

1 Corinthians 12:12-31 (December 11, 2022)

OPENING QUESTION:

SERMON DISCUSSION: How were you impacted by the sermon? What new thoughts or lessons did you discover? In what ways did you find yourself challenged and/or encouraged?

BIBLE PASSAGE STUDY QUESTIONS: READ 1 Corinthians 12:12-31

1. From 1 Corinthians 1:7; 12:18, 24, 28 what do you discover about God's sovereignty? How should this realization impact your outlook concerning your God-given gift(s)? If you are dissatisfied with your gift(s), what does this indicate?

2. Paul uses the analogy of a human body to illustrate what it means to be a member of the body of Christ. What caution is evident for those with "prominent" gifts? What encouragement can be found for believers who feel less "important" in terms of giftedness?

3. How would recognizing God's distribution of gifts within the body of Christ, result in its health and well-being (1 Corinthians 12:25-26; Ephesians 4:11-16)?

For Personal reflection: Have you considered what gift(s) God has ordained for you?

4. NOTE REGARDING VERSE 28: “Paul numbers the first three gifts, which are people who embody certain ministries: ‘first apostles, second prophets, third teachers.’ To rank the gifts in order of importance would contradict what Paul has been arguing in chapter 12, so it is more likely that the numbering is chronological: God first appointed apostles; then he appointed prophets at Pentecost; then he appointed teachers.”
(Crossway ESV Expository Commentary p. 341 by Andrew David Naselli)

Reference Ephesians 2:19-22 to discuss verse 28.

5. What would it mean if the answers to the seven questions in 1 Corinthians 12:29-30 were all “yes”? Give examples of what this would look like in your own church body?

6. Share what you think Paul means by his instruction to the Corinthians to “earnestly desire the higher gifts” (1 Corinthians 12:31). Discuss the following perspective:

“Believers are to be open to the Spirit’s gifts and when they receive them to exercise them gratefully and humbly. Any earnest seeking for particular gifts ought to be guided by the desire to be involved in strengthening the church so that the whole people of God may truly be the divinely ordered alternative to the brokenness of human society.”

(Manfred T. Brauch Hard Sayings of Paul p. 165)