**Gifted to Regift**

**1 Corinthians 12**

I was reminded recently of my first trip to a restaurant in Tacoma called El Gaucho. It was probably 10 years ago, or so, and someone from the church had given my wife and I, two $50 gift certificates. It was around Christmas time and I never know what to get my mom and dad for Christmas so we regifted one of the gift cards to my parents.

At that point I had never been to El Gaucho and after going I realized that one $50 gift card wasn’t a very good gift for that restaurant. Yes $50 is $50, but I think when my wife and I went, by the time we left we spent at least $50 above the $50. My point is that some things are not meant to be regifted. On the other hand, the grace of God, which has been given to those who believe, is 100% re-giftable. In fact it is meant to be regifted. And this is one of the things I would like you to keep in mind as we read about the gifts of the Spirit that God has given to His people.

**12 Now, dear brothers and sisters, regarding your question about the special abilities the Spirit gives us. I don’t want you to misunderstand this. 2 You know that when you were still pagans, you were led astray and swept along in worshiping speechless idols. 3 So I want you to know that no one speaking by the Spirit of God will curse Jesus, and no one can say Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit.**

**1 Corinthians 12:1-3 NLT**

Spiritual Gifts can also be defined as gifts of God’s grace. They aren’t earned or bargained for. And they aren’t used for going against God or worshipping self or other things.

One Bible Resource says of Spiritual Gifts (Institute of Basic Life Principles)

“God gives spiritual gifts to those who have received salvation through Jesus Christ so that believers will grow and mature in their faith, the needs of the Church will be met, and God will be glorified. Wayne Grudem, author of Systematic Theology, broadly describes a spiritual gift as “any ability that is empowered by the Holy Spirit and used in any ministry of the church” (Grudem, page 1016)…

Throughout the New Testament, the word charisma is translated in English as (free) gift. In his “Lexical Aids to the New Testament,” Spiros Zodhiates notes that the word charisma is “derived from charis, [which means] grace, and the suffix –ma, indicating the result of grace. A gift of grace; an undeserved benefit from God (Rom. 1:11; I Tim. 4:14).”

Let’s continue on in verse 4.

**4 There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. 5 There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. 6 God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us.**

**1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NLT**

God’s Spirit is the source of every gift. The way we see God work in each other’s lives will be manifested differently from each other, but it is God who work’s in us to will and to act according to His good purposes.

**7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.**

**1 Corinthians 12:7 NLT**

I think this is a very, very important statement in the text. In Corinth, there were some who were in a competition to prove that they were the most spiritual. If we remember that the grace gifts God gives us are so we can help each other it should keep us from thinking our gift is about us. Grace gifts are meant to be regifted.

 **8 To one person the Spirit gives the ability to give wise advice; to another the same Spirit gives a message of special knowledge. 9 The same Spirit gives great faith to another, and to someone else the one Spirit gives the gift of healing. 10 He gives one person the power to perform miracles, and another the ability to prophesy. He gives someone else the ability to discern whether a message is from the Spirit of God or from another spirit. Still another person is given the ability to speak in unknown languages, while another is given the ability to interpret what is being said. 11 It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have.**

**1 Corinthians 12:8-11 NLT**

Not only is Paul trying to share what some of the gifts are he is also reminding them that it is not a bunch of different “spirits.” One Spirit, God’s Spirit, has the big picture understands how to best distribute the gifts to those who belong to Him. Wishing you were someone else with different talents and gifts is a lack of gratefulness to God.

In this next section we see Paul use an illustration to help the Corinthians, and us, see how the church is one interdependent group of people.

**12 The human body has many parts, but the many parts make up one whole body. So it is with the body of Christ. 13 Some of us are Jews, some are Gentiles, some are slaves, and some are free. But we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit, and we all share the same Spirit.**

**14 Yes, the body has many different parts, not just one part. 15 If the foot says, “I am not a part of the body because I am not a hand,” that does not make it any less a part of the body. 16 And if the ear says, “I am not part of the body because I am not an eye,” would that make it any less a part of the body? 17 If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything?**

**18 But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it. 19 How strange a body would be if it had only one part! 20 Yes, there are many parts, but only one body. 21 The eye can never say to the hand, “I don’t need you.” The head can’t say to the feet, “I don’t need you.”**

**1 Corinthians 12:12-21 NLT**

Such a great illustration! He goes on to write…

**22 In fact, some parts of the body that seem weakest and least important are actually the most necessary. 23 And the parts we regard as less honorable are those we clothe with the greatest care. So we carefully protect those parts that should not be seen, 24 while the more honorable parts do not require this special care. So God has put the body together such that extra honor and care are given to those parts that have less dignity. 25 This makes for harmony among the members, so that all the members care for each other. 26 If one part suffers, all the parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all the parts are glad.**

**27 All of you together are Christ’s body, and each of you is a part of it.**

**1 Corinthians 12:22-26 NLT**

Before we move on I have two questions for you to consider.

What is the role God has given you to play in His Church?

Do you see yourself as a working member of Christ’s Body?

A few years back, I broke my ankle playing softball. I had to get surgery and have a plate with 10 screws put in my ankle. I spent eight weeks in a cast. And I think it was 3 weeks after than in a walking boot. I depend on my ankle. Granted I still got around, but I suffered. And yes, the reason I was suffering was because my ankle (was suffering) it needed time to heal. But the goal of the surgery and the cast was to get my ankle back in shape so that the rest of my body wouldn’t suffer from the deficiency.

Some people, maybe even some of you, have been injured spiritually. Maybe you are in the process of healing up from being overworked or living in a legalistic environment. But remember if you, as a believer, are not serving God in your community and in the community of believers, it is a little bit like the church has a broken ankle.

When I first started pastoring this church, we had quite a few things going on, quite honestly too many things going on. I say that because people were burned out. So I ministered to people by letting them know that loving God and being loved by God wasn’t dependent on their work. Many who were serving really did need some surgery, some time in a cast and some rest and relaxation.

And today I am not telling you that I want to go back to people working themselves into a huddled mass, but I am going to ask you to consider “How are you using your gifts and talents for the building up of God’s people?”

Paul closes 1 Corinthians 12 by giving a short list of God’s grace gifts.

**28 Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church:**

**first are apostles,**

**second are prophets,**

**third are teachers,**

**then those who do miracles,**

**those who have the gift of healing,**

**those who can help others,**

**those who have the gift of leadership,**

**those who speak in unknown languages.**

**29 Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? 30 Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not! 31 So you should earnestly desire the most helpful gifts.**

**1 Corinthians 12:28-31 NLT**

Next week we will focus on verses 28-31 and I would ask you to begin praying, this week, about how God has gifted you to regift.