



1 Corinthians 12:1-7 The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts

June 22, 2014

Text: 1 Corinthians 12:1-7

Review from verse one

Good Morning! Since it's been two weeks since we've been in 1 Corinthians, I thought I'd quickly review the thought we took from verse one. We thought it might be a good idea to first be reminded of who the Holy Spirit is and what Scripture says concerning Him to increase our chances of being informed instead of "uninformed" concerning his gifts.

If you recall:

1. He is **God**, being co-equal with the Father and Son, eternal, omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent. (Matt 28:19, Heb 9:14, Ps139:7-10, 1 Cor 2:10-11, Ps 104:30)
2. He is a "**Person**" within the Godhead, having personal characteristics like intelligence, emotions, and a will. He teaches, speaks, and intercedes for us in prayer. (1 Cor 2:10-11, Eph 4:30, 1 Cor 2:11, John 14:26, Acts 8:29, Rom 8:26)
3. He is our Regenerator/Renewer, Sanctifier, and **Helper** (John 3:5-6, Titus 3:4-7, 1 Cor 6:9-11, Gal 5:16-26)
4. He is the In-filler, Empowerer for service, and **Giver** of gifts! (Acts 2:1-4, 1 Cor 12:7-11)
5. His ministry primarily is to bring **glory** to the Father and Son!
 - *Joh 14:25-26 ESV "These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. (26) But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.*
 - *Joh 15:26-27 ESV "But when the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth, who proceeds from the Father, he will bear witness about me. (27) And you also will bear witness, because you have been with me from the beginning.*
 - *Joh 16:13-14 ESV When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come. (14) He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you.*
 - This last part is **very important**, in my opinion, to properly arrive at a good, balanced place on Spiritual Gifts. Consequently, this will again be our focus today....

Walking though the Passage:

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. (1Co 12:1 ESV)

1. Based on the text and the form of Paul's epistles to Corinth, yet another problem was being addressed.
2. Apparently, like in many other areas, Corinth needed some adjusting on the use of Spiritual gifts.
3. In fact, we can infer from chapters 12-14 that:
 - a. There was a basic misunderstanding on their purpose (today's text)
 - b. There was some sense of arrogance and perhaps even classism in their use (chapter 12:12-31)
 - c. They were not being used in love (chapter 13)
 - d. And when they were used, they were used out of order! (chapter 14)
4. Again, like a firm apostle (1 Cor 4:18-21) AND a loving father (1 Cor 4:14-16), Paul brings apostolic instruction to bear on this critical area of the life of the church.

5. May I go ahead and say that like everything else we've covered, this area is still critical? It is! The Holy Spirit still moves in the church! Let us refuse to pick and choose parts of the Bible we like and don't like! I'm glad we can still count on the POWER of the Spirit of Christ to do what we cannot, and I'm glad, that according to His own will the Holy Spirit still empowers us!

You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. (1Co 12:2 ESV)

1. This is both a cause for celebration (because they had been saved) and grounds for great caution (bringing pagan practices into the use of God's gifts).
2. Paul implies that when pagans (Gentiles), the Corinthians were led by different spirits however those spirits would lead them. We know those "mute idols" were demons...
 - a. *1Co 10:20-21 ESV No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons. (21) You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.*
3. We must guard against paganism, humanism, and all the other scary "ism's" when we celebrate our Lord in worship. One way we do that is to worship Him "according to the pattern." (Heb 8:5)
4. There is a difference between good and evil, light and dark, biblical and unbiblical. A truth that I'm coming to understand more and more is that we do not have the lawful right to worship Him any way we choose. He Himself has prescribed His worship:
 - a. *Mat 15:9 in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men."*
 - b. *Joh 4:23-24 ESV But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. (24) God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth."*
5. As grateful as I am for spiritual gifts, I AM VERY CAUTIOUS. This is an area than can easily be used by the devil if we are not careful.
6. **It is NO LONGER "however you were led," but rather, "What has the LORD said?!?" ☺**
7. Now please, let us give one another GRACE. There is no perfect church and the church, "Is always to be reformed": *Ecclesia Semper Reformanda Est*. We are always striving to worship Him more lovingly and more correctly...or at least we should be! ☺
<http://www.crcchesapeake.org/church/blog/2014/06/ecclesia-semper-reformanda-est/>

Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit. (1Co 12:3 ESV)

1. Yes! This is the ultimate purpose of gifts...to **honor** our LORD and Christ!
2. When any sort of gift that comes from the Spirit is in operation, not only can the user say Jesus is Lord, but the "spirit" of the demonstration is "Jesus is LORD."
3. When gifts become "my ministry," "my calling," and "my purpose," it smells wrong; it feels wrong; it is wrong. ☺
4. In context, a foundational way for the Corinthians to discern the true from the pagan is the first declaration of the church: Jesus is Lord!
5. Only by the Spirit can this be TRULY said and TRULY lived out, even in the use of gifts.
6. But I'd like to emphasize again that this hell-shaking phrase does more for us than help with discernment; it GOVERNS the use of gifts and **protects** us...from us, as well as from the demonic.
7. Make NO mistake: Satan is ALWAYS trying to infiltrate the church. Always.
 - a. *2Co 2:9-11 ESV For this is why I wrote, that I might test you and know whether you are obedient in everything. (10) Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. Indeed, what I*

have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ, (11) so that we would not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

- b. *2Co 11:3 ESV But I am afraid that as the serpent deceived Eve by his cunning, your thoughts will be led astray from a sincere and pure devotion to Christ.*
 - c. *2Co 11:14-15 ESV And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. (15) So it is no surprise if his servants, also, disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.*
8. **But keeping “Jesus is Lord” in focus and using whatever He has gracefully given for His own glory, is a shield and hedge against the enemy! Satan operates best with like-minded individuals...rebellious, selfish, self-absorbed. Don’t be that one! 😊**

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. (1Co 12:4-6 ESV)

1. As we’ll see, each gift God gives is important and when they are used properly, it’s obvious to see the ONE SPIRIT, ONE LORD, and ONE GOD who gave them.
2. Today isn’t about whether you believe in certain gifts; it’s about understanding the purpose for any gift God gives: His glory and building up His church.
3. Spiritual gifts are meant to edify the Body, to build it, encourage it, and console it (1 Cor 14:1-4).
4. Regardless of the varieties of gifts, services, and activities, they all should work together under the authority of Jesus our Lord, holy in their usage and fully pleasing to Him.
5. That is the focus today. If we get that, the rest becomes much easier.
6. So once God gives a gift, the questions are: “Lord, how might this be used to honor you and Lord, how might I be a blessing to the church and my brothers and sisters in Christ?”

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1Co 12:7 ESV)

1. Again, the common good is part of the focus.
2. All the fussing and fighting over this (and some of it is necessary, I understand) to me is tragic.
3. The Spirit’s control over His church is supposed to be for the common good. I love the King James here: “*But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.*”
4. We all are suppose to profit from what God freely gives to each of us, male and female, black and white, young and more seasoned. 😊
5. The Spirit’s activity at CRCC is supposed to be for our good and benefit. Sometimes that good is painful and requires change; sometimes that good means simple encouragement and the strengthening of faith; but in every way, it is good.
6. My prayer is that the “manifestation of the Spirit” in whatever form He chooses, will blow our socks off with His goodness! Friends, our God is still good!
 - a. *A Psalm of Asaph. Truly God is good to Israel, to those who are pure in heart. (Psa 73:1 ESV)*
 - b. *And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. (Mar 10:18 ESV)*

Final Thoughts...a few words from Peter:

1Pe 4:1-11 ESV Since therefore Christ suffered in the flesh, arm yourselves with the same way of thinking, for whoever has suffered in the flesh has ceased from sin, (2) so as to live for the rest of the time in the flesh no longer for human passions but for the will of God. (3) For the time that is past suffices for doing what the Gentiles want to do, living in sensuality, passions, drunkenness, orgies,

drinking parties, and lawless idolatry. (4) With respect to this they are surprised when you do not join them in the same flood of debauchery, and they malign you; (5) but they will give account to him who is ready to judge the living and the dead.

(6) For this is why the gospel was preached even to those who are dead, that though judged in the flesh the way people are, they might live in the spirit the way God does. (7) The end of all things is at hand; therefore be self-controlled and sober-minded for the sake of your prayers.

(8) Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, since love covers a multitude of sins. (9) Show hospitality to one another without grumbling. (10) As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: (11) whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies--in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.
(Emphasis mine)

Amen, Pete. Amen. 😊