



PRODIGAL

CHURCH

DATE: SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25TH 2020

SERIES: PRODIGAL CHURCH

SPEAKER: ROB STACEY

SCRIPTURE: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-11

SERMON TITLE: THE SPIRIT & UNITY.

In 1 Corinthians 12 the Apostle Paul dedicates an entire chapter to discuss the issue of spiritual gifts. Rob, in his sermon, stated that Paul gives a challenging declaration of what the Church must look like if it is to become all it is intended to be for that community. This declaration, that began in chapter 11 and will continue well into chapter 14, is that:

WORSHIP, AND THE WAY WE WORSHIP, IS IMPORTANT TO GOD.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-3.

"Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. ² You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. ³ 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." NIV

NOW READ IT IN THE MESSAGE VERSION.

¹⁻³ What I want to talk about now is the various ways God's Spirit gets worked into our lives. This is complex and often misunderstood, but I want you to be informed and knowledgeable. Remember how you were when you didn't know God, led from one phony god to another, never knowing what you were doing, just doing it because everybody else did it? It's different in this life. God wants us to use our intelligence, to seek to understand as well as we can. For instance, by using your heads, you know perfectly well that the Spirit of God would never prompt anyone to say "Jesus be damned!" Nor would anyone be inclined to say "Jesus is Master!" without the insight of the Holy Spirit.

Q1. What was the issue that caused Paul to give so much attention to this subject? (See vs.1-2)

Q2. Why is the way we worship so important?

Q3. What is unique about the gathered people of God in worship?

In v.2 Paul says: *"You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols."*

Or as The Message version puts it: "Remember how you were when you didn't know God, led from one phony god to another, never knowing what you were doing, just doing it because everybody else did it? It's different in this life."

The Corinthians are no longer what or who they used to be before the work of the Spirit worked salvation in them. They must no longer think or act in the ways to which they were accustomed before knowing Christ. Many of us know the struggle of that...the metamorphosis/transformation of letting go of our old life and embracing the God way of life. Rob said that many of us burned our old record collections back in the day when we became Christ followers.

Q4. Can you relate to that? What are some habits, practices and mindsets that changed and shifted as a result of your walk with Jesus?

in verse 3 Paul indicates that one cannot have the Holy Spirit and curse Jesus at the same time. This speaks to the mute idolatry possibly from the surrounding pagan influence. But here is an essential truth that will continue to unfold as we go along and as we will see in these next verses:

Where the spirit of the LORD is there is freedom. There is love. There is unity. (2 Corinthians 3:17)

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-6.

"4 There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. 5 There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. 6 There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work."

Q5. What is or has been your attitude toward spiritual gifts? a.) For pastors only. b.) For all believers. c.) For mature believers. d.) Those were for Bible times. e.) I've never really had a clear understanding of spiritual gifts.

Q6. These verses indicate that some felt certain gifts were better than others. Have you ever encountered that attitude among Christians? In yourself?

Verse 7 says: *"Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good."*

Rob said that if the gifts of the Spirit are not about 'my exciting experience' then what are they used for? The common good. It actually translates from the Greek word Sympherō which means beneficial..... for those it serves.

Remember in chapter 10 Paul says that everything is permissible but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. Paul likes this word. He likes it because it speaks directly to purpose.

The manifestation of spiritual gifts are for the Church. You and I are conduits for God's grace and love to one another.

1 Peter 4:10 says:

"Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms."

You see in the context Paul has in Corinth there are plenty of well-meaning new believers exercising gifts but creating some sort of class distinctions between them.

Some were even creating a hierarchy for the gifts. Almost like class distinctions.

Which, sadly, is very much a part of human nature. We love to create exclusivity and to make one thing superior to another.

But when it comes to the manifestation of the Spirit it is exactly the opposite of what Paul believes the Spirit does. You see, the manifestation of the Spirit in you is the spiritual gift for others. The Holy Spirit equips people to advance His Kingdom in the face of the principalities and powers of this world. Not our own notoriety.

READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12: 8-10.

⁸To 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, and to still another the interpretation of tongues."

Q7. See these passages for some of the different spiritual gifts that the Bible explains: 1 Cor. 12:8-10, 12:28; Romans 12:6-8; Eph. 4:11; 1 Pet. 4:9-10; Exodus 31:3-5; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; Ps. 150:3-5.

Q8. Do you see the connection between how God has gifted you and how you can influence your world? In what ways are you using your gifts to influence your world?

Q9. How are you using your spiritual gifts for the common good of our BBC community?

Paul's desire in this part of the letter is to correct wrong worship, to develop unity but also to help believer's understand that diversity has always been at the heart of a healthy church community.

God has called and equipped His Church to be a place of healing, a place of love and reconciliation, a place of life giving hope, and the work of His Spirit.

Let's lean into all that he has equipped us for.

End your time with praying for one another.