

Bible Study Guide

Introduction:

In the church, nobody should do everything, but everyone should do something. Last week we discussed how every disciple of Jesus has been called and equipped by the Holy Spirit for ministry. The logical questions most people asked when attempting to figure out how they are to be a minister of the gospel are “What has God made me to do?” and “Where does God want me to do it?” The answer to both of these questions can be found in the church.

“A manifestation of the Spirit is given to each person for the common good.” - 1 Cor. 12:7

The “common good” Paul is referencing here is the church, the local body of believers. Typically gifts given by the Spirit are revealed in community where a need or opportunity presents itself. Spiritual gifts are not meant for our personal or family’s benefit, but for building up God’s church and providing for the common good of God’s family.

The Corinthians wanted to “grade” the gifts; Paul views this as absurd. All of the gifts, ministries, and activities that the Spirit brings about reflect the unity and work of God. They are never meant to draw attention to their recipient. When we slip into comparing gifts God has given there are three potential results: envy, pride, or self-depreciation. Envy breaks the unity of the church by taking our focus off of God and putting it onto what we do not have. Pride destroys our hearts by overvaluing ourselves, the recipient, and undervaluing God, the giver. Self-depreciation hurts the church by leading many to view themselves as unnecessary or unimportant in God’s family. In Christ, God grades each believer based on Jesus life, death, and resurrection; by grading one another we ignore what the gospel has declared.

This week we will look at our mutual dependence on one another as the body of Christ - all reliant on the Spirit together. Philippians 2:3 commands us to, “in humility, consider others as better than ourselves.” Consider together how we can serve one another with the gifts we have all received and appreciate one another for how God has made them to uniquely contribute to the body of Christ.

Introduction Question:

1) What commitments or circumstances in your life limit or hinder your (and your family’s) ability to be involved in the local church?

Bible Study Questions: (Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-31)

2) What do verses 1-11 say that the Spirit does for believers?

3) Compare and contrast the Bible’s view of gifts from the world’s view of abilities.

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4) How does Paul use the “body” imagery to describe the church in verses 12-31? How is it helpful for you in understanding God’s desire for you in the church?

5) How do verses 14-20 prevent church members from feeling useless as part of the church?

6) As a group, come up with some other analogies of how different parts of the body are indispensable to one another.

7) How do verses 21-26 prevent church members from feeling overly proud of their role and gifts within the church?

Group Application Questions:

8) As followers of Christ, our identity primarily comes from the gospel. As Paul addresses in I Corinthians 12, we are all prone to supplement our spiritual identity with our own accomplishments. Where are you prone to derive identity in the church other than from Christ?

- The role you play in the church?
- The people you are in community with?
- Something else?

9) Share ways you feel like you have become a “side-line” member at the Summit and ways that you and your small group can engage together to use the gifts God has given you *for the common good*.

Prayer:

- Thank God:
 - For the gifts, he has given you.
 - For the gifts, he has chosen not to give you, but to others.
- Ask God:
 - To enable you to have the right attitude about your gifts and toward the gifts of others.
 - To see how you can most use your gifts for the good of the Summit.