

Lost & Found Center Teaching Series



UNDERSTANDING THE BODY PARTS

Introduction

God is always at work trying to educate us. That's just one of the things he does. He is always trying to move us out of darkness into areas of greater and greater light and understanding. That is exactly what he's doing through the Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 12. He's trying to move us into greater and greater light in the understanding of spiritual gifts, which I like to call the body parts. Let's look at some of this passage.

Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.

1 Corinthians 12:1 NIV

He states that he does not want us to be in darkness. You can look at the word translated here **ignorant** as meaning uninformed or unaware or unknowledgeable. He does not want us to be unknowledgeable about spiritual gifts. Why would he say this? Why would he start out with a negative? I think the next verse let's us know.

You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. 1 Corinthians 12:2 NIV

Okay. There it is. He is saying that he doesn't want us to be unknowledgeable about spiritual gifts. Why? Because we are so used to being influenced by things with no power. He's saying we have such a proclivity for being manipulated by spiritual ideas and superstitions, that we are bound to get it wrong with spiritual gifts. Would you agree?

Let me put it another way. We are so used to being uninformed about our superstitions yet we still seem to follow them. We then take that same uninformed approach toward the real power of God through the Holy Spirit. Where does that get us? It gets us in a big mess.

But there is good news. The good news is that the Lord doesn't want us to stay here. He doesn't want us to be uninformed, so he reveals some truths about spiritual gifts that he wants us to delve into and to examine. So let's get going.

Principle #1 The Son's Show

Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12: 3 NIV

First, this is the Son's show. Let's be very clear here. This verse means that the gifts operate under the direction of the Son, Jesus the Christ. He uses drastic language so we can get it. There is no movement of the Holy Spirit apart from the authority of the Son. Any person, organization or religious group that operates in the gifts of the Spirit

independent of the rule of the Son is a counterfeit. There is no bypassing Jesus and going straight to God. The Lord wants to create a clear distinction in our understanding that the Son holds the authority here.

Make sense? To make it clearer:

And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. Ephesians 1:22-23 NIV

The Son runs the body. The absence of his reign is the absence of God's rule.

Principle # 2 The Harmony of God

Now **Principle #1** is bound to create a bit of confusion so we need an understanding of the harmony of God. This next set of verses is beautiful in the way it explains the inner workings of God.

There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 NIV

The Holy Spirit is showing us this harmony. He's showing us how things break down in God through the different roles of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in dealing with spiritual gifts. Can you see that?

Okay let's take a look at these verses and pull out a few key word/pairs as follows:

Gifts and Spirit

Service and Lord

Workings and God

First, it says there are different kinds of gifts but the same Spirit. So what's the Spirit's role? He is the distributor. Said another way, there may be different expressions of God but there is only one distribution channel - the Holy Spirit.

Next, it says there are different kinds of service. The word for service here means offices or ministers. You could think of it as different hierarchies or orders but only one ultimate authority – Jesus our Lord. This part is the same as Principle #1.

Lastly, there are different kinds of working. This word means operation or effects. It is saying that there are different types of power being released like wind power, electrical

power, gravitational power but there is only one source from which all that power originates – God our Father.

There you have it. Different gifts but one distribution channel, different rankings but one overall ruler, different types of power but only one source of power.

Principle # 3 The Common Good

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

1 Corinthians 12:7 NIV

This principle is rocket science. The gifts of the Holy Spirit are for the common good of all believers. I know this verse must be rocket science simply because as a body we can't seem to get it.

When the Lord says the gifts are for the common good, he means that they are not just for your inner circle. They are not just for you and your friends and the people you like. They are not just for those who have money and can afford conferences. They are not just for those that are good looking or part of your nationality, ethnicity or gender.

The gifts are how you serve the body. That is the common good.

I remember seeing this famous preacher talking about the Word of Knowledge, how he labored using the gift. He was talking like he was doing the Body of Christ a favor. I get physically ill when I hear this type of stuff. Can you say common good? Can you get a sense of how the Lord wants us to approach the gifts?

Principle # 4 Just as He determines

For this principle we need to skip a few verses down to verse 11, where the word of God says this:

All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. 1 Corinthians 12:11 NIV

Just a friendly reminder, the distribution of the gifts is controlled by the distributor not us. Be reminded that the gifts are gifts and not wages. Wages are earned; gifts are not. Wages can be demanded; gifts cannot. Wages are based upon the performance of the worker. Gifts are based upon the generosity of the giver. Whatever gifts we possess, he decided. We need to trust his judgment. Isn't that a silly thing to say? But it needs to be said.

May the Lord help us come to grips with this concept because we need help here too.

Mapping the Body Parts

If you know 1 Corinthians 12 you'll know that verses 8 through 10 speak specifically about the gifts of the Spirit. We're going to look at these gifts individually in a moment. What we will do differently is to look at the gifts in the context of verses 14 to 21 as follows:

Now the body is not made up of one part but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" 1 Corinthians 12:14-21 NIV

Now a few things are being said in this passage. First, the Lord is trying to show us the interdependence of the gifts through the analogy of the body parts. At the same time he's showing us a way to think about the gifts to help us understand them. Can you see this? He wants us to think of the gifts as spiritual body parts. That's exactly what we're going to do. We're going to pick out all the body parts listed in this passage and map them to the spiritual gifts in verses 8 through 10. Sound good? First, let's pull out all the body parts listed and then we'll begin the mapping.

Body parts from 1 Corinthians 12:14-21

Foot

Hand

Ear

Eye

Nose

Head

Tongue

All the above body parts are specifically called out in the above passage except for tongue, which is implied throughout. Now when we review the spiritual gifts we'll map it to a physical body part so we can get a greater depth of understanding in the gifts.

Why Are Spiritual Gifts Important Again?

Let's take a quick step back before we begin examining the body parts. What is the purpose of spiritual gifts? There are at least two key reasons. Reason one is:

Spiritual Gifts enable us to break through the ordinary.

The purpose of spiritual gifts is to break through the ordinary. A very important word that I've been studying for a new lesson is "ordinary." Ordinary means "according to the natural order of things." We need to break our reliance on the natural order of things. Think of God as Spirit existing outside our universe. Think of us as both physical and spiritual beings that touch both realms. The problem is the physical realm tends to dominate us. We get trapped in the ordinary. Spiritual gifts then is the infusion of power from the Holy Spirit to our spirit so that we can operate outside the realm of the ordinary where God lives.

Reason two is:

Spiritual gifts are part of the fullness of the expression of Christ in the earth.

The gifts are part of the expression of God in this earth. The gifts show the world and remind the church who our God really is. Look at this verse:

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ephesians 3:10-11 NIV

God's intent was to reveal himself, his wisdom and his purposes through the church. Can you see it? The stakes are high here. When the enemy is successful in subverting some of the gifts, he is successful in preventing the full expression of the Lord in our generation. The enemy desires to keep you trapped in the normal. He tries to minimize our expression, minimize our effectiveness and minimize our impact.

The Body Parts

First, a bit of personal disclosure, I have not operated in all the gifts but I do have some insight into many of them from talking to people with those gifts and from the understanding the Spirit has provided me. If you would like to augment my understanding then I welcome your input. Please email me at lostandfoundcenter@yahoo.com. So here is the passage:

To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.

1 Corinthians 12:8-10 NIV

Message of Wisdom

So the first gift is the Message of Wisdom. Wisdom and knowledge get confused as much as power and strength. The differences are subtle but real. Knowledge is information. Wisdom is the application of that knowledge. Make sense? Knowledge knows something. Wisdom knows what to do. Now the Message of Wisdom is supernatural. It is the Spirit of God letting you know what to do in a particular situation. This gift is a message. It is not achieving through great learning and then by drawing intelligent, well-conceived conclusions based upon sound Godly principles. People like this may be wise, but the message of wisdom is supernatural information on what to do.

What body part is the message of wisdom? It would be the **head**.

...And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!"

The message of wisdom is the spiritual head. It is a decision-making gift. It knows what to do – supernaturally. When we map body parts we can think how the body part interacts with the spiritual realm. The message of wisdom is power through the Holy Spirit to think what the Spirit is thinking. This is truly knowing “what Jesus would do.”

This is a gift I have. I say this for the specific reason to let you know how it works in me. Sometimes I just know exactly what to do or say in a situation. I’ve had dreams on more than one occasion where I’ve woken up not really remembering the dream itself but knowing what the dream meant for me. The Message of Wisdom is what many teachers must have because I rely on it greatly. The things I teach just come to me. I don’t use material from others, nor do I repeat what others have said (at least not intentionally). The area for growth in me is to not restrict this gift to my study of the Bible but to seek it, or at least try to be aware of its operation in other areas of my life.

Let me give a personal example here. My wife asked me a question about how to handle a negative prophetic word. At the time we were in a church that discouraged negative prophetic words as a policy to protect people. Their intent was good. But my wife was getting a lot of these prophetic words and it was confusing her. Now I am not prophetic and I could have echoed the church policy – but in this case I didn’t. I had what I thought

was a Message of Wisdom. I just knew what to say. I told her that negative prophetic words are just as important as positive ones and can have the same encouraging and freeing impact on people. The only thing is, they have to be handled with care. I said, the next time you are in a situation and you get a negative prophetic word, your job is not to speak it, but to draw it out of the person and be there for support. I told her the Lord must trust her a great deal to give her a negative word, and so she must honor that trust and use it with care.

Now, I didn't use those exact words but that was the message I gave her. I'm not trying to convince you of anything. I'm not trying to get you to adopt my policy of prophetic words. This is just my example. Sound interesting? Well, we'll finish this story in the next section.

So think of all the gifts the same way. It is the spirit of God interacting with our spirit and giving us power in a variety of ways. The Message of Wisdom can be thought of as the impartation from the Holy Spirit to our spirit of the power to think in the spiritual realm.

I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, Ephesians 3:16 NIV

Message of Knowledge

As we discussed in the last section, knowledge and wisdom are different. Knowledge knows and wisdom knows what to do. The Message of Knowledge is also referred to as the "word of knowledge." It is the same thing. The thing to emphasize is that it does not come through study. It is a supernatural impartation. What body part do you think the Message of Knowledge maps to? It would be the **ear**.

...If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be

Think of the Message of Knowledge as spiritual ears so you can hear what the spirit is saying for the moment. People with the Message of Knowledge "hear" things but not with their physical ears. These are things that nobody had told them and things that they may not fully understand yet. This is information heard with spiritual ears.

Okay, let's finish the example from last section. I gave my wife a Message of Wisdom on how to handle a negative Message of Knowledge. So a few days later my wife was in a small prayer group with 2 other women, and everyone was sharing their intimate struggles and holding each other up in prayer, when my wife was startled with a negative word about one of the women. On any other occasion she would have kept it quiet, but now she was armed with the Message of Wisdom. She knew just what to do. She told the woman that she was getting a sense that she was carrying a burden that she didn't need to

carry. The woman tried to side-step her statement saying something like, “yeah, I’m not giving myself enough to my husband and my children.” Something spiritual that we would all say to take the pressure off. However, my wife knew exactly what the problem was. My wife pressed again saying that was not it and something happened. The women broke down and confessed in this small group the exact word my wife had heard. It was a tremendous burden that she had been carrying. Something she had not told anyone, her kids or her husband.

Cool huh? That’s the Lord in action, using the Message of Wisdom and the Message of Knowledge to release captives and set prisoners free.

The Message of knowledge is the impartation from the Holy Spirit of the power to hear in the spiritual realm.

Faith

The first two gifts are messages, but this one is not. Faith is not a message. The best way to explain this gift is to map it to its body part. Faith is spiritual **feet**.

If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

Feet help us understand a lot about faith. Faith acts. Faith does. In one of my snippets I talk about how faith is the energy source in the kingdom of God. Everything of God gets done by faith. When people have spiritual feet they are predisposed to actually trusting God. What a concept.

But listen up. The gift of Faith is not just acting or getting things done, because that’s not enough. The gift of Faith is a hard one because it is like a story within a story. Faith stands alone as something we all possess yet it stands as a gift as well. The ordinary surely is relentless. The purpose of the ordinary is to destroy faith or trap us in the ordinary. That means limit us to solutions that occur only in the natural order of things. That means get us to pray for the natural order of things and not the supernatural. Think about healing for example, we will discuss this later, but many pray for skill or wisdom for the physician. That is praying for the natural order of things. That is fine but let us not limit our prayers to the ordinary.

Faith becomes a gift when it allows us to move even when there are obstacles in the way that would defeat or discourage most people. The gift of Faith allows us to move because the Spirit is moving. Faith enables us to move against the natural order of things. Those with spiritual feet are those who can move forward when everybody starts making excuses or formulating another plan. I had a pastor who always said that his gift was Faith and he defined it as the ability to believe God for great things. I’ll agree with that.

The gift of Faith is power from the Holy Spirit to move when the Spirit moves in the spiritual realm.

Gifts of Healing

Gifts of Healing is different still. I'll bet you know what the body part is for this gift. It is the **hands**.

If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

How different is the Gift of Healing? Well it is very different for a couple of key reasons. First, healing does not happen in isolation. The Gift of Healing is not something you can do independently like wisdom, knowledge or faith. The Gift of Healing has a special dynamic because it requires another person. Remember we just read:

There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

The second difference is implied in the first. When we think about the gifts we need to remember that they are a manifestation of the power of God. What is the relationship of power with the first three gifts? In the first three gifts power is imparted to our spirit to enable us to think, know or move. With the Gift of Healing the power is used to work. That means healing involves power transfer. In healing the power of the Holy Spirit is transferred from the person with the gift to the one being healed. It doesn't help them think, know or move. Can you see this? Now power may be released in different ways but there is only one source – God.

Although I don't move in the gift, I have been planning to do a study on healing. Healing is a lot like electricity. The person with the gift is like the battery, the person that is sick is the load - like a light bulb, and the wires that connect and allow the transfer of power is faith. In order for healing to occur all three must be functioning. Make sense?

All this begs one very important question. Where are all the power sources? Excellent question. The power sources are in our midst, but they have been subverted and intimidated. The enemy has done an excellent job with the help of very dominant church leaders. The Gift of Healing and Miraculous Powers are critical gifts because they release power. They directly alter the natural order. As a result they will usually be under attack from all those that seek to maintain the natural order.

There are leaders who want to be the central depository of all the gifts, including healing. They want to be stand-ins for the Holy Spirit. They don't seem to have a clue of

Principle # 4 Just as He determines. The role of church leadership is not to control the gifts but to seek their release. It is to help release people into their calling, their gifts and their destiny. The good thing is this current era will not last. The Lord is raising up a new generation of leaders that are going to be interested in his purposes without private agendas.

The Gift of Healing is power from the Holy Spirit to our spirit to do work. That work is releasing power from the spiritual realm.

Miraculous Powers

I have mixed emotions with this gift. I thank God that it is not in the hands of those who say they have it, who would use it solely to promote themselves and their ministries. When we look again at **Principle #4 – Just As He Determines**, I am reminded that everything God does is perfect and right. Every gift that we have, he has determined. He has prepared us for every gift we possess. We have been “tuned” for our gifts. That means that every gift that we have is right for our personality, our measure of faith, our temperament, our endurance and our uniqueness. Something like Miraculous Powers will be given to someone who would not be destroyed or corrupted by it.

What body part is this? It is the **hands**, the same as healing. Hands are symbolic for work being done.

If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body.

In looking at Miraculous Powers in our electricity model, there is a slight difference. This gift does not require a person on the receiving end. The miraculous powers of Jesus were released in the environment in such things ways as changing water to wine, walking on water, multiplying the bread and fish.

Where are these people? They are hidden away with the gift of healing. If this is you, I pray that you would be strengthened in the Lord because you are a target. Still, if this is your gift, you are being prepared by the Holy Spirit to use it in accordance with his purposes and with great care. Hang tough.

The gift of miraculous powers is from the Holy Spirit to our spirit to do work. That work is releasing power from the spiritual realm.

Prophecy

This is the gift with the greatest market share in the body of Christ right now. It seems to be the most popular and the most desired. Is it the most common? Who knows? What body part do you think this is? It is the **eyes**.

If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be?

If so many people have the gift of prophecy, who will listen for the people? When we exalt one gift over another, we do a disservice to those with the other gifts. When we exalt one gift over another, we deprive ourselves of the fullness of God. May we come to grips with our gifts.

How about we focus more on discovery of our gifts than on our ambition?

Spiritual eyes see. They see in the spiritual realm. I wouldn't say they see the future, because the spiritual realm is not according to the natural order, therefore those who have spiritual eyes can see anything the Spirit sets before them - past, present and future.

Do you get the very real sense that the church is lost? Think about it. Could that be possible if we had so many with spiritual eyes? I have known of one with alarming spiritual eyes, only to find out that their gift was so reserved for inner circles and friends, that it almost seemed pointless. Is this the state of most of the gifts in the body of Christ? That is why I think **Principle # 3 The Common Good** is like rocket science. So few of us seem to get it.

The gift of prophecy is power from the Holy Spirit to our spirit to allow us to see what the Spirit sees.

Distinguishing Between Spirits

When I first started mapping the gifts a few years ago, I was stuck with which body part for this gift. I heard this popular prophet say it was the smell and now it seems obvious. Those with the gift of Distinguishing Between Spirits have spiritual **noses**.

If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be?

In fact our common language has a lot of references to smell used to discern situations like: "It didn't pass the smell test."

It is interesting to note that although the enemy may disguise his appearance, often appearing as an "angel of light." He must not be able to disguise his odor. Those with spiritual noses will be able to sniff him out. He may in fact pass the visual test but he can't pass the smell test. This gift seems like it could come in handy in these days of darkness, when even misinformation in the kingdom of God is running rampant.

For those of you with the ability to distinguish spirits, let me give you a Message of Wisdom. I was talking to a friend of mine a few weeks ago and told her I was working on a study on spiritual gifts. Well, my friend immediately told me something like: “I used to have the gift of discernment (same as Distinguishing Between Spirits), but it was taken away from me.” She then went on to say, “I used to be able to watch TV preachers and instantly know who was bad.” Then she tried to start naming people who she thought was counterfeit before I stopped her. Her comments were well placed for my study.

First, I told her and I tell you as well, the gifts of the Holy Spirit are not taken away. If you have **ever** had it, then you **still** have it now.

You do not lose them for bad behavior because you did not get them for good behavior.

... for God's gifts and his call are irrevocable. Romans 11:29 NIV

Now they can be weakened. That’s why Paul once told Timothy:

For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 2 Timothy 1:6 NIV

I told her that her gift of discernment is still around but only needs to be strengthened. There is no real formula for strengthening your gift other than reading, understanding and praying – sorry. I also told her that when her gift gets renewed that she should use both sides of it. The negative side need not dominate. The negative side of Distinguishing Between Spirits is to point out wrong. Pointing out wrong will protect you but will not strengthen. It is of no benefit for someone who can distinguish gold to spend a lifetime identifying what is not gold. Is it? The other side of Distinguishing Between Spirits is to approve of what is right and point in that direction for people. If yours is that gift please use both sides of it.

The gift of Distinguishing Between Spirits is power from the Holy Spirit to our spirit to smell what the Spirit smells or to distinguish between good and bad odors in the kingdom of God.

Speaking in Different Kinds of Tongues

The last two are very similar. I have no interest in getting bogged down in the debate about tongues. There is no need. We will apply the same approach as in all the gifts. The body part is stated in the gift. The body part is the **tongue**. Speaking in Different Kinds of Tongues and Interpretation of Tongues is similar to healing and miracles, because all of these gifts release something. Healing and Miracles release power. Tongues and their

interpretation release something as well. They release words. Tongues release spiritual words.

Speaking in Different Kinds of Tongues is the power of the Holy Spirit to our spirit to enable us to release spiritual words or to say what the spirit is saying. How does it come out? It comes out in a variety of ways. However, the mind is not engaged. It is not you trying to form words. It is the power of the Spirit to allow you to release. Think release not create. Tongues like all the other gifts are not about the will of man. The will of man is the natural order of things and gifts run contrary to the natural order.

Why are tongues so prevalent? I don't know. There could be a couple of reasons. Reason one is that they are not prevalent and what is prevalent is counterfeit tongues. Counterfeit gifts are those initiated by the will of man. Some gifts, like tongues are easier to counterfeit than others, just like the Pharaoh's magicians who could reproduce God's miracles until things got more and more complex. Reason two is that tongues are prevalent because the Spirit has decided it to be so. Maybe a little of both are at work here.

The gift of Speaking in Different Kinds of Tongues is power from the Holy Spirit to our spirit to release spiritual words.

Interpretation of Tongues

As just stated, this last gift releases the interpretation or the explanation or the understanding of spiritual words. This gift like all the other gifts is not a result of learning or training. Why? Because learning and training is part of the natural order of things. This gift is from the power of the Holy Spirit to your spirit. If you mentally understood what was being spoken based upon previously studying languages, then that would not be power. If tongues could be interpreted through the natural order of things, then there would not require a spiritual gift.

The gift of Interpretation of Tongues is power from the Holy Spirit to our spirit to interpret, explain or understand spiritual words.

Conclusion

All the gifts are enabled through power, not through training, nor through will, nor through desire. Why do some try to force the natural order on things from a totally different realm? That's a good question. The answer is they are trapped in the natural realm. That's all they think, hear, move, see, work, smell and speak.

The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned. 1 Corinthians 2:14 NIV

Lastly,

But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. 1 Corinthians 12:24b-26 NIV

His desire is that all the parts of his body would have equal concern for each other. His desire is that we would understand that when one of the gifts are undermined, or subverted, it affects all of us and limits the expression of him to this generation. May the Lord develop the gift or gifts he has deposited in you. May you embrace his work in you. May you re-invigorate your journey of exploration of how he expresses himself through you. For those of you who are currently under pressure, may he strengthen you to endure your training. For those of you in confusion, may he bring greater and greater clarity. For those of you with special gifts, we need you. May the Lord prepare us to deal with you properly and not misunderstand you, envy you nor exalt you. This is his show. Amen.

Notes

For Questions or Comments please respond to lostandfoundcenter@yahoo.com and visit www.lostandfoundcenter.org for additional information.

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