

# “Gifted” // 1 Corinthians 12:1–13 // Rushing Wind, #5

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## Announcements:

### Easter:

- **You did it again.** A couple of surprising things about that... we don't experience the surge that a lot of churches do because we have a lot of students and so many go home on that weekend... So actually we do experience a surge, it's just offset by 2000 people going home.
  - Over 1000 kids;
  - 1000 at N Ral;
  - Spanish campus had over 200.
- We **baptized last weekend 182 people.** Here's the thing about that. Few of those, if any, just came alone. They were there because you brought them.

Here's a note I got this week:

*I want to write you and express my gratitude for the opportunity to be baptized last weekend.*

*I went to church off and on throughout high school (in California—sorry) but when I came to college I stopped going completely. I had cut Jesus out of my life. At the end of first semester, I happened to run into some of my dorm mates who were discussing going to church the next morning and I decided to join in. They took me to the Summit at West Club. Since then, my faith has grown TREMENDOUSLY and now I look forward to church every Sunday.*

*When I came to church this morning, I felt Jesus's presence stronger than I have ever felt Him in my life. At that moment I knew for a fact without an ounce of doubt that I fully believe that Jesus lived, died, was resurrected and took MY sins upon his own shoulders so that I would be saved.*

*At the end of the service when people were called forward to be baptized, I knew there was nothing I would not now do for Jesus, and walking forward to be baptized was the first step of a lifetime.*

*~~Knowing myself, it probably would have been years before I got baptized if I had not been presented the opportunity today~~ (I may never have taken that step had it not been presented to me by the Summit Church,) and so I must say I am forever grateful to you.*

**The 180 or so of last week brings us up to over 700 we've baptized for the year**, each of them with a story. We're going to do an encore baptism today... I know there are many of you here this weekend who know you should have been baptized last week and weren't. (KID who turned the car around). Or maybe you were **out of town**. Today is your day. Your campus pastors will tell you more at the end of the service.

One more thing. **Giving:** I told you 2 months ago that we were in a season where we needed to stretch ourselves to meet some needs we have to grow. I told you we needed about *1.5 million* above our normal ministry costs to do some really important things: *we need to expand North Raleigh; new space for summit en espanol, chapel hill campus, expand brier creek; improve video quality everywhere)*

- In the past 2 months, we've collected an extra \$120,000 above what we expected. Over 60K of that came in last week alone. That's going to enable us to take some of these steps.
- So we have a lot of praise God for... If you want to pull out your checkbook and stroke a check for the other 1.3 million we need, we're ready. This is for everybody. This is a time for everybody to dig deep and invest.

### **Intro:**

You got your Bible? **1 Cor 12:** the next two weeks are going to be fun. We're going to look at spiritual gifts...

I've told you before that one of the things I love about the Summit church is how diverse we are in our backgrounds. We have people here who come from all manner of religious backgrounds: we have people who grew up **Baptist; Presbyterian; Catholic; Pentecostals;** we have charismatics; non-charismatics; I'm not really sure what any of this means-atics; and we've got just plain former addicts.

You say, "What does that mean for our church?"

1. We have some interesting small group discussions.
2. A friend of mine says that with all the Baptists, Reformed people, and Pentecostals we have in our church, we are predestined to speak in tongues at a potluck dinner.

I believe the diversity in our church is a very healthy thing, and one I'm grateful for, because we bring different experiences to the table and we teach one another.

I would say that regarding the charismatic issue our official stance is we are "charismatics with a seatbelt." I'll be explaining more about that to you in the next couple of weeks.

### **Message:**

Here we go: **1 Corinthians 12.**

In the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of this series, I explained to you that the power Jesus drew upon to do all that He did not come out of

His own God-ness, but He leaned into the power of the Spirit.

- The Gospel writer Luke, who wrote Luke and Acts, goes out of his way to show you that—that Jesus is accessing the Holy Spirit’s power to do pray and have insight and do miracles—because he wants you to see that the same power Jesus tapped into in His ministry is what you have access to as you follow Jesus.

With that in mind,

**1 Corinthians 12:1**, *Now concerning spiritual gifts (pneumatikon: spirituals), brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.*

*[4] Now there are varieties of gifts (charismata), but the same Spirit; [5] and there are varieties of service (diakonia: servanthood, deacons), but the same Lord; [6] and there are varieties of activities (energema), but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. [7] To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.*

**1. A spiritual gift is (very simply) Jesus pursuing His mission through the members of His church<sup>1</sup>**

- **John 14:12**, (Jesus said) “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do;

and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

- “because I am going to the Father” is a code-reference to the coming of the Holy Spirit, because that’s what Jesus had promised to do when He went to the Father
  - “greater works” means greater in extent, because now that the Spirit is in everyone, the collective effect of the Spirit is greater than if it was all bound up in Jesus. It would be great if Jesus were here, but with 7000 people here this weekend, we’ve got 7000 people potentially tapping into the same power Jesus had access to.
- What was the mission of Jesus? *A. To glorify God in the world; B. to bless it and to heal it; C. to save sinners; D. and to build up His church.* (John 12:27–28; Luke 4:18–19; Luke 19:10; John 21:15)
  - When God does those things through you, it is a spiritual gift.

**2. Every believer has one**

- (vs. 7) to “each” is given...

**3. The gifts are given ‘for the common good’ of the church**

- One of the many problems the Corinthians had is that they thought their spiritual gifts made them look super spiritual; manifestations of their awesomeness. They were proud and boasted in them.

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<sup>1</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 396.

- They thought of spiritual gifts like spiritual **Spiderman powers** that proved you were a spiritual super-hero. “Ooh, watch this, I got **tongues; prophecy**; I got Jesus-**spidey-sense** about your needs... What do you got? Oh, you just got the gift of administration, that’s lame.”
- Paul is going to tell them that not only does that show they are immature, it shows that they don’t understand either the nature of the gospel or the nature of the gifts.
  - The gospel is that you have the absolute approval of God in Christ. Christ’s righteousness has been given to you as a gift, and God sees you now in Christ. That is the highest recognition by the loftiest person.
  - To think that a spiritual gift sets you apart shows that you don’t understand that what you deserve is nothing but God’s wrath but what you’ve been given is Christ’s righteousness.
- Fallen human nature searches for something about itself that is unique, that it can boast in, that sets it apart: I’m prettier; I’m more athletic; I’m smarter; I’ve got a better body; I’m more moral;
  - Spiritual gifts can even be used to that end. I’ve got this; I can do this. I’m special.
- Christ’s righteousness is our boast. Luke 10, **the disciples came back from a preaching tour...** Jesus said, “Don’t rejoice that the demons are subject to you...”
- Now, possessing that mentality is more easily said than done, I will admit! My fallen heart is constantly gravitating to ways to distinguish myself in your eyes. Things that give me a sense of importance.
  - Ex. Somebody on the way out of church says, “Pastor, that was a phenomenal sermon. you do this every week. You are truly a great preacher.” A word of encouragement. I love it. When we get home, I ask my wife, “Babe, how many *truly* great preachers are there in the world, do you think?”
  - Ex. The other day I caught myself thinking... I’d spoken at a big conference; really high profile. On the way home, I sat next to someone on a plane... I was tired, but I faithfully shared Christ with the person. And I thought, *“How many other people would do that? I just preached to thousands; and now I have the humility to talk to the one person beside me...I bet God is really glad to have a guy like me on His team.”* (I kid you not, that’s what went through my head. What’s wrong with my heart?) And then I think, *“You idiot. Do you know what it cost God to have you on His team? The death of Jesus. I don’t think God feels lucky to have you. I think the fact that you are not in hell you should consider to be a gift of grace that cost Him everything.”*
- The gifts of grace are given to you for the common good, not for your own personal benefit and certainly not to

give you a reason to boast; our boast is in the righteousness of Christ given to us as a gift, and our gifts are given to us to serve others like he served us.

- *Too honest? Uncomfortable? Want me to cut stuff like that out and just kind of act like I have everything all together?*

#### **4. No believer has them all**

- Vs. 7, to each was given something that everybody else needed.
  - God didn't give them all to anybody. Jesus had all the spiritual gifts, but nobody else does.
- Down in vs. 12, he's going to use the analogy of the body. Every member is unique and performs a different function. If the eye decides that it's more important than the foot... and you could see how it could think that...
- God designed the church like that. You see, one of God's agendas is to go to war against our self-sufficiency. So, He communicates part of Himself to one person and part of Himself to another so that without one another we can never experience God.
  - *He does this with knowledge about Him.* He allows different people to gain a different angle on Him. C.S. Lewis and his friend
  - *He does that with His work in the world.* Example I've used a lot... how does the brain take care of the elbow? He's made the elbow

dependent on the fingers and the eye  
dependent on the foot.

- So the only way to know all of Jesus; the only way to experience all the power of Jesus, is to be connected to other believers.
  - There is no lone-ranger spirituality. There is no "I am complete in Christ and therefore I don't need the church."
  - You are complete in Christ, but the way God continues to work in your life is through intimate connection with His body, the local church.
- Which, let me add here—*It makes no sense to ask God to work in your life if you are not intimately connected to a local church.* "God, give me guidance. Help my marriage. Help my kids. Help me to overcome temptation; to not be so lonely as a single."
  - *God has distributed the primary portion of His power in the world by means of gifts He's given to the church. When you are asking God to work in your life without being intimately connected to a local church you are asking Him for His power and while you disconnect yourself from the source of that power, and that, frankly speaking, takes a pretty brawny level of Chutzpah.*
    - You know chutzpah? Jewish word that means a brazen, completely self-unaware self-confidence. I've always heard it described as...

- No believer has them all... I used to think that everything that was important to the kingdom of God I had to be involved in:
  - Evangelism; missions; the poor; adoption; men's ministry... I don't have the bandwidth to be involved in them all. Tired, feeling guilty all the time.
  - The answer is in spiritual gifts: *Not everything that comes from heaven has your name on it.*
  - You are a creature, and creatures can't do everything. You have limited bandwidth. God can do everything.
  - You want to know one of the ways God has set things up to prove that to you? SLEEP. God doesn't need to sleep, but He's made me so that I do. And sometimes I feel like I could get so much more done if I didn't have to sleep! But God designed me so that I would, so every night I have to turn myself off and reflect on the fact that He's God, and I'm not.

##### 5. "Real church" only happens when all are contributing

- Let me jump ahead to next week: *"When you come together, each one has a hymn, a lesson, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Let all things be done for building up." (1 Corinthians 14:26)*
- Paul's expectation is that everyone comes with something to give. Let me ask you something: Is that

your expectation? "God has given me a word of exhortation; an insight; a word for someone...?"

- Most of you think of me as the one giving. You come to receive from me. You preach. We listen.
- Summit, let me give you a conviction I have about something I think we are really weak in. It's this. According to Paul, a New Testament worship service consists of 3 things being present in abundance: **Word of God; Spirit of God; People of God**
  - I'll tell you where I really saw this: our team went to a big megachurch
- What if you each came to church just bubbling up... "I've got this word of encouragement; I've got this insight; whom am I to share it with?"
- That's what it is supposed to be... but is that how you approach church? For many of you it's just "I come; J.D. and the worship team gives; I receive."
  - ***I'll prove it to you: the moment that I say, "Let's bow for prayer..." about 50 of you get up and leave. You've gotten what you came to get... now you are ready to go home.***
  - Now, let me be very clear: You are welcome to come here and do that. Nobody is going to stop you. Our ushers are trained not to give you judgmental looks. You're welcome to leave early. I realize that you probably won't do it today... sneaky that one.
  - But if you do that, I just want to ask you—what does that reveal about your attitude toward the

church? What a horrible Christian experience.  
*The joy of the Christian life comes not from consuming spiritual nuggets like you're at a MacDonald's and going home; the real joy is when you are part of a body that is interdependent and gives and loves and serves one another!*

*We still friends? We have time? Keep reading, 1 Cor 12:*

*[8] For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, [9] to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, [10] to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. [11] All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.*

This is 1 of 6 different lists of spiritual gifts found in the New Testament (there are 2 more in 1 Corinthians; 1 in Ephesians; one in Romans; and one in 1 Peter<sup>2</sup>). Here's the thing: none of them are the same. There are some overlaps, but there are at least 22 different gifts noted, and no list includes all of them.

There is the gift of:

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<sup>2</sup> Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 398.

- apostle
- prophet
- teacher
- miracles
- healings
- helps
- administration
- tongues
- the interpretation of tongues
- a word of wisdom
- word of knowledge
- faith
- distinguishing between spirits
- gift of the evangelist
- pastor-teacher
- serving
- encouraging
- contributing
- leadership
- mercy
- marriage
- celibacy (my wife took this test)

**6 different lists; each giving different gifts; no one list contains all of them.** What that means: there is no exhaustive list.

- A spiritual gift is whatever God wants to do in the world through his church. Remember they are just

called 'spirituals' or 'Spirit manifestations.' They are whatever the Spirit wants to do at the moment for and through the church in pursuit of the mission of Jesus.

- It's not like an alphabet where you have a set number, and only a set number, to work with. You've got A, B, X.
- Peter would lump all spiritual gifts into basically two categories: those who speak for God; those who serve for God (1 Peter 4:11).

Sometimes the gifts are more permanent; sometimes they are temporary—sometimes the power of God can upon you for a time, or a season, to do one thing; and then not again; sometimes it is a gift for life.

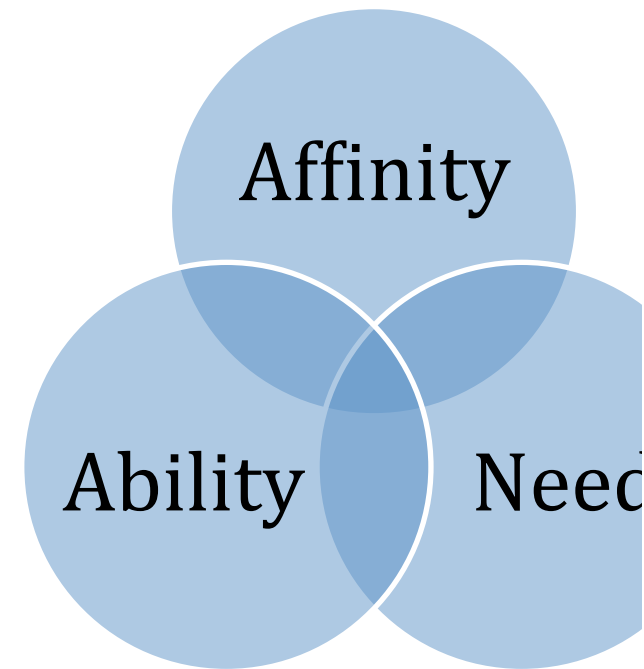
Sometimes (in fact, often) they are in rhythm with your natural abilities (The spirit of God takes some natural talent you have and supercharges it and anoints it for us in His kingdom); other times (more rarely) they are completely foreign your natural gifts.

- I've known a few people who were not natural public speakers at all who became great preachers. That's rare, but it happens.
- I've known a lot of people who thought they could bless others in song but I just wasn't seeing it.

So they are usually in line with your natural abilities but not always. You say, "Well, how can you tell?"

You ought to study these lists (small group; transcripts)

**3 things:** Ability/affinity/need



**5. Spiritual gifts give a wonderful diversity to the church**

- **Vs. 4**, "Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit."
- **Vss. 12-13**, "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. [13] For in one



*Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.*

- **“The Spirit gives unity to the church; His gifts give diversity.”**
- You are given various passions, interests, insights, burdens for ministry.
- And here’s the thing: that creates tension in the church. Limited resources. Everybody is saying, “Oh, why don’t they see the value of *this*!”
  - Me receiving letters... I’m not saying that we shouldn’t listen to you, I’m just saying that you should recognize it is a particular gifting that you have. The reason no one else sees it like you do is because you’ve been given that gift.
  - So yes, lead us in it as a church (we say the best ministry ideas are in the congregation). But also, we want you to lead in it.
  - The vision of this church is catalyzing you for ministry. Not us starting a bunch of ministries, but helping you start ministries.
  - 20/80.

In the time I have remaining... Let me talk about the group of gifts Paul mentions in vv. 8–10, because we, as a church, are largely unfamiliar with these and I think we should be; I think we are at a loss because we are ignorant of these. VV. 8–9: utterances of wisdom, knowledge, gifts of faith; healing; miracles, prophecy, the ability to distinguish

between spirits, tongues and their interpretation, and we’ll get more into it next week:

### **Gifts of Wisdom, Utterance**

- Sometimes the Spirit of God will give you insight into His will in an area that is not spelled out really clear...
- A lot of times the Scriptures are plenty clear. “Do not murder.” Other times, what job is the right one, whom should I marry? Should Christians vote against homosexual marriage?

**Gifts of Knowledge:** a special knowledge from the Holy Spirit

- Jesus in John 4
- 1 Cor 14:25
- I’ve had this happen; had friends it happened to

### **Gifts of Faith**

- Not normal “believe in Jesus” and trust God faith, but the ability to perceive what God wants to do. Think of the people in the Gospels who come up to Jesus with an awareness that He will heal.

There’s another phrase there **“gifts of prophecy”**

- The ability to speak God’s will into a situation at just the right time. Sometimes it is knowing just how to apply Scripture to someone.
- Sometimes it is taking the above (wisdom, utterance, and faith) and speaking it into someone’s life. Wayne

Grudem says it is *“reporting in ones own words something God has spontaneously brought to mind.”*<sup>3</sup>

- Examples:
  - Acts 21:4, says that the disciples of Tyre, “...warned Paul through the Spirit not to go to Jerusalem.”
  - Acts 21:10 tells us a disciple named Agabus who told Paul, through the Spirit, told Paul that Jews would deliver him into the hands of the Roman rulers.<sup>4</sup>
- God still does that. (Situations in my life.) Notice, Grudem says, “In one’s own words.” This doesn’t take the weight of a “thus says the Lord” part of Scripture. That means when a prophecy is given, it should always be humbly. People say to me, “God says this to you.” How do you argue with that? You say, “I think God might be saying this.”

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<sup>3</sup> Grudem, 408.

<sup>4</sup> Wayne Grudem points out that Agabus was mostly correct, though not entirely. It was the Romans who bound Paul, not the Jews; the Jews did not deliver Paul, but tried to kill him. “The prediction was not far off, but it had inaccuracies in detail that would have called into question the validity of any Old Testament prophet... This is exactly the kind of fallible prophecy that would fit the definition of New Testament congregational prophecy proposed above—‘reporting in ones own words something God has spontaneously brought to mind.’” *Bible Doctrine*, 411.

- Notice Paul says that prophecy is one gift, another is the ability to distinguish the spirits, or to distinguish the prophecies.
  - **1 Thessalonians 5:20–21**, Paul says, *“Do not despise prophesying, but test everything; hold fast to what is good.”*
  - Weigh it out. I never say, “God says X. No more arguing.” Unless I have a verse of Scripture. I can say, “I think God may be telling me to tell you...” and then I expect you to weigh it out. The gifts of prophecy and the interpretation of spirits.
  - We need more of that interaction with the Spirit!

### Gifts of healing, miracles

- Special abilities to pray for God’s supernatural work.
- That’s not over today. Now, I will say, you do see, even in the Bible that there seems to be an explosion of signs around the coming of Jesus, and they seem to subside after while; Acts is full of stories of these signs happening as the gospel goes into a new area. But when you read the epistles, you see that a lot of this has died down. 1 Tim 4:18 Paul talks about leaving a guy at a place “sick.”
- You often see it as it is going into new places.
  - Dreams and visions
  - “this is the guy God listens to.”

- This doesn't mean He won't do it here, just that we may expect it more in places where the gospel has not gone

**Tongues:** glossalia, which is giving praise to God in language that is unknown to you, which we'll get into next week. Should be fun.

Last point: **6. Spiritual gifts do not equal spiritual fruit.**

- Right after this chapter, tucked in there before chapter 14, is Paul's great hymn on love. People often think it's just "inserted" in there so we would have something to read at weddings. Or like Paul had written the chapters of Corinthians on note cards and that one got mis-shuffled. But it's not random. God gave us these gifts as an act of love to us, and they only work when we are focused on using them in love for one another.
  - You see, there are many people who are VERY effective on the outside, but on the inside they are joyless, they are **jealous, loveless, discontent**. That's why Paul never confuses spiritual gifts and spiritual fruit.
  - 1 Corinthians 12 and 14 are about spiritual gifts, 1 Corinthians 13 is about the greatest of the spiritual fruits which is love.
- Where does love come from? Not from a spiritual gift, but from seeing the greatest gift of God, God's Son torn apart for your sin. Through seeing that

Jesus took all of His spiritual "gifts" and laid them down for us!