

✍ We continued to look last time at how God has so gifted the Church to do His mission. We considered different metaphors that the Bible uses to illustrate this, building, field, a body, and then we added some of our own, jigsaw puzzle, keyboard on a computer, and a band. One band many pieces all coming together to make one sound. The "sound" we make is not worship services or bible studies or even our prayer meetings (these are certainly the means to an end, but they are not the end). Think about it, if that is all that we do and are then we are like a band on a field that is suited up, in formation and marching out, but we are making not sound! The sound we make is the impact that we have on our world. A church without impact is like a band with no sound. How can the light of world not light up anything, not push back the darkness?

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**1. We are going to be taking a closer look at the instruments that we can play in this band. What gifts has God given the Body of Christ?, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:7-11, 28-31.**

- ✓ There are 13 gifts spoken of here; adding to that number the others lists of gifts in the New Testament in Romans 12, Ephesians 4, and 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4 we can count between 18 and 20 in total. Why aren't there any complete lists? Why doesn't some writer of the New Testament say, "here is the full list:"? First of all, apparently, we didn't need a full list, had the Holy Spirit thought we needed a full list He would have given us one. Second, I'm not convinced that there is a full list. What I mean by that is that God reserves the right and ability to gift His body however He needs to. I say that because the Spirit of God manifested numerous gifts and enablings throughout Scripture. Is there anything good that the Spirit cannot gift us to do? The point of Paul's discussion of the gifts is not to give a complete list of gifts but to emphasize the fact that every person in the Body has a ministry.
- ✓ 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:7, our view of ministry has gotten so off track that what we think of as "the ministry" is only what very few in the church do. We see ministers as only those behind the pulpit or in some official office within the church, but nothing could be further from the truth. The real upfront ministers are the members of the church not the pastors, the pastors are the equippers of the Body, but the Body is the ones out there doing the work.

**2. 1<sup>st</sup> Peter 4:11 seems to suggest two major divisions within the gifts, the speaking gifts and the service gifts.**

- 1) The Speaking Gifts are gifts that involve more often speaking, teaching, writing, proclamation, or interpreting the Word of God. There are at least 8 different speaking gifts revealed in the Scripture. Word of utterance or Knowledge, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:8, the gift to know things about the Scriptures and the details of those truths. A speaking gift that enables a person to analyze, investigate, interpret, systematize the things God wants us to know. Word or utterance of Wisdom. A speaking gift that applies knowledge to a given situation. Some have called it a "sanctified common sense" If an issue is confusing or problematic to the church and this gift arises and says, "couldn't this or that be what God is saying to us?"
- 2) Gift of Teaching, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:28, Knowledge knows the truth; Wisdom applies the truth, teaching transfers both of those things to you. A person with this gift explains, clarifies and communicates truth so that it is clear to others.
- 3) Gift of Prophecy, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:10, knowledge knows; wisdom applies; teaching transfers; prophecy confronts with the truth. Foretelling the future is a rather minor part of prophecy, whereas forth-telling is a major function of God's prophets in the Old and New Testaments. John the Baptist was the greatest prophet according to Jesus, and, yet he did very little foretelling and very much confronting with the truth.
- 4) Gift of Tongues, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 12:10; 28, speaking in a language that the person has never learned for the sake of communicating the Gospel or worshipping God. The Bible seems to indicate that there more than just human languages that are available to the Spirit, 1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 13:1, 14:2.

**The Corinthian church made way too big of a deal out of the tongues gift and people today have a tendency to do the same.**