

## ***Spiritual Gifts in a Spiritual Body***

### **I Corinthians 12:1-11**

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#### **Introduction:**

How would you feel if your children did not open the Christmas gifts which you hand-picked for them? Or, if they did open them, what would you think if they merely tossed them aside? And yet, could it be that many Christians have treated the spiritual gifts that God has personally selected for them in much the same way? This morning we purpose to open, appreciate, enjoy and employ the gift/s that God has given to each one of us. Our goal as we continue this sermon series on the person, work, gifts, and fruit of the Spirit is to learn spiritual principles from I Co. 12-14 that will tangibly affect our life together.

#### **The recipients of I Corinthians:**

Corinth was the New York City of its day. It was the cosmopolitan hub of that area of the world.

Economically

Culturally

Militarily

Politically

#### **The Gospel comes to Corinth    Acts 18,    51 A.D.**

#### **The Corinthian Church reflected the Culture**

The Corinthian Church in many ways reflected the Corinthian culture. The believers were worldly wealthy and worldly wise but spiritually they were spoiled brats. At the beginning of this letter, I Corinthians 1:7 Paul states, "You are not lacking in any gift." But they lacked the maturity needed to enjoy the gifts.

#### **They struggled with three besetting sins which Paul addresses:**

I Corinthians 1-11: S \_\_\_\_\_

I Corinthians 12-14: S \_\_\_\_\_

I Corinthians 15-16: S \_\_\_\_\_

## Overview of I Corinthians 12:1-11

This passage has two broad components both of which speak about God's sovereignty:

In vss. 1-3 we see God's Sovereignty as our Lord

In vss. 4-11 we see God's Sovereignty as our Giver

### I. God is Sovereign in His ruling (vss. 1-3).

Paul contrasts their experience as unconverted idolaters with their present experience as Christians. Earlier he had described their pagan background. (I Co. 6:9) The place to start, therefore, in any discussion of the spiritual gifts is a declaration of the greatest Gift of all....The Gift of God's One and only Son.

### II. God is sovereign in His giving gifts (vss. 4-11)

In vss. 4-11 Paul describes how God sovereignly oversees the gifting of the church. Notice the three ways in which He is sovereign in His gifting:

#### A. God superintends all aspects of imparting spiritual gifts (vss. 4-6).

##### 1. *God the Holy Spirit* gives different gifts (vs. 4)

The Gift of the Spirit (singular) is different from the gifts of the Spirit (plural). (John 14:14-16, Acts 2:37-38)

The gifts of the Spirit are different from natural abilities or talents.

##### 2. *God the Son* superintends the exercise of the gifts (vs. 5).

Just as God the Holy Spirit provides the gifts, (vs. 4), God the Son provides the opportunities for us to use our gifts. Or, to say it another way, the Holy Spirit provides, Jesus guides.

##### 3. *God the Father* superintends the results of our faithfulness (vs. 6)

God takes full responsibility for the eternal impact when we exercise spiritual gifts.

**B. God superintends the corporate welfare of the whole by imparting spiritual gifts to individuals (vs. 7).**

**C. God sovereignly hand-picks spiritual gifts (vss. 8-11).**

**1. Who gives and who receives spiritual gifts?**

I Corinthians 12:7, 11, 18

**2. What are the different spiritual gifts?**

|                               |         |
|-------------------------------|---------|
| <b>I Corinthians 12:8-10</b>  | 9 gifts |
| <b>I Corinthians 12:28-30</b> | 9 gifts |
| <b>Romans 12:6-8</b>          | 7 gifts |
| <b>Ephesians 4:11</b>         | 4 gifts |
| <b>I Peter 4:11</b>           | 2 gifts |

**3. How can I discover what my spiritual gift is?**

**4. Can spiritual gifts ever be lost?**

Romans 11:29

**5. Suppose we don't exercise our spiritual gifts?**

Romans 12:6; I Peter 4:10-11

**Conclusion:**

**Application:**

*Based on God's Word and my worship this morning, this week I purpose to:*

## Understanding Different Prayer Styles<sup>1</sup>

Christians who are gifted differently understandably will pray differently. Each of us will probably approach the same prayer request based on our own life experiences and giftedness. This is why corporate prayer is so important. Just as we need different gifts in the body of Christ, so we need different kinds of people praying for effectual prayer. It's helpful to see how our giftedness affects even the way in which we pray.

### What kinds of prayers or intercessors might there be?

- 1) **Flexible Intercessors** - These people find their prayer lives constantly changing. They seek to follow the Spirit in spiritual warfare prayer, lists, or hard work prayer.
- 2) **Crisis Intercessors** - These people pray best in times of emergency. They are always on call to search and rescue those who are in urgent situations or who have been wounded in life's battles. They might possess gifts such as mercy, faith, healing or service.
- 3) **Intercessors for the nations** – Increasingly more people seem to be called to this ministry. They are the prayer evangelists who pray for the last great revival before the Lord returns. They may have gifts of evangelism, faith, and mercy.
- 4) **Mercy-Motivated Intercessors** - These find great satisfaction praying for a person or situation that needs God's mercy. They can pray with empathy, love and compassion and can minister to others with encouragement and love. They may possess gifts such as counseling, healing, faith, giving, and helps.
- 5) **Prayer List Intercessors** - These seem to function with the gift of administration. They are usually very disciplined and pray faithfully through any prayer requests. They will pray for other things but their primary place is to present requests for people, places and issues on their lists.
- 6) **Special Assignment Intercessors** - These care deeply about those for whom they pray. They may pray about a political, religious, or social situation. Their concern is to protect and care for the body of Christ.
- 7) **Warfare Intercessors** - These are aware of and pray against areas of trouble. They know that our struggles are not against "flesh and blood" but against spiritualities and principalities. They may possess gifts such as wisdom, knowledge, or faith.
- 8) **Administrative Intercessors** - These have the gifts of leadership, giving, administration, exhortation, or faith. They serve as the "spinal cords" of the body, carrying requests to others, coordinating prayer lists or chains, newsletters, or crisis lines. Their own prayer times may not be consistent or their personal styles may vary but the body benefits from their ministry.

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<sup>1</sup> I filed this sheet away years ago, but unfortunately I didn't document who wrote it. I've tried to identify the author, but so far have been unsuccessful. Nevertheless, I have benefitted from the insights of "anonymous" and I hope you will, too. - Pastor Gerald Stigall