

**Bible Study**  
**1 Corinthians 12:1-13**

**Opening Question:**

1. What do you think of when you think of Pentecost? Why?

**Read 1 Corinthians 12:1-13**

**Discussion Questions**

1. Why did Paul give the Corinthians advice about spiritual gifts?
  - (a) Look at the list given. What do they mean to you?
  - (b) Are gifts limited to the list given?
  - (c) Who receives them?
  - (d) What is the purpose of these gifts?
3. Are people considered more or less Christian because of the gift that they have? Why?
4. Read Acts 2:1-21?
  - (a) How does this fit with our Corinthians reading?
  - (b) How does it fit with the other readings we have?
5. What was the condition of the Corinthians when they were pagans?
6. Why can someone speaking by the Spirit of God not say, "Jesus be cursed"?

7. What is point is Paul making in Verse 3 (Cross reference Matthew 7:21-23)
8. Who determines how the gifts are distributed?
9. What point does Paul make about the physical body and the church?

### **Thought Points**

- Throughout this letter Paul has rebuked his readers for the divisions and the personal arrogance that characterise them.
- The word used for 'gift' in 1 Corinthians is charisma (plural – charismata). It means 'a gift of grace' with the emphasis on grace on the part of the giver.
  - Neither the giving, nor the thing given, is related to any merit on the part of the recipient. It is freely bestowed (uncaused, unearned, undeserved).
  - Etymologically, the word is related to joy: chairō – I rejoice; chara - joy, rejoicing; charis – grace; charizomai - I bestow a favour (I cause joy); charisma - the thing freely bestowed or given, that generates joy because it was not earned, deserved or merited.
- Paul's emphasis on the common source of all the gifts is in stark contrast to the divisions generated by the abuse of the gifts in the Corinthian church.
- While stressing the source of all the gifts as the 'one and the same Spirit' Paul also stresses that the gifts are distributed among the believers; they are not all given to the same person.
- The 'gifts' are also called 'service' and 'workings'. The meaning of these words is: (a) *diakonia* – service, ministry, function, office, commission; (b) *energema* - working, operation. Paul is not here talking about three different functions, one for each person on the Trinity; he is talking at each point about the same 'gifts' given by the one God, but referring to them with different words. The fact that the 'gifts' are also referred to as 'service' or 'ministry' speaks against all personal, self-focused, and/or self-exalting use of the gifts. *Service and ministry are essentially other-directed and other-focused.*

### **Extra Reading**

Acts 2:1-21, Numbers 11:24-30, John 20:19-23, Psalm 104:26-36, Romans 12:3-8, Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 John 4:1-3, 1 Peter 4:10-11

### **Personal Reflection:**

- Compile a list of gifts from the readings. Using the list of gifts you compiled, which one or two do you believe have been given to you from the Holy Spirit?