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**Last week: I Cor 12:1-3**

- **Realize the Truth**
- **Remember the Past**
- **Recognize the Difference**

Beauty of this diverse world -

Nature: blades of grass, trees, mountains, fingerprints, drops of rain, sunsets...all different.

People: \*Difference between my identical twins. No person is the same and no spiritual gift is the exact same.

Beauty of the Bride of Christ - the church can connect and impact every culture at any time.

Somehow with all of this uniqueness, God has created the world to be unified.

Let's open up by establishing two essentials to unity.

**Essential to unity is DIVERSITY.**

Unity cannot only be uniformity. Every player being a quarterback doesn't work. There are a variety of gifts.

**Essential to unity is HARMONY.**

Source of gifts - before Paul gives us a list of the gifts he emphasizes the importance of the Triune God who gives us these gifts. Father, Son, and Spirit unite as one God in giving these variety of gifts to a variety of believers. Various gifts, one God!

Focus on vs. 7 and ask 4 important questions:

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## **1) Who has spiritual gifts? - To each is given**

### **Followers of Jesus**

Now those who aren't followers of Jesus might have certain talents or abilities, but without the Holy Spirit they aren't spiritual gifts. Followers of Jesus operate their gifts not according to any power they have but rather according to the power at Jesus has given them.

From the Vintage Primer on Spiritual Gifts

*The most important element to understand spiritual gifts is understanding when we receive them as believers in Jesus Christ. Salvation and all that encompasses it is appropriated or carried out by the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that applies the saving work of Jesus upon our lives. Therefore the Spirit is responsible for empowering us with whatever spiritual gift(s) we receive. The question is: when do we receive this empowerment. The Bible teaches that at conversion (i.e. repentance and faith in Jesus), we are justified (made right before God) and regenerated. Regeneration is what Paul refers to in 2 Corinthians 5:17 when he writes "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation." Our hearts are transformed which ultimately leads to a transformed character and life.*

*Man's Condition*

*God's Provision*

*Man's Response*

Will you give your life to Christ?

## **2) What do they look like? - the manifestation**

### **Variety of gifts, service, activities**

**VARIETIES:** the word *diakrisis* basically meaning "distributions". There isn't a final comprehensive list but there are major categories (SPEAKING, SERVING, SUPERNATURAL)

A believers gifts can be an overlapping combination, taken in different proportions from the categories of gifts.

Same gifts can be manifested in different ways. Teacher - young kids or a college. Doctrinal or comfort/mercy Evangelist - large crowds or one on one.

**GIFTS:** the word *charisma* means "gifts of grace" or "free gift" and in 16 of 17 NT uses is connected to God as the Giver.

Spiritual gifts are not talents. Unbelievers can be highly talented but they haven't necessarily activated their spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts are only possible in Christ as talked about in the first point.

**SERVICE:** from the same word *diakonos* which means one who serves, servant, and deacon.

Spiritual gifts are not given to the church as status symbols, they are given to us as tools for MINISTRY or SERVICE.

**ACTIVITIES:** the word *energema* means literally "what is worked out or energized".

God not only provides the gifts but He also provides the energy and power and faith to make them effective for the mission of God.

We cannot make it or make a Kingdom difference on our own power.

That is why it is important for us to answer this next question:

### **3) Where do they come from? - of the Spirit**

#### **Same Spirit, Lord, God**

In this week's CG Discussion Guide:

Ephesians 4:4-6

There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

Spiritual gifts MANIFEST (or make known) God the Father, Son and Spirit in the church and in the world.

Which brings us to our last point:

### **4) Why do we have them? - for the common good.**

## **Good for God and man**

*sumpheron* means to bring together, to help, or to benefit. Spiritual gifts are supposed to be helpful to the church by bringing them together in His name.

Example: Pastor preaching doesn't just exercise his gift to build himself up and his people up spiritually. He preaches in such a way that fall in line with Ephesians 4:12 which says, *to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.*

Today is SUPERBOWL Sunday, so let's close with a football illustration.

Illustration from A29 Conference:  
Coach calls the play, the players run the play.

Let's run the play!

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.  
(1 Thessalonians 5:11 ESV)