

Power partners

Part 2, 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

The Giver and the gifts!

Last Sunday Steve preached on John 14:15-27. Jesus is going away, but will not leave the disciples alone. He gives us the Holy Spirit, who will be just as if He was still with them. He will never leave us alone. He will be in us. Our defender, counsellor, advocate. We will be in a relationship.

God is a parent – we are His children – we are brothers and sisters who have the same father, as if we were out of the same womb! Adelphos. All who affirm Jesus is Lord are our family.

Survey of our similarities and differences. What if we were all the same?

When you receive gifts, what do you unwrap first? The biggest, the best wrapped, the heaviest?

God gifts us with parents, today we acknowledge mums – many generations.

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

Parents love giving their children gifts – God gave each of us a spiritual gift that we need to both unpack and use – when this happens all the family benefits. If we squabble over the gifts, and are jealous of what others got, we all lose.

Who is the giver?

Who chooses the gift we receive? How does the gift reflect the giver?

Do any miss out?

What are they called the spirituals? Unlocks and empowers our spiritual world.

The gifts are different and unique but together they add up to Jesus continually being with us. They cause us as a people, when gathered together to be Jesus to each other and to the world. We are essential to each other.

All who believe Jesus is Lord receive a gift.

Looking at verses 1-3: now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to dumb idols. Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, 'Jesus be cursed,' and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit.

The ultimate criterion of the Spirit's activity is the exaltation of Jesus as Lord. Whatever takes away from that, even if they be legitimate expressions of the Spirit, begins to move away from Christ to a more pagan fascination with spiritual activity as an end in itself. Fee

Looking at verses 4-6: there are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are

different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

Gifts" (Gr. *charismata*, from *charis*, meaning "grace") are abilities that enable a person to glorify and serve God. God gives them freely and graciously. Likewise there are different services (Gr. *diakonia*; opportunities for service) that the one Lord over the church gives. Furthermore there are different workings (Gr. *energemata*; manifestations of the Spirit's power at work) that the one God who is responsible for all of them bestows.

Looking at verses 7-10: now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

Gifts, ministries, and effects all manifest the Spirit's presence, not just the more spectacular ones in each category. Believers who have spectacular gifts, ministries, or effectiveness are not necessarily more spiritual than Christians who do not. Each believer makes a unique contribution to the common good, not just certain believers (cf. vv. 12-27; 3:4-10)

Wisdom Knowledge

wisdom – applied knowledge – a mature perception of what is true to reality

knowledge – standing for understanding of God's mysteries (revelations)

Faith Gifts of healing

In verse 9 Paul mentions the gift of "faith" and the gift of "healings."

By faith he means the ability to passionately believe in spiritual possibilities, that faith which turns the vision into reality. Ken Chafin

Faith is trust in God. Every Christian has some faith just as every Christian has some wisdom and knowledge. However some believers have more God-given ability to trust God than others just as some have more God-given wisdom or knowledge than others.

All believers should seek to cultivate wisdom, knowledge, and faith, but some have a larger God-given capacity for one or another of them than other Christians do.

The "gifts of healings" (literally) by definition refer to abilities to cause healing to take place. Evidently there were various types of healings that those so gifted could produce, for example, physical, psychological, and spiritual healings.

Miracles

Miracles are mighty works (Gr. *dynameis*) that alter the natural course of events.

Prophecy

Foretelling and forth telling.

Prophecy has a four-fold meaning in the New Testament:

1. Prophets foretold future events.
2. They also declared things known only by special new revelation from God.
3. they uttered under the Spirit's prompting some lofty statement or message in praise of God, or a word of instruction, refutation, reproof, admonition, or comfort for others.
4. they led in worship and preaching.

Distinguishing between spirits

Gift of discernment, right judgment.

Speaking in tongues

The gift of tongues was the ability to speak in one or more languages that the speaker had not learned. However the languages do not seem limited to human languages (cf. 13:1).

Interpretation of tongues

Could translate what a tongues-speaker said accurately so others present could know the meaning of what he or she said.

Verse 11: All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

It may not be on the list Paul gives in this chapter or in Romans (12:3–8) or in Ephesians (4:7–11), because these lists were not meant to be exhaustive but to give examples of God's gifts

We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully. Romans 12:6-8

So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Ephesians 4:11-14

Applications

There are different gifts, but the one Spirit. He gives to His church, not just to one brand. Amongst our local churches, in what way is PUC gifted?

Diversity, not uniformity, is necessary for a healthy church. But often in the church we have a tendency to seek unity in conformity. Rather than encouraging each person's uniqueness we often discourage it.

He gifts within this section of His universal church. Each gift is for the common good.

The gifts are different and unique but together they add up to Jesus continually being with us. They cause us as a people, when gathered together to be Jesus to each other and to the world. We are essential to each other.

First, there is no gift the church needs that God has not given to one of the members. Second, the work of the church is to encourage the members in the discovery and use of these gifts. Gordon Cosby, Church of the Saviour Washington.

While Paul celebrated the diversity of gifts, of activities, and of ministries, he insisted that they had a common source and a common purpose. All the gifts were from the Holy Spirit and were for the purpose of building up the Body of Christ.

Paul makes this great liberating truth in these verses by insisting that every Christian is gifted (v. 7). Each one is given an ability by God's grace, and no believer is left out. Each gift is a manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

It is truly a gift, not earned, lest we would be tempted to be proud.

Therefore, what is next? What is my relationship with the Holy Spirit? Am I allowing Him to empower and use me so that Jesus is revealed? Or I am just a passenger?