

- Last week considered Eph4:11-12; Christ gives teaching gifts to His church to equip the saints; they are being equipped for the purpose of serving or ministering to body of Christ; the goal is to build them up
- To begin that equipping, I laid out 3 motivations: (1.) to be like Christ (2.) to serve Christ (3.) to be served by Christ
- essential to fulfilling this task is to understand the subject of spiritual gifts – primarily from 1Corinthians 12

I. THE UNITY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

A. GIVEN FROM THE SAME SOURCE

- 1Cor12:4-6 (Spirit, Lord, God); vv.7-10 (spirit); v.11 “as He wills”; Jm1:17 every gift from above

B. GIVEN TO THE SAME PEOPLE

- 1Cor12:11; 1Pet4:10 (stewardship); Mt25:15 (parable of talents)
- No one can say they don’t have a part nor gift; they can say they are not using their gift
- it should be everyone’s desire to discover, develop, and use what gifts given to them by God

C. GIVEN FOR THE SAME PURPOSE

- Eph4:12 the building up of the body of Christ; 12:7 for the profit of all; care for one another 12:25
- not self-building, but other building with love and humility
- Illustration: like being given present, but purpose is not for self, but others
- but this brings true happiness, when others rightly considered
- What is the purpose of the building up of the body of Christ? His own glory
 - Call to desire the best gifts, that is those gifts which most build up the body

II. THE DIVERSITY OF SPIRITUAL GIFTS

- though unified in the ways above, there are also differences

A. THEY ARE DISTRUBUTED DIVERSELY

- 12:4-6 various, diversities, differences; distributed to each one individually as He wills (v.11)
- it is not for us to choose, nor complain if we don’t get that gift we think we should have
- it is our Lord who calls us as servants, and who assigns us to serve as He wills and desires
- Illustration: giving of gifts by Father Christmas, each to the children as he willed knowing of the future and their needs

B. THEY ARE EXPRESSED DIVERSELY

- 14ff body not one (in gift), but many; 28ff various kinds of gifts, and none of them are for everyone
- suggest a two-fold categorizing of gifts; base this on two things
- 1.) man’s makeup or constitution (physical AND spiritual)
- 2.) word/deed; 1Pet4:11; Col3:17
- word –truth communicated by speaking and writing
- deed –truth communicated by action and visual - both needed
- word to interpret deed, and deed to demonstrate word (not Gnostic, nor humanistic)
- Illustration: E-mail and video of Dick and Rick Hoyt; different meaning if man not father, being paid \$1 million per race
- Not merely the Gospel, but truth about who God is (care, goodness, compassion), truth about God’s world, truth about us, what is beautiful, noble, etc.
- Can see this expressed in the two-fold ministry of Christ of healing and teaching

C. THEY INFLUENCE DIVERSELY

- how many people those gifts reach and effect; one person (who will change others), small group, children, elderly, unconverted, large crowds - this can even change over time, moving from lesser/greater or greater/lesser
- those who plant and water are nothing because God gives the increase as He wills (1Cor3:7)
- we strive to do all the good we can, but recognize that results are in the hand of the Lord
- Example: the difference between my “success” in evangelism and shepherding (though I love both)

APPLICATION

1.) We must recognized that we are unified in our service to the Lord

- we are given gifts by our God for the purpose of the building up of his body – this brings unity in our one goal

2.) We must recognized that we are diversified in our service to our Lord

- these truths should keep us from jealousy of others, but looking for gift, and being content with place
- we will also recognize that everyone will not be “like us” in their gifts, and not despise them if they don’t...
- these truths should keep us from pride if there is success in their use – 1Cor4:7