**BEING THE CHURCH**

**“Gifts of the Spirit and Body of Christ” - 1st Corinthians 12**

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**Last Week:**

**“27**So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord.

The good news about communion, is that it is all about forgiveness, especially us being forgiven for any sin. That’s why it’s important to reflect on your life, see if there is any *unconfessed sin*, *unforgiveness* or *selfishness*, and ask God to “forgive your sins as you forgive others”, which He is eager to do.

This Week: CHAPTER 12 presents two main topics;

1. The Gifts of the Spirit

2. The Body of Christ

**1st Corinthians 12:1-11 “**Now concerning spiritual *gifts,* brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant: **2**You know thatyou were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led. **3**Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

**4**There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. **5**There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. **6**And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all. **7**But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all:*

**8**for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit,

to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,

**9**to another faith by the same Spirit,

to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,

**10**to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy,

to another discerning of spirits,

to another *different* kinds of tongues,

to another the interpretation of tongues.

**11**But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.”

### This Section on the “Gifts of the Spirit” is sadly one of the top reasons for division among churches, some leading to denomination splits and creating Christian factions.

### It’s sad because Paul is presenting kinds of gifts, kids of service, kinds of workings and manifestations that are supposed to be a blessing to the church not something that becomes a stumbling block.

### Paul opens the chapter with the general term “Gifts of the Spirit”

### “Now about the *gifts of the Spirit*, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed”.

### He then goes on describe them with these phrases; diversities of gifts, differences of ministries, diversities of activities, and manifestations and then presents them as list of supernatural abilities that he says are *“are the work of one and the same Spirit.”*

### Let’s look at the differences between the words Gifts, Ministries and Activities;

### Gifts (gr. charis) – something *given* to you, not that you acquired on your own

**Romans 12:****6**Having then *gifts* differing according to the grace that is given to us, *let us use them:* if prophecy, *let us* *prophesy* in proportion to our faith; **7**or ministry, *let us use it* in *our* ministering; he who teaches, in teaching; **8**he who exhorts, in exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness.”

1. Ministries (gr. diakonia) – The function of those who serve and equip the church

**Eph. 4:11-12** “And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, **12**for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the [[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Ephesians+4%3A10-14&version=NKJV#fen-NKJV-29285a)]edifying of the body of Christ.”

1. Activities (gr. energēmatōn) – an effect, operation of the Spirit

*Power, Boldness, Conviction, Truth, Comfort, etc. (many scriptures)*

**7**But the “manifestation” of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit *of all:*

This list while it includes gifts, ministries and activities, is largely considered a list of “manifestations of the Spirit”

1. word of wisdom

Having a supernatural level of understanding over a certain situation and offering God’s perspective to those who need it.

1. word of knowledge

Receiving an important piece of information from the Lord for a specific situation.

1. faith

Having an extraordinarily heightened amount of trust in God’s power and providence for a certain situation regardless of circumstances.

1. gifts of healings

Being used as the vessel by which God brings wellness to a person who is sick, injured, or physically, psychologically or emotionally impaired.

1. working of miracles

Being used as the vessel by which God brings about seemingly impossible outcomes to situations in tangible and evident ways.

Prophecy

Speaking forth a message from God

1. discerning of spirits,

Having a keen and accurate understanding of the spiritual activity that is taking place within a certain situation or with certain people.

1. *different* kinds of tongues,

Speaking to God in an unknown language. *(“to God” 1st Cor. 14:2)*

1. interpretation of tongues.

Being given the ability to interpret that language.

### Many of you operate in these manifestations or have in the past. It’s important to not let the rampant misunderstandings, abuses or misuses of the Spiritual gifts and manifestations cause you to become skeptical about them. They are given from God for His glory, the edification of the Church body and even for unbelievers.

### It’s important to allow God in His sovereignty to impart whatever gifts He chooses to whomever He chooses, including you.

### II.

**THE CHURCH AS “ONE *BODY”* OF CHRIST**

The Church is called “the body in Christ” here in 1st Corinthians 12 as well as Romans 12:5, 1 Corinthians 10:17, **Ephesians** 4:12, Hebrews 13:3, **Ephesians** 5:23 and Colossians 1:24.

Eph 5:**32“**This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way *Christ and the church are one.”*

The Mystery:

We, the Church, are “Jesus’ body” here on earth.

How is it then that Jesus had a body while He was here and will return again someday?

Here’s how:

Jesus wasGod and was *with* God, even before he took on a human body in Bethlehem.

**John 1:1**In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**>>>**

**14**The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us.

He lived, died, was resurrected and ascended, and is now seated at the right hand of the Father.

What about us? How are we His body?

He breathed life into the church by giving us “His Spirit” (Ruach HaKodesh)

And guess what?...He lives in us, and us in Him and WE are now the presence of the BODY OF JESUS CHRIST here on earth.

**1st John 4:13** “This is how we know that we live in him and he in us: He has given us of his Spirit.”

One Body with Many Parts

**1st Corinthians 12:12-31”**Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. **13**For we were all baptized by[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2012&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28648c)] one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. **14**Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

**15**Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. **16**And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. **17**If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

**: )**

**18**But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. **19**If they were all one part, where would the body be? **20**As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

**21**The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” **22**On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, **23**and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, **24**while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, **25**so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. **26**If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

**27**Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. **28**And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. **29**Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? **30**Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1%20Corinthians%2012&version=NIV#fen-NIV-28665d)]? Do all interpret? **31**Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.”

The church is made up of parts that are all very diverse and different from one another, and yet are one united body of Christ. It’s the way God designed it.

The fact that we are diverse and different is beautiful and effective as long as we have UNITY.

**Unity is vital for a healthy body.** But Unity does not mean *uniformity.*

“UNITY IS NOT UNIFORMITY”.

Look around, many different ethnicities, ages, social backgrounds and most interesting-different Spiritual backgrounds. I know many of you personally and am fascinated at how so many people from extremely different persuasions within the body of Christ not only dwell together, but successfully “thrive” together as one body.

*Martin Smith “All the streams flow as one river, to wash away our brokenness”.*

Your “stream” is your background, your spiritual heritage, and how you identify your journey thus far.

We have so many streams represented in our body, yet are all flowing as one river…ONE BODY of Jesus Christ.

All of us are simply “Christians” (Messianics), Christ Followers, Believers. But have come from different streams or denominations (or non-denominations).

What Stream or Denominations did you come from?: Baptist, Catholic, Assemblies of God, Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopal, Christian & Missionary Alliance, Lutheran, Evangelical Free, Non-denominational, Nazarene, Eastern Orthodox, Messianic Jewish, Calvary Chapel,...? Some come from no church background at all.

Denominations can help to articulate styles of worship and doctrinal emphasis, but they also can divide and create disunity in the Body of Christ which is supposed to be above all things United in love.

*Example:*

*Shout out the name of the denomination you came from…1,2,3 (confusion)*

*Shout out the name of your Savior – 1,2,3, JESUS!*

v. **18**But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. **19**How strange a body would be if it had only one part! **20**Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. **21*The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you.”***

*HAND AND FEET : ) : )*

*The Hand can’t say to the Foot, “I have no need of you”,*

*(mostly because these parts don’t have mouths and vocal cords…: )*

*If they did, the hand might say “We’re very different you and I, but that’s a good thing. However, I am glad I am not you with that funny-looking body and stubby little fingers…*

*The foot could say…”I’m glad I don’t look like you or the whole body wouldn’t be able to walk very far”…etc. etc. etc. : )*

The biggest detriment to the health of the body of Christ – Disunity.

Disunity comes when the body is separated from one another, or turns against itself.

Jesus prayed fervently in John 17 for unity. He mentions it THREE times.

**John 17:23** “I am in them and you are in me. May they experience such *perfect unity* that the world will know that you sent me and that you love them as much as you love me.”

One of the greatest threats to the human body is: **Internal Disease**.

Many of us have been affected by an internal disease like;

**Cancer:** a malignant growth or tumor resulting from the *division* of abnormal cells that become rogue. They eventually work against the health of the body and can eventually destroy it from within.

**HIV:** Unhealthy cells infect and destroy healthy T-Cells.

**MS:** (My disease of choice) The body’s immune system, which is meant to protect the body from disease, turns against itself and destroys the lining of the nerves and brain.

In all these cases, the body’s own cells and members are turning against other cells and members and causes damage and destruction.

***Warning:***

*Within the “Body” (the Church) there are sometimes those who become rogue and divisive. They cause members to turn against each other and infect or destroy one another.*

*As the body of Christ, we must guard against those who seek to do this within the body and more importantly, guard against becoming unhealthy cells ourselves.*

The devil does enough damage, attacking, tempting, discouraging and condemning members of the body. He doesn’t need any help from us. We need to buildup, encourage and unify together, not tear down one another.

We are ALL cells of the Body of Christ. We are each important and together make up the Church, His Body here on earth.

Closing:

This is why it is so important to Love one another, build one another up, encourage one another and bear one another’s burdens.

It’s not our job to condemn one another or tear each other down. Our job is to do all we can to keep the *unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace*.

**Eph 4:3“**Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. **4**There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; **5**one Lord, one faith, one baptism; **6**one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”