

“Now Concerning the Spirit Stuff...” // 1 Corinthians 12:1–27 // *Cutting Through the Noise # 13*

(Announcement)

Welcome to TSC...Y'all, I cannot overstate how expectant we are for what God is going to do in our Men's Conference. We have 1700 signed up (in fact, we have over 100 on a waiting list, so if for some reason you got a ticket and are unable to come, please turn it back on so someone else can experience it!) I know many of you ladies are like, "That *does* sound amazing...can we come?" Not this time, but fret not, my sisters, there's another thing right around the corner that you *are* invited to: Easter Sunday is coming up! You say, "Well, what's so exciting about that?" First, that's like Super Bowl Sunday for the church, minus the Dr. Dre and the Snoop Dogg; and second, this year we are going to be gathering as one church in one location, and that location is the Walnut Creek Amphitheater in Raleigh, and we'd love to see 20K people there. We haven't done this since our last Church at the Ballpark which was almost 10 years ago.

So mark your calendars for Easter Sunday, be thinking of friends and family to join you. Let's see 20K people pack the place. College students, invite your parents! Free tickets w/b available in the next couple of weeks, along with opportunities to volunteer. And let's start praying, ok? Pray that this would be another moment in the life of TSC where we look back and say God truly did more than we could ask or imagine. OK?

This is the last week of BHM, and we've tried to take time each weekend to acknowledge the unique contributions our brothers and sisters of color have made to the church. We do this not because it's politically correct, but because we are family and because we're family we want to know each other's history! My wife is from RVA and whenever we are there, she loves to take us to places she loved growing up. Now, these places mean nothing to us, but we go along, because we're family, and her history is our history. We're family here, from different backgrounds, but we're interested in each other's stories because your history is my history.

And so I want to pray and thank God for our community of color here, and pray of course for the continued healing of these racial divides in our society. And, of course we want to pray for Ukraine. They've pulled all of the IMB personnel out, but we have friends there. Nationals. One of the most powerful ministry experiences I've had was speaking in a student event there a few years ago.

Prayer: thanking God for the diversity of his church. Praying for healing. For Ukraine. Men's Conference and Easter.

(Introduction)

If you have your Bibles, open them to 1 Corinthians 12, as we continue our march through Paul's 1st letter to the Corinthians.¹ I've loved this, haven't you?

Our cardiac surgeons in the house probably recognize the name of Dr. Alfred Blalock: In the 1940s, Dr. Blalock essentially created modern cardiac surgery and bypass operations. He was nominated several times for the Nobel Prize in Medicine. Yet, by his own admission, none of his work would have been possible if it were not for a man who worked at his first hospital, Vanderbilt, as a janitor; a man who had never been to medical school. That man's name was Vivien Thomas; a black man, a carpenter by trade with an incredible knack for mechanical engineering. Dr. Blalock noted Thomas' ingenuity and skill, and he hired Thomas to run his lab. Thomas began to suggest new surgical techniques and then develop new tools to implement those techniques. He became so pivotal to Dr. Blalock's work that when Blalock moved from Vanderbilt to Johns Hopkins, he brought Vivien Thomas, the janitor, with him. Eventually, Thomas went from merely helping with these groundbreaking surgeries to actually *training* other surgeons--hundreds of them. Sadly, when people talk about breakthrough cardiac surgery, and when the Nobel Prize gets brought up, only Alfred Blalock gets mentioned. But as is often the case with great breakthroughs, behind Dr. Blalock were a lot of others whose work enabled his success.²

¹ Works Consulted: Andrew Wilson, *1 Corinthians for You* (The Good Book Company); Bryan Loritts, "Gifts Do a Body Good," January 13, 2019; John Mark Comer, "First Corinthians: The Common Good," May 29, 2011; John Mark Comer, "Stuff the Spirit Does," sermon preached on 1 Corinthians 12; Craig Groeschel, "Ghost, Part 3: Spiritual Gifts," sermon preached at Life Church; Wayne Grudem, *Bible Doctrines*.

In 1 Cor 12 Paul explains why the body of Christ is like that. God has set up the church so that it is one body with many members, with no one member being complete without the others, and each one's success dependent on the others. It's a profound concept, and one that will fundamentally change your attitude toward the church if you understand it.

1 Corinthians 12:1, Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. ("now concerning" is Paul's indication

that he is turning to the next of the Corinthians' questions: Remember that Paul's letter to the Corinthians is basically his response to 5 sets of questions they've asked him, or things he's heard about that concern him. Those 5 sections break down like this:

- Part 1: questions about divisions in the body (chs. 1–4);
- Part 2: questions about sex and singleness (chs. 5–7);
- Part 3: navigating controversial topics (chs. 8–10);
- Part 4: questions about church service stuff (chs. 11–14)--that's the section we're in now; and
- Part 5: what's important about the resurrection (chs. 15–16).

For the next 3 weeks we're looking at spiritual gifts. This is gonna be fun! Don't know if you know this, but there can be a little bit of controversy around spiritual gifts.

Y'all, one of the things I LOVE about the Summit Church is how diverse we are in our backgrounds. We don't all come from the same

²<https://hub.jhu.edu/2019/11/26/blue-baby-operation/>; <https://www.washingtonian.com/2020/06/19/the-remarkable-story-of-vivien-thomas-the-black-man-who-helped-invent-heart-surgery/>

church tradition; we have some who grew up Baptist; some Presbyterian; some of you grew up Catholic; some Pentecostal; some were charismatic; some non-charismatic; some “I’m not really sure what any of this means-atic”; and then some actual former addicts. So, we’re kind of a hodge podge.

I consider myself a little bit of theological hodge-podge. I grew up very Baptist but then married a girl who was very Presbyterian. Our first year of marriage was me baptizing her, making her stop drinking, and convincing her this all predestined to happen. **One of the biggest spiritual influences on me early on in ministry** was Pentecostal--so by the time I came to this church I had Baptist, Presbyterian and Pentecostal all in my mix--which my friend Clayton King says means **I’m predestined to speak in tongues at a potluck dinner.** But what that has given me, I think, is an **appreciation for how different traditions approach these questions.** I’m not saying everyone is equally right, but I do think we can all learn something from each other. So, for the next 3 weeks let’s ask God to open our minds, and look into his Word with clear eyes and expectant hearts--because what his Word teaches is always best, whether it goes what we’re familiar with or not. Amen?

Again, vs. 1: **Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed.** (The word translated “spiritual gifts” here is *pneumatikon*--and ‘spiritual gifts’ is, honestly, probably not the best translation, since there is another word Paul could have used that means gifts. This word, *pneumatikon*, is a bit ambiguous. It basically just translates as “spirituals.” It’s like saying, “Spirit stuff.”)

Vs. [4] Regarding this Spirit stuff, **There are varieties of gifts** (there’s your word for gifts: in Gr, *charismata*), **but the same Spirit**; [5] **and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord**; [6] **and there are varieties of activities, 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.**

Paul uses 4 different words to describe the Spirit stuff, with 4 different words: gifts (*charismata*) is one of those words; then, empowerment for service (Gr. *diakonia*: which is where we get our word ‘deacons’); varieties of energies (*energema*, where we get our word ‘energies’), and then spiritual manifestations.³ Then, in vs 8–11, Paul lists out a handful of examples of these things: prophecy, utterances of wisdom and knowledge, miracles, healing, the discernment of spirits, tongues, and the interpretation of tongues. That is not supposed to be an exhaustive list of spiritual gifts. There are, in fact, 6 different lists of spiritual gifts in the NT, giving us a combined total of 22 different gifts. **No one list contains them all and each list** has certain ones that are left out on the others.

What all this shows us--with the ambiguous wording and the hodge-podge lists--is that spiritual gifts are not like some catalog of items that you get 1 or 2 of, or like an assigned spiritual Enneagram number or a profile on a Strengths Finder test.⁴ I point that out because a **lot of people see spiritual gifts this way, and it’s a wrong way of looking at them.** They think of spiritual gifts as something you discover that is

³ See John Mark Comer and his helpful work on spiritual gifts

⁴ Grudem, *Bible Doctrine*, 398.

now an inextricable part of your personality that defines who you are and what you do for the rest of your life.

They can include that, which I'll show you in a minute, but the ambiguous way Paul talks about them shows us that **a spiritual gift is simply when the Spirit of Jesus comes on you to accomplish something he wants done in the world.**

Which leads me to my first point:

1. Spiritual gifts are how Jesus continues his ministry on earth (vv. 4–7)

Jesus promised that after he was gone, he would continue to build his church **by his Spirit through his disciples**. It's not that when Jesus was physically here on earth he did the work by his power, but now that he's gone we do the work for him. No, just like Jesus was doing the work when he walked around Jerusalem, so now he's doing the work through us, by the Spirit.

Luke, the writer of Acts, makes this point in his opening to the book of Acts--Acts, you might know, is the 2nd volume of a 2-part work that Luke wrote about the life of Jesus. The first was the Gospel of Luke itself, which contains Luke's biography of the life of Jesus. Luke then opens the book of Acts, vol 2 of his anthology, this way (I love this)--**"In the first book** (i.e. the Gospel of Luke), **O Theophilus** (some dude he addressed the books to), **I have dealt with all that Jesus *began* to do and teach..."** (Acts 1:1) See the word 'began'? The first volume, the Gospel of Luke, is about what Jesus "*began* to do and teach," which

⁵ The whole Trinity is involved in these verses: one God empowers us by his Holy Spirit to testify to Jesus. (12:3–7)

means that this 2nd volume (the book of Acts) is about what **Jesus *continues* to do and to teach**--It's not that when Jesus was physically here on earth he did the work and now that he's gone we do the work for him. No--the same power at work in the physical body of Jesus is now at work through us.⁵ And whenever Jesus through this Spirit empowers you to do his work in the world, that is a spiritual gift.

Which leads me to #2:

2. A spiritual gift can be either a lifelong calling or a temporary empowerment (vv. 4–7)

Like I said, the ambiguity in how Paul talks about spiritual gifts is intentional. The Spirit stuff; the Spirit manifestations. Paul is showing you that he's not only talking about life callings; sometimes they are just energies for the moment.

Here's why I point that out: When you think of a spiritual gift only in the lifelong-calling category, you might miss out on something Jesus wants to use you for in the moment.

The gift of prophecy, for example, is where God speaks through to someone in the moment. That can happen to you without you feeling like you have the permanent gifting of prophecy. In fact, some of the most dangerous people in the church can be those who think they have the gift of prophecy, who feel like everything they think is what God says. Sometimes, God just puts something on your heart, and you are supposed to say, "*Listen, I'm not sure if this is from God or*

not, you need to prayerfully discern that” and then tell them what’s on your heart.” That’s *pneumatikon*; a Spirit-manifestation.

Or the gift of faith. The gift of faith that Paul refers to is where someone perceives what God wants to do in a situation--and then they pray it back to God in faith, believing him for it. That can happen to any of us in prayer. When the friends of the lame man in Mark 2 lowered him through the roof, Mark says that it was when Jesus saw “their faith”--that is, the faith of the friends lowering down the man -- that he healed the guy. **They’d been given the gift of faith in that moment, perceiving that Jesus was ready and willing** to provide the healing. That **can happen to any of us as they pray.**

Now, if those two things occur in your life repeatedly--fulfilled words of prophecy or the bestowal of unusual faith--you might see those as part of your personal life-calling. But I want you to see that spiritual gifts are not *only* that. **Spiritual gifts are whenever the Spirit of God comes on you for the accomplishing of his purposes;** you become, for whatever length of time, his hands or feet or mouth. It could be temporary--lasting for just a few moments; or it could be more permanent; lasting for a lifetime. Paul talks about “the spirituals,” the *pneumatikon*, not just as “gifts;” but also energies, empowerments, and manifestations.

3. You’ve got one (vv. 7, 14–26)

[7] To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. **To each...** to each *what*? To each... believer. Who in here is an ‘each’? Raise your hand if you are an each. If your hand is up, you have a spiritual gift. God has given you something *for the common good* of his body. He’s got a special role for you in the church.

In vs. 14, Paul explains that if you don’t use your gift, the whole body suffers because of you: “For the body, he says vs 14, **does not consist of one member but of many... 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing?... 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I have no need of you,” nor again the head to the feet, “I have no need of you.” 22 On the contrary, (even) the parts of the body that seem to be weaker (and smaller) are indispensable... 26 If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together.**

If my little toe says, “Well, I’m not as glorious as the tongue! The tongue of this body speaks such wonderful things to the Summit Church each weekend. It’s famous. So many are blessed by it. That’s not me. Nobody ever even sees me. I have no importance.” OK, but what happens when your pinky toe is hurt? When I get up at night to go to the bathroom--and somehow my pinky toe finds that edge of the dresser--It’s like it has a homing beacon in it, I swear!--that brings my WHOLE body down and causes my tongue to say all kinds of non-wonderful things! It’s always funny to me when you’re watching football and some 300 lb lineman gets taken out of the game because his pinky toe is hurt. You football fans know this was a bad year for toe injuries. Megastar wide receivers Julio Jones and AJ Green, as well as (eventual Super Bowl winner) Matthew Stafford were all taken down this season by toe injuries. Every part is connected to the whole.

Listen: Every week there is a group of people who love and serve our church by taking care of our kids. Not only do they disciple them, they enable us to experience what we experience in here. I think of our

kids' department like the liver of this church. No one sees it or thinks about it but if it stopped working **this mouth up here** wouldn't have a chance to speak because **the ears out there** wouldn't be able to hear. *OK, #4 is a big one...*

4. You want to know God's will? Discover your gift (v. 7)

If God has given you a part to play in his body, then isn't it fair to assume that you'll never REALLY know his will for you until you know what that gift is? The way you discover his will for your life is looking at the gift he's put in your hands.

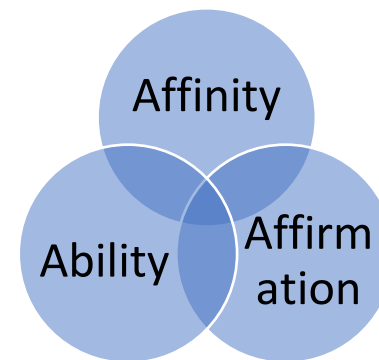
I love the scene in **C. S. Lewis's *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*** where "Father Christmas" shows up and gives each of the four children a mysterious gift from Aslan, the lion in Lewis' story who represents Jesus. The gifts are mysterious, and at the time the children can't figure out why they've been given these gifts. But in the midst of their battle with the White Witch, Lucy realizes that her gift, a healing ointment, was given to her to bind up the wounded in battle. Peter realizes he's been given a sword so he can lead an assault on the forces of the White Witch. C.S. Lewis was trying to say that **one of the ways we figure out what Aslan wants from us is by looking at the gifts he's placed into our hands.** Do you know yours? I'd go so far as to say that you cannot walk with the Spirit if you are wholly unfamiliar with the gifts he has given you for service in his kingdom.

You say, "Well, this sounds great, Pastor J.D., but how do I figure out what mine are?" There's lots of angles we could come from here, but

the best practical counsel I can give you is to just get in there and try stuff out. As you're obeying, you'll find that there are certain things that just fit you; they almost feel natural. And other people recognize that God is in you, using you for these things. This, btw, was how I discovered I had the gift of exhortation and teaching. People told me--when you teach the Bible, I understand things I've never understood before, and my life changes.

It's one of the reasons we need to speak encouragement to each other and call each other's gifts out. This is also one of the main benefits of being in a small group--it allows people to be up close to you enough to see these things and call them out.

Here's a tool I've found helpful over the years for discerning your gift⁶:



"Ability" is what you are naturally good at; "affinity" is what you're passionate about; "affirmation" is where people in the church tell you

⁶ I first saw a diagram like the one above in Jim Collins's *Good to Great*. Collins uses it to show how companies can find their "sweet spot," the place they can really become a great company.

God is using you. **Where all three circles converge is typically the place of a spiritual gift. Ability, affinity, affirmation.**

Often, spiritual gifts coincide with natural abilities we already have. God takes some natural talent and “supercharges” it for his purposes. For example, my gift of exhortation coincides with a natural ability I have for public speaking and persuasion. Evidently, Paul was a great thinker and leader before he became a Christian; we know that because he’d been selected to apprentice under Gamaliel—which was like going to Harvard in our day.⁷ The point is, Paul’s special calling as an Apostle coincided with his natural abilities to think and write. *So, often, spiritual gifts coincide with natural abilities we already have.*

But, there are exceptions. Sometimes, God bestows spiritual gifts that have nothing to do with natural abilities. For example, I know a young woman in our church who is terribly shy around people, yet God has given her incredible ability in evangelism. It makes no sense, naturally speaking. But God has just anointed her so that when she shares Christ, people get saved. Sometimes God does it that way just to demonstrate that the power comes just from him, not from our natural talents at all.

So, start with your natural talents, but don’t limit it to that.

4. The gifts are for service not for show (v. 7)

Again, vs. 7, [7] **To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit... for the common good.** Why are they given? Not for others to admire how spiritual you are, but so you can work in their lives for their good.

One of the *many* problems the Corinthians had is that they felt proud about their spiritual gifts, using them as a reason to think of themselves as spiritually superior to others. They thought of spiritual gifts like Christian Marvel Super Hero powers: I got tongues; I am ‘prophecy man’; I got Jesus-spidey-sense about your needs. What do you have? Oh, you ONLY have the gift of administration? That’s lame. That doesn’t feel very spectacular. I’m clearly more important than you. I’ll pray for you not to be depressed over what a loser gift you have—because luckily for you I have a powerful dose of the gift of faith, too.”

And Paul just shakes his hand. What is there to be proud of with a spiritual gift? It’s not your power; it’s God’s. The boxing glove doesn’t boast of its power to punch. The hand in it has the power. It’s not my ability to stand up here and persuade you that is effective. I’m just the glove God wears for his work in your life. The gift that God gave you was not to puff you up before others, but to enable you to lift them up above you. The gifts are for service not for show.

In vs. 13, Paul tells them that their pride in their gifts shows that only do they not understand spiritual gifts, they don’t understand the gospel itself:

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.

⁷ Acts 22:3

The Spirit and his gifts weren't given to us as a reward for our awesomeness. The Spirit was a free gift that God gave to us as part of salvation. All of us--Jew, Greek, slave or free--were hopelessly condemned when God made us his children, and if you're looking for something to boast in, boast in that! In Luke 10, the disciples had just come back from a preaching tour, and they were all bragging, like all guys do, trying to one up each other. "Well, I cast out a demon with my eyes closed!" Jesus said, "Don't rejoice that the demons are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written down..." The greatest gift God ever gave was forgiveness and sonship in him, and your identity now based on Christ and Christ alone.

Human nature is always trying to find something that sets us above others, and the Corinthians are now finding their significance in their spiritual gifts. "I'm valuable, I'm worth something," they say, "because I can do this." Paul says, "Your value is because Christ has made you his son and daughter, and your gifts are now to serve others, not lift yourself above them."

This is one of the reasons I'm not a fan of Christian self-help material that's only focused on helping you discover your inner awesomeness, as if that's where all your value lies: *"You're unique; you're special; you're a snowflake. There's no one like you. Be a narcissist."* Yes, God made you special. But your awesomeness comes not from the gifts that you possess, but from the fact that the Giver of those gifts possesses you! The purpose of a spiritual gift is never to boast; only to bless; never to show, only to serve.

Now, I'll admit: possessing that mentality is more easily said than done! My fallen heart is constantly gravitating for ways to feel special.

My preaching sometimes gives me an inflated sense of importance that is stupid. I'm just the glove. I've told you, for example, that somebody on the way out of church said to me, "Pastor, that was a phenomenal sermon. And you do this every week. You are truly a GREAT man." On the way home in the car, I'm still basking in the glow of that affirmation, and I ask my wife, "Babe, how many truly great preachers are there in the world, do you think?" She replies, "Probably one fewer than you think."

I know my gifts are not to distinguish me or make me special. I've got all of that I could ever need in Christ. These gifts are for service, not for show; to bless and not to boast. And if you Corinthians could ever get that, Paul says, you'd stop feeling proud about your gifts and acting like jerks to each other. When your gifts cause division with others, you know you're using them the wrong way.

5. God works in your life through the spiritual gifts of others (v. 25)

In vs. 25 Paul says, "Members care for one another." Each member of the body is taken care of by other members of the body. **I've used this example before, but say** my left elbow itches, so it sends a message up to my brain, "I'm dying over here. Please help." And what does my brain do? It doesn't send down a magic "brain power zap" to fix it. No, it sends a message to the fingers on my right hand, "Go take care of your brother left elbow."

In the same way, when we pray about a need in our lives, God doesn't usually "zap" power straight down from heaven to fix it. No, he moves a member of his body to do the work, through the means of a spiritual gift. We, the members of his body, are literally his hands

and feet. You pray, “God, I need direction in my life.” God says, “Ahh... that wisdom you’re looking for comes **from the Spirit**, and that Spirit speaks through members of my body. “God, I need help in my marriage.” He says, I’ve put the resources to heal your marriage into members of my body. You pray, “God, I am lonely; I am confused” and God says, “I’ve put all my help for all these things into members of my body.” **If you want God to work in your life, you have to be part of the church. And when you disconnect yourself from the church, you disconnect yourself from the power of God. Stop asking God to work in your life if you’re not willing to put yourself in the portal of his power.**

You see, this church, like many churches, has a problem with what I call “**ninja**” Christians.” You slip in silently, **unnoticed**. You sit right on the aisles. And when I bow for prayer at the close of the service, you gone. You take off like a horse out of the gates of the Kentucky Derby. You should stand outside in the lobby sometime and watch. I say, “Let’s pray,” and we still have 10 minutes left the service, and you have people trucking out... You never get to know anybody, you are not really involved in anything. You barely know MY name. You definitely don’t know how to spell it. Somebody asks you where you go to church, and you’re like, “Summ...it?” They say, “Cool. Who’s the pastor there?” You’re like, “D.L.; D.J.; Nicolas Cage. I’m not sure.” (BTW, whenever I talk to somebody on a plane and ask them if they go to church, if they say yes, I always ask them the pastor’s name because if they don’t know that, I know they are not serious.) And the point is not even knowing my name. The point is knowing and being known by others enough that God uses you in their lives and he uses them in yours. Y’all, **Ninjas are cool—but they make bad church members**. And, the tragedy is that Ninja Christians miss out on the

majority of what God wants to do in their lives and through them. You might make it out to the Mexican restaurant first after church is over, but you’re missing out on some of the best things God wants to do in your life. God does his work *through the church*.

Sitting on the sidelines of this church, or continuing to stay home even if you could be here, and I know some of you have to be home for medical reasons; I’m only talking to those of you who are doing everything else, going to ball games and the mall just not the house of God--I’m telling you that even if you are hearing the best sermons in the world--means that you’re experiencing only a small fraction of what God wants you to know. You have to be involved. **VERY involved.**

Y’all, there are so many times in my life when God has spoken a life-saving word of encouragement to me through a member of the church; or a word of warning. People have spoken into my marriage; my parenting; my kids’ lives. They’ve given me direction and counsel when I needed it. **Y’all, I wouldn’t have half the walk of God I have today if it weren’t for members of this church.** People are like, “Oh, me and God are good. I listen to great messages and am really growing.” You can’t be a Lone Ranger Christian and be spiritually healthy. God puts the Spiritual stuff into members of his church.

6. Which have you experienced?

I want to conclude this with a special message to our church. I told you that all in all in the NT, there are 6 different spiritual gift lists containing 22 different gifts. They include:

- apostle
- prophet

- teacher
- miracles
- healings
- helps
- administration
- tongues
- the interpretation of tongues
- utterances of wisdom
- utterances of knowledge
- World of Warcraft (Gotcha! Y'all need to pay attention)
- faith
- distinguishing between spirits
- evangelist
- pastor-teacher
- serving
- encouraging
- generosity
- leadership
- mercy
- marriage
- (and everybody's favorite) celibacy

Like I said, this is not an exhaustive list.⁸ The Apostle Peter lumps all the spiritual gifts into basically two categories: those who speak for Jesus; those who serve for Jesus. You've got at least one of these. My hope is that you'll plunge in and figure out yours. And the best way to do that here is **SERVE**.

⁸ The Apostle Peter lumps all the spiritual gifts into basically two categories: those who speak for God; those who serve for God. 1 Peter 4:11

Before I close, I want to at least bring up the gifts that Paul lists out in chapter 12, because that will really set us up for the next few weeks; and because I'd really love to see us grow in these. I think, in general, we're pretty unfamiliar with these and, quite frankly, a little scared of them. And that's my fault. Let's take a minute and at least familiarize ourselves with them, since Paul introduces us to them in this chapter and then we'll get into them in future weeks.

[8] For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom,

Utterances of wisdom: This is when the Spirit of God will give you insight into his will in an area not spelled out directly in Scripture.

...and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, **The utterance of knowledge, or a word of knowledge,** is a special knowledge from the Holy Spirit about someone's life, directing you to pray or speak into their lives. Like Jesus, in John 4, knowing about the woman's 5 previous marriages.

[9] ...to another faith by the same Spirit, a special bestowal of faith that God gives to certain Christians at certain times when he wants to do something miraculous through you. He gives you the ability to perceive what he wants to do and the urge to ask him for it.

...to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, [10] to another the working of miracles, (That's pretty straightforward: praying or asking God for healing and he grants it.)

...to another prophecy, (10) Prophecy is the ability to speak God's will into a situation at just the right time; or how to apply Scripture to someone in just the right way.

...to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, (10) This is the ability to know whether what someone is saying really is from God.

...to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. (10) The word for tongues is *glossolalia*, which is when you give praise to God in a language other than Hebrew. We'll unpack this more in the coming weeks. That should be a fun message.

For now, serve...

Listen, first time guest surveys consistently note that the joyfulness and helpfulness of our Guest Services teams are a primary reason they want to return to Summit for a second time.

Our kids volunteers, both weekend volunteers and AWANA volunteers, play a significant role in each child that comes to faith. It's the same with our student volunteers. Just two weeks ago at our Chapel Hill campus, one of our small group leaders led two girls in her small group to Christ.

Every week, during every service at TSC, we have a team of people who stand in the gap for us and pray during the entire service that the Lord would through preaching and worship.

This church is what it is because of people who say, "God, I just want to be used by you wherever you want!" I'm thinking of Maleek at our Chapel Hill Campus: He serves wherever, and I mean wherever. He single handedly led the relaunch set up for our kids ministry. He's a SG leader and serves in men's ministry there. Or Kelby and Connie at NDC, who asked, "Where can we serve with the most lost people? They figured the greatest percentage of lost people at the Summit Church each weekend were in the kids area, so now they serve as Elementary leaders there, working among the Unreached People Group known as your children.

Listen, I want you to serve not just because it makes a difference in others' lives, but in YOURS, also. Through our church engagement survey, we know that people who serve on the weekend are the ones who feel most connected here and most growing in their faith. Did you know that? The most common characteristic of people who feel like they are spiritually growing here are the ones who are saving. They are the ones who feel known by the pastoral team. (People say, "Well, I don't know anybody here. This is a hard place to get to know people." Whenever someone says that, I always ask, "Are you serving?" And INEVITABLY, they say 'no.) Listen, I'm not trying to come down on you--but how do you think people get to know you? Stop staring at your belly button wondering why nobody is ministering to you and start focusing on ministering to others and you'll find that a lot of people start knowing and ministering to you.

Seriously--you'll find that nothing helps you grow in your relationship with Jesus like helping somebody else with theirs. We offer opportunities at TSC for you to serve not simply bc/we need you to serve, but because you need to serve. So join one of our teams

TODAY. We have volunteers ready at our next steps area to get you connected to a serving team today OR you can just go to the website at www.summitchurch.com/serve

Ask God: How should I serve? Ready to take the first step?