

1 Corinthians 12—One Body, Many Gifts

- **Intro—Avengers:**
 - Nick Fury is director of SHIELD peacekeeping force.
 - Ultimately, he responds to the threat of world invasion by calling together this task force of superheroes to save the day.
 - Most of the movie is all of them assuming their own agendas and working in their own power and they are almost defeated.
 - Fury convinces them to work together toward a common goal:
 - When it looks as though the team has fallen apart, Agent Nick Fury says to them, "The idea was to bring together a group of remarkable people, see if they could become something more. See if they could work together when we needed them to, to fight the battles that we never could."
- **Spiritual Gifts are Easy to Mess Up—v.1**
 - "Now Concerning"—he is addressing a question from the Corinthians and is correcting their error!
 - Within Christian churches, history is littered with people messing this up—on both sides of the road (stifling it or over-hyping it!)
- **Spiritual Gifts are About Jesus—v.2-3**
 - Who are the only people who have the Spirit?...those who love Jesus!
 - Pentecostals—the only people with the Spirit are those who speak in tongues...SAD!
 - Do you have the Holy Spirit? Ask yourself, "do I love Jesus? Is he my Lord? Is he above all else?"
 - What ultimately counts is not what gift you have or how many...but loving Jesus—nothing counts if we don't love Jesus!
 - Where you don't hear about Jesus—the Spirit is NOT at work!
- **Spiritual Gifts Involve the Entire Trinity—v.4-6**
 - "There are varieties of gifts but the same Spirit, and there are varieties of service but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone."
 - You become a Christian—God becomes busy.
 - **Father**—I want them to have a gift
 - **Son**—saves people and delivers the gift so that we might look and live more like Him!
 - **Ephesians 4:8-12**—when he ascended on high, he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.
 - In his resurrection, Jesus claimed the gifts that were his and then gave them to his people as a means of ministry on earth!
 - **Spirit**—fills a believer and applies the gift
 - **Spiritual Gifts are given to God's people for the good of all people—v.7**
 - "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good."
 - Everybody here has a gift and everybody here IS a gift—we need you all and you need us as we all work together for the sake of seeing people meet, know and grow in Jesus!
 - If you are a Christian and you are here looking around like, "they don't need me, they got it all under control,"...are you serious!? WE DO NOT! Get in the game!
 - Spiritual gifts are not fireworks for us to ohh and ah at, they are gifts of God, given to us, that we might extend His love and grace to the ends of the planet!
 - **Spiritual Gifts are used in service to one boss—God—v.11**
 - The pastors at Harvest ultimately are not the ones you are accountable to for how you use and steward your gifts.

- **Jesus is our boss.** He gives the gifts. He gives the power. We live and serve and use our gifting ultimately as an act of worship and obedience to Jesus!
- **Spiritual Gifts are beautifully diverse—v.8-10, 28-30**
 - Notice Paul’s emphasis on “VARIETY” throughout this section...we aren’t all the same!
 - God, in infinite wisdom, is dispersing all sorts of gifts and passions and is doing so in order that the body of Christ may be edified and the Kingdom of God may be advanced!
- **Spiritual Gifts are meant to unify, not divide, the body—v.12-13**
 - Paul uses the analogy of HUMAN BODY to articulate what it means to be a Christian church. The Church is a body, not a building
 - The Spirit doesn’t fill a building...he fills a PEOPLE who gather in a building, live/work/play in a world and filled with his Spirit.
 - Jesus is saving people, changing their lives and hearts, and then knitting them together, ligament by ligament to form a Body to represent him on the earth.
 - Just think about your body—all the parts, all the systems, all working together in tandem to cause you to live and function and flourish!
 - “Jews, Greeks, slaves or free”....why on earth are you all here? We love Jesus. Have been made new by Jesus.
 - Let’s have as many different types of people as possible doing as many different types of things as possible to reach as many different people as possible!
 - So, if there is all this variety yet there is also coordination and unity..how?
 - v.13—we were all baptized into one body—WE ALL GET THE HOLY SPIRIT!
 - Our unity does not come from sameness but from Spirit—led by, filled by, empowered by, being shaped by the same Spirit!
- **Spiritual Gifts Oppose Self-Deprecation—v.14-20**
 - There is no room for “because I am not ____” I am not useful here—everybody is needed!
 - Examples: speaker, seminary educated, a mature christian, etc.
 - When you are part of a body, you matter. EVERYONE MATTERS
 - Ever noticed how dysfunctional you are when you jam your thumb, get a paper cut in that particularly bad spot, get a cut in your eye...THE SMALL PARTS MATTER TOO!e
 - Out there, usefulness is dependent on talent, beauty, etc. Inside here, usefulness is for everyone here filled with the Spirit!
 - Implicit in this text is the ASSUMPTION THAT EVERY CHRISTIAN IS MEANINGFULLY ENGAGED IN A LOCAL CHURCH.
 - The Bible knows nothing of disconnected, non-contributing Christians!
- **Spiritual Gifts Oppose Self-Exaltation—v.21-26**
 - Just as no one can say, “because I am ____” I am not needed, so nobody can say, “because you aren’t ____ I don’t need you.”
 - If you have pride regarding your gift, you have misunderstood your gift.
 - God orders spiritual gifts to humble us!
 - “I have no need of you”—idea of one part of the body making war on another.
 - Smitty Illustration—nobody wins when this happens!
- **Spiritual Gifts are to be earnestly desired—v.31**
 - While it is God who apportions the gifts by his will, it is for us to yearn for them!
 - 1 Cor. 14:1—earnestly desire them!
 - What are your passions?
 - Where have you seen success/fruit?
 - Do some trial and error
 - This verse is a divine invitation to a treasure—and the invitation is to seek it out!