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**SERMON TITLE: "Bridging the Gap"**  
**SCRIPTURE: 1 Corinthians 12:4-13**  
**DATE: July 3, 2022**  
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## READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-13

In churches we find that God has provided believers the ability to do great and mighty acts for his name's sake, but we get hung up on various details which have divided and created gaps in church bodies and has even helped create various denominations.

What things do we see happening in our world? We see arrogance, self-centered insistence on one's own rights, marginalizing those that would be considered helpless or weak which reveals our priorities. What the church, whom are all believers that have a true, saving faith in Jesus Christ, need is to bridge the gap in using their spiritual gifts that God has gifted believers, setting ourselves apart from the world and pursue the holiness of God.

### **The Trinity is interconnected, integral, and essential in giving spiritual gifts (vv. 4-6)**

Each part of the Trinity described here is paired with its own key word: Spirit with gifts, service with Lord, and activities with God. Even though the word "Trinity" is not in the Bible and was introduced by Tertullian (AD 155 – AD 220) in the early third century, finalized at the council of Nicaea in AD 325, the Bible describes that even though there are a variety of gifts, they come from the same Spirit.

The first link Spirit is a capital "S" directly referring to the Holy Spirit with the variety of gifts. The word they use in the Greek Septuagint, which is the Greek translation of the New Testament for the Holy Spirit, is "pneuma" (πνευμα) and the word that is used in Greek for gifts comes from the word "charisma" (χαρισμα). This charisma is "favor one receives based on no merit of their own, a gift or an endowment of divine grace, which denotes extraordinary powers distinguishing Christians from other non-believers, enabling them to serve the church of Christ." <sup>1</sup>

The second link this passage makes is a variety of services or ministries but the same Lord. The Greek word for services and ministries here is "diakonia" (διακονια) and the Greek for Lord is "Kyrios" (κυριος) translated from the Old Testament YHWH which describes the Son, Jesus Christ. The definition of the word that we translate for services and ministries includes the office of deacons, but this also includes "those who proclaim God among men and those who have the gifts of prophecy and evangelism." <sup>2</sup>

The last link given to us in this passage is the words varieties of activities or effects and God. The word, God, translated "Theos" (θεος), comes from the Hebrew Old Testament of his name, Elohim. The word for activity and effect comes from the root word "energeo" (ἐνεργέω) which means "to be operative, be at work, put forth power, to effect and to display one's activity." <sup>3</sup> It is through the empowerment of God then that we can put forth power and display the giftings of the Holy Spirit through our example of the servanthood which is Christ.

What are the spiritual gifts that God has gifted in the body and what is their design?

### **Each person is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good (v.7) (vv.7-11)**

There are nine gifts presented here in 1 Corinthians like the nine fruits of the Spirit. The nine gifts presented in 1 Corinthians 12 are:

- 1) wisdom
- 2) knowledge
- 3) faith
- 4) healing
- 5) miracles
- 6) prophecy
- 7) distinguishing spirits
- 8) speaking in tongues
- 9) interpretation of tongues

Briefly, an explanation of what each of them would be:

<sup>1</sup> Definition from here:  
<https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g5486/kjv/tr/0-1/>

<sup>2</sup> Definition from here:  
<https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g1248/nasb95/mgnt/0-1/>

<sup>3</sup> Definition from here:  
<https://www.biblestudytools.com/lexicons/greek/kjv/energeo.html>

That first wisdom, or in Greek, “Sophia” (σοφία), is the application of knowledge. When Joseph gave his interpretation of the dreams to Pharaoh, the bread baker, and the cup bearer in Genesis, and when Daniel gave his interpretation of the dream to Nebuchadnezzar, they were utilizing the gift of wisdom.

Knowledge or “gnosis” (γνώσις) is a gift that allows one to learn about the various things of God in certain situations or about things that are going on around us today. In the New Testament, especially in John’s epistles, he addresses Gnosticism which was a way to try to come to know God without a relationship with him, but God has intended this gift to be used in conjunction with coming to a greater understanding of God and the times that are going on around us.

Faith, or “pistis” (πίστις) is someone who demonstrates an unwavering faith in God despite various difficult circumstances that may be around this person. This person also can also impart or encourage others in their faith in God when difficult times come as well.

Healing, “iama” (ἰάμα) is demonstrated as a cure or a remedy.

Miracles, “dynamis” (δύναμις), are performing mighty works and utilizing power or strength.

Prophecy, “propheteia” (προφητεία), declares the purposes of the Lord. This is someone who says, “thus says the Lord...” based on what God has directly said to them to share with others like the words that came to the Old Testament prophets.

Distinguishing spirits, or “diakrisis pneuma” (διάκρισις πνεύμα) is being able to precisely judge or discern that which comes from God and that which does not.

Speaking in tongues, or “glossa” (γλῶσσα) is tied to the word “glossolalia” which means speaking in the heavenly language and where we get our word glossary today. The speaking of tongues is not meant to be a language we already have here on earth, but we know what it means by way of the next gift, the interpretation of tongues. “Hermeneia” (ἑρμηνεία) is the verb of translating what is said in the heavenly language, the “glossa” (γλῶσσα), and is tied to the noun hermeneutics, or hermeneuo (ἑρμηνεύω).

Knowing what these gifts are, how can these be used within the church body as the bride of Christ?

**All believers are empowered by the same Holy Spirit to continue the work of Christ as we look forward to the day of Christ’s return.** (v.12-13)

I study Krav Maga. It is an urban self-defense martial art used by the Israeli Defensive Forces (IDF). It is a blend between kickboxing, judo, and other martial arts. In our training one of our most basic kicks is called a front snap kick. It takes the front foot, and kicks it out, and delivers the strike with purpose and to a target.

If we are to liken spiritual gifts working within the singular body of believers that makes up the church to this front snap kick, we see that each part of the body plays a specific role. If I do not have my hands up or have my arms flared out and they are not doing its’ job of protecting my face, I could get countered and take a hook shot. If I do not plant my foot right, then I cannot deliver the proper force of a snap kick, and if I do not kick out straight with the kicking foot and allow it to slide upwards when I kick, it also does not deliver the force needed to create the strike. If I do not spot my target with my eyes, I do not know where to aim and if I do not control my core, I will be off balance.

Each of these components play an equal role in its’ contribution to the same goal which is to deliver the most powerful strike to the target. Beyond our passage we are looking at today, it presents this idea that we are all empowered to serve, and that if we do not serve in the manner that we may want, it does not mean that we are somehow less or not even a part of the body, which is the body of believers.

Spiritual gifts that are treated as equal components to the kingdom of heaven are meant to be also treated equally in the church and the body of believers, even ones that we do not understand how to enact or understand how they function. Likewise, everyone who is a member of the body of believers must be in active work within the body, contributing those spiritual gifts as they have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve the kingdom of God.

To bridge the gap between our understanding of spiritual gifts and how to use them as God has intended us to use him is to know and meditate on his word. We cannot be dismissive, ignorant, or arrogant about various spiritual gifts within the body of believers. Everyone that is a born again believer has been gifted to serve the kingdom of God and should be disciplined by or in mutual discipleship with others who are growing in their faith, pursuing like a runner who is striving towards the prize, towards the kingdom of heaven (Phil 3:14).

AMEN.