

**Ezekiel 36:24:32**

<sup>24</sup> “For I will take you out of the nations; I will gather you from all the countries and bring you back into your own land. <sup>25</sup> I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you will be clean; I will cleanse you from all your impurities and from all your idols. <sup>26</sup> I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. <sup>27</sup> And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws. <sup>28</sup> Then you will live in the land I gave your ancestors; you will be my people, and I will be your God. <sup>29</sup> I will save you from all your uncleanness. I will call for the grain and make it plentiful and will not bring famine upon you. <sup>30</sup> I will increase the fruit of the trees and the crops of the field, so that you will no longer suffer disgrace among the nations because of famine. <sup>31</sup> Then you will remember your evil ways and wicked deeds, and you will loathe yourselves for your sins and detestable practices. <sup>32</sup> I want you to know that I am not doing this for your sake, declares the Sovereign LORD. Be ashamed and disgraced for your conduct, people of Israel!

**1 Corinthians 12:1-31**

**12** Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. <sup>2</sup> You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. <sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

<sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> 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. <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

<sup>12</sup> Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

<sup>15</sup> 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. <sup>16</sup> 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. <sup>17</sup> 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? <sup>18</sup> But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. <sup>19</sup> If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

<sup>21</sup> 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!” <sup>22</sup> On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, <sup>23</sup> 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, <sup>24</sup> while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, <sup>25</sup> so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. <sup>26</sup> If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. <sup>28</sup> 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. <sup>29</sup> Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? <sup>30</sup> Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? <sup>31</sup> Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.

And yet I will show you the most excellent way.

**Sermon Title - Different Gifts, One Body, Many Parts**

**(Ezekiel 36:24-32 & 1 Corinthians 12:1-31)**

**24-May-20**

It would be **great** to have your **Bibles open** at **1 Cor chapter 12**

Let me ask God to give us understanding of His Word; **Let's pray...**

**Intro/Promised Holy Spirit (John 14:26; 16:14 & Ezekiel 36:26-27)**

Just to **recap** then

At the beginning of **chapter 11 - verse 1** - the **Apostle Paul** said:

**[PowerPoint 1-Example]**

*Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.*

Then in the **rest of chapter 11- which we looked at last week** - Paul gave two **examples** of how the **Corinthians hadn't followed Paul's teachings** that he laid down - **teachings that Jesus, Himself had laid down** - the teaching of **male headship** in the church & family - and the **teaching** of celebrating the Lord's Supper properly.

Now it's **easy for us to forget things** - so before **Jesus died on the cross**

**[PowerPoint 2-Promises]**

He **promised this** in **John 14:26**:

***26 But the Advocate, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you.***

And also, in **John 16:14** - **Jesus** said:

*He [The Holy Spirit] will bring glory to me [Jesus] by taking from what is Mine and making it known to you*

What Jesus is promising here is that when it comes to following His teaching - He gives Christians a helper to make following His teaching possible

This helper is the Holy Spirit

We shouldn't be surprised that Jesus promised the Holy Spirit as a helper.

Because, in our OT reading from Ezekiel - God promised His people this in

**Ezekiel 36:26-27**

[PowerPoint 3-Ezekiel]

*26 I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you; I will remove from you your heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh. 27 And I will put my Spirit in you and move you to follow my decrees and be careful to keep my laws.*

What a promise from Jesus, in the NT - and what a promise from God the Father, in the OT.

And they always keep their promises!

**The Holy Spirit shows us who is Lord (1 Cor 12:1-3)**

So, when we come to believe in Jesus we are born of Spirit and born from above as John 3:3 says.

[PowerPoint 4-Lord]

And as v3 of 1 Cor 12 tells us - the Holy Spirit shows us - Jesus is Lord of our lives

The Apostle Paul reminds the **Corinthians**, in v2, they live in a **pagan society** where they had **previously worshipped dumb or mute idols** which led them **astray** - because **people thought** these idols could **achieve what** they asked for - when in fact they **couldn't** - because **these idols were just lumps of metal or stone!**

Paul says, only **The One True God** and His **One true Spirit** - leads people to the **Lord** - and to the right path for life

The **Holy Spirit** - leads people to **confess their faith**

The **Holy Spirit** - moves a person from head knowledge of **Jesus** to heart and hands - that serve Jesus

Therefore, as Paul says in v3 - when a person has the **HS** inside them - they would never curse Jesus - so in practical terms - a person with the **HS** - wouldn't say things like - **OMG** or **JC** - that sort of thing is blaming Jesus or God for something happening - and is in fact **blaspheming**

### There is a Diversity and Unity of Gifts (1 Cor 12:4-6)

Paul goes on to say in verses 4 to 6

As people receive the **Holy Spirit**

[PowerPoint 5-One Spirit]

The **Holy Spirit** gives people different spiritual gifts

When these gifts are given

They are used in a way that **produces unity** - because

- **The Spirit** gives the gifts
- **Jesus** is made Lord and is made known by the use of these gifts

- And **God, the Father**, is at work - as **each gift** is used

So - the **Holy Trinity** is **working together in unity** with people's spiritual gifts.

### Spiritual Gifts are used for Common Good of All (1 Cor 12:7-11)

[PowerPoint 6-Common good]

Then Paul - gives the purpose of these spiritual gifts

See v7 - It's for the **common good** - of everyone

Each person is given one or more spiritual gift as a means of helping the entire church

Everyone gets the **benefit** from these gifts

Paul lists some of these spiritual gifts - **Nine gifts** are given in vv8-10

- The gift of Wisdom - that's applying what we've learnt from the Bible and from the experiences of **God's people** (whether those experiences are good, bad or ugly) and the **wisdom** we have learnt from our **own experiences** - applying all of this to our lives
- The gift of Knowledge - not just intellectual knowledge - it could be practical knowledge like - **carpentry, electrics, building, engineering, plumbing, technology** & so on.
- The gift of Faith - we all receive the gift of faith - otherwise we wouldn't believe in **Jesus in the first place** - but some people have been **blessed** with a **faith** - that they never doubt God - and trust Him in all things - this sort of faith encourages others watching on.
- The gift of Healing - even today - we hear of **people** being **healed** - by someone praying over them - and God answering their prayers -

[share my own example]

- The gift of Miraculous powers - e.g. we hear stories of missionaries performing miracles or experiencing miraculous protection from danger and persecution.
- The gift of Prophecy - people speaking words from God - which declare God's plans & purposes - which may correct & rebuke the wicked - or comfort those who are suffering - or reveal things that were hidden; including foretelling future events - and including preaching.  
Of course - any prophecy must line up with God's Word - or it should be disregarded
- The gift of Discerning of Spirits - some people are blessed with the ability to distinguish clearly what is from God and what is not from God but from the devil - remember the devil is the father of lies and can be convincing - if he gets a foothold. So, it's good to have someone who can discern this clearly.
- The gift of Speaking in Tongues - which is speaking in a language or tongue we don't know - this is not much use though - if no one can understand it - as its then not for the common good of all - which is why the last gift listed is necessary - the interpretation of tongues
- The gift of - Interpreting tongues - is where someone can understand the words of someone speaking in a different tongue or language - and can share what was said with all the people present - bringing common good to all.

A word of warning here - don't let anyone tell you - you're not a Christian if you can't speak in tongues or haven't got a particular gift - because V11 clearly says - God chooses who gets which gift!

- Spiritual gifts are given by one and the same Spirit (v11) - they don't come from ourselves or from another human being - spiritual gifts are not man-made
- We shouldn't worry if we don't have a certain gift - because someone else in the church family - has that gift - and according to v7 (the key verse) - they're supposed to use that gift for the benefit of all - for the common good.
- In the church at Corinth - some believers thought they were super spiritual because they had more gifts than others or because they thought prophecy and speaking in tongues were more important - and so they thought they were better than others - and looked down on other believers
- Those with fewer gifts - resented those with more gifts - and that was causing divisions in the church at Corinth
- Division was one of the big problems in the church in Corinth - and can be in many churches today.
- Divisions won't occur if the believers in a church realize the golden rule of v7 - gifts are for the mutual benefit of everyone.

Paul expands on this idea of mutual benefit of spiritual gifts in verses 12 to

30

## Spiritual Gifts are Used within the Body of Christ (vv12-30)

### [PowerPoint 7-Body]

- Paul likens the body of believers (whether our church or the universal church) - Paul likens the body of believers to the human body with many parts
- Paul calls the body of believers - the body of Christ - we at St. David's are part of the body of Christ - Jesus' body parts so to speak!
- When we first believed in Jesus - we were baptized by the HS
- The HS took up residence inside us - and marked us as part of God's family - and marked us as one of Jesus' body parts
- Just like the parts of a human body have different jobs - eyes=see, ears=hear, feet=walk - so each part of the body of believers - the body parts of Jesus - have a different job
- And God put each one of us in the body - to serve a purpose
- Every part of the human body can't be an eye - otherwise there would be no body part that speaks or hears
- In the same way - Not every part of the body of Jesus - does the same job
  - Some people might preach or teach or pray or read or sing or play music or cook or clean or help others or care for others or drive people around - or build stuff.
  - Some people work better with the older people
  - Some people work better with younger people
- God decides each person's job - and God puts all the body parts together

- Each body part is equal and there should be no divisions - no arguments no arrogance - no feeling superior - and no feeling inferior
- We are unified in Jesus
- If someone loses a loved one and they're grieving - we all grieve with them and comfort them
- If someone is suffering - we suffer with them and understand their suffering - and support them through their suffering
- If someone has a joyous occasion - like a wedding, an anniversary, a baptism, a birthday, a graduation, a new baby - we all rejoice together
- We're family
- Paul confirms in verse 28 that God gave His church - apostles, prophets, teachers, miracle workers, healers, helpers, administrators, speakers of tongues
- But V29 explains - we can't be all of these - God chooses what we are
- But whatever God chooses for each person - it's so that we work together in unity

### Application - Gifts used in a most excellent way (v31)

How do we apply this idea of spiritual gifts and being part of the body of Christ to our lives today?

- Well Paul tells us in v31
- Now eagerly desire the **greater gifts?**
- What are the greater gifts? - presumably those gifts listed in v28 (cf. 14:1, 39)

- Then in case the Corinthians or us - start to seek spiritual gifts with an air of arrogance - Paul says - he will show how to seek gifts - in a most excellent way
- This most excellent way mentioned in v31 - is love - which Paul will explore & expand on in chapter 13 - which we'll look at next time

[PowerPoint 8-Excellent Way]

- And - isn't that the most excellent way - the way Jesus showed - by lovingly and sacrificially dying on the cross?
- If we're following that most excellent way of love - when it comes to our spiritual gifts
- We'll seek spiritual gifts - with a desire to show sacrificial love to others
- We'll eagerly seek the gifts we haven't got - because God may have plans for us in the different seasons of our lives
- We'll use our God-given spiritual gifts - rather than keeping them in the closet
- We won't look down on someone if they don't have the same gifts as us - we won't think our gifts are better - and we won't think we're somehow super spiritual - remember gifts are for the common good - not for ourselves
- We'll realize we need each other; we'll respect each other; we'll sympathize with each other
- We'll think about how we can use our gifts in our church family - and at home - in the community - at work - at school - at Uni - for the common good

- To help you with this - **prayerfully consider completing the spiritual survey** that was **in our Bible study booklet** - ask God to show you your spiritual gifts - and ask someone who knows you well - to tell you what your spiritual gifts are.

Let's pray...