

Victory of the Lamb – Foolproof – 1 Corinthians 12 – Gifts
February 6, 2022 – Pastor Bill Limmer

A mosaic is a pattern or an image made up of small regular or irregular stone, glass, or ceramic, pieced together to make an amazingly beautiful piece of art. Mosaics are often used as floor or wall decorations and were particularly popular in the ancient Roman world. Mosaics today are not just in murals and pavements, but artwork, hobby crafts, and industrial and construction forms. Mosaics are usually tons of little pieces that are put together to make a beautiful image. This is really a great example of God's idea for the Christian Church. A whole lot of people with different backgrounds and gifts joining together to form one Church, namely the body of Christ.

Today we are continuing our series **Foolproof** as study of 1 Corinthians and today we are going to look at 1 Corinthians 12. For the last handful of chapters Paul, the author of the letter we know as 1 Corinthians is responding to questions that the people sent to him. Apparently, they asked our about spiritual gifts. And so Paul is going to answer the question for them for us **What should we know about spiritual gifts?**

1 Corinthians 12:1,7 Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. . . 7 Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. The words gifts of the Spirit let us know that there are gifts from God. In other words, you don't work harder and get one You don't catch a lucky break and fall into one. It is not a gene that is passed along. You don't inherit through parents. It is a God given gift.

There are a number of places in Scripture that list these spiritual gifts. Among them are Romans 12, Ephesians 4, and where we are studying today, 1 Corinthians 12. There is overlap between the lists, but they are not synonymous, so we know that this is not a complete list. 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, 28-30 **To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit,⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit,¹⁰ to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues,^[a] and to still another the interpretation of tongues. . . ²⁸ And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second**

prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues.²⁹ Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles?³⁰ Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues^[a]? Do all interpret? So even in this incomplete list there are a number of gifts mentioned. And so Paul answers **What should we know about spiritual gifts?** 1. **Every believer has at least one spiritual gift.** Remembering the gift giving days on Oprah. Oprah would say, you get a gift, you get a gift, you get a gift. The Holy Spirit is saying you get a gift, you get a gift, you get a gift. This is not arbitrary gift giving. This is the Holy Spirit strategically and on purpose giving you your gift or gifts. We all have at least one gift, some have more than one, but none of us have all.

When it comes to gifts here is how we know that we live in individualistic culture: when I was reading through the diverse list almost every one of us is looking for “my” gift. It’s like when you take a photo with family or friends, way more times than not your eyes look for you in the picture, and you determine whether the picture is good or bad first of all by how you look in the picture. It is kind of like taking a selfie over and over to get it right because it is after all, all about me. **Picture of me and polar bear.** I’m telling you I took more than one picture. If you don’t like the way I look in this one you should have seen the others. And so when I was reading through the list, most of us were eagerly looking for a descriptor of me.

Here is another way we can tell that they and we live in an individualistic culture. There is an innate, automatic tension as we see the diverse gifts because we are accustomed to comparing everything with everyone. On the one hand, this can lead to pride – my gift is better than yours, or coveting – I want the cool kid gift. Or insecurity and doubt – I don’t I have much if anything to offer. There is no reason for us to have pride or doubt. The gifts we have are given to us on purpose and strategically by the Holy Spirit.

We also know that they and we live in an individualistic culture because there is a tension to figure out how my gifts and other’s gifts work together. How many times haven’t we said or thought, why isn’t everybody like me. There is tension but it doesn’t have to be this way. For example, the Trinity is made up of three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. This is a complex and unique

scenario. Yet there is no tension because there is unity. Jesus said, John 17:11 **Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one.** The Trinity is complex and creative and amazing! The church which is the body of Christ is to be the same complex and creative and an amazing Mosaic. They are to fit together like a mosaic and so make something beautiful namely the body of Christ. And so **What should we know about spiritual gifts? 2. No one has all the gifts.**

Here are some reasons why we don't have all the gifts. 1. Our weaknesses make us more dependent on God. If you thought you didn't have weaknesses, you wouldn't think you needed God. We would become arrogant. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 **But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me. ¹⁰ That is why, for Christ's sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.** We don't have all the gifts so we can trust in God and be strong. Think of it this way: If you were a team captain in the game tug of war and you wanted to win who would you pick on your team? Pastor Ben or me? If you were playing tug of war and your wanted to win who would you pick? Pastor Ben or God. We don't have all the gifts so that we can trust in God and truly be strong.

Which leads us to a second reason we don't have all the gifts. He not only uses our strengths but our weaknesses in ministry. For example, I have lived life in the darkness of depression. But now I know there is hope when you literally can't see hope. I know there is light when you can't see light.

Which leads to a third reason why we don't have all the gifts. 3. It helps us value others. I need you. I need our team. I appreciate you. I appreciate our team. There are so many things you can do and our ministry team can do that I can't do. Those of you who hang out at Victory know that I often say how blessed I am to be here. I value you as brothers and sisters in Christ and blessings from God.

As I mentioned, every believer has at least one gift and not one of us has them all. 1 Corinthians 12:7 **Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.** The word that is used in place of gift in this verse is the word **manifestation** of the Spirit. I don't know when the last time you used the word

manifestation. I know manifestation is definitely in my passive vocabulary. The word manifestation means appearing or revealing. **So the spiritual gift that you have is God revealing himself in you to others.** Wherever you are, the Spirit of God is inside of you have an opportunity to reveal God to others. When you are using your spiritual gifts you are revealing who God is to others. Your gift is God working through you.

Which brings us to another key point: **What should we know about spiritual gifts? 3. Your spiritual gift is not for you.**

1 Corinthians 12:27 **there are many parts, but one body.**²¹ **The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!”**²² **On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable,**²³ **and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty,**²⁴ **while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it,**²⁵ **so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.**²⁶ **If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.**²⁷ **Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. Your spiritual gifts are given to you to help other people.** When you use your spiritual gifts, the body of Christ is blessed. Your service to the church, the body of Christ, is essential. Each of us has a role to play, and every role is important. There are no insignificant ministries in the church. Some are visible, some are behind the scenes, but all are valuable. Every ministry matters. Because every spiritual gift is meant to serve someone else.

God has a purpose for your life. God calls you to a service far beyond anything you could ever imagine. He created you for life of good deeds which he has already prepared in advance for you to do. And he has given you the spiritual gifts to do it. Your spiritual gifts are the equipment that God gives you to carry out that purpose of revealing God to others. We all need each other. 1 Peter 4:10 **Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.**

In our house the most important light is not the chandelier over our kitchen table but a little night light that keeps me from running into things in the dark. Spiritual maturity is not based on the size or number of your spiritual gifts but based on

how you use it in other words the maturity of the gift is found in the fruit of the Spirit. Galatians 5:22-23 **the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, ²³gentleness and self-control.** So when you are using your gift, you are showing how spiritually mature you are by the attitude you are using it. **What should we know about spiritual gifts? 4. Spiritual maturity is not about the gift but how you use the gift.**

Spiritual gifts - Have you ever thought about someone else – how did you do that? And they really don't know. Or has someone ever asked you, how did you know to do that? And you really don't know. It is because that is a spiritual gift. As Paul did not want the Corinthians to be uninformed about their spiritual gifts, so Pastor Ben and I don't want you to discover or be reminded of your spiritual gifts. Here is a next step for you. It is your spiritual homework. Here is a link for you to follow for a spiritual gift analysis, it will take about a half hour or more to complete. <https://www.freeshapetest.com>. If you are worshiping online click the chat for the link. And everyone in person or online can go to **votl.life** and find the link in the orange bar at the top. If you would like to share your results with Pastor Ben and me you can send your results to **hello@victoryofthelamb.com**

- **S – Spiritual Gifts:** What natural gifts do you possess?
- **H – Heart:** What motivates and invigorates you? What do you do you love to do?
- **A – Abilities:** What talents and skills do you have?
- **P – Personality:** What is your natural approach to life and relationships?
- **E – Experience:** What experiences do you have that has molded you into who you are today?

What God made you to *BE* determines what He intends for you to *DO*.

That is a lot. Keep in mind that your faith is a spiritual gift. Keep your eyes not on your faith but on the object of your faith – Jesus. You see there is actually one person who had all the gifts. And he used them to serve you no matter the cost.

Mark 10:45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” And so can you picture the Mosaic of Jesus very God, taking on tiny human hands. Jesus, perfect yet covered in blood. Dead but yet alive. All to bring you and me together in unconditional to make us more than we could ever be and so we could live with him for an eternity.