



Life Group Notes: 'One Body, One Spirit' Tuesday 4th September 2018

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-12

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; 5 and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; 6 and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. 7 To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. 8 For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, 9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, 10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. 11 All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills. 12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. (ESV)

INTRODUCTION:

God made us all individually and has given gifts and talents to every one of us. Some of us may be aware of some of the gifts that God has given us and some of us may not. Sometimes the gifts God gives us are wrapped up in things that we are naturally good at or enjoy doing and get a lot of pleasure from, so we don't always recognise them as a gift from God. Sometimes God gives gifts to us that we are not yet aware of and he packages it as a treasure stored in us that is yet to be opened and discovered.

QUESTIONS TO EXPLORE:

- 1) Based on the above verses, why do you think that God gives us all gifts and talents? What is the purpose of God doing that?

Also read James 1:17

- 2) Romans 11:29 says that '*the gifts and callings of God are irrevocable*'.

- a) As God gives gifts that he doesn't take back, what do you think we should be doing with those gifts? Do you think that we each have a responsibility as individuals and as a church family in relation to the gifts God gives us? Discuss why. Also consider 1 Timothy 4:14: '*do not neglect the gift you have...*'

- b) 2 Timothy 1:6 encourages us to '*fan into flame the gift of God...*' Discuss how can we proactively do this with our gifts – as individuals and as a church family.

3) Verse 6 says that it is God who empowers the gifts in everyone. Later in the chapter in verse 12 (after listing a few of the gifts) it says: *'All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit who apportions to each one individually as he wills.'*

- a) Have you ever undervalued your own gifts and talents, comparing yourself to other people? Or have you ever felt that you didn't have much to offer or you just don't match up to other people's gifts? Briefly discuss how this made you feel.

It has been said that comparison is the thief of joy. We can all fall into that trap at times, but it is not God's will that we compare our gifts to other people's gifts.

- b) Read Romans 12:4-8. In view of the truth of these verses in Romans, how does it change your perspective in relation to your own gifts and talents?

4) Verse 7 says: *'To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.'*

The Bible is clearly saying that the gifts and talents that God gives each one of us is not just for us – it is for others' benefit too.

- a) How can you actively use your God given gifts *'for the common good'*?
- b) What do you think the impact would be within our church family if every one of us used our gifts to help serve, build up and encourage others in the church?
- c) What do you think would be the impact in the world around us if we as the church truly captured the truth of being one body through the Spirit?

Further reading:

1 Corinthians 12:12-27 talks about how we all have different parts to play in the body of Christ (please take time to read this later if you do not have time during Life Group).

Verse 12 says: *'for just as the body is one and has many members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ.'*

We all have a part to play in serving and honouring God well. Part of that is using our gifts and talents for the glory of God and learning to develop them and allow them to grow.

CLOSING REFLECTION & PRAYER

Take some time to focus on each person in the group and tell them what gifts and talents you see in them and have seen working through them. Sometimes we don't realise what others can clearly see God doing through us so it's very encouraging to hear it from others!

Pray together that:

- each person will use their gifts for the glory of God and the good of others and that we will learn to develop and grow in them
- God would empower us in a greater measure
- as a body of Christ, we will become more united and one in Spirit together