DISCUSSION GUIDE

BUILT DIFFERENT :

"A Disciple is Gifted"

SCRIPTURE | 1 Corinthians 12:1–31

MEMORY VERSE

"I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

MAIN IDEA OF THE TEXT

Built different: disciples are gifted by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of building up the church.

DISCIPLESHIP RHYTHM

Discipleship Distinctive: Gifts of the Spirit

OBSERVATION: WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Gather in groups of three to five people to discuss the Observation and Interpretation questions.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 1: SOURCE AND PURPOSE

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1–11. What is the source of spiritual gifts? What is their purpose?

Suggested Response: Paul said God is the source of spiritual gifts, specifically by the presence of the Holy Spirit. The gifts from the Spirit are for the common good. The context is the Corinthian church, so the common good is understood to refer to the church, or body of believers. This becomes clearer in the second part of the chapter.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 2: ONE BODY WITH MANY PARTS

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12–20. What analogy did Paul use to describe the church?

Suggested Response: Paul compared the church to a body. A body is one thing, but it has many parts that make it work. Paul said believers were all baptized by one Spirit to form one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free. He said the body is not made up of one part but many. The foot should not say it does not belong because it is not a hand, and the ear should not say it does not belong because it is not an eye. Paul said God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as He wanted them to be.

OBSERVATION EXERCISE 3: EVERY PART MATTERS

Read 1 Corinthians 12:21–31. Did Paul say there is a hierarchy of parts in the body? Explain. What connection is there between the analogy of the body and spiritual gifts?

Suggested Response: No, Paul did not say there was a hierarchy of parts of the body. Rather, he explained that all parts of the body are necessary. He said the parts that seem weaker are indispensable, and the parts that are treated with less honor should receive special honor. Paul said because God has put the body together, there should be no division and the parts should have equal concern for one another. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.
Paul connected the analogy of the body to the church, saying the church is the body of Christ, and each person is part of it. He listed gifts and roles God has placed in the church, including apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, healing, helping, guidance, tongues, and interpretation.

INTERPRETATION: WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 1: GIFTS FROM GOD TO SERVE PEOPLE

In 1 Corinthians 12:1–11, why did Paul emphasize the source and purpose of spiritual gifts?

Suggested Response: Paul was helping the Corinthians understand that spiritual gifts come from the Holy Spirit and are given for the common good. This was a different way of thinking than the Corinthians currently had. Gifts are not signs of personal importance or spiritual superiority. The same Spirit gives different gifts, the same Lord is served through those gifts, and the same God is at work in all of them. This means no disciple should boast in their gift, and no disciple should dismiss what God has given them. Spiritual gifts are expressions of God's grace meant to strengthen the church.

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 2: THE DIFFERENT PARTS BELONG TO ONE BODY

In 1 Corinthians 12:12–20, Paul emphasized that the body is one unity made up of many different parts that are all important. How does this help people who think they don't matter?

Suggested Response: Paul showed that difference does not mean lesser value. A foot is not less a part of the body because it is not a hand, and an ear is not less a part of the body because it is not an eye. In the same way, disciples should not measure their place in the church by comparing themselves to others. God has arranged the body with many different parts because the church needs many different gifts. Every disciple has a meaningful role because God has placed each person in the body as He chooses.

INTERPRETATION EXERCISE 3: THE BODY NEEDS EVERY PART

In 1 Corinthians 12:21–31, how do Paul's words challenge people who think they are more important than others?

Suggested Response: Paul taught that the most visible gifts are not the only important gifts. 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." The parts that seem weaker are still indispensable. God gives special concern and honor so there will be no division in the body. Spiritual gifts are not meant to create competition or ranking. They are given so disciples care for one another, suffer with one another, rejoice with one another, and build up the church together. Disciples are built different because they are gifted by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of building up the church.

APPLICATION: HOW DO I RESPOND?

QUESTION 1: Paul said the Spirit gives gifts for the common good. How have you seen someone use a spiritual gift to build up the church?

Suggested Response: God is intentionally building up His church through different people with different gifts. Some gifts are visible and some are quieter, but every gift given by the Spirit has purpose.

As your group responds, use follow-up questions to guide below surface-level responses. Encourage transparent responses.

QUESTION 2: What is one way God has gifted you to build up the church?

Suggested Response: God may have given me the ability to encourage, serve, teach, lead, show mercy, give generously, pray faithfully, help practically, welcome others, or notice needs. I may not always think of these as spiritual contributions, but Paul taught that every part of the body matters.

Note: it is common for believers to be shy (verbalized as humble) about sharing the gift God has given them. It is not prideful to acknowledge the gifts of the Spirit.

QUESTION 3: How are you using your gift to build up the church? If you are not, what is holding you back?

Suggested Response: Responses will vary. The key is to help people identify how they are a vital part of God's work in the church at Lakepointe.

I may hold back because of lack of awareness of my spiritual gift, insecurity, comparison, fear of failure, busyness, past hurt, pride, or the belief that someone else is more qualified. Paul reminds me that God has placed each part in the body on purpose. I do not have to have every gift to use the gift God has given me. Here is a spiritual gift assessment that can be used as a starting point: (https://my.lakepointe.church/spiritualgifts). A great next step is to register for Serve Now to learn more: https://lakepointe.church/serve/

QUESTION 4: Paul was clear that no one chooses their gift. Which gift do you wish you had? Why?

Suggested Response: I may compare my gifts, influence, visibility, knowledge, leadership, service, or opportunities with someone else's. Comparison can make me either proud or discouraged. Paul reminds me that the Spirit gives different gifts to different disciples, and God places each person in the body as He chooses.

QUESTION 5: Whose gift and contribution to the church do you need to value more intentionally?

Suggested Response: I may need to value people whose gifts are different than mine, less visible than mine, or easier for me to overlook. This could include people who serve behind the scenes, care for children, pray faithfully, set up rooms, show hospitality, lead quietly, or encourage others. The church is stronger when we honor the gifts God gives through different people.

QUESTION 6: Paul said if one part suffers, every part suffers, and if one part is honored, every part rejoices. How can you practice that kind of shared life?

Suggested Response: I can pay attention when someone is hurting, pray with them, help carry a burden, celebrate when someone else is honored, and refuse to treat another person's pain or joy as disconnected from me. In the body of Christ, we are not competitors. We belong to one another.

QUESTION 7: How can our group help one another discover and use our gifts for the good of the church?

Suggested Response: A spiritual gift assessment (https://my.lakepointe.church/spiritualgifts) is a great first step that can be followed by registering for Serve Now (https://lakepointe.church/serve/) to begin taking steps into using our gifts for the good of the church. Consider taking a spiritual gift assessment together and discussing it together. Consider attending Serve Now together too! Disciples are built different because they are gifted by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of building up the church.