

“The U in YOU” 1 Corinthians 12

Introduction: Pg. ____

When Jesus came to fulfill his mission, he did so in such a way that his mission would continue after he died for our sin and rose from the dead.

- Rather than simply teaching about God’s kingdom and how we can have a restored and vibrant relationship with God, he invited people around him who would hear his teaching so they could pass it on.
- And rather than simply showing the radical effects of God’s kingdom by feeding the poor, miraculous healings, loving the marginalized... he modeled it so others could see and practice the same things.

Jesus made this explicit when he sent out his 12 closest followers to speak his words and show his works and spoke *six of the most inspiring words ever declared over them*: **“FREELY YOU HAVE RECEIVED; FREELY GIVE (Matthew 10:8)”**

If you follow Jesus, this is your story! Freely you have received; freely give.

If you are learning what it means to follow Jesus, this can be your story! Freely receiving from sGod, in order to freely give to others.

FCF: It is so crucial that we grasp this because we live in a culture that says: “Freely you have received. . . . Receive MORE!” OR if not that, this: “Freely you have received, but when you give, expect something (even if it’s a little something, something) in return!”

We live in a culture that helps us be concerned with us, but God invites us into a better story.

Today I want you to see that God made you...

The Point: Reveal the power of God as you serve others.

This is what we see in... 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

This chapter reveals the beauty of God’s design to create unity in the midst of diversity.

Different gifts. Same God.

Different service. Same goal.

Different manifestations. Same glory. First...

1. Different gifts. Same God (1-11).

Paul begins his discussion about spiritual gifts by saying that all genuine activity of the Spirit happens in alignment with the central confession of Christianity: “Jesus is Lord!”

- You know the Spirit is at work and alive in someone when they say: “Jesus is Lord!”
- Every good thing we do, by the power of the Holy Spirit, must flow from a love for Jesus.
- Baptism Sunday. Baptism is a beautiful picture. People who have said: “Jesus is Lord.”

What is a spiritual gift?

- To understand this, we need to rewind just a little bit.
 - When someone believes in Jesus, they receive a new spiritual life and the gift of the God’s Spirit.
 - 1 Corinthians 6:19 says: “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God?”

- When the Spirit comes to live in us, he gives us gifts empower us to serve others and reflect God's kingdom.
- Spiritual gifts are activities of service "characterized or controlled by the Spirit" (SPIRITUAL), and they come to us because of God's grace (they are GIFTS that come down to us from God).

Arrow DOWN

- ***I like how Wayne Grudem defines a spiritual gift as: "any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church."***
- This definition recognizes lists in Scripture, but it does not restrict the gifts to these lists. For example, in this chapter we see gifts like teaching, healing, faith, prophesy, speaking in tongues, and the list goes on.
- But Romans 12 highlights gifts like service, leadership, mercy, exhortation, and giving.). Those are all gifts of the Spirit, but those are not the only gifts of the Spirit.
- We believe *all* of these gifts are for today as much as they were when these words were written. (SAME GOD)
 - You say: Well, why aren't we seeing more miracles and healings, and why haven't I ever received a prophetic word?
 - Here are a few thoughts:
 - 1) Maybe you have, and you didn't recognize it.
 - 2) Maybe God wants to give you those gifts, but you haven't asked. 1 Corinthians dispels the unbiblical myth that we have all the gifts that we will ever have at conversion. Look at 12:31, 14:1 (and 12, 13, & 39)
 - 3) Maybe (and this one hurts the most - including me)... Maybe we are not living lives that require the Spirit's power. I'm talking about stepping out in faith. I'm talking about moving toward people in love and actually praying for their healing.

T: Now, I understand most all of us have questions around specific gifts and how they work, here's what we need to focus on today...

We receive different gifts, but it is the same God giving those gifts. Sam Storms says: "Spiritual gifts are nothing less than God Himself in us, energizing our souls, imparting revelation to our minds, infusing power in our wills and working His sovereign and gracious purposes through us." #1. Different gifts. Same God. #2.

2. Different service. Same goal (12-31).

What? SERVICE

We all have a part to play! Verses 12 & 17-20

There is a beautiful unity because we all make up one body. There is a beautiful diversity because not one person plays the exact same part in the body.

The part you play has value in our church... (14-20)

- And don't you say it doesn't! If God gives you a gift, your gift has great value.
- Apparently there were some in Corinth who were saying: "You don't need me. I don't have a valuable role!"
- This usually happens through the nasty curse of comparison.
 - I *just* set up the signs; I don't sing on stage (I'm just a pinky toe around here!)
 - I *just* greet people in the lobby. That's not a big deal. Hey, most people decide if they will return to a church in their first 7 minutes.
- To function properly, we need eyes, and ears and mouths, and arms, and elbows and pinky toes (you feel me!)

... so play your indispensable part! (21-31)

- No one can say: “You don’t need me.” But no one can say: “I don’t need you.”
- There may a role that “seems” weaker, (v22) but that’s just the thing. It only “seems” that way. In reality, each role is indispensable.
 - Somebody say: “I am indispensable...”
 - Somebody look at your neighbor and say: “You are indispensable...”
- In God’s kingdom, (upside-down kingdom), he loves bestowing greater honor to what *we think* is less honorable.
 - The guys who get here at 7:30am to start setting up all of this sound equipment. They are the heroes of Redemption Hill. Not the joker standing on stage with the mic! :)
 - [[Let me tell you about **Chip Brown!** He helped setup. He hung around in the background. Never stepped foot on the stage. He pushed a broom. Every week, he was the last one cleaning up; the person telling the intern to leave. WOW! Thank you, God, for the Chip Brown’s of your kingdom.]]
 - It’s not what we do, but how we do what we do and why we do what we do that matters so much to God.
- And listen: NEVER assume that because you see a lot of people, that all the spots are filled on our Teams. It takes all of us working together!
- If you fail to play your part, you will be weaker, and so will our church. Verse 26. “If one member suffers, all suffer together.” Conversely, when you do your thing, you are strengthened and our church is strengthened. “If one member is honored, all rejoice together.”
- I am praying that at least 10 people say: I’m jumping into serve with a Team in our church (Kids, Connections, Venue, AV. Music, Communications, so many opportunities!).

T: But why? What is the goal?

WHY?

- “To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.” (V.7) This idea is echoed in chapter 14 when it talks about how the gifts build up the church. We strengthen one another and encourage one another as we serve another.
- Gifts come down from God to flow out to others.

ACROSS ARROW. “Freely you have received, freely give!”

- You are gifted for their good. You got that hospitality gift, that teaching gift, that healing gift, that administrative gift, that mercy gift, that singing gift, to strengthen their faith and point them to God! SO DON’T HOLD BACK!!
- Miraslov Volf says, **“Every gift breaks the barrier between the sacred and the mundane and floods the mundane with the sacred. When a gift is given, life becomes extraordinary because God’s own gift giving flows through the giver.”** - Miraslov Volf (pg. 54)

T: Different gifts. Same God. – Different service. Same goal. #3.

3. Different manifestations. Same glory (7).

Look back at verse 7 (the key verse of the chapter): “To each is given...”

Service focuses on our role. Manifestation focuses on God’s role. The word manifestation means that something becomes visibly evident. Something is revealed that was not obvious.

“Spiritual gifts are concrete disclosures of divine activity and only secondarily human activity. . . . Gifts are God going public among His people.” (Sam Storms)

The ultimate purpose of the spiritual gifts is for God’s power to be on display. Received from God, they point others to God.

UPARROW

So let me give TWO implications...

1) If the gifts manifest God's glory, they should humble us, not make us proud.

Did you see verse 6? ... Did you see verse 11? God does not give us the gift and then turn us loose to get it done in our own strength. He gives us the gift and then actively empowers those gifts every step of the way.

If God is empowering us to use what he has given us, how could we be proud?

- One of the most twisted realities of the human heart is how we can take the credit that belongs to God. We do it all the time.
 - Look at how brilliant I am. Who gave you that mind? (Graduates!)
 - Look at how strong I am. Who gave you those guns?
- Everything is from him:
 - Verse 11 - God apportions V 18 - God arranges
 - V 24 - God composes V 28 - God appoints
 - "What do you have that you have not received?" (1 Corinthians 4:7)
- The church is not an arena for us to demonstrate our talents. The church is a family in which we get to display God's love and care for us & the world through one another.
- The spotlight should never be on us. God gets the glory.

But the spotlight on him comes when we actually put these gifts in to practice! So ahead and serve. And go ahead and shine. (I'm going shine...)

2) If the gifts manifest God's glory, they will pull others into that same glory!

Here's a fun question, with some eternal weight to it... is "the common good" restricted to the community of faith

- No! It's so that more people can discover who Jesus is. (1 Cor. 1, 2, 3, 9, 14)
- Not only are some of these gifts directly concerned with communicating the message of Christ for all people to hear, but as we just saw, when we exercise the gifts by serving one another, people will be pointed to God, and we will be equipped for the mission of telling the entire world how they can be brought into to a relationship with God through Jesus!

Conclusion:

How are you using your God-given gifts? Are you actively engaged, serving the common good, strengthening others by how you are serving?

Maybe you're here and you know God has gifted you, but you haven't been exercising those gifts as effectively as you know you should.

Maybe you're here and you don't even know how God has gifted you.

I have the same encouragement for both of you...

"You step out. He'll show up!"

Worship Night Testimony... (YWAM) Journal (walk with God and write it down) - Step out. He'll show up, but the stepping out comes from stepping into his presence 1,001 times.

- You step out. He'll show up! What's your next step?

Are you one of the 10 that will say, "I'm going to start serving!"?

Is God calling you to serve someone in our church in a practical way?

Is there someone who needs to see the power of God on display so they can step into the life of Christ?