

Spiritual Gifts
Lesson #23
1 Corinthians 12

In the last chapter, Paul began addressing some of the abuses that were taking place during worship in the church at Corinth. After discussion of the abuses taking place during the observance of the Lord's Supper, Paul said that God had judged them. As a result, some Corinthians had become sick and some had even died. (1 Corinthians 11:27-29) Another place of division and abuse was in the area of spiritual gifts. Paul devoted three chapters to this discussion, which is the most extensive passage on this topic in the New Testament.

Spiritual Gifts - 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

1. Paul said that he did not want the Corinthians to be ignorant about spiritual gifts. Since many of them had been pagans before they heard the gospel, they would need instruction. What did Paul say their source of influence had been before they became believers? (1 Corinthians 12:2)

2. What difference does the Holy Spirit make in the life of the believer versus the pagan who is without God's Spirit? (1 Corinthians 12:3)

3. Within the church body, Paul said there are some things that are different, while others are the same. Using 1 Corinthians 12:4-6, fill in the chart below:

What is different?	What is the same?

4. Paul said that each one has been given the (Holy) Spirit. Why did God give every believer the gift of His Spirit? (1 Corinthians 12:7)

5. Make a list of gifts of the Spirit. (1 Corinthians 12:8-10)

6. Using 1 Corinthians 12:11:
 - Who does the work of these gifts?

 - Who gives these gifts to the believer?

 - Who determines what each person receives?

 - Does every believer receive the same gift(s)?

7. **Reflect:** In these 11 verses, Paul set the foundational understanding about the whom, what and why of spiritual gifts. Review your answers and then, based upon this text, write your own understanding about spiritual gifts.

One Body, Many Parts – 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

8. To help the Corinthians understand how the church works in harmony, Paul used the analogy of the human body. What three points did he make about the human body? (1 Corinthians 12:12a)
 - What about the spiritual body, or the church? (1 Corinthians 12:12b)

9. How does one become part of the body of Christ? (1 Corinthians 12:13a)
 - To whom does that apply? (1 Corinthians 12:13b)

10. Paul illustrated how the body works by creating a conversation among the various parts of the body. What point was Paul making in the conversation with the foot and the ear? (1 Corinthians 12:15, 16)
11. What was Paul's point in verse 17?
12. In relationship to the body, both physical and spiritual, what is God's role? (1 Corinthians 12:18)
13. Paul tried to imagine a body where everything was the same. What were his conclusions? (1 Corinthians 12:19, 20)
14. In the human body, why did Paul say that the eye cannot tell the hand "*I don't need you*" or the head say the same to the foot? (1 Corinthians 12:21, 22)
15. What if a body part is less honorable than another? (1 Corinthians 12:23a)
 - What about those parts that are unpresentable? (1 Corinthians 12:23b)
16. Paul said that "*our presentable parts need no special treatment*," then went on to say "*But God.*" What has God done that may have been surprising to these Corinthians? (1 Corinthians 12:24)
17. Why did God do that? (1 Corinthians 12:25)
18. What happens in the body if one part suffers? (1 Corinthians 12:26a)

- What if one part is honored? (1 Corinthians 12:26b)
19. What was Paul teaching the Corinthians with this illustration of the body?
(1 Corinthians 12:27)
20. What parts of the body (spiritual gifts) did Paul list are in the church? (1 Corinthians 12:28)
21. Paul asked if everyone has the same gift. What was the implied answer?
(1 Corinthians 12:29, 30)

When chapter divisions were placed in the Bible for ease in finding text, chapter 12 ended with Paul's instructions, *"But eagerly desire the great gifts."* Those greater gifts will be explained in chapter 13, often called the great "Love Chapter."