loose change just lying around. And researchers say that's typical of people in many other countries of the world.

To me, it's a wonderful illustration of the collective wealth and worth of the family of all believers in Jesus Christ. The Bible often refers to the church as "the body of Christ" and says that "all the members of that one body, being many, are one body" (1 Corinthians 12:12).

Every person, therefore, is essential and valuable as part of the whole. By ourselves, we may sometimes feel insignificant, unneeded, and of little value, like so much spare change. But as individual parts that make up the whole, each of us is needed (vv.15-22).

All people are unique individuals, but as Christians we are also indispensable parts of the body of Christ, and of greater value than we can ever know. By: David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Help us, Lord, to work together
With the gifts that You bestow;
Give us unity of purpose
As we serve You here below.
—Sper

There are no unimportant members in the body of Christ.

How The Body Works

God composed the body . . . that the members should have the same care for one another. —1 Corinthians 12:24-25

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

They were thousands of miles from home when an auto accident put both of them in the hospital. The husband was released within a few days, but the wife was in critical condition with serious head injuries.

Far from his home, his children, and his church, this man could have felt stranded and abandoned while his wife lay in a coma in the hospital. But he didn't. Members of a local church heard about his plight and came to the rescue. "We will be your church family while you are here," they assured him.

Soon people from the church were visiting the couple, providing the husband with transportation, and advising them about doctors.

The only bond between this couple and these people was their shared faith in Jesus Christ. Yet that was enough. And it enabled them to reach out in love to a couple whose lives had been suddenly disrupted. That's how the body of believers is supposed to work!

We tend to favor people in our own church over those in another, somehow considering their needs less important because they don't worship with us. But all Christians are members of Christ's body and should be treated as such. Let's always be ready to help in the time of need. By: Dave Branon ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Reach out in Jesus' name
With hands of love and care
To those who are in need
And caught in life's despair.
—Sper

What concerns the child of God concerns the family Of God.

You're Necessary

But God composed the body, having given greater honor to that part which lacks it. —1 Corinthians 12:24

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:14-26

The story has been told about a conductor who was rehearsing his orchestra. The organ was giving a beautiful melody, the drums were thundering, the trumpets were blaring, and the violins were singing beautifully. But the conductor noticed something missing—the piccolo. The piccolo player had gotten distracted and hoped his instrument wouldn't be missed. The conductor reminded him: "Each one of us is necessary."

This was essentially the same message Paul communicated to the Corinthian believers in his first letter to them (12:4-7). Every Christian plays an important role in the body of Christ. Paul gave a list of gifts of the Spirit and compared their use to the functioning of the various parts of the human body for the good of the whole (vv.8-10). The Corinthian believers may have had different cultural backgrounds, gifts, and personalities, but they were filled with the same Spirit and belonged to the same body of Christ. Paul made special mention of the parts of the body that were weak and obscure, and taught that all believers play a necessary and significant role. No one part was more necessary than any other.

Remember, Jesus has given you a significant part to play and will use you to build up His people. By: Marvin Williams ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#)) Reflect & Pray

The church, a living body, containing all the parts—
It lives, it moves, it functions, and touches many hearts;
When each part is committed to do the Savior's will,
His members are united, His purpose they fulfill.
—Fitzhugh

As a member of the body of Christ, you are a necessary part of the whole.

1 Corinthians 12:25 so that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another.

- there: 1Co 1:10-12 3:3 Joh 17:21-26 2Co 13:11
- the same: 2Co 7:12 8:16
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

1 Corinthians 1:10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all agree and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.

2 Corinthians 13:11 Finally, brethren, rejoice, be made complete, be comforted, be like-minded, live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.

Ephesians 4:3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Philippians 1:27 Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I will hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

1 Peter 3:8 To sum up, all of you be harmonious, sympathetic, brotherly, kindhearted, and humble in spirit;

So that ([hina](#)) - Term of purpose. God's purpose in so composing the body that the seemingly lesser members are given more abundant honor!

There may be no division ([schisma](#)) **in the body** ([soma](#)) - NLT = "This makes for harmony among the members." Paul uses the same Greek word ([schisma](#)) he had used to describe the **division** of the church in Corinth (1 Cor 1:10+), which would undoubtedly "strike a nerve" in the mind of his readers. They could see the point Paul was seeking to drive home.

But (term of contrast) **that the members** ([melos](#)) **may** (present tense - continually) **have the same care** ([merimnao](#) - concern) **for one another** ([allelon](#)) - He is still referring to the human body, but the analogy to the body of Christ in Corinth is clear. And the application would also be crystal clear. He is clearly alluding to mutual concern, that anxious sense of interest in or responsibility of the believers for **one another**, just as with members of the human body.

POSB - God has composed or blended the members together to create a natural **care for one another** ([allelon](#)). Note the words "**same care**." The very **same care** should be shown to one member as is shown to another member. One member of the church is not more important than another member—not to God, and it should not be to us. There should be no favoritism or partiality shown to anyone. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

MacArthur - We should care as much for the nursery teacher as for the pastor, as much for the janitor as for the Sunday school superintendent. ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

Lend An Ear

The members should have the same care for one another. —1 Corinthians 12:25

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Someone needs to talk to you today. Are you willing to listen? It may be a deep confession of failure, an expression of faith, an old joke, or a comment about the weather, but it needs to be said. The person may be a child or a senior citizen. Are you ready to lend an ear? For 10 years, Mary Ridgway, a busy college administrator and educator, has regularly visited Mary Jacobs in an assisted living center. Ridgway began by receiving 50 hours of training to be a caregiver. She wondered if she could learn to step away from her tendencies to fix problems and to fill silent moments with words. Today, Mary Ridgway considers listening an expression of her service to Christ. Mary Jacobs thanks God every night for her faithful friend who cares enough to hear what she has to say.

The Bible calls us as Christians to "care for one another" (1 Corinthians 12:25) by using the gifts God has given each of us by His grace. One of the ways we can care for and serve each other is to listen.

Listening is not the job of a talented few but the privilege and responsibility of us all. Someone needs to tell you something today. Are you ready and willing, for Jesus' sake, to lend an ear? By: David C. McCasland ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

A caring heart, a listening ear,
A thoughtful word, a gentle tear
Will help to lift the heavy load
Of weary souls along life's road.
—D. De Haan

A big part of loving is listening.

Zebras and Wildebeests

There should be no schism in the body, but . . . the members should have the same care for one another. —1 Corinthians 12:25

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:14-26

After our plane landed on the gravel airstrip, Jay and I climbed out and entered the world of Masai Mara in Kenya. A Masai tribesman named Sammy met us and loaded our baggage into a Land Rover. Then we headed toward the camp where we would spend the next 2 days. Stopping so we could watch the zebras and wildebeests migrating from Masai Mara to Serengeti, Sammy explained that the two massive herds travel together because the zebras have good eyesight but a poor sense of smell, and the wildebeests have bad eyesight but a good sense of smell. **By traveling together, both are less vulnerable to predators** This was our first lesson from God's revelation in creation, which Kenya has in abundance.

Just as God makes animals with different strengths and weaknesses, He makes people the same way. God made us to be dependent not only on Him but also on one another. The apostle Paul elaborated on this idea in his letter to the church in Corinth. As members of the body of Christ, we all have different gifts and abilities (1 Cor. 12:12-31).

The church is healthy only when we work together, look out for each other, and use our strengths to benefit one another. By: Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Help us, Lord, to work together
With the gifts that You bestow;
Give us unity of purpose
As we serve You here below.
—Sper

We can go a lot further together than we can alone.

1 Corinthians 12:26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if one member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

- Ro 12:15 2Co 11:28,29 Ga 6:2 Heb 13:3 1Pe 3:8
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 25:35-36 'For I was hungry, and you gave Me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave Me something to drink; I was a stranger, and you invited Me in; 36 naked, and you clothed Me; I was sick, and you visited Me; I was in prison, and you came to Me.'

Acts 20:35 "In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'"

Romans 15:1 Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves.

1 Corinthians 9:22 To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak; I have become all things to all men,

so that I may by all means save some.

1 Thessalonians 5:14 We urge you, brethren, admonish the unruly, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with everyone.

ONE AFFECTED ALL AFFECTED

And if one member([melos](#)) **suffers** ([pascho](#)), **all the members** ([melos](#)) **suffer with it**; **if one member** ([melos](#)) **is honored** ([doxazo](#)), **all the members** ([melos](#)) (present tense - continually) **rejoice with** ([sugchairo](#)) **it** - Paul states that the experiences of one part of the human body are shared by all the members of the body. His application to the church at Corinth is clear. Suffering, honor and rejoicing are to be mutually shared among the body of believers. Bad and good is to be shared. Recall Paul is speaking of division and when a church demonstrates this kind of mutual care and concern it can heal and/or prevent divisions.

POSB - When a member of the human body **suffers**, the whole body suffers. When **one member** (for example, the feet in a race) is honored, the whole body rejoices with the feet. So it is to be in the church. The church is one body; therefore, it is to **suffer** and **rejoice** together. The body is to walk through the experience of life together—suffering and rejoicing with every member, looking after and caring for every member. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

Family Therapy

If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. —1 Corinthians 12:26

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:26-31

Dr. Paul Brand, a medical missionary in India, observed an unusual phenomenon with several of his patients. When they were recovering from surgery in his hospital, some family members would bring hot meals to them. At night a relative would sleep on the floor under the bed of the recovering patient. When patients awoke in pain, their loved ones would gently massage them until they went back to sleep.

At first Dr. Brand thought this was inappropriate and unsanitary. Over time, however, he began to notice that the patients receiving this loving care from family needed less pain medication. They were being soothed by people who loved them. This “family therapy” brought the warmth and care of home into an unfamiliar place.

We can learn from this example of love and care for our family. Those who belong to Christ are part of a spiritual family and need to be aware of the hurts of other members. The apostle Paul said, “If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it” (1 Corinthians 12:26). This principle requires that we find practical ways of soothing hurts. Do you know a Christian brother or sister who needs “family therapy” from you? By: Dennis Fisher ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

A caring heart, a listening ear,
A thoughtful word, a gentle tear
Will help to lift the heavy load
Of weary souls along life's road.
—D. De Haan

To ease another's burden, help carry it.

“I Hurt For You”

If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. —1 Corinthians 12:26

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

When my sons were young, one of them stubbed his toe and grimaced with pain. Seeing him trying bravely to bear the agony of those moments, I said, “Son, I’m truly sorry. My toe hurts for you.” Lifting his head, he looked at me and responded, “Dad, your toe doesn’t really hurt, does it?” No, I didn’t sense any physical pangs, yet I did share his suffering. I even wished his ache could somehow be transferred to my body.

The apostle Paul said that all believers in Christ are part of “one body” (1 Cor. 12:13). And if one part suffers, “all the members suffer with it” (v.26).

Are you grieved when a brother in Christ is in trouble? Does it bother you when a believer stumbles into sin and is brought under the chastening hand of the Lord? Do you experience sorrow of heart when a child of God is passing through the deep waters of affliction and trial? If not, ask the Lord right now to help you become the kind of person who can share the heartache of others and sympathize with them.

Yes, to every Christian we meet who is in some kind of distress, we should be ready to say from our hearts, "I hurt for you."
By: Richard DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The hurting ones need sympathy,
They need to know we're there;
A quiet word, a tender touch
Assures them that we care.
—DJD

Empathy is your pain in my heart.

1 Corinthians 12:27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

- 1Co 12:12,14-20 Ro 12:5 Eph 1:22-23 Eph 4:12 Eph 5:23,30 Col 1:24
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Romans 12:5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.

Ephesians 1:22-23 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Ephesians 4:12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

Ephesians 5:23; 30 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 30 because we are members of His body.

Colossians 1:24 Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I do my share on behalf of His body, which is the church, in filling up what is lacking in Christ's afflictions.

INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY THEY WERE CHRIST'S BODY

Now you are Christ's ([Christos](#)) body ([soma](#)), and individually members ([melos](#)) of it - "Now you are Christ's body, and each of you is a member of it." (1Co 12:27NET) In case his readers still have not seen his comparison, Paul now makes it clear that he has been comparing the harmonious functioning of the human body with the ideal harmonious functioning of the spiritual body of believers, the Body of Christ in Corinth. Staton has an interesting note "As soon as he says that, he is asking us to re-read his preceding section and see what our attitude should or should not be." ([1 Corinthians](#))

POSB - Each believer is a member of the body of Christ and has his own place in it. This point is forceful and emphatic. **you are Christ's body**: collectively, we have the supreme privilege. We are the members of Christ, of His body, of the body of God's Son Himself. **"individually members of it"**: individually, each one of us is a member of Christ's body. Not a single believer is excluded, and no person is more a member than any other believer. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

Church Membership

Now you are the body of Christ, and members individually. — 1 Corinthians 12:27

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Church membership has never gotten anyone into heaven. But this doesn't mean it's unimportant to be committed to a local church. I once said in a group, "I think every believer should join a church," to which a Christian couple replied, "But we are not joiners."

Such a response is contrary to the teaching of the New Testament. True, the Bible doesn't command believers to "join" a church,

because they are already members of the church, the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23). But the Bible does instruct Christians to be actively involved in a local group of believers. This includes identifying with Christ and His people through baptism, the Lord's Supper, exercising one's spiritual gifts, studying God's Word, fellowshiping, praying together, and being accountable to one other (Acts 2:41-47; 1 Cor. 11:26; Heb. 10:24-25; 13:7,17; 1 Pet. 5:5).

Each local church is the body of Christ in miniature. Thus, the church is more than an organization; it is a living organism, manifesting Christ to the world (1 Cor. 12:12-31).

Commitment to and active fellowship in a local church is biblical. Christ willingly identified with us by bearing our sin in His own body. Shouldn't we be willing to identify with His body by uniting with a local group of His people? By: Dennis J. DeHaan ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

The church, a living body, containing all the parts—
It lives, it moves, it functions, and touches many hearts;
When each part is committed to do the Savior's will,
His members are united, His purpose they fulfill.
—Fitzhugh

The church is a living body and must have working parts.

Broken Toes, Broken World

You are the body of Christ, and members individually. —1 Corinthians 12:27

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Twice in my life I've broken one of my little toes by colliding with furniture. Ouch! For days I limped painfully, my body protecting its tiny injured member. My body was doing exactly what it was designed to do. It supported and sympathized with the part of me that was hurting. Gradually my toe healed, resuming its thankless task. Although I'll never again take my toes for granted, I sometimes take for granted certain members of the church. Paul taught that the church is the body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-27), not merely like the body of Christ. Each member has God-given abilities to support and sympathize with other members.

If Christ's church is to function the way God designed it, there are three things we dare not do: (1) Refuse to fellowship with others. (2) Let fear and lack of love cause us to withhold our gifts from others. (3) Disregard or oppose the gifts of others through pride and envy.

Instead, we need to be actively using our spiritual gifts to the benefit of fellow members of Christ's body. Only when we experience both the giving and receiving of Christ's healing love for broken members will we be ready to reach out to a broken world. By: Joanie Yoder ([Our Daily Bread, Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

We're all dependent on the strength
We draw from one another,
For we're connected by the love
That comes from God our Father.
—Sper

A healthy church is the best witness to a hurting world.

1 Corinthians 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, various kinds of tongues.

- **God:** 1Co 12:7-11 Lu 6:14 Ac 13:1-3 20:28 Ro 12:6-8 Eph 2:20 3:5 Eph 4:11-13 Heb 13:17,24 1Pe 5:1-4
- **helps:** Nu 11:17
- **administrations:** Ro 12:8 1Ti 5:17 Heb 13:17,24
- **kinds,** 1Co 12:10 Ac 2:8-11
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Numbers 11:17+ "Then I will come down and speak with you there, and I will take of the Spirit who is upon

you, and will put Him upon them; and they shall bear the burden of the people with you, so that you will not bear it all alone.

Ephesians 2:19-20+ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built on the foundation of the **apostles and prophets**, Christ Jesus Himself being the Corner Stone,

GOD'S APPOINTMENT OF GIFTED PEOPLE

And God has ([sovereignly](#)) appointed in the church ([ekklesia](#) - the assembly), first apostles ([apostolos](#)), second prophets ([prophetes](#)), third teachers ([didaskalos](#)), then miracles ([dunamis](#)), then gifts ([charismata](#)) of healings ([iama](#)), helps ([antilempsis](#)), administrations ([kubernesis](#)), various kinds of tongues ([glossa](#)) - God has appointed repeats the fact that God is [sovereign](#) as he had stated earlier in 1 Cor 12:18 in that "God has placed the members...just as He desired." Now Paul describes some of the **varieties of ministries** (1 Cor 12:5+) of the body, beginning with the most prominent, the **apostles** for without them the church would not have come into existence. He follows with the **prophets**, those who have a word from God's word. And then come **teachers**, who are to edify and equip the saints for the work of service. Note that two of these gifts, **helps** and **administrations** are not mentioned in the previous listing (1 Cor 12:8-10)

Paul's additional listing of gifted people and specific gifts reminds us of Paul's earlier description of the church at Corinth that they were "not lacking any **gift** ([charisma](#))." (1 Cor 1:7+) They had it all! What they lacked was spiritual maturity and selfless love which led to confusion (implied by 1 Cor 14:33+) and disorder (implied in 1 Cor 14:40+) in the church!

Staton summarizes this passage - The **apostles** were those inspired by God and inspired by Jesus and sent out by Jesus. They include the twelve, whom Jesus himself chose, and the special selection of the apostle Paul. The **prophets** are those who were the inspired spokesmen of God. The **teachers** were those who would apply the teachings of the apostles and prophets. Workers of **miracles** were those who had the gifts of doing things beyond the natural ability. "Those having **gifts of healing**" are those whom God has empowered to heal people in particular situations. "**Those able to help others**" are the people who are gifted to be assistants in the ministries in which others are leading. Those with "**gifts of administration**" are those who have been gifted to be leaders of others. "**Those speaking in different kinds of tongues**" are those who have been gifted to speak in languages they have not learned. ([1 Corinthians](#))

POSB on **helps** ([antilempsis](#)) - This is the gift that does just what it says: helps people. We all know some persons who are always ready to jump to help people—always available and ready to offer a helping hand. These are particularly directed to help the needy, for example, the widows or widowers, orphans, disabled, shut-ins, and poor. ([Preacher's Outline & Sermon Bible – 1 & 2 Corinthians](#))

Helps ([antilempsis](#)) is similar to serving Paul described in Ro 12:7 "if **service** ([diakonia](#)), in his **serving** ([diakonia](#)); or he who teaches, in his teaching." The Greek word gives the picture of laying hold of and pictures one member laying hold of the burden on another, providing support for the one burdened, keeping them from falling. We need these people in the church, for there are many saints with heavy burdens in need of help! While this is a specific gift, clearly every believer should be willing to help a brother or sister in need and should not use the excuse "I don't have the gift of helps!"

Administrations ([kubernesis](#)) is a person gifted to "steer the ship" (origin of the word), so to speak steering the ship through the dangerous waters of this fallen world system and guiding it towards the destination God has appointed for it. This meaning would suggest that most pastors have this gift, but it is not restricted to pastors. This gift includes actual guidance and control over the course of events related to the local Body. It goes without saying that this strategic position calls for close communication of the "pilot" on earth with the "Pilot" in Heaven via His Word and prayer. It follows that it is crucial that these men be Spirit controlled (Eph 5:18+). The use of this same word ([kubernesis](#)) in the Septuagint translation of Proverbs 11:14 is applicable to value of **administrations** in the Body of Christ, for Solomon records that "Where there is no **guidance** ([kubernesis](#)) the people fall (THIS PRINCIPLE CLEARLY APPLIES TO THE CHURCH), But in abundance of counselors there is victory." Similarly in Proverbs 24:6 we read "For by wise guidance ([kubernesis](#)) you will wage war (cf SPIRITUAL WARFARE AGAINST THE CHURCH!), And in abundance of counselors there is victory." **MacArthur** adds that "gift of administrations lies in the ability to make wise decisions and to mobilize, motivate, and direct others toward an objective." ([Ibid](#))

MacArthur - The first two offices mentioned in verse 28, those of apostle and of prophet, had three basic responsibilities: (1) to lay the foundation of the church (Eph. 2:20); (2) to receive and declare the revelation of God's Word (Acts 11:28; 21:10–11; Eph. 3:5); and (3) to give confirmation of that Word through "signs and wonders and miracles" (2 Cor. 12:12; cf. Acts 8:6–7; Heb. 2:3–4). ([MNTC- 1 Cor](#))

We see a parallel passage in Ephesians - And He gave some as **apostles**, and some as **prophets**, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and **teachers**, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. (Eph 4:11-13+)

Helps (484) (**antilempsis** from **antilambano** = to take hold of mutually as by the hand figuratively to support from falling as by hand, to support) strictly described a laying hold of; hence help, assistance; plural helpful deeds; by metonymy those who help. Only here in the NT. Those with gifts of "helps" are not necessarily people in positions of authority. Instead, they are individuals with resources (both spiritual and physical) which others lack. The gift of "helps," therefore, involves the giving and sharing of those resources. The root verb **antilambano** is found in Luke 1:54+ "He (GOD) has given help to Israel His servant." Paul used with in his final exhortation to the Ephesian elders ""In everything I showed you that by working hard in this manner you must (**dei** - are continually obligated to) **help** (**antilambano**) the weak (**astheneo**) and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He Himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" (Acts 20:35+)

Administrations (2941) (**kubernesis** from **kubernao** [only in Pr 12:5 = "counsels" or "advice"] to steer a ship, guide, govern cf **pilot** - **kubernetes** - in Acts 27:11+) speaks of the skill with which a pilot guides a ship. In NT only in 1 Cor 12:28. Plato used it for "steering" or the "art of the helmsman" (Beyer, "kubernēsis," Kittel, 3:1035). But it is also used figuratively of statesmen meaning "the government of states" and of deity meaning "divine governance." In the Septuagint it is used three times in Proverbs -- Pr 1:5+; Pr 11:14; Pr 24:6 -- meaning "wise counsel" or "direction." But the counsel is not just verbal. As the root meaning of steering a ship implies, it is actual guidance and control over the course of events, that is, "administration." It is used in the plural indicating "proofs of ability to hold a leading position in the church" (Bauer). The meaning of this word is described in *Kittel* as "gifts which qualify a Christian to be a helmsman to his congregation, i.e., a true director of its order and therewith of its life" (Beyer, *ibid.*, 3:1036). It is unknown precisely what activities were included in such administration in Paul's day. Apparently the preaching of the word was not included, since this was done by apostles, prophets, and teachers.

Age Is Not a Factor

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it. 1 Corinthians 12:26

Today's Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-26

After owning and working at his dental lab for 50 years, Dave Bowman planned to retire and take it easy. Diabetes and heart surgery confirmed his decision. But when he heard about a group of young refugees from Sudan who needed help, he made a life-changing decision. He agreed to sponsor five of them.

As Dave learned more about these young Sudanese men, he discovered that they had never been to a doctor or a dentist. Then one day in church someone mentioned the verse, "If one part suffers, every part suffers with it" (1 Cor. 12:26). He couldn't get the verse out of his mind. Sudanese Christians were suffering because they needed medical care, and Dave sensed that God was telling him to do something about it. But what?

Despite his age and bad health, Dave began exploring the possibility of building a medical center in Sudan. Little by little, God brought together the people and the resources, and in 2008 Memorial Christian Hospital opened its doors to patients. Since then, hundreds of sick and injured people have been treated there.

Memorial Christian Hospital stands as a reminder that God cares when people suffer. And often He works through people like us to share His care—even when we think our work is done. By: Julie Ackerman Link ([Our Daily Bread. Copyright RBC Ministries, Grand Rapids, MI. — Reprinted by permission. All rights reserved](#))

Do you see a need that God may be calling you to meet? Pray and ask Him to help you step out in faith. Share your response to this question on facebook.com/ourdailybread or odb.org

God cares when people suffer.

1 Corinthians 12:29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they?

- **apostles:** 1Co 12:4-11,14-20
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

Related Passages:

Matthew 25:15 "To one he gave five talents, to another, two, and to another, one, each according to his own ability; and he went on his journey.

1 Corinthians 12:11+ But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

Ephesians 4:11-12+ And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ;

All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not workers of miracles, are they? - Paul now gives a series of seven rhetorical questions, all of which clearly call for a negative reply. Note the key word **all** is mentioned seven times. This would recall Paul's previous words of how non-functional a body would be if all the body were an eye (1 Cor 12:17). Paul's point is that all believers have not been gifted with the same gift.

1 Corinthians 12:30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

All do not have gifts ([charismata](#)) of healings ([iama](#)), do they? All do not speak ([laleo](#)) with tongues ([glossa](#)), do they? All do not interpret, do they? - Paul continues his rhetorical questions calling for his readers to say "Of course not!" Clearly God did not intend for everyone to have these "showy" gifts. This recalls Paul's earlier description of the "division of labor" (so to speak) having explained that "one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills." (1 Cor 12:11+) Notice especially the words **EACH** one, not **EVERY** one! The practical application would be for each believer to accept with gratitude whatever gift he or she had been given by the Spirit and to function in the sphere of their gifting for this would lead to order, edification and fruitful ministry that would be generously rewarded at the Bema Seat of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.

- covet: 1Co 8:1 14:1,39 Mt 5:6 Lu 10:42
- show: 1Co 13:1-13 Php 3:8 Heb 11:4
- [1 Corinthians 12 Resources](#) - Multiple Sermons and Commentaries

SOMETHING MORE EXCELLENT THAN THE GREATEST GIFTS

But (de) - Term of contrast.

G G Findlay in [Expositor's Greek Testament](#) notes that "Our striving has a part to play, along with God's bestowment, in spiritual acquisitions; hence the contrastive **δέ**. "**But** (for all that) **be zealous after the greater gifts.**" A man must not, e.g., be content to "speak with tongues" when he might "prophecy" (1 Cor 14:1 ff.), nor to work miracles when beside that he might teach in the "word of wisdom".—**zeloo** implies in its good sense an ardent, in its bad sense (1 Cor 13:4) an **emulous** pursuit. The greater (**μεῖζονα**) gifts are those intrinsically **greater**, or more beneficial (1 Cor 14:5)—conditions usually coincident.

(Present tense **imperative** - continually) **earnestly desire the greater gifts ([charismata](#))** - The KJV has "covet earnestly." This is God honoring "coveting!" Paul actually commands them (**present imperative**) to continually **desire the greater gifts**. There is nothing wrong with the **greater** spiritual **gifts**, and so it is not wrong to seek them or be zealous for them. What is **greater** about the gifts just mentioned? They have to do especially with the edification and equipping of the Body of Christ. Clearly this exhortation should be understood in light of 1 Cor 12:11 which says "one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills." Human desire clearly cannot overrule the **sovereign** actions of the Spirit. So what is Paul saying? This is clearly a confusing passage.

Some like **John MacArthur** ([see end of sermon](#)) feel that instead of the [imperative mood](#), this is actually [indicative mood](#) which could then be read something like "you (Corinthians) are earnestly desiring the greater gifts" which was undoubtedly was the case among the puffed up fleshly saints in Corinth. It also fits with the fact that the Spirit gives the gifts sovereignly (1 Cor 12:11+) independent of men's desires. This interpretation makes good sense, but the problem is that the same verb ([zeloo](#)) is used in the same Greek form in 1 Cor 14:1 and there it is clearly a present imperative. Others ([Gordon Fee](#)) favor that given that the identical verb in the identical form is found in 1 Cor 14:1, Paul is "about to launch on his next argument, namely 1 Cor 14:1–25 and the need for intelligibility in the community; and in the community all the intelligible gifts are "greater" than tongues because they can edify while tongues without interpretation cannot." (Fee) This interpretation holds that Paul "catches himself" so to speak and gives the framework on which all the gifts should function, that is love. And then after the beautiful chapter on love, he picks back up with 1 Cor 14:1 "**Pursue** ([present imperative](#)) love, yet **desire earnestly** ([present imperative](#)) spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy." (See [NICNT-1 Cor](#) for Fee's arguments supporting this interpretation).

William MacDonald offers another interpretation - When Paul says: "But earnestly desire the best gifts," he is speaking to the Corinthians as a local church, not as individuals. We know this because the verb is plural in the original. He is saying that as an assembly they should desire to have in their midst a good selection of gifts that edify. The best gifts are those that are most useful rather than those that are spectacular. All gifts are given by the Holy Spirit and none should be despised. Yet the fact is that some are of greater benefit to the body than others. These are the ones that every local fellowship should ask the Lord to raise up in the assembly." ([Believer's Bible Commentary: Old and New Testaments](#))

One other interpretation of this difficult passage is that Paul is calling on the saints at Corinth to earnestly desire that God would raise up individuals with the greater gifts to maximize the edification of the Body. While that sounds plausible, it seems to be a less accurate interpretation.

This is another Pauline passage I look forward to discussing with Paul in Heaven when we "will know fully"! (1 Cor 13:12+)

Constable has an interesting comment - While the bestowal of gifts is the [sovereign](#) prerogative of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:8-11, 18), human desire plays a part in His bestowal (cf. James 4:2). This seems to indicate that the Spirit does not give all His gifts to us at the moment of our salvation. I see nothing in Scripture that prohibits our viewing the abilities God gives us at birth as part of His spiritual gifts. Likewise a believer can receive a gift or an opportunity for service or the Spirit's blessing on his ministry years after his conversion. Everything we have or ever will have is a gift from God.[Barclay] ([1 Corinthians 12 Commentary](#))

W E Vine - The brethren in Corinth did covet the greater gifts, but their estimate concerning them was all awry. We cannot all have the best gifts. We can seek God's grace and help to desire them and by prayer and humble obedience to His will and the leading of the Spirit, and by placing ourselves at His disposal, being content with what He gives or withholds, we shall find that He will use us for His glory. ([Collected Writings](#)).

Gilbrant asks regarding **the greater gifts** "How is this determined, and does it mean one gift is worth more than others? The criterion of worth is use; purpose determines value. Those most serviceable to others are the most valuable and thus the greater or best gifts." ([Complete Biblical Library](#))

Earnestly desire (eagerly seek) ([2206](#)) [zeloo](#) from [zelos](#) = zeal in turn from **zeo** = boil; source of our English word "zeal") properly, to bubble over from getting so hot (boiling) and figuratively to burn with zeal (or intensity), to be fervent, to "boil" with envy, to be jealous. It can be used commendably to refer to a striving for something or showing zeal. **Zeloo** is an onomatopoeic word imitating the sound of boiling water! The idea is to be deeply committed to something, with the implication of accompanying desire – 'to be earnest, to set one's heart on, to be completely intent upon'. **Thiselton** adds that **zeloo** "applies the notion of burning or boiling metaphorically to burning or boiling emotions, stance, or will for earnest striving, for passionate zeal, or for burning envy. Whether it is constructive zeal or destructive envy depends on the context' **Zeloo** takes the notion of burning or boiling and applies it metaphorically to burning or boiling emotions, stance, or will for earnest striving, for passionate zeal, or for burning envy.

Zeloo - Acts 7:9; Acts 17:5; 1 Co. 12:31; 1 Co. 13:4; 1 Co. 14:1; 1 Co. 14:39; 2 Co. 11:2; Gal. 4:17; Gal. 4:18; Jas. 4:2

And I show you a still more excellent (beyond all comparison) **way** - While every believer can not possess the **greater gifts**, they can possess and practice something far greater than these greater gifts and that is agape love. Paul says that as good as the greater gifts are, there is an even better way, in fact a way that is "beyond all comparison." (MIT) The Greek word [huperbole](#) gives us our English **hyperbole** which speaks of extravagant exaggeration! In Paul's case this is "extravagant fully inspired exaggeration," so that it is not an exaggeration but a reality. Love surpasses all the gifts combined. This is the way of love and it is available to all believers and it puts all the gifts in proper perspective, for this excellent quality is selfless and sacrificial and seeks the best for the

other person. It follows that even the greater gifts without love will be dysfunctional and divisive and destructive to the local Body of Christ.

The word **way** (hodos) is also translated **road**. The Corinthian church was on a road, but it was a road of division (et al sins) and the potential end of that road was destruction of the church. And so Paul gives the church the "divine detour" they **must travel** in order to avoid disaster! That road is not a gift but is the sphere in which the gifts, greater or lesser, must be practiced, the "road" of selfless, giving, unconditional agape love.

G G Findlay in [Expositor's Greek Testament](#) notes "Carefully and luminously Paul has set forth the manifoldness of the Holy Spirit's gifts that contribute to common life of the Church. All are necessary, all honourable in their proper use; all are of God's ordination. Some of the charisms are, however, more desirable than others. But if these "greater gifts" be sought in selfish emulation (as the ζηλοτε of ver. 31a, taken by itself, might suggest), their true purpose and blessing will be missed; gifts of grace (χαρίσματα) are not for men actuated by the ζelos of party spirit and ambition (cf. 4 f., 3:3; 2 Cor. 12:20, Gal. 5:20). While encouraging the Cor. to seek larger spiritual powers, the Ap. must "besides point out" the "way" to this end (31b), the way to escape the perils besetting their progress (4 ff.) and to win the goal of the Christian life (8–13). Love is the path to power in the Church; all loveless abilities, endowments, sacrifices are, from the Christian point of view, simply good for nothing (1–3)

Robertson and Plummer - The Corinthians coveted the greater gifts, but they had formed a wrong estimate as to which were the greater. The Hymn of Love, which follows, is to guide them to a better decision: not those which make most show, but those which do most good, are the better. As members of one and the same body they must exhibit self-sacrificing love, and they must use their gifts for the benefit of the whole body. This is the lesson of 1 Cor 14:1-40. We cannot all of us have all the best gifts; **but** (ὁὐ) by prayer and habitual preparation we can strive to obtain them: and a continual desire is in itself a preparation. ([1 Corinthians 12 Commentary](#))

Pulpit Commentary - I bid you desire the best gifts, and further show you a truly royal road (viam maxime vialem), a road par excellence, which leads to their attainment. The way of love would lead to them, and it was itself the best of them. "All the way to heaven lies through heaven, and the path to heaven is heaven."

Pulpit Commentary, The - The Pulpit Commentary – 1 Corinthians.

Show ([1166](#))([deiknuo](#)) means to show and has the sense of to draw attention to, to point out, to make known, to exhibit something (by visual, auditory, gestural, or linguistic means) so that it can be apprehended by the senses. The other nuance of deiknuo is to show so as to prove something is true by evidence and it is this latter sense which applies to Paul's current use as he will give "evidence" to support that love is the more excellent way!

Excellent ([5236](#)) [hyperbole](#) from **hyperballo** = a throwing beyond the usual mark from **hyper** = above + **ballo** = cast) refers to a degree which exceeds extraordinarily a point on an implied or overt scale of extent. It means extraordinary, far more, much greater, to a far greater degree, surpassing, beyond measure, utterly. All NT uses - Rom. 7:13; 1 Co. 12:31; 2 Co. 1:8; 2 Co. 4:7; 2 Co. 4:17; 2 Co. 12:7; Gal. 1:13 Only in 4 Macc 3:18.