

Uniting Despite Doctrinal Differences

Read Eph. 4:1-3; 7-16. Big idea: Actively using your spiritual gifts in your local church is one of the best ways to develop maturity in your Christian life.

The spiritual gifts can be a contentious theological topic. God’s Word tells us to make every effort to unite with our fellow believers. Division in the church is so easy. Differences between theological traditions are endless. So how can we unite in the face of doctrinal differences? To do this, I sort doctrines into three categories:¹

The first category is called “Die For” doctrines. These are doctrines that mark true Christianity no matter where or when you live. These are such central doctrines that if we disagree, I have to say “You’re *not* a Christian.” Doctrines like the bodily resurrection of Jesus; the deity of Christ; that the Bible is God’s Word.² The second category is called “Divide For” doctrines. These are doctrines that if we disagree, I can still say, “You’re a Christian, *but* logistically it’s hard to worship in the same church.” Doctrines like whether the bread and cup literally transform into the body and blood of Jesus; infant baptism; women pastors. And the third category is called “Debate For” doctrines. These are doctrines that if we disagree, I can say, “You’re a Christian, *and* it’s easy to worship in the same church.” Doctrines like creationism; the millennium. One reason this young adult group thrives despite having different churches from different theological traditions is because the things that distinguish us almost always fall under this third category. There are some divide-for differences among us, and that’s okay. My point is *not everything* is a “Die For.”

There’s discontinuity in the American church today surrounding the spiritual gifts. More Pentecostal churches have strongly emphasized the gifts and reacting against the apparent centralization, non-Pentecostal churches have swung to the other side of the pendulum by avoiding the topic altogether. The topic is complex. There are a dozen or so hotly contested theological debates pertaining to spiritual gifts.³ Some of the debates around the spiritual gifts are “Divide For’s,” but for the most part they fall under the “Debate For” category.

¹ These categories are modified from the four categories taught by Gerry Breshears, PhD at Western Seminary.

² Just to be clear, not yet understanding something is different from rejecting it. I’ve studied the Trinity, but I wouldn’t dare say I fully understand it. There’s a difference between not yet or not fully understanding something vs. denying it or rejecting it outright.

³ Cessationism vs. Continuationism vs. Pentecostalism; Exclusive List vs. Exemplary List; Uninterpreted Tongues in Public vs. Uninterpreted Tongues in Private; Tongues as Real Languages vs. Tongues as Angelic/Unknown Languages vs. combination; NT Prophecy Distinct from OT Prophecy vs. NT Prophecy Identical to OT Prophecy; Tongues as *the* Evidence of Salvation vs. Tongues as *an* Evidence of Salvation; Prophecy Identical to Preaching vs. Prophecy Distinct from Preaching; Apostleship has Ceased vs. Apostleship Continues Today; the women question; etc.....

My views on some of these debates will be unavoidably apparent by the night’s end. But to be up front about one, I do want to say I’m a continuationist. A passage in 1 Cor. 13 speaks about the cessation or the end of the spiritual gifts when the *perfect* comes. The cessationist view argues that the more supernatural gifts have *already* ceased; that the word *perfect* in 1 Cor. 13 refers to the finalization of the content of Scripture, which was finalized during the lifetime of the first disciples. The continuationist view that I hold argues that the gifts have *not yet* ceased; that the word *perfect* in 1 Cor. 13 refers to the New Creation still to come. Some of you may be cessationist, and that’s okay; both the cessationist and continuationist views are biblically defensible; I just think the continuationist view is a stronger synthesis of Scripture. And so, I think all the gifts are still given today, with one exception.

The one exception is apostleship. To be an apostle, one must see the Risen Christ with their own eyes and witness the earthly ministry of Jesus, which took place about 2,000 years ago. Sometimes it’s been said that church planters have the gift of apostleship. A big difference, though, is the spiritual gift of apostleship involved more than just church planting. It involved writing Scripture and performing signs and wonders to authenticate their unique authority. For these reasons I think this gift has ceased, and you should beware of anyone who calls themselves an apostle.

The Purposes and Principles of Spiritual Gifts

There are two Greek words for the word ‘gift.’ One of those words is *doran*. *Doran* is a gift that people give to God. The other word is *charisma*. Whereas *doran* describes a gift people give to God, *charisma* always refer to gifts God gives to people. The word *charisma* almost always refers to abilities like the ones listed in Rom. 12; 1 Cor. 12; Eph. 4; and 1 Pet. 4.⁴ Every other time *charisma* is used it refers to the salvation God gives to all believers.⁵ Even within the word *charisma* we find the Greek word *charis*, which means ‘grace.’ In this sense, a *charisma* is no generic gift; it’s a gift from God; a *spiritual* gift; a means of grace.

Developing a Gospel Culture means being a consumer *and* a contributor. To be a *consumer-only* Christian makes community like a buffet. If your community doesn’t have the items you want, you leave and find a better menu. I’ve heard from a decent number of you that you think YA has become cliquey, but respectfully to these people, when I asked them who *they*

⁴ Rom. 1:11, 12:6; 1 Cor. 1:7, 7:7; 12:4, 12:9, 12:28, 12:30, 12:31; 2 Cor. 1:11; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Pet. 4:10.

⁵ Rom. 5:15, 5:16, 6:23, 11:29.

spend time with, for most of them the answer was the same: their own collective of three or four people. In other words, I wish people would invite me into their lives, but I’m not going to invite them into mine. I want people to want me, but I don’t actually want them. To be a *consumer-only* Christian will give you the spiritually destructive gift of complaining; expecting others to solve your problems while you critique from the peanut gallery. On the other hand, to be a *contributor-only* Christian will give you the spiritually destructive gift of self-idolization; of finding your value in what you do. *You are not your gifts*. One of my gifts is prophecy, but I don’t call myself a prophet and neither should you. Who you *are* is not what you do. You *do* as a *response* to what *Christ* has done for you. To be a *contributor-only* Christian will lead you to legalistic blunders, burnout in your Christian life, and feeling like you’ve been exploited by your church.

Both extremes disrupt Gospel Culture. but to be a consumer *and* a contributor is to strike the beautiful balance of belonging to the Body of Christ. The use of spiritual gifts is the premier way to be served by *and* serve the church. I’ve accumulated from Scripture principles pertaining to the spiritual gifts. While I’m sure there are others, I have attempted to be as thorough as possible. On your worksheet, I’ve listed these with fill-in-the-blanks to help you follow along...

The Holy Spirit is a **required** prerequisite to receiving any spiritual gift.⁶ The Spirit gives each believer specific gifts **after** conversion,⁷ though the Spirit absolutely can start preparing you for your gifts before your conversion since your salvation was ordained from eternity-past. Though united by the *same* Spirit into *one* Body of Christ, there are **varieties** of spiritual gifts.⁸ It is ultimately the Spirit, not our egos, who **decides** what gifts we receive.⁹

Every believer is promised at least **one** spiritual gift;¹⁰ though in my observation most typically have three or four and usually one or two are primary gifts and another one or two are secondary. The only gift all believers receive is the gift of **salvation**.¹¹ No believer receives **all** the gifts.¹² No gift is more **important** than any other gift.¹³ It is right for believers to **desire** spiritual

⁶ 1 Cor. 12:3

⁷ Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:7-11; Eph. 1:13-14

⁸ 1 Cor. 12:4-6

⁹ 1 Cor. 12:11, 18; Eph. 3:6-8

¹⁰ 1 Cor. 12:6-7; Eph. 4:7

¹¹ Rom. 5:15, 16; 6:23; 11:29

¹² 1 Cor. 7:7-9

¹³ 1 Cor. 12-14

gifts.¹⁴ Believers should not **neglect** their gifts,¹⁵ because believers are given their gifts for **life**.¹⁶ Rather than neglect them, believers ought to stir their **hearts** toward using their gifts.¹⁷

Each gift **needs** other gifts working alongside them for them to be effective.¹⁸ ‘Seen’ gifts only thrive when they are **supported** by ‘unseen’ gifts.¹⁹ All gifts are to be used in an **orderly** manner.²⁰ This doesn’t mean you’re an automatic expert at your gifts. Each gift comes with its own set of challenges that we must work through, critical among them the challenge of using our gifts in an orderly manner. Believers steward their gifts in proportion to their **faith**.²¹ The primary motivation for using your gifts is **love**.²² The proper use of gifts will not prompt fellow believers to **sin**.²³ Rather, the proper use of gifts can help or prompt others to **worship** God,²⁴ in fact, God is **glorified** by the proper use of our gifts.²⁵

Spiritual gifts are intended to strengthen the faith of **others**.²⁶ Spiritual gifts are given so we can serve **others**.²⁷ Spiritual gifts are for the purpose of edifying **others**.²⁸ Spiritual gifts help equip **others** for ministry.²⁹ *Do you notice a pattern?* Using your gifts isn’t a performance. Your gifts aren’t for you or for your ego; your gifts are for the rest of the Church. Spiritual gifts are meant to bring good to our **community**.³⁰ Using our gifts help us wait eagerly for Christ’s **return**.³¹ And the Fruits of the Spirit are **not** the same thing as spiritual gifts.³²

In summary, spiritual gifts are God-initiated. The purpose of the gifts is others-oriented. And the use of one’s gifts requires intentionality, good order, and interdependency.

There are some who assume wrongly that women get more behind-the-scenes or homely gifts like serving and hospitality—you know, gifts that require women to be quiet—whereas men

¹⁴ 1 Cor. 12:31; 14:1

¹⁵ 1 Tim. 4:14

¹⁶ Rom. 11:29

¹⁷ 2 Tim. 1:6

¹⁸ Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:14-17, 21-26

¹⁹ 1 Cor. 12:21-26

²⁰ 1 Cor. 14:26-40

²¹ Rom. 12:4-8

²² 1 Cor. 13

²³ 1 Cor. 7:7-9

²⁴ 1 Cor. 14:24-25; Ex. 35:30-33; Dan. 2:46-47

²⁵ 1 Pet. 4:9-11

²⁶ Rom. 1:10-12

²⁷ 1 Pet. 4:9-11

²⁸ 1 Cor. 14:2-5, 12; Eph. 4:9-12

²⁹ Eph. 4:9-12

³⁰ 1 Cor. 12:7

³¹ 1 Cor. 1:7; 1 Pet. 4:7-11

³² Gal. 5:22-25; cf. 1 Cor. 13

get the more “important” gifts like teaching and evangelism, but these caricatures don’t line up with Scripture. Now, there *are* gender-specific instructions for how prophecy and teaching are used, but I don’t know of any passage that says receiving a gift is contingent upon your gender. Ladies, if a man tells you you’re ineligible to receive a gift simply because you’re a woman, I think it’s appropriate for you to (gently) tell that man to ‘go home’ — ‘go home’ and return when he’s reread the NT.³³ If any of you know a passage, I’d be happy to receive that, stand before you all, and correct the record. As it stands, I don’t know any passage that teaches that any gift is gender-restricted.³⁴ Since we’re on the topic, here’s some unsolicited relationship advice: You will magnify the ministry of your marriage if the person you marry has *different* gifts than you do. The same is true of friendships. But I digress.

How do we figure out our gifts? Since the gifts are others-oriented, not self-oriented, one of the best ways is to seek input from others. Other believers are in a better position to tell you the things you do that strengthen them. A second way to discover your gifts is to identify what gifts are absent from your local church. If you’re not using any spiritual gifts, but you recognize that a certain gift is absent and needed, it might be absent because you have it and aren’t using it. Now, there might be many gifts missing from your local church; that doesn’t mean you have all of them. Ask yourself, which one or two or those missing gifts are you drawn to? Which of them do you feel a burden for? I’m convinced there’s a reason you are drawn to specific, unmet needs; that the Spirit is using that burden to reveal your gifts to you. Identifying a need in your church and filling it can help you figure out your gifts.

As this pertains to my own story, I saw in the larger American church a general absence of Christ-centered preaching from the OT. From this, my gift of teaching was revealed, and over time I’ve practiced teaching, improving my clarity, devoting myself to the Scriptures, and working through the challenges that exist with this gift. And I still do these things. Time has shown that this is one of my gifts. Now, I’m on a trajectory toward the academy where I hope to teach OT to aspiring pastors so they can fill the need. In you’re unsure of your gifts, look for gifts that are absent and needed, and then strive to fill the need. For those of you who are curious, my other two gifts are administration and mercy.

³³ An intentional snub against John MacArthur in response to his infamous quip about Beth Moore’s ministry.

³⁴ Acts 1 implies maleness is required to be an Apostle, but debate abounds over whether Junia (female) was known *by* the apostles or known *among* the apostles (Rom. 16:7). See Nijay Gupta, *Tell Her Story* (Downers Grove: IV Press, 2023) for the latest argument. Regardless, as I state later, the gift of apostleship is the one gift I think has ceased.

Online tests are convenient to use, but they have a hard time taking your specific local church into consideration. They also frequently give limited options from one or two of the NT lists. If you live your Christian life seeing a limited list, and you know you don’t have one of those select few, you may fall into a state of apathy or question whether you’re actually saved, neither of which are necessary. I see the NT lists as *examples*; I think anything that meets the principles can be a spiritual gift, including gifts omitted from my own list.

I’m going to walk through my list of spiritual gifts with descriptions that are far too brief; more could be said about them all. While I summarize each of these, I want you to think about yourself. Which of these do you sense the Spirit drawing you toward? Circle yes, no, or maybe on your worksheet. While I summarize each of these, I also want you to think about your YA peers. Who’s using this gift? Who’s perhaps *not* using this gift but it seems like they might have it? Write their names down on your worksheet. And if you’re a cessationist, please don’t feel any pressure to write down a name for a gift you think has ceased. Let’s dive in...

Surveying the Spiritual Gifts in Alphabetical Order

1.

2. Those with the gift of **administration** like Brooke and Gabe have a burden for organization, planning, and research so that ministry can run smoothly. The Greek word for administration refers to the captain of a ship, steering the church toward a desired destination. While a local church may have a vision statement, an administrator puts that vision to action.

3. Those with the gift of **celibacy** have a burden for holiness. Paul wishes all Christians were celibate, because he wants us all to have self-control, but he recognizes that not all share this ability. Celibacy frees you from family obligations to maximize your ministry to others. Whereas marriage uniquely illustrates Christ’s love for the Church, the gift of celibacy uniquely illustrates Christ’s devotion to the Father. It’s not right to call these individuals *single*; rather, they should be called *single-minded*.

4. The gift of **craftsmanship**: Bezalel and Oholiab (among others) were filled with the Spirit to construct and artistically design the tabernacle in a way that enabled God’s people to worship. In the context of Ex. 31-36, it’s clear these people did this *only* because they were filled with the Spirit. That they were Spirit-filled to do a task that enabled others to worship, and that God chose them by name leads me to recognize craftsmanship or artistry as a spiritual gift. Those

with the gift of artistry **like Maddi and Angie** have a burden for using non-musical, but creative means to help others worship or learn the Bible.

5. Those with the gift of **discernment** **like Andrew Sasere and Macy** have a burden for truth. Gifted discerners are excellent judges of character. Discerners also have the ability to distinguish between the Holy Spirit and demonic spirits. Discerners have the special ability to warn the church about popular teachings that may contain deviations of truth. All believers are called to discern the teachings we receive, but some are specially gifted to do this.

6. The gift of **dreams and visions**: Looking into the future, the prophet Joel said when the Spirit is poured out at Pentecost, men *and women* will prophecy, dream dreams, and see visions. There’s no mandate for an interpreter, but the examples in Scripture show that those who received dreams and visions always sought an interpretation.

7. The descriptions of the **interpretation of dreams and visions** leads us to suggest some Spirit-filled individuals can clarify the dreams and visions others experience. Dreams and visions can result in a wide variety of interpretations, but Moses tells us only God can provide a legitimate interpretation. When a Spirit-filled person interprets a dream or vision, the interpretation should prompt the dreamer or visionary to worship God.

8. Those with the gift of **evangelism** **like Alana and Alexis** have a burden for the lost to be found *and* for the found to remain in the light. Evangelists are ready at any moment to share the news that Jesus is the Messiah who came, died, and rose from the dead for those who repent and believe. Evangelism involves converting unbelievers to the faith, but also discipling existing believers so they may endure through trials. The purpose of preaching the Gospel to *unbelievers* is for them to come to faith, and the purpose of preaching the Gospel to *believers* is for them to remain in the faith. Evangelists have a way of bringing seemingly every conversation back to the Gospel.

9. Those with the gift of **exhortation** **like Taige and Garrison** have a burden for encouraging others when others are down. Exhorters recognize Godly character in others and affirm or motivate others with their words. Exhortation can also refer to a style of preaching; in fact, Heb. 13:22 calls the entire sermon of Hebrews one long exhortation.³⁵ For the most part, exhortation refers to bold encouragement.

³⁵ In my denomination, I’m ordained to preach, and my ordination is called a “License to Exhort.”

10. The gift of **faith**: This may seem odd. Aren't all of us supposed to have faith? The Spiritual gift of faith doesn't refer to saving faith. Instead, those with this gift **like Cali and Hannah** have a deeply-held, unshakable confidence in the promises of God, and they love to strengthen the faith of others when others face trials or seasons of doubt; and they do this with bold resolve.

11. **Giving from abundance** is a way to share in the needs of the saints by filling those needs. Giving enabled the apostles to preach without worrying about the needs of those to whom they were preaching. Giving is a way for non-preachers to share in the ministry of the preacher. In brief, cheerful giving advances the Gospel.

12. **Giving from poverty** is described alongside other spiritual gifts that are useless without love. Those who are poor, yet still give, are commended for doing so. Paul says that giving out of poverty to share in the ministry of others is a prime example of generosity. In brief, sacrificial giving advances the Gospel.

13. Those with the gift of **healing** have a burden for the sick. Sometimes healing is meant to be witnessed by unbelievers so they would come to faith. Other times healing is meant to prompt worship. Yet other times, when we're to call our elders when we're sick, it's so that in preparation for death we can be assured of our salvation in submission to God's will. Those with this gift are not always “successful” for two reasons: sometimes healing is a believer dying of cancer, because for the believer death is the door to new creation where we are promised our bodies will be restored. In a sense I will be then more me than I even am today.³⁶ The second reason those with this gift are not always “successful” is because God is most glorified in our weaknesses. If we falsely believe it's always God's will to heal every person in this life, then this gift will be misused.

14. Those with the gift of **hospitality** **like Julie and Blake** have a burden for welcoming others. Those with this gift open their homes for ministry to happen there. There's a couple in my church who have opened their home every week for over two years for me to teach a Bible study. Those with this gift create space for community and ministry to happen and they serve those in that space like a waiter or waitress. Those with this gift are told to do so without complaint and Scripture tells us they can even welcome angels without knowing simply because of how open they've made their home or space to be. Those with this gift make great deacons.

³⁶ Scripture also describes salvation as healing, because to be saved is to be healed of the most important sickness we face, sin. In fact, the Greek word is the same for “saved” and “healed.”

15. Those with the gift of **intercession** like **AJ Johnson and Connor** have a burden for praying with and for those who don't know what or how to pray. Intercessors have a tendency to hear confession or distress from others and go directly into prayer with them or for them. While all believers are called to intercede; to pray for others, some are especially “natural” at doing it. You could call those with this gift Spirit-filled prayer warriors.

16. Those with the gift of **knowledge** like **Bradley and Corey** have a burden for Scripture. Those with this gift can sometimes receive from the Spirit special insight into someone's life that they wouldn't otherwise know so they can effectively and meaningfully minister to them. Primarily though, those with this gift have a rich knowledge of Scripture and can recall specific passages that are relevant to the situations others face for the purpose of ministering to them; for the purpose of stirring distressed hearts to rest in the grace of God as revealed in his Word.

17. Those with the gift of **leadership** like **Andrew Koon and Trevor** have a burden for accountability. Leaders oversee your Christian life. Spirit-filled leaders are delegators who take responsibility in failure and share rewards in success; and they lead as examples of humility. Those with this gift make great elders.

18. Those with the gift of **martyrdom** have a burden for defending the faith. Martyrdom is listed among other gifts that are useless without love. It may seem strange, since this gift can only be used once, but *through* martyrdom is the faith of witnesses strengthened most fervently. While all believers should be prepared to die for Christ, not all will be put in that position. But those who are have a special place and purpose in the Kingdom.

19. Those with the gift of **mercy** like **Sam** have a burden for compassion. All believers are told to have mercy on those who doubt and bring comfort to the discouraged. The spiritual gift of mercy takes on a focus of compassion. In fact, the Latin root to the English word compassion means “to suffer alongside.” Those with the gift of mercy strive to meet the emotional needs of others and nurture those who are hurting by hurting with them. You could call those with this gift Spirit-filled empaths.

20. Performing **miracles** prepares the hearts of witnesses to hear the Gospel. The Gospel proclamation can come from the miracle-worker or from others who work alongside the miracle-worker. To work miracles and not follow it up with an evangelistic effort is to misuse this gift, like it popularly is in the heretical Word of Faith movement.³⁷

³⁷ See “The American Gospel: Christ Alone” film.

21. Making **music** is listed among other spiritual gifts that require good order. Paul says being filled with the Spirit leads to making melodies in our hearts. One of the ways all believers let the Word dwell among us is through singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs. Worship is a reality for all believers, but those with the gift of music **like Jeremy and Leila** have a burden for using creative musicality to help us worship. Spirit-filled musicians use their ability to guide others in communal worship in ways that take the focus off themselves so it can be on God alone. After all, if a song is not *to* God or *about* God, then it’s not God who’s being worshipped.

22. Those with the gift of **prophecy** have a burden for declaring God’s Word. Those with this gift are led by the Spirit to speak specific words to a specific individual or group on behalf of God. Those with this gift can either foretell or forthtell. Foretelling refers to future events, and the basis for determining whether someone’s gift of prophecy is legitimate is if their future-telling occurs perfectly. Forthtelling refers to describing present circumstances from God’s perspective. Forthtelling is actually the primary form of prophecy in the Bible. Those with this gift never prophesy in contradiction to the Bible. Scripture limits the number of prophecies permitted during a gathering and requires taking turns so that things remain in good order.

23. Those with the gift of **service** **like Braden and Isaiah** have a burden for supporting others. Those with this gift serve without hesitation in seemingly unnoticed, but tangible and necessary ways that free up those with speaking gifts to speak undistracted. Paul frequently names people in his letters who refresh him, help him, or are useful to his ministry. It’s imperative for anyone with a speaking gift to remember that proclaiming the Gospel is a team effort that depends on those who get stuff done “behind-the-scenes.”

24. Those with the gift of **shepherding** **like Andrew Peacock and Dillon** have a burden for protecting God’s people. Those with this gift are loyal to God and protect their church communities from the dangers that seek to devour believers. Shepherds are willingly sacrificial, modeled after Jesus himself. Rather than working with greedy intentions or by exploiting their communities, shepherds work in ways that tend to the needy, poor, and sick even to their own detriment. Pastors who are authoritarians or exploitative of their congregations abuse this gift.³⁸

25. Those with the gift of **teaching** **like Carley and Nicole** have a burden for illuminating Scripture. Those with this gift are able to make the Bible clear so that those they’re teaching can better understand God’s Word. We read in Acts that what described the great teacher Apollos was

³⁸ See “The Rise and Fall of Mars Hill” podcast published by *Christianity Today* for a prominent example of this.

his powerful use of the Scriptures, specifically how he accurately showed Jesus to be the Messiah from the OT. Teaching is not a performance; it’s about content. It’s not a teacher’s job to blow your mind; it’s their job to be faithful to Scripture so you can understand it clearly. Spirit-filled teachers will be held accountable for every word they say. A heavy weight is on them. Those of you who aren’t teachers should actively pray for your Bible teachers.

26. There are three types of speaking in **tongues**.

“Real Languages” – This is when a speaker speaks in their own native tongue and it is heard by someone else in a different language. For example, I have no knowledge of Nigerian. When I preach in English, if a native Nigerian hears my sermon in Nigerian instead of English, that would be an example of this.

Ability to Learn Languages – Certain people just have an ability to learn other languages quickly. These are equipped to share God’s Word in multicultural contexts with great ease. Missionaries with this gift often use it by translating the Bible for a people group who don’t yet have access to God’s Word.

“Angelic Language” – This is when someone speaks in a vocalization that matches no human language. If an interpreter interprets the tongue, then the NT considers the interpretation as prophecy. If no interpreter is present, Scripture tells the tongue speaker to sit down and be quiet. Without interpretation, this form of tongues should be done exclusively in private, because tongues are not chaotic speech; they are orderly manifestations of the Spirit for the benefit of others. Additionally, there are no Scriptural examples of anyone speaking in tongues and then interpreting it themselves. To do so defeats the purpose of speaking in tongues. The purpose of speaking in tongues is that even language barriers can’t stop the Gospel from reaching the nations.

27. The **interpretation of tongues** is required for any *public* speaking of tongues. If the tongue spoken is a real language, then the native hearers or readers are the interpreters. If the tongue spoken is an angelic-vocalization that another person *can* understand, the interpreter must share the prophetic word with all who are present. A person genuinely led to speak in tongues does so in faith, hoping there is someone present to interpret. When an interpreter interprets, they not only edify the Body who hears the prophetic word, but they also affirm to the one who spoke in tongues, affirming that they truly were being led by the Spirit.

28. Those with the gift of **wisdom** have a burden for applying God’s Word. Those with this gift speak with gentleness. While all believers are to fear the Lord, pray for wisdom, and use

wisdom in our decision making, some Spirit-filled individuals have the ability to speak into situations from a God-fearing, righteous perspective.

Conclusion

Alright, are y’all still with me? Information overload, I know! I hope this has given you some insight into what you can do for your church, and also what your church can do for you. This is what the “Body of Christ” imagery in the four main spiritual gift passages refers to. As believers, we are different parts of the same body of Christ; we need one another to function as a body. We need to do our part but we need others to do theirs we well. Just as I need others to use their gifts around me, so also do they need me to use my gifts around them. If we are parts of the same body then we work together with the same mission, even though we have different parts to play.

Now, I want you to be able to keep those worksheets because there’s a lot of information that I hope is useful to you. So, there are little square sheets on your tables, and I’d like you to consolidate the yeses and maybes from your worksheet onto the front side of those square sheets. After filling out those square sheets, please drop them in this box. My plan for these is to pair you with a leader to spur more individualized support. Whether with Laura, Veronica, Maribel, Val, Rachelle, Kyana, Adam, Scott, John Hayes, John Thompson, or myself—we want to pair you with a leader (1) to help you discern what your gifts are if you’re still unsure; (2) to help you get started in using your gifts; or (3) to help you improve upon a gift you’re already using. No matter what stage you’re at, we want to help you because *actively using your spiritual gifts in your local church is one of the best ways to develop maturity in your Christian life.*

If you wrote other people’s names down, I want you to tell them. If someone’s unsure what their gifts are, one of the best ways for them to learn is for their gifts to be affirmed by others. Take the opportunity to be used by God; tell them the gifts you see in them. *And* if you’d like to tell *us* what gifts you see in others, you can do that if you’d like on the back side of those square sheets. Tonight is just the beginning! So make sure to turn those square sheets in before you leave!

Let’s pray—*Lord, we thank you for all the ways you show your grace to us. Thank you for filling us with your Spirit. Help us discern the gifts you have given to us and open up opportunities for us to practice them—room to fail and room to improve—so that our lives would be devoted to doing these good works that you saved us to do. In your son’s name, amen.*