

## You have Spiritual Gifts Message 1

### What is a Spirit Filled Church?

#### Main Text: (1 Corinthians 12:1-11)

Introduction:

It has been said that we are continuing to live out the “information age” in America. That is to say, whereas the majority of commerce and employment through and until the late 1980’s was related to industrial works and agriculture, now most are employed in some way or form related to technology. Consider these realities:

- In 1965, roughly 47%- nearly half- of the working age population in the US worked in manufacturing and farming
- Today, only 20% work in these industries. It’s decreased well over 100%

Whereas:

- Today, 120,000,000 people- 60% of the working adult population of the US- do so in technology or service related fields that depend on IT for all or part of their businesses

And that’s just about information we know! Think about this:

- The CIA has a budget approaching 100 billion dollars- *that’s 1/10th of a trillion dollars- every year.*
- They employ nearly 22,000 people just themselves.

So, as a nation, we employ that many people to help us find out ***what we don’t know***. And we’re not even including those employed to do research in any and all fields that would also be seeking knowledge we currently don’t have. That number is so large and vast it’s likely impossible to accurately estimate.

Considering how much incredible wealth has been gathered in the US, it’s obvious that knowledge is really, really valuable.

Like Proverbs 18:15 says, “An intelligent heart acquires knowledge, and the ear of the wise seeks knowledge.”

If that’s true (and it is), then not seeking knowledge is foolish and can lead to all sorts of problems and missed opportunities.

**Main Idea: A Spirit-filled church is a unified church that both *knows about* and *practices* spiritual gifts.**

In this series, we are talking about Spiritual Gifts. This is a subject in the bible that some practice and others reject- but the likely reality is that most of us honestly just don't know much about them. And no matter how one might feel about Spiritual Gifts, it's not wise to go through life without knowledge of what they really are.

### **1. A Spirit filled church doesn't *ignore* spiritual gifts.**

Paul begins his teaching on this subject to the people at Corinth:

*Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed.*

Paul knows first-hand what being uninformed (some versions say "ignorant") is like.

- Paul was famously brought to his own conversion in direct and dramatic means, hearing the voice of the Lord- "Why are you persecuting me?" Remember, in the world he lived in until that moment, the only people who heard God's voice would have been considered prophets. He was uninformed of how God desired to speak to everyone no matter who they might be until that moment.
- Furthermore, since the church in Jerusalem came to be simultaneous with the outpouring of spiritual gifts of tongues and interpretation of tongues, teaching and prophecy, Paul had likely been practicing them since his days with the other disciples who experienced those things on the day of Pentecost. But that would only have been *after* he was presented to Peter, James and others after his conversion. Until then, he would not have known anything about these things and he would have had to learn them- this former educated pharisee *learned* from these former fishermen- about both what spiritual gifts were and what they were not. It was from this perspective that he teaches us in this letter.

### **2. A Spirit Filled church *honors* spiritual gifts.**

*You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. 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.*

-Paul is making the point- perhaps because someone told him about what some were saying- that someone cursing Jesus or trying to mislead you to another God is just as bad as someone who tries to convince you that someone who honors Jesus is, somehow, evil.

-He's laying the foundation that the following spiritual gifts are, in fact, from God. And just because you don't know about them (as Paul once didn't) does not mean that they are evil. In fact, if the person who practices them declares and holds fast to the truth that Jesus is who He said He is, they can't be.

*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. there are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.*

-He goes on to emphasize that not only are they not evil but they are, in fact, from God. Even though they are very different from one another and may even seem to be practiced differently person to person, it is the same God- Father, Son and Holy Spirit- who is behind them. (Note that in verse 4 he uses "Spirit"; in verse 5 he uses "Lord"; and in verse 6 he uses "God".)

### **3. In a Spirit filled church, *everyone* practices Spiritual Gifts.**

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

As Paul continues in the vein of thought that emphasizes it is not multiple gods but the one true God that brings the diversity of the gifts we see, he touches on several sub points:

- Spiritual gifts are given to "each one." No one is left out.
- Since everyone receives gifts, it benefits everyone. ("given for the common good.")
- These gifts, in this instance of scripture, are not presented with a "rank." They are listed out as a function of carrying out His will for that common good.
- These gifts are not earned by the "super spiritual." They are distributed to "each one, just as *he determines.*"

Call- In this way, Spiritual Gifts are truly that- gifts. We must be open to know and learn about them, honor them, and maybe most importantly- be willing to **receive them**. Our openness to them is an indication of our openness to God, and we all benefit in miraculous ways when each of us is willing to practice spiritual gifts.

