

Approximately Expository 35 minutes



“One Body, Many Parts”

1 Corinthians Chapter 12

Opening Prayer:

Father God, we come before You in the powerful name of Jesus. Thank You for Your Word that unites us, teaches us, and equips us. Holy Spirit, open our eyes today to understand how You have gifted us. Remove comparison. Remove pride. Remove insecurity. Help us see our place in the body of Christ. And Lord, if anyone listening does not yet know You, draw them to salvation today. We surrender this time to You. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Historical Setting:

Corinth was spiritually curious but religiously confused. The city was filled with pagan temples, ecstatic worship practices, and dramatic spiritual displays. Before coming to Christ, many believers in Corinth had participated in idol worship and counterfeit spiritual experiences.

When they were saved, the Holy Spirit began working powerfully among them ... but confusion followed. Some elevated certain spiritual gifts above others. Some believers felt superior because of visible gifts. Others felt inferior because their gifts were less dramatic.

So in chapter 12, Paul teaches about spiritual gifts, unity, diversity, and the true source of spiritual power.

This chapter answers a crucial question:

How does the Holy Spirit work in the church?

1. The True Source of Spiritual Power

1 Corinthians 12:1-3 Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. ² You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. ³ 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.¹

Paul begins in verse 1:

“Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.” (V.1)

¹ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Co 12:1–3.

They needed clarity.

Verse 2 reminds them of their past:

“When you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols.” (v.2)

Before Christ, they were spiritually deceived.

Verse 3 gives a powerful test:

“...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.” (v.3)

The Holy Spirit always exalts Jesus.

If something draws attention away from Christ, it is not the Spirit of God.

The central confession of the Christian life is:

“...Jesus is Lord...” (v.3)

2. Different Gifts, Same Spirit

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 ⁴ 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 by means of the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 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.²

Paul emphasizes diversity and unity:

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them.” (v.4)

Different gifts.

Same Spirit.

Different service.

Same Lord.

Different workings.

Same God.

This is Trinitarian unity - Spirit (Holy Ghost), Lord (Jesus), God (Father).

Verse 7 is key:

² [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Co 12:4–11.

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.” (v.7)

Every believer has a gift.
And every gift is for the good of the body.

Paul lists several gifts:

- . Wisdom
- . Knowledge
- . Faith
- . Healing
- . Miraculous powers
- . Prophecy
- . Discernment
- . Tongues
- . Interpretation

Verse 11 reminds us:

“All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.” (v.11)

The Holy Spirit is sovereign in distribution.

We don't choose our gifts.
We steward them.

3. One Body, Many Parts

1 Corinthians 12:12–20 ¹² **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 As it is, there are many parts, but one body.³

Paul uses a powerful metaphor, verse 12:

Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.⁴ (v.12)

We are one body.

Verse 13:

³ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Co 12:12–20.

⁴ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Co 12:12.

“For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body...” (v.13)

Different backgrounds.

Different personalities.

Different abilities.

One Spirit.

One body.

Then Paul addresses insecurity, verse 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.⁵ (v.15)

Comparison leads to discouragement.

Verse 18:

“But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.” (v.18)

⁵ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Co 12:15.

You are not an accident.
Your role is intentional.

4. No Part Is Unnecessary

1 Corinthians 12:21-26 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. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. 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. ⁶

Now Paul addresses pride, verse 21:

“The eye cannot say to the hand, ‘I don’t need you!’” (v.21)

Independence is an illusion.

Verse 22:

“...Those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable.” (v.22)

Hidden faithfulness matters.

Verse 26 is beautiful:

“If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.” (v.26)

The church should feel together.

⁶ [The New International Version](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Co 12:21–26.

Not competitive.
Not divided.
Connected.

5. God's Order and Calling

1 Corinthians 12:27-31 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.⁷

Paul says in verse 27... :

⁷ [*The New International Version*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011), 1 Co 12:27–31.

“Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.” (v.27)

That is identity.

Verse 28 lists roles:

- . Apostles
- . Prophets
- . Teachers
- . Miracles
- . Healing
- . Helps
- . Administration
- . Tongues

Not everyone has the same gift.

Verse 29-30 reminds us that diversity is intentional.

And then Paul says verse 31... :

“Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.” (v.31)

But in chapter 13, he will show that love is the greatest gift of all.

Application for Today:

Chapter 12 teaches us five truths:

1. The Holy Spirit exalts Jesus.
2. Every believer is gifted.
3. Gifts are for serving others.
4. Comparison is destructive.
5. Unity is essential.

Some believers feel inferior:

“I don’t have a platform.”

“I don’t have a visible gift.”

Others feel superior:

“My gift is more important.”

Both attitudes miss the point.

The body only functions when every part plays its role.

You matter.
Your gift matters.
Your faithfulness matters.

A Church Empowered by the Spirit:

The world values talent.
God values surrender.

The world promotes self.
The Spirit promotes Christ.

When the church operates in humility and
unity, the Spirit works powerfully.

Invitation to Be Born Again:

Perhaps someone listening today has never
received the Holy Spirit because you have
never received Christ.

You cannot operate in spiritual gifts without
spiritual life.

The first step is not discovering your gift.
It is surrendering to **Jesus**.

The Bible says:

**“....No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’
except by the Holy Spirit.”** (v.3)

Jesus died for your sins.
He rose from the dead.
He offers forgiveness and new life.

When you trust Him,
He fills you with His Spirit.
You become part of His body.
You receive new identity.

If you are ready, pray in your heart:



Let us Pray...

**Lord Jesus, I confess that I am a
sinner.... I believe You died for me and
rose again.... I surrender my life to
You.... Save me.... Fill me with Your
Spirit.... Make me part of Your body....
Amen.**

If you mean that by true faith, He saved you.

He will place you in His body.

And He will begin working through you.

 Closing Prayer:

Father God, thank You for the gift of the Holy Spirit. Thank You that we are one body in Christ. Remove jealousy. Remove pride. Help us celebrate each other's gifts. Teach us to serve faithfully where You have placed us.

For those who have surrendered to You today, fill them with Your Spirit. Help them discover their gifts. Empower them to serve with humility and love.

May our church reflect unity, diversity, and devotion to Jesus.

**We love You. We praise You.
In Jesus' mighty name, Amen.**