

## Open Sails - 1 Corinthians 12:1-11, 31 "The Best Gift!"

It was Christmas Day when I was 11 yrs old.

❖ That year I was really hoping my parents were going to get me a new Bike – Sting ray.

A) Awakened – ran out to the tree and to my disappointment there was no new Bike and there was not a box that looked big enough for a Bike.

B) Started opening presents, small packages – little piddly toys.

1) One box – had a shirt – it was nice but come on.

C) Next package - underwear – white BVD's

1) Followed by another package of white socks

D) My 5 year old Brother got some pretty cool stuff and I was seriously wondering if my parents loved me any more.

That is when my dad asked me to go into the garage and get a trash bag to clean up the mess.

A) Walked into the garage – turned on the light and there it was a beautiful brand new – Purple – Huffy Sting ray – bike – Banana seat.

B) I came bounding back into the house – It is perfect – thanks mom and Dad that is the best gift ever!

C) Have your kids ever said that to you? – THE BEST GIFT EVER! - you scored....

Fast forward seven years – High School graduation. Planning on going to college in the Fall.

A) For my High School graduation, my parents got me – a brand new Subaru Hatchback car!

B) Thanks mom and Dad – THE BEST GIFT EVER – exactly what I needed!

C) More than I needed – Brand new car - \$4,000 in that day – but a new bike would not have helped me get to college.

Well here in our text in 1 Corinthians 12 Paul is talking about the gifts of the Spirit! –

A) V.31 Earnestly desire the BEST GIFTS!

B) There is a BEST GIFT? – Some of you are into having the best things That interest you. – THE BEST

C) What does Paul mean by the best gift? Answer that question today

1) Clue it has more to do with the gift that is needed than the one that is wanted!

V.1 Now concerning spiritual gifts [but actually that is not a good translation It is, "Now concerning the spirituals" or spiritual matters brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant .

A) The Spiritual matter that Paul does not want us to be ignorant about here are the gifts of the Holy Spirit

B) Because although the word gift is not there in v.1 it is v.4, 9, 28,30 & 31

C) Paul is saying: I don't want you to be ignorant about Spiritual gifts

Now this word ignorant has a 3 fold definition in the Greek Language.

A) 1<sup>st</sup> Don't ignore – Don't say that they don't exist Don't say not for today-NOT SCRIPTURAL CONCEPT

(Paul's approach w/Corinth – not stop but - here is how they function)

B) 2<sup>nd</sup> Don't be unaware – Don't be UNAWARE Instead need to understand – purpose, function -

1) What they are & how they are to work

(All things done..... Order - not free for all)

C) 3<sup>rd</sup> Don't be lacking in experience - Need to have a working Knowledge – Knowledge by experience –

D) No doubt There are many believers in the Church today who would say: I am ignorant – never taught – NEVER EXPERIENCED!

E) At least not to their knowledge – when in reality they are experiencing these gifts all the time and they just didn't realize it

That is one of the things we have been trying to point out about the gifts is how they operate inside the A) Church setting but also outside of the church setting as well.

B)I hope that is becoming more clear to you!

Focus today I want to consider – 4 important things that Paul tells us about these particular gifts

A)As well as looking at the first two gifts that he mentions:

B) Word of Wisdom and the Word of Knowledge and see how they function

IN the Church and outside of the Church!

C)Outline today:

- 1.) Diversity of Spiritual Gifts.
- 2.) The Nature of Spiritual Gifts.
- 3.) The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts.
- 4.) Desiring of Spiritual Gifts.

1<sup>st</sup> thing we want to note about the gifts of the Spirit is there is a DIVERSITY OF GIFTS

(1 Cor 12:4-6 NKJV) *There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. {5} There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord. {6} And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.*

TWO KEY WORDS HERE: DIFFERENCES & DIVERSITIES

A) **Differences speaks of – variety** – 31 flavors all ice cream / made of the same stuff – but there is a variety. So glad there is!

B) When it comes to the gifts of the Spirit there is a variety – **not all teachers / evangelist etc**

1)In order for body to function there has to be variety.

2)But all from the same source- Same Holy Spirit All from the Lord – See the Unity of the Godhead.

So there are differences – VARIETY

A)But there is also DIVERSITY – meaning the way in which these gifts are going to be manifested is not going to be the same.

Ab)They will differ with the person the place and the time – no formula

B)Example: Diversity in the way Jesus healed different blind men.

❖ Mark 8:23 – **He spits on the guys eyes and touches him.**

❖ John 9:6 **Made mud with spit**

❖ Matthew 9:29 **no spit – just a touch**

❖ Mark 10:51 **Just a word – “Go your faith has made you well.”**

C)Point? There is not a formula

So the first thing we want to note is there are different gifts and there is a Diversity in the way they will be used!

2<sup>nd</sup> thing: The Nature of Spiritual gifts

A)V.7 The manifestation of the Spirit is given.....

B)**MANIFESTATION** = a shining forth, an expression

C)Awesome thought, Spiritual gifts are in reality a shining forth of the Holy Spirit.

- 1) They are an expression NOT of man’s ability but an expression of the **person and power of the Holy Spirit.**

D)Shinning forth in a human vessel

One commentator said that the term *manifestation* can literally be understood to mean *that which may be laid hold of by hand.*

A) The OXFORD dictionary defines *manifestation* as: *to show plainly to the eye or mind.*

B)Jesus said the Holy Spirit is like the wind- can’t see the wind but you can see the effects.

1)The gifts of the Holy Spirit make it more tangible.

C)Through these gifts he is manifesting his presence!

1)Set up courtyard – cooking – gift of helps and hospitality

D)Gift of hospitality – Greeters – making people feel welcome.

1)Teaching in the Classrooms – all day long – The Holy Spirit is being manifested through the Body – the Church.

So the Manifestation of the Holy Spirit is seen in the gifts being manifested in the body of Christ.

A)The list of gifts mentioned here in 1 Corinthians 12 is different from those in Romans 12 –

B)**Romans 12 Permanent** – and often linked to natural giftings – the way God has wired you.

1)Natural leaders – learning to function under the leadership of the Holy Spirit

C)**Natural teaching gift** – Naturally helpers and servants – wired that way.

The gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 are not permanent-but are ways that the Holy Spirit manifests Himself – through the body of Christ

A)V.11 is Key He distributes to each one individually as He wills

B)When he wills – how He wills – when he sees fit

C)So there have been times when – someone has come to me – pray for a healing

1)God gives me faith to pray with boldness – **and they get healed. – Pastor Chuck – Wheelchair and COLD prayer story**

**D)Had those experiences - So the Holy Spirit has manifested the gift of healing in my life.**

1)But that doesn't mean I can go down to Tri-City hospital and walk from room to room – heal people.

E)So the nature of the gifts is that the Holy Spirit is manifesting his power through His church the body of Christ – **when HE WILLS!**

At this point I want us to consider the first two gifts that Paul mentions in this list of the Sign gifts.

A)V.8 Word of Wisdom and Word of Knowledge.

B)These two gifts often are used **in conjunction with one another.**

C)Consider first **a Word of Knowledge:** The gift of the Word of Knowledge doesn't mean you are well learned and can talk on any subject

1)Greater than that!

The **WORD OF KNOWLEDGE** is the **DIVINE IMPARTING OF KNOWLEDGE**

A)A Divine imparting of Knowledge concerning a person or a situation that you could NOT know unless the Lord gave you that information.

B)It is a manifestation of the Spirit that often times operates without your even being aware that it is in operation.

**Bb)You might say something and people will ask themselves: “Who told him?”**

C)Example in the NT. - **Acts 5 Ananias and Sapphira** 1)Sold a piece of Property – Kept back part of the profit

2)Gave some to the church – But said they were giving all.

D)Peter has a word of Knowledge by the Holy Spirit – You are lying ....

1)No one told Peter – but the Holy Spirit revealed it to him – knowledge he didn't have.

**I have had situations where I am counseling with a young couple – maybe premarital - The Lord tells me – You are having sex!**

A)No signs – not overly touchy feely – not like MARINE COUPLE I noticed

B)Nothing like that – **Sweet great couple** - They are sleeping together

1)WE'RE NOT DOING PREMARITAL WITH HIM

C)Other times counseling with a man – **YOU ARE IN AN ADULTEROUS RELATIONSHIP!**

D)IN a message – give a random analogy – a story – made up – but it happens to be exactly what someone needs to hear.

**E)So that is a word of Knowledge: Knowledge about a person or situation that is completely outside the norm of you information.**

**What about a word of Wisdom?**

A)Wisdom is the application of Knowledge. So a Word of Wisdom is a supernatural insight that helps diffuse a situation.

B)Gives insight and application that is from the Lord that helps someone move forward in a situation or solve a great dilemma

**C)Remember the story of Solomon: 1 Kings 3  
Two ladies living in the same home – both had babies. – NEW BORN**

1)One night one of the ladies rolled over in the night killing her baby – but she woke up and switched it with her friend – {Lifetime movie

D)The other Lady wakes up not my Baby – She took my Baby – **So they are brought to Solomon... both claiming the live baby was theirs.**

1)Solomon listened – Has a word of Wisdom: Ok Sword – cut the baby in two -

**E)The real MOM says: No way – Give her the Child don't cut it in half.**

1)But the other lady says: Yea cut him in half and let him be neither mine or yours.

**F)Solomon looks at the real mom who said – No way – THE BABY IS YOURS –**

1)His word to cut the baby in half – diffused the situation and revealed the real mother!

**Another Example: Acts 15 please turn**

A)In Acts 15 a problem had arisen among the believers in Antioch because of certain men who had come from Jerusalem that were legalistic Jews.

B) They saw the liberties that the Gentile believers had in Jesus.

C)They told the GENTILE believers in Antioch that they could NOT be saved unless they were **circumcised.**

D)These guys represented themselves as official representatives of the Church in Jerusalem.

1) So Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem to meet with all of the elders & settle this issue once and for all.

**Now This was a very sticky problem. It was a very DIVISIVE issue in the Church. There was some heavy discussions -**

A)Paul, being the champion of Grace, said that you did NOT have to keep the Mosaic Law to be saved. Others insisted must keep the law to be saved

**B)This dispute could have caused a major split in the early Church. There is a danger that at this point the Church could have split in two.**

1) Peter stood up and testified of how God had worked to save the Gentiles.

*Acts 15:7-12 7 “Men and brethren, you know that a good while ago God chose among us, that by my mouth the Gentiles should hear the word of the gospel and believe.”8 “So God, who knows the heart, acknowledged them by giving them the Holy Spirit, just as He did to us,”9 “and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.”*

*10 “Now therefore, why do you test God by putting a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear? But we believe that through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.”*

**Word Of wisdom: Diffused a tense situation  
That statement was a word of Wisdom given to Peter Don't put yoke of bondage on them they're not able to bear.**

C)This was a word of wisdom for this young movement. This was the first time the early church had been down this road.

**D)NOTHING WRITTEN YET IN SCRIPTURE THAT ADDRESSED the problem.**

**1)We are told – that the saying pleased the multitude.**

**Peter is RIGHT ON!**

**WORD OF WISDOM can occur in a message in church – it can occur in a conversation!**

A)You are supposed to do this.

B)Often times these two gifts go together: The Lord gives you knowledge about a situation that you didn't normally have.

C)And wisdom that follows!

**Time of waiting on the Lord – Wed night – a retreat**

A)The Lord showed me someone here tonight that is battling this- we want to pray for you – so we pray



B)But then someone else says – I have a word of wisdom for that person this is what God wants you to know – or this is what He wants you to do.

C)In fact in preparing for this message today: The Lord impressed on my heart that there was going to be someone here today – Sunday

1)Battling Suicide thoughts {Word of Knowledge

D)The word of wisdom is this: Lie from the pit of hell – the thing that has you discouraged is not your fault

❖ 1)You're thinking – Worthless – God is saying **NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH–**

2)**Worth me sending my son.....** You are going to make it through this trial.

❖ **If that is you – love talk to you afterwards!**

**So the Word of wisdom and the Word of Knowledge is when the Holy spirit is manifesting Himself – Supernatural Knowledge and Wisdom**

1.) Diversity of Spiritual Gifts.- variety different gifts & functions

2.) The Nature of Spiritual Gifts. – Holy Spirit manifesting Himself

3.) The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts.

A) 1 Cor 12:7 *But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:*

B) Spiritual gifts are NOT given to me for my own personal profit.

1)God does NOT give to me the word of knowledge so that I can go to the race track and clean up.

C)NOT so that others look at me and think – He is so spiritual!

**D)NOTE: There is only ONE gift that is said to be for personal spiritual edification. That is the gift of tongues.**

1) 1 Cor. 14:4 He who speaks in an unknown tongue edifies himself.

E)The rest of the church is NOT edified unless there is an interpretation of it.

1)Talk more in a few weeks – when we get there.

**The Purpose of the gifts is to build up the Body of Christ**

A)To profit and enhance the body of Christ.

B)**Begs us to ask the question.** Do you want to be a blessing to your brothers/sisters in the Lord?

C)You should: When we fall into that trap of only focusing on what is in it for me mentality –

1)Selfishness attitude – My world

D)The body gets robbed and you as an individual are not fulfilling your purpose.

**God wants us to realize that – when He saved you...**

A)He brought you into His family – made you a part of this thing called the body of Christ.

B)You have a part to play! – Role to play – God wants to use your life to bless others- The Holy Spirit wants to manifest himself – through you

1)**But you have to be a WILLING VESSEL. – DESIRE IT**

**Which leads us to our 4<sup>th</sup> point today. – The Desiring of Spiritual gifts**

A)V.31 But earnestly desire the best gifts.

B)**Best is a relative word. The best gift for what?**

C)**Lets go back to my analogy at the beginning of the Study – On that Christmas day as an 11 year old – the best gift was A NEW BIKE!**

**Now a car would have been a lot more expensive gift – than a bike - But a car would be useless to an 11 year old.**

A)I would have to wait five yrs to even use the gift! – A bike was a perfect gift for me at 11!

B)**At 18 a bike would not have been the best gift.**

Bb) I could have rode a bike to collage but – it would have taken a long time.

1)The perfect gift was a car.

C)That is how theses gifts of the spirit work as well – the best gift is the gift that MEETS THE NEED AT HAND!

**Best gift is the one that is needed for the right situation.**

A)Baseball mit / Catcher / 1<sup>st</sup> base/ out field –big / SS- small

B)**The NEED at hand determines the best gift.**

**C)If the need is healing – teaching is not helpful.**  
– Person is dying – they don't need a good Bible study.

**D)If the need is Helps – stuff that needs to be organized – again – teaching or tongues is not going to be appreciated – You freak**

1)I don't need a word, I need you to pick up a broom.

**E)If a room needs put back together – the gift of mercy isn't needed**

1)Mercy: wow what a mess I feel so sorry for you – cry together – I need you to get your hands dirty!

**So here is the application: You want to be used by God? Tell Him that! –**

A)Lord I want to be a willing vessel – Pray Lord give me someone this week to share Jesus with. – He will answer that.

**B)Lord show me needs – Give me the gifts to meet those needs –**

**C)Lord I would love to speak a word of wisdom into someone's life.**

**D)Lord I want to be used – He looks for willing vessels**