



GIFTED

The Most Excellent Way

1 Corinthians 12-14

Concerning spiritual gifts...

- **Variety** of gifts
- Designed to create **Unity** in the church
- Allow us to **Minister** to the body of believers



Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth

- New church – trying to figure it out
- Letter in response to multiple questions and problems
- Spiritual Gifts is one of those problems, especially *speaking in tongues*
- Three “chapters” devoted to this topic – 12-14



1 Corinthians 12

Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.... There are **different** kinds of gifts, but the **same Spirit** distributes them. ⁵ There are **different** kinds of service, but the **same Lord**. ⁶ There are **different** kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the **same God** at work.

⁷ Now to each one **the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good**. ⁸ To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge... ⁹ to another faith..., to another gifts of healing..., ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ All these are the work **of one and the same Spirit**, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For we **were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body**—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

¹⁵ Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body.

¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ **But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.** ¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰



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We cannot function without ALL the gifts and people God has brought into his family.

As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” ²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. ... But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵ so that **there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.** ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and **each one of you is a part of it.** ²⁸ And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. ²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? ³⁰ Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret?

³¹ Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. And yet I will show you **the most excellent way.**



If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have **love**, I am only a resounding gong or a **clanging cymbal**.

² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have **love**, I am **nothing**.

³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to **hardship** (to be burned) that I may boast, but do not have **love**, I gain nothing.

Love needs to be the driving force behind our ministry— but what is it, exactly?



Love – “agape”

- Conveys the love of God
 - *200+ times in NT*
- Not a feeling
- Decision or commitment, not merit
- Love for the unworthy, sacrificial



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If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have **agape**, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. ² If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have **agape**, I am nothing. ³ If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have **agape**, I gain nothing.

⁴ **Agape** is patient, **agape** is kind.

It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking,

⁵ it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7 The Wedding Passage

⁴ Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, it is not selfish, and it cannot be made angry easily. Love does not remember wrongs done against it. Love is never happy when others do wrong, but it is always happy with the truth. Love never gives up on people. It never stops trusting, never loses hope, and never quits.

Easy-to-Read Version (ERV)

⁸ *Agape* never fails. But where there are **prophecies**, they will cease; where there are **tongues**, they will be stilled; where there is **knowledge**, it will pass away. And now these three remain: **faith, hope and agape**. **But the greatest of these is agape.**

Follow the way of agape and eagerly desire gifts of the Spirit, especially prophecy. ² For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to people but to God. Indeed, no one understands them; they utter mysteries by the Spirit. ³ But the one who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouraging and comfort....

- instructions on spiritual gifts and order of worship in the congregation -

²⁶ What then shall we say, brothers and sisters? When you come together, each of you has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. **Everything must be done so that the church may be built up. ...**

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. ⁴⁰ **But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.**



Spiritual Gifts – Variety, Unity, Ministry

Chapter 12

- Variety of spiritual gifts
- For the common good - unity, not division
 - Tools to bless and share God's love with others
 - God gives gifts to minister THROUGH me, not TO me
- All equally valued and useful

Chapter 13

- Gifts are something we should desire and seek
- **The motive must be *agape***

Chapter 14

- Let love and thoughtfulness guide your gatherings

Variety - gifts of the Spirit

Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Faith, Healing,
Miracles, Prophecy, distinguishing spirits, tongues

Ministry to others- for the common good

Tools to love others

God gives gifts THROUGH me, not TO me

Unity is the goal - fruit of the Spirit

Love, joy, peace, patience, kindness,
goodness, faithfulness



Invitation

What do you believe about spiritual gifts?

Sit before God with your beliefs. Ask him to show you areas that may need a different perspective.

Challenge: Read through 1 Corinthians 13:4-7 and consider how it describes the way you view the church. Can you substitute “I” for “love” or “it?” Talk to God about that.

⁴Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, it does not brag, and it is not proud. Love is not rude, it is not selfish, and it cannot be made angry easily. Love does not remember wrongs done against it. Love is never happy when others do wrong, but it is always happy with the truth. Love never gives up on people. It never stops trusting, never loses hope, and never quits. (ERV)

