

1 Cor 12- The Body- Sermon on 1 Dec 2019 – Small Group Notes

Hybels- 'the local church is the hope of the world'

Church is amazing when working right... it is God's idea, but can also be toxic...

Last week – 'you do more harm than good' (in 1 Cor 11).

- From what you know of the situation described in 1 Cor 11... what aspects may have caused people distress?

The passage we are looking at today speaks significantly into what I hope we are/and can be... together as a church.

Context in Corinth- only have half the conversation as Paul responds to their letter- What issues can you remember from what we have been studying?

Into that context in Corinth Paul wanted to *encourage their unity, remind them of their mission, and get them to depend on the Holy Spirit.*

Goal that comes up again and again is that we have Unity with Diversity.

Unity- we are one body...Diversity- one body of many parts (great illustration)

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12- The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.

Unity then diversity...

Unity- 1-3- we confess the same Lord, 4-6- we all depend on God to work through us, 7-11- we minister to the same body, 12-13- we all have been baptised in or by the same Spirit

Diversity- 14-20- we have different functions, 21-26- we need to depend on each other, 27-31- diversity fulfils the will of God

Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 - There are **different** kinds of gifts, but the **same** Spirit. ⁵There are **different** kinds of service, but the **same** Lord. ⁶There are **different** kinds of working, but the **same** God works all of them in all men.

Notice the parallelism in verses 4/5/6.

- Why would Paul want to emphasise this like this?

Sovereignty of God in the Great Mission

Key verbs that show how God is at work among us...

Read 1 Cor 12:11, 18, 24, 28... or even just scan the whole chapter.

- How is God at work?

Notice that God is active, but also how his work is described. He has assigned/arranged/composed/and appointed

- how is this building a big picture of God leading the grand mission?

[11] All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and **he gives them** to each one, just as **he determines**. (assigned)

[18] But in fact **God has arranged** the parts in the body, every one of them, just **as he wanted** them to be. (arranged)

[24] while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But **God has combined** the members of the body and has given greater honour to the parts that lacked it, (composed)

[28] And in the church **God has appointed** first of all apostles, second... (appointed)

We play our small part in the mission that God is orchestrating.

- When have you gotten a glimpse of what God is doing that is much bigger than any of us?
- What examples can you think of that illustrate the power of many people working together? As one person we can only do so much. With others the multiplied impact is significant. (sports teams, pyramids, etc)

Quote- "There are two great moments in a person's life: the moment you were born and the moment you realize *why* you were born." —Pastor Kirbyjon Caldwell at a Willow Creek Leadership Conference

God wants to Supernaturally Enable us to Serve Each Other

Supernatural (diversity) – God wants to gift and use you.

We can get used to functioning by natural means... sometimes God wants to enable us in a way that is supernatural. They are '**spiritual**' gifts.

1 Corinthians 12:4- There are different kinds of gifts, but **the same Spirit**.

1 Corinthians 12:7- Now **to each one** the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:13- For we were all baptised by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and **we were all given the one Spirit to drink**.

God has supernaturally gifted you for His work.

- **How are you gifted?**

List of gifts in verses 8 to 10. In Romans 12:6–8, Ephesians 4:7–11 and 1 Peter 4:7–11 we have three other lists, which overlap but also delineate over twenty clear gifts of the Spirit.

Great variety in how God uses people.

- How are spiritual gift lists both helpful and unhelpful?
- Have you ever been gifted by the Spirit of God for a season? Are you aware of any ways that you have gifted that you lean into and develop over time?

Quote- Samuel Chadwick wrote of his discovery of the work of the Spirit in the following way: 'Every part of my being wakened up. I did not get a new set of brains, but I got a new mentality. I did not get a new faculty of speech, but I got a new effectiveness of speech. I did not get a new dictionary, but a new Bible. Immediately I was a new creature, with the same basis of natural qualities, energized, quickened, reinforced into a bigger vitality and effectiveness that nobody would ever have dreamed possible. That is what happens to those upon whom the Spirit comes.'

This is a spiritual work... but the Spirit often works in tangible ways... not just unusual gifts (tongues, prophecy) are supernatural.

Paul really drives this home with 1 Cor 13. Love is what really matters.

Quote- Tom Smail has written: 'The Spirit must not be "spiritualized". He operates in the body and his business there is to produce visible glory, which all who have eyes for reality can see.'

- Have you ever known anyone that you think was spiritually gifted for something that may have looked ordinary?

God wants to Supernaturally Enable us to Serve Each Other

To Serve Each Other (unity) - **For the Common Good**

This grand work that God is orchestrating is not just for the spiritually elite, but for everyone as they serve each other.

1 Corinthians 12:7 - Now *to each one* the **manifestation of the Spirit** is given *for the common good*.

1 Corinthians 12:11- All these (spiritual gifts in vs. 8-10) are the work of one and the same Spirit, and *he gives them to each one, just as he determines*.

So, we are gifted with a range of gifts that are (in vs. 7) for 'the common good'.

These gifts **don't belong to us**. They are given by the Spirit to benefit others.

The Corinthians are very open to the Spirit of God, but they have let the gifting of the Spirit become a source of division. This division is contrary to the work of the Spirit.

You are gifted... not for your own pride or ego... but for the common good.

- Why would God gift us, not for our benefit, but so we can pour ourselves out for others?

Bill Hybels said, 'the local church is the hope of the world', and I think he is right.

Church is amazing when working right... it is God's idea

We are, and want to increasingly be, a church where the Spirit of God is at work powerfully. Where people are empowered by the Spirit as the body of Christ to share Christ with the world. Where the spiritual gifts are marked by a commonality, service, and love that is a taste of God's kingdom breaking into this world.