

Christ Community Covenant Church
Spiritual Gifts
Body Pains: When body parts don't work
Pastor Dave Scherrer - August 21, 2011

1 Corinthians 12:14-2

For the body does not consist of one member but of many. ¹⁵If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁶And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. ¹⁷If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? ¹⁸But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. ¹⁹If all were a single member, where would the body be? ²⁰As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

What happens when one part of the body does not work? Generally, it impacts the entire body. In this case the church is described as a body, and if one body part is wounded then we all suffer. If one body part is considered less important then the whole body suffers, if one body part is proud, then we all suffer. All these conditions refer to our giftedness.

In verse 21 there are people who are compared to eyes and people who are compared to hands. There are people compared to heads and people compared to feet. In verse 22 there are people who "seem to be weaker." And in verse 23 there are people who have a less honorable appearance, not referring to sinful dishonor, but having less prominence, or distinction, or we might say, being less flashy or outstanding.

So it would seem that the category of differences would embrace non-sinful distinctions that can easily be perceived as weaknesses or strengths, or as somehow more or less fit for public ministry. They might include spiritual gifts that are spectacular or more ordinary. They might include different emphases and different perspectives and different focuses.

The point is not that there is no sin in being different. In fact, you and I both know that sometimes the least recognized and appreciated parts of our body are most important. Kidneys are not one of the most celebrated body parts, but when that body part goes bad, bad things happen fast!

Two chronic errors of perception: Uselessness and Pride or Self-sufficiency. While we are going to talk about this specifically next week I wanted to tell this story:

Calvin: Serving out of legalism or duty rather than giftedness. Teaching was a disaster. Now that Calvin has matured after learning that God has a special gift for him and loves him like a son not a robot, everything has changed for him. He still doesn't know what his gift is but Calvin is excited to use his 'manifestation' for God's glory.

Eric: He is not from this church but he started a non profit Christian ministry on his own with no desire or plan to involve the church and he didn't care to partner with other ministries.

He was proud of his abilities to command attention from the platform. He had radio and book contracts. When you spoke with him he could talk of nothing but himself. The ministry he founded grew spectacularly and fell even more so. He is now out of ministry; I don't know what he is doing.

Five Words

1 Corinthians 12:7

⁷ To **each** is given the **manifestation** of the **Spirit** for the **common good**.

"each one"

Each Christian has at least one gift and they have been given these gifts uniquely designed for you as a believer and for a specific set of purposes.

When I first became a Christian, someone said to me "Isn't this great, now your life has purpose." That seemed strange to me, my life had purpose. I was running track hoping for a college scholarship; I intended to become a lawyer so that I could later become a judge. I wanted to get married and have a family. I had purposes. But as I became more hidden in Christ, spending time with him and abiding with him, I found out that those purposes were natural and temporary and secular. He had purposes for me that were supernatural and eternal and spiritual.

I found out that God had good works to set aside for me to walk in 'from before' – from the beginning of time!

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

He has prepared good works; that means *that I don't prepare the good works but he does*. He has set them before me that I would walk into them and bring glory to God in doing so. You cannot take pride in these good works, because God prepared them - you can take some pride in the fact that you had the faith to walk in them, but in this same paragraph I just read from we know that we cannot even brag about our faith. Even our faith is not of ourselves; God gave us the gift of that faith as well.

"Spirit"

These gifts are from the Holy Spirit. The Bible says that when we become Christians, the Holy Spirit comes into us and when this happens he gifts us for his purposes. My guess is you didn't feel it happen. There wasn't a tingling or shock, but you have been blessed none the less with the packaging of a gift that is meant to be a blessing for the church and for you. Take a moment later today and thank God for His blessing you with this gift.

Then there is the word 'manifestation'. I want to spend most of our time here this morning:

"manifestation"

Last week we listed some 22 gifts that are specifically mentioned by the Bible. We are going to spend more of our time on these in a moment. I think it is interesting that the word manifestation is used, that brings to mind something concrete and real.

<http://www.churchgrowth.org>

"common good"

These gifts are used specifically, for the common good ***of the church and the extending of the Kingdom of God***. The spiritual gifts are used for spiritual purposes not secular purposes, for eternal purposes not temporary purposes, for supernatural purposes not natural purposes. The world will benefit from a strong and loving and caring church, but these gifts are to encourage and support one another as a body.

"to the glory of God"

As the church obeys the purposes of God, grows deeper in Christ and further in mission, God receive glory.

1 Peter 4:10-11

¹⁰ As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: **"*whoever speaks***, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

"Whoever speaks": gifts that help us "Know God"

Teacher	Apostle
Pastor	Words of Wisdom/Knowledge
Evangelism	Leadership

Evangelism

The special ability God gives to some to proclaim the Gospel of salvation effectively so that people respond to the promises of Christ through conversion to Christianity.

Notice that the gifts are a special anointing or helping of a trait. Many of these character traits are commanded by God to be character traits of the so-called 'average' Christian. Everyone is commanded to be able to give a defense of our personal faith, to be able to tell our story of God's grace and mercy in our lives. But some have a special gift of evangelism. It seems that moment by moment they are testifying of Jesus' love and inviting others to give their lives to Him.

"Whoever serves": Gifts that help us "Experience God"

Administration	Helps
Prayer	Faith
Encouragement	Mercy

Faith

The special conviction God gives to some to be firmly persuaded of God's power and promises to accomplish His will and purpose and to display such a confidence in Him and His Word that circumstances and obstacles do not shake that conviction

Mercy/Compassion

The divine enablement to feel exceptional empathy and compassion for those who are suffering (physically, mentally, or emotionally) so as to cheerfully and practically help those who are suffering or are in need by putting compassion into action.

"Sign Gifts": Gifts that point us to the Holy Spirit

Tongues	Interpretation of tongues
Healings	Miracles
Exorcism	Discernment

Discernment / Distinguishing of Spirits

The special ability God gives to some to know with assurance whether certain behavior or teaching is from God, Satan, human error, or human power.

Cindy Oury – a conversation on "Manifestations"

The Gift of Love

We saw that these gifts are bestowed by the Holy Spirit but they are powered by love. They run on love like an engine runs on gasoline. His purposes are to love us and to release love in us, and the spiritual gifts are the vehicle through which God's love is delivered. The better we love one another, the greater his church will be and the more glory God's Son Jesus Christ will receive.

1 Corinthians 13:1-8, 13

Love is patient and kind; love does not envy or boast; it is not arrogant or rude. It does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrongdoing, but rejoices with the truth. Love bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends . . . so now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; but the greatest of these is love.

The great violinist, Niccolò Paganini, willed his marvelous violin to Genoa -- the city of his birth -- but only on condition that the instrument never is played upon. It was an unfortunate condition, for it is a peculiarity of wood that as long as it is used and handled, it shows little wear. As soon as it is discarded, it begins to decay.

The exquisite, mellow-toned violin has become worm-eaten in its beautiful case, valueless except as a relic. The moldering instrument is a reminder that a life withdrawn from all service to others loses its meaning.

Prayer