

THE BODY

HOW THE HOLY SPIRIT BUILDS HIS CHURCH

WEEK 7

THE HOLY SPIRIT EQUIPS EVERY MEMBER FOR THE WORK

We don't own our gifts – we steward the thing the Spirit is doing, and our calling is to stay available for whatever he wants to do through us.

BECOMING LIKE JESUS

Jesus equipped his disciples for the work of the kingdom — but not all in the same way, and not all at the same moment. Some were sent out to preach; others to heal; others were given wisdom in a critical exchange they couldn't have manufactured on their own. And in Ephesians 4, Paul looks back on the risen Christ and sees a God who has been distributing gifts ever since. The pattern throughout is consistent: the Spirit distributes as he wills, to whom he wills, and the question he asks of each of us is simply — are you available?

Luke 10:1-3, 17-20

After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of him to every town and place where he was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves." . . .

The seventy-two returned with joy and said, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name." He replied, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven. I have given you authority to trample on snakes and scorpions and to overcome all the power of the enemy; nothing will harm you. However, do not rejoice that the spirits submit to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven."

John 14:12-14

"Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it."

Ephesians 4:3-13

Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his people." So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Across these passages, what do you notice about how Jesus and Paul describe the distribution of gifts? What does it suggest that Jesus sent out seventy-two ordinary people — not just the Twelve — and they returned having done things they couldn't explain by their own ability?

SCRIPTURE

1 CORINTHIANS 12:27-31 | What is Paul saying in these verses? Before you answer, try rewriting these verses in your own words.

MANY GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

There are a few ways to look at the various lists of gifts in the New Testament. Below is one way to compile them. You may have heard some of these gifts called by different names, so feel free to add those names, then mark any of these spiritual gifts you think you might have.

Administration	Healing	Prophecy
Apostleship	Helps / Service	Teaching
Discerning	Hospitality	Tongues
Evangelism	Interpretation of tongues	Word of knowledge
Exhortation	Leadership	Word of wisdom
Faith	Mercy	Working of miracles
Giving	Shepherding	

YOUR LIFE

Paul says “eagerly desire the greater gifts” (v.31). What gifts do you find yourself naturally drawn toward — or perhaps already moving in, even if you wouldn’t have named it a “gift” before?

Can you think of a moment when the Spirit seemed to work through you in a way that surprised you — a conversation, a prayer, a word of encouragement that landed beyond what you could have planned? What was that like?

Is there a gift you tend to admire in others but have never considered might also move through you? What has held you back from being available in that way?

YOUR IDENTITY

How does your false identity (old self) tempt you to either cling to a gift as part of your status, or dismiss yourself as “not gifted enough” to be used by the Spirit?

The Greek word Paul uses — *pneumatika* — is better understood as “things the Spirit does” than “gifts you possess.” How does that shift — from owner to steward, from inventory to availability — change the way you see your role in the body and what God wants to bring through you?

HOME & WORK

This week, where is the Spirit most likely wanting to work through you? . .

home

working

at church

What would it look like to stay genuinely available rather than waiting until you feel “ready” or “qualified”?

Ephesians 4 ties every gift to one purpose: “so that the body of Christ may be built up.” Who in your life right now needs to be built up — encouraged, served, equipped? What is one thing you could do for them this week?

What do you need from the Holy Spirit right now?

Stop for a moment and ask Him, “Spirit, what do I need from you right now?” and write the first thing that comes to mind. If nothing comes to mind, just sit quietly. Do this a couple of times, each time asking the Lord to help you hear whatever He may have to say.

SERMON NOTES

Lord, what do You have for me in this sermon?

What question will I bring to the group from this sermon?

PRAYER LITURGY

Lead *Lord, we are not the source — You are.*

Group *Make us available, not just capable.*

Lead *Where You want to move, may we not be in the way.*

Group *Make us available, not just capable.*

All *Do through us what only You can do. Amen.*