

## Gifts & Unity

1 Corinthians 12

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### Gifts

#### 1 Corinthians 12:1

Spiritual gifts: *pneumatikos*

Translated: "spiritual gifts" (i.e. gifts given by the Holy Spirit)

Or "spiritual people" (i.e. people empowered by the Holy Spirit)

#### 1 Corinthians 12:2

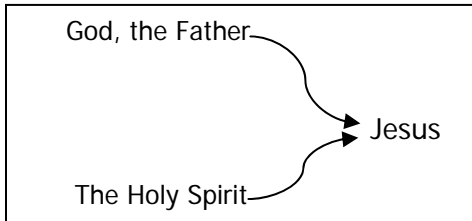
Idols cannot hear prayers or speak, but the Spirit of God can.

#### 1 Corinthians 12:3

In pagan worship, people were known to speak on behalf of the idol in some kind of inspired speech, similar to Christian prophecy.

To call someone "Lord" was to commit yourself to unwavering loyalty and undying allegiance. The Romans had a motto: *Caesar is Lord*.

Spiritual gifts and power are not the true evidence of the Spirit's presence. The exaltation of Jesus is the real evidence.



#### 1 Corinthians 12:4-6

In the church, people have different gifts, services and activities, but out of that diversity is unity.

Unity in diversity is a reflection of the Triune God himself who is God, the Father, the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit. The Latin phrase is *e pluribus unum* meaning "out of the many, one."

#### 1 Corinthians 12:7

The Giver gets the glory and the church gets the good.

#### 1 Corinthians 12:8-10

The validity and practice of these gifts have been debated throughout church history, particularly in the last 500 years. For hundreds of years, Protestants held the view that the more miraculous gifts of the Spirit died out and were no longer a part of the modern Church.

*But that gift of healing, like the rest of the miracles, which the Lord willed to be brought forth for a time, has vanished away in order to make the new preaching of the gospel marvelous forever.*

John Calvin, *Institutes*, 4.19.18

*It does not appear that these extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were common in the church for more than two or three centuries.... The cause of this was not (as has been vulgarly supposed) "because there was no more occasion for them," [but] because... "the love of many," almost of all Christians, so called, was "waxed cold." The Christians had no more of the Spirit of Christ than the other Heathens.*

*The Son of Man, when he came to examine his Church, could hardly "find faith upon earth." This was the real cause why the extraordinary gifts of the Holy Ghost were no longer to be found in the Christian Church -- because the Christians were turned Heathens again, and had only a dead form left.*

John Wesley, Sermon #89: "The More Excellent Way"

The miraculous gifts of the Spirit were never absent from the Church, but were sporadic and often on the fringe until the late 1800s.

Dramatic and miraculous healings began to occur more often in the Church in the US predominately through the ministry of A.J. Gordon, Alexander Dowie and R.A. Torrey.

In the early 1900s, a number of Christians began to experience the gift of tongues in what has now been called the Pentecostal/charismatic Movement. There are roughly 2 billion Christians on the earth and approximately 500,000 million Christians (25%) consider themselves charismatic in their orientation.

The list of spiritual gifts here is not a complete list. There are other gifts mentioned in Romans 12:5-8, 1 Corinthians 12:28-31, and Ephesians 4:11.

### ***Spiritual Gifts (1 Corinthians 12)***

- 1) Utterance of wisdom
- 2) Utterance of knowledge
- 3) Faith
- 4) Healing
- 5) Working of miracles
- 6) Prophecy
- 7) Distinguishing spirits
- 8) Tongues
- 9) Interpretation of tongues

### **1 Corinthians 12:11**

Spiritual gifts should be desired by everyone in the church (1 Corinthians 14:1). Spiritual gifts are given as the Spirit chooses.

### **Unity**

#### **1 Corinthians 12:12**

It is one Spirit who gives gifts to one body of believers, who are the body of Christ.

#### **1 Corinthians 12:13**

The Holy Spirit baptizes us into the body of Jesus (the Church) and Jesus baptizes us in, and makes us drink of, the Holy Spirit.

#### **1 Corinthians 12:14-17**

Your human body is made up of different parts and each part is necessary.

### **1 Corinthians 12:18-23**

The head cannot say to the foot I don't need you.  
Mr. Head cannot say, "Mr. Foot you are calloused, stinky and smelly and there is a strange jam-like substance oozing from your toes! I have no need of you."

### **1 Corinthians 12:23b-25**

We hide certain parts of our body, but in the local church no part is hidden or sent to the back of the bus.

### **1 Corinthians 12:26-27**

In the church, we are one body. If one part hurts we all hurt. If I stub my toe in the middle of the night, my whole body hurts.

### **1 Corinthians 12:28**

First, God established the Church on apostles, the Apostles (the original eleven, Matthias and Paul).  
Second are prophets, those who proclaim Jesus crucified, resurrected and coming back.  
Third are teachers, those who can explain to new converts what it means to be a follower of Christ.

### **1 Corinthians 12:29-30**

The expected answer to these questions is "no."  
We all don't have the same gift.

### **1 Corinthians 12:31**

The excellent way is the way of love.



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