Spirit-Empowered Gifts

1 Cor. 12:4-11, 1 Cor. 12:27-31, 1 Cor. 13:1-3

The Holy Spirit gives believers **different gifts for a common purpose**, placing each person within the body of Christ to serve others. Not given for personal status but for **building up the church**. And no matter how impressive the gift is, its exercise is **meaningless without love**.

- **One Spirit, Many Gifts:** The same Spirit distributes a variety of gifts to individuals according to His will **for the common good**. *(1 Cor. 12:4–11)*
- **One Body, Many Roles**: Every believer is part of Christ's body, but God appoints **different people to different roles and ministries**. (1 Cor. 12:27–31)
- **One Essential Motivation, Love**: Spiritual gifts may be powerful, but **without love they accomplish nothing of lasting spiritual value**. (1 Cor. 13:1–3)

1 Cor. 12:4-11 NASB

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same
Spirit. 5 And there are varieties of ministries, and the
same Lord. 6 There are varieties of effects, but the same
God who works all things in all persons. 7 But to each
one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the
common good. 8 For to one is given the word of wisdom
through the Spirit, and to another the word of
knowledge according to the same Spirit; 9 to another
faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing
by the one Spirit, 10 and to another the effecting of
miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the
distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of
tongues, and to another the interpretation of
tongues. 11 But one and the same Spirit works all these
things, distributing to each one individually just as He
wills.

1 Cor. 12:27-31 NASB

27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts
of it. 28 And God has appointed in the church, first
apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then
miracles, then gifts of healings, helps,
administrations, and various kinds of tongues. 29 All
are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are
they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not
workers of miracles, are they? 30 All do not have
gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with
tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do
they? 31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And
yet, I am going to show you a far better way.

1 Cor. 13:1-3 NASB

1 If I speak with the tongues of mankind and of
angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy
gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of
prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge,
and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but
do not have love, I am nothing. 3 And if I give away
all my possessions to charity, and if I surrender my
body so that I may glory, but do not have love, it
does me no good.

Consider the "how"…

- In the Hebrew Bible, the Holy Spirit empowered certain people to do specific tasks.
  - Now the Spirit empowers all of Jesus' followers by giving them each spiritual gifts in order to care for each other.
  - For example, some have a tenacious faith, others are agents of healing, while still others are compelling teachers.
- This doesn't necessarily mean that the Spirit suddenly zaps someone to give them a totally new ability.
  - Often the Spirit intensifies or supercharges a natural ability God has already given them.
  - Rather than the Spirit overriding human agency, divine enablement merges with human ability as people use their gifts to serve one another.

Consider the "why"…

- In 1 Corinthians 12:12-26, Paul develops the metaphor of a "body" to describe the gathering of Christ's people, or the Church.
  - Every follower of Christ is a body part, and each part functions differently.
  - Just as individuals need all of their body parts working together for personal health, so the body of Christ needs all of its "parts" (its people) to use their different Spirit-enhanced gifts so the community can flourish.

Consider the "results"…

- Most importantly, Paul explains that even the most powerful gifts are, at best, worthless and, at worst, harmful (like a "clanging cymbal") if they are not exercised from a heart of genuine love for others.
  - Paul repeats this point three times in three verses (1 Cor. 13:1-3) to boldly emphasize that using Spirit-empowered abilities is only helpful when the action is motivated by a loving desire for the good of the whole community.

Reflect on the “results”

- What are some ways that gifts of the Spirit can empower us to serve at Browndale?
- Why is love for others so crucial when using Spiritual gifts?

More Relevant Scripture References

Romans 12:3-8

1 Corinthians 14:1-40

Ephesians 4:11-16

1 Peter 4:10-11