**ONE BODY, MANY PARTS**

1 Corinthians 12:1-31

Key Verse 12

“The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ.”

**Introduction**



 The Holy Spirit is God himself, and the way that he works in the believers. In today’s passage, Paul teaches us about one clear work of the Holy Spirit. He teaches us that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to the believer. And when we look at the gifts Paul mentions, we see that some are the visible kind while others are the invisible kind. But the truth is that whether it is visible or invisible, there is absolutely no doubt that every believer has different gifts from the Holy Spirit. Some were proud of what they received, while others were feeling somewhat inferior. Paul tells us how nonsense it is. Then he explains the purpose of the gifts the Holy Spirit gives each believer. It’s not to elevate one Christian from another, but clearly to serve God’s purpose individually and collectively. It’s important that we consider what gift God has given me, and then to learn how to use it in the sight of God, so that I can be a blessing to others, and to the whole body of the church in the Lord our God.

1. Read verses 1-11. What does Paul want the Corinthian believers to know? (1-3) What are some different gifts given by the same Lord? (4-6, 8-10) What is God’s purpose in giving different spiritual gifts to each person? (7) How was each person given these gifts? (11)

1-1, Read verses 1-11.

 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. **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,[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12#fen-NIV-28645a)] 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.

1-2, What does Paul want the Corinthian believers to know? (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.***

* Before coming to know Jesus as their Lord and Savior, the Corinthians worshiped idols. We know that idols are nothing but false gods who cannot speak.
* But God’s grace found the Corinthians and sent the Holy Spirit to deliver them. The Spirit of God drove out these demons from their hearts and opened their eyes to see the Lord.
* The Holy Spirit led them to Christ who alone can give us eternal life and the kingdom of God. When they were freed from demonic influence, they were able to worship God and serve him as they should.
* Now, the were able to confess that “Jesus” alone “is Lord” and no other! By their confession from the heart, it was clear that they were Christians. (Ro 10:9-10) Here Paul was clear that no one can say “Jesus is Lord” except by the Holy Spirit. They needed to make that the standard of differentiating, and no other.

1-3, What are some different gifts given by the same Lord? (4-6, 8-10)

***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.***

* God’s salvation work is rooted in who God is. He is the Triune God, rich in diversity, yet one in identity and purpose.
* The Holy Spirit gives gifts. Though there are different kinds of gifts, service and work, the same God works all of them in all people for his own purpose.
* Those who confess Jesus as the Lord receive the Holy Spirit and gifts. They are to use their gift or gifts to serve others as Jesus did.
* Then God put together the ministries of service to accomplish His own purpose of world salvation. In our ministry God has called and gifted many in many ways, but our mission calls us to raise disciples of Jesus from among campus students.
* God calls us, regardless of our gifts, to be a blessing to college students. While our collective gifts are focused on this special mission and calling, we must acknowledge that the Holy Spirit is diverse in his work in other Christians whom he calls according to his own purpose for other special missions. All to His glory.
* Whether it’s a prison ministry or street evangelism or campus mission, it is the same God working in all those who have the same confession, “Jesus is Lord.”
* While we fulfill God’s mission on campuses, we must open our hearts to see the wide and awesome ways in which the Holy Spirit has empowered all His people.

***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.***

* Here Paul describes some gifts of the Holy Spirit. We have more reference.

 Romans 12:3-8 reads,

 For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. **4** For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, **5** so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. **6** We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; **7** if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; **8** if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

Ephesians 4:11-12 reads,

 So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, **12** to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up **13** until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. **14** Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.**15** Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. **16** From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

* There are many specific gifts of the Holy Spirit shown in the New Testament. But Paul mentions only nine here in 1 Corinthians 12. Especially he mentions the gifts of wisdom and knowledge first to know God better.
* The message of knowledge teaches us who God truly is, **based on the Bible**. The message of knowledge corrects our wrong ideas about God and turns our understanding to know the truth about God.
* The message of wisdom teaches us how to apply this knowledge to glorify God. This message gifts are glorious because through those who have these gifts, others learn the depth of the Gospel, and can see Jesus better and deeper.
* Faith compels a person to give up one’s easy going life, and live mission oriented life. Such gifts of faith must not be left without use. They must be used when God urges, and calls and speaks to our hearts, encouraging each other.
* In other version, there is a gift of helps. Like Bartholomew who was one of Jesus’ disciples and usually unnoticeable, still he helps Jesus’ companion with humility. Jesus never ignore him rather always include him as His disciple.
* In other version, there is a gift of administrations or governments. Those who is in charge of administering or governing is not supposed to be proud but to be humble because such gifts stem from the Lord for His benefit.
* The Holy Spirit uses some people to heal others, both physically and spiritually. God granted us gifts of healing as a shepherd for young people in our times for the glory of God until a young man is healed from their sins.
* The Holy Spirit enables some to work miracles. There are gifts of prophecy and distinguishing between spirits and tongues-speaking and interpreting.

1-4, What is God’s purpose in giving different spiritual gifts to each person? (7)

***Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.***

* The word “manifestation” is “a public demonstration of power and purpose,” making visible the work of the Holy Spirit. When we exercise our spiritual gifts, what’s demonstrated is actually the power of the Holy Spirit. And it is not the power of the gifted person.
* He says: “to each one”. Each one who confesses Jesus as Lord receives a gift from the Holy Spirit.
* These are not just natural talent that may be common to most human beings. He is talking about gifts that are different. Spiritual gifts that come from the Holy Spirit. Only God’s children have these gifts.
* The Holy Spirit gives gifts to make each person a blessing in special way to the whole body of Christ. It is for the common good.
* Church members should know this and always have an attitude of sharing the special gifts God has given to bless, to give, to serve, and to honor God.
* The Holy Spirit is clear in that he wants us to work together. Some people insist on working all alone because they think they are special and know more than others. But the Holy Spirit continuously disciplines them to work together.

1-5, How was each person given these gifts? (11)

 ***All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.***

* When we observe any work of God in our ministry, we must first recognize the Holy Spirit rather than the gifted person because it stems from the Lord, the Holy Spirit distributing His gifts just as he determines.
* Everyone has something and no one has everything. This is quite true in the context of this passage.
* A big misconception about spiritual gifts is that people think the gifts are just for “spiritual elite.” And that is certainly not true according to today’s passage.
* Spiritual gifts are not for special people. Each of us has received something from the Spirit. Now it’s our turn to figure it out and fan it into flame so that the Holy Spirit may be manifested.

2. Read verses 12-26. What analogy does Paul use to explain both the diversity and unity of spiritual gifts? (12) How do people of different cultures and status become one? (13) Why can’t each part of the body claim its independence? (14-21) How did God give equal concern for each member of the body? (22-26, Ro 12:4-5)

 2-1, Read verses 12-26.

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[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12#fen-NIV-28648c)] 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. **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.

2-2, What analogy does Paul use to explain both the diversity and unity of spiritual gifts? (12)

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





* Paul talks about the unity and diversity in the body of Christ. He Paul explains the work of the Holy Spirit in the church by using the metaphor of the human body.
* A human body is consisting of has 206 bones and more than 650 muscles. The smallest bone in the body is in our ears. Without any part of it, we cannot hear any sound properly.
* The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts. These parts have different functions, but they are inter-correlated. The parts cannot function by themselves and they need each other. So is with Christ.

2-3, How do people of different cultures and status become one? (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.***

* The word “baptized” means to be born again by the work of the Holy Spirit. By the cross of Jesus, God enabled us to die with Him. Then the Spirit began to live in us in reality. This is the baptism by the Spirit. Though we come from many different backgrounds, we have the same Spirit. We have the same Lord.
* So we are one body joined together by the one Holy Spirit. Those who feel distant from Jesus Christ and their Christian family now must drink of the Holy Spirit.
* We are one with God and with our dear spiritual family members. The bond we have in Christ goes far beyond any human bond of blood or color or nationality.
* Everyone who confessed Jesus is Lord is invited to drink of the Holy Spirit and receive God’s blessing. .

2-4, Why can’t each part of the body claim its independence? (14-21)

***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. 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!”***

* The feet should not feel bad or inferior because they are not hands. The feet are very important. There is a foot doctor who treat it exclusively.
* If the feet begin to envy the hands, they can be easily discouraged and say, “I do not feel a part of the body.” But it doesn’t change the fact that they are part of the body. But the way they feel can only harm themselves and the body.
* The body has many parts. It cannot be all one part. It is made up of diverse parts and each part must accept its place in the body. According to verse 18, We must accept our God-given place in the body of Christ.
* Paul deals with the problem of despising others in the body of Christ. For example, 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!” They are absolutely interrelated and interdependent. So it is with the body of Christ.

2-5, How did God give equal concern for each member of the body? (22-26, Ro 12:4-5)

 ***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.***

* But, the problem is that some people try to do everything by themselves. This is suicidal, and those who try to do everything without recognizing the importance of others only hurt themselves and end up hurting the body. We absolutely need one another.
* “The parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor” - Think about hearts, lungs, pancreas, spleen, and kidneys that are essential to keep our life although they are unseen to our eyes.
* They need more delicate care and honor. When we lost lots of blood due to shock or accident, our body kick in autoregulation to move blood to such organs to sustain our life on an emergency basis. What a body being designed by God!
* You who does not honor your brother and sister because you think they are inferior to you, please learn the heart of God and honor others practically and not just in your mind.
* Those who seem weaker and not so important in the body of Christ, are indispensable. They must be treated with honor. When we honor one another properly, we develop an atmosphere of love crucial to the body and function of the church.
* The parts of the body work together. The eyes and ears do not only serve themselves, but the whole body. The hands do not only feed and defend themselves, but the whole body. The heart does not only supply blood to itself, but serves the whole body.
* Sometimes there is a part of our body that only lives to serve itself. It doesn’t contribute anything to the rest of the body, and everything it gets it uses to feed and grow itself. We call this **malignant cancer**.

3. Read verses 27-31. What is the relationship between the church and the individual? (27) What places has God given in the church? (28) Why can’t each believer have all of God’s gifts? (29-30) What was apostle Paul’s guidance for them in regards to loving one another? (31)

3-1, Read verses 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[[d](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=1+Corinthians+12#fen-NIV-28665d)]? Do all interpret? **31** Now eagerly desire the greater gifts. Love Is Indispensable And yet I will show you the most excellent way.

3-2, What is the relationship between the church and the individual? (27)

 ***Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.***

* So our identity is the body of Christ and each one of us is a part of it.

Ephesians 5:29-30 reads,

 After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— 30 for we are members of his body.

3-3, What places has God given in the church? (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.***

* The church begins with apostles, ones who are sent to plant the word of God. The church grows as prophets provide spiritual vision and direction, and teachers patiently instruct with the word of God.
* Then the Holy Spirit raises up a body of believers miraculously with the help of the Holy Spirit and gives them enough spiritual gifts to transform their community.
* It is God who appoints his servants and gifts them according to His own purpose and plan. It is not those who are in authority in the church, but God himself who does this.

3-4, Why can’t each believer have all of God’s gifts? (29-30)

***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?***

* Each person can not have all spiritual gifts but we together have all. May the Lord help us to respect and love each other for common purpose to glorify God.

3-5, What was apostle Paul’s guidance for them in regards to loving one another? (31)

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

* Paul knew that the gift of love is most essential to the body of Christ. That is a gift to be desired by all, by every Christian whether their gifts are one or another.
* We will learn about the gift of love in the next chapter, but for now, pray that God would reveal to everyone of us his or her gift, pray that we may use it for the glory of God and not to compare our gifts each other.

**Conclusion**

 The gifts are merely ways and means through which we can express and receive love from God and love to one another. They are the “containers,” and what is in the container (love) is far more important. May the Lord help us to be united in love and respect as one body of Christ so that we may render glory and honor to the Lord our God! Amen.

**One word: Christ, our Body!**