



Group Guide

1 Corinthians 12

December 1, 2024

Main Passage: 1 Corinthians 12

Theological Theme

All believers are gifted by God to serve in some way or another. We each have the responsibility to identify the ways we have been gifted and use those gifts to serve the church and bring glory to God.

Introduction

- ❓ What is a gift you received but never used? What do you typically do with those type of gifts?
- ❓ How can we know that God only gives useful and helpful gifts to His children?

1. God Gives Gifts to All (1 Corinthians 12:1-11)

God gives spiritual gifts to believers to glorify Him and build up the body of Christ. These manifestations of the Holy Spirit are varied and meant to be used for a common purpose. It is important to remember these gifts all come from the same divine source and are specifically chosen for each individual. Paul stressed the importance of being informed about the gifts and understanding their purpose.

- ❓ How does it shape your perspective to remember the gifts are all from the same Spirit and the same God who is working them out in the lives of believers individually and together? How does this assure it that the gifts are not meant to work in competition?
- ❓ Why is it important to not think too highly or too lowly about your spiritual gift? What happens if this is our focus?
- ❓ Application: How are you seeking to use your gifts to build up the body of Christ? How can you grow in this?

2. Diversity and Unity of the Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:12-20)

After he listed some of the specific spiritual gifts that believers receive, Paul identified the way those gifts all work together. Stressing that Christ followers are one body, Paul discouraged comparison of gifts, or viewing a specific type of giftedness as being above the others, because we as believers make up one body. This reminder emphasizes the unity we should strive for as the body of Christ in the local church.

- ❓ How can unity or disunity affect the way that the body of Christ functions as a whole? Why does this matter?
- ❓ When was a time a small or overlooked part of your body didn't work correctly (like a toe)? What impact did this have on your whole body? How does this relate to Paul's teaching on the church?
- ❓ Application: Consider the ridiculous idea of your entire body being an eye or a hand. Why is this absurd? How does this apply to believers wrongly elevating various gifts in the body? How are you susceptible to this way of thinking?

3. Purpose of the Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:21-31)

Paul continued with the body illustration and gave specific examples. Just as most people don't wake up every day thinking about their middle toe and giving it special treatment, if they drop a weight onto that toe, it demands attention. When one part of the body is hurt, it affects the entire body, and we suddenly understand how important that part is. Although there may be certain parts that seem more valuable, each piece supports the whole body.

- ❓ What are various ways we protect and care for different parts of the human body? What does this teach us about the unique care needed throughout the church?
- ❓ What problems would arise if all believers had the same gifts and the various gifts were not spread throughout the body? Think back to the idea of the entire body being an eye or a hand.
- ❓ Application: How has today's lesson challenged your thinking about spiritual gifts?

Conclusion

- ❓ How have you been guilty of comparing or coveting another person's giftedness?
- ❓ How can you encourage another person in the gifts of God you see in their life?
- ❓ How is the gospel advanced as we work together as a body as Christ intends?