

Sermon Notes – April 29, 2018

Review

- ⇒ The church at Corinth was a divided congregation – divided by ethnic & cultural differences, religious backgrounds, diverse social status, and economic realities. It is Paul’s clear belief and expectation that the blood of Jesus shed on the cross is stronger than **all** those differences.
- ⇒ In last week’s text we saw “spiritual gifts” introduced, and we used this definition: *“Spiritual Gifts are abilities given by the Holy Spirit to each child of God to build up the body of Christ and to point people to Him.”*

Today’s Text: I Corinthians 12:12-31

Chapters 12-14 form a unit that continues the theme of worship in the church community. Of specific interest is the use and abuse of Spiritual Gifts. In the NT, Paul uses several analogies to help us learn how the church should function. In this text he likens the church to a healthy physical body – many parts with differing functions, yet one, true, organic unity that must not be despised.

WE are the Body; Christ is the HEAD of the Body

(Romans 12:4-8; Ephesians 4:4-5, 11-16; Colossians 1:15-20)

- ⇒ Every true Christian has been “_____” into the body of Christ, the Church, regardless of denomination, ethnicity, family background, or personal struggles. (13)
- ⇒ God arranges the members of the body as He chooses. Every part of the body needs every other part. There is inter-dependence. Even “_____” members are essential. (18-20)

Unity and Diversity are Essential...and Vulnerable

- ⇒ A healthy physical body functions as a unit without jealousy, compromise, or delay; such unity is essential for its _____.
- ⇒ Unity means a common purpose. See John 17:21 & 23

- ⇒ In the church, we must value and _____ the unity that is ours because of Jesus; unity can be disrupted, despised, or _____.
- ⇒ Biblical diversity means differing functions, differing passions, differing specialties, & differing perspectives.

Getting Specific About Gifts

- ⇒ The Holy Spirit gives different gifts “as He wills.” (11, 18)
- ⇒ Some gifts are more _____ than others; as we’ll see in chapter 14, the misuse of the gift of “tongues” is a source of division in the church at Corinth. Paul urges restraint, gives boundaries, and re-focuses the attention of the church on *other* gifts. Cf. v. 28-30; Ephesians 4
- ⇒ In II Corinthians 12:12, Paul mentions the “signs of an Apostle,” that unique group who had seen the _____ Christ. Cf. Acts 1:21-26; I Cor. 9:1-2
- ⇒ Let’s clarify what is meant by “Cessationism” –
 - We are NOT saying that God is _____, that the Holy Spirit is less active today than in any other era, OR that God does not stir our emotions or grant _____.
 - We ARE saying that God is sovereign over what gifts He gives to the church at any given time, that in Christ & in His Word we have “all things that pertain for life & godliness” (II Peter 1:2-4), and that the chief _____ of the work of the Spirit of God in our lives is the _____ of the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-26).

Responding to God’s Word

- ⇒ How do you view your role in the body of Christ as a follower of Jesus? Are you serving faithfully according to how God has “wired you” – all for the good of others & for the progress of the gospel in the world?
- ⇒ Do you need your perspective on “Spiritual Gifts” adjusted? Do you tend to see some gifts as more valuable or less valuable than others? Do you sometimes wish that you had a different gift or better opportunities – or is there true contentment in your heart with where God has placed you in His body, the church?
- ⇒ Remember from last week: What’s the best way to “Discover Your Spiritual Gift”? Get busy serving! Watch to see what _____, what _____, and what makes _____ when you’re doing it.