

Centripetal Faith

Text: 1 Corinthians 12:1-13

Warming Up

Questions:

1. *What is something that you have found difficult about being a part of a church?*
2. *What is something that you have found beneficial about being a part of a church?*

Digging In

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

Questions:

1. *Why do you think Paul felt the need to use the word “one” so many times in this particular passage?*
2. *What are some implications of all of us being baptized by the **Spirit**, and not by someone or something else?*

A lot of times we think of spiritual gifts as being jobs we are given to do. But here in 1 Corinthians it is the *church* that is our spiritual gift.

Question: *Why do you think it might be important to see the church as a gift of God’s Spirit?*

Read **1 Corinthians 12:4-11**.

Questions:

1. *Why do you think Paul feels the need to specify that these gifts are **for the common good**?*
2. *How does Paul help us differentiate our sameness and difference in this passage?*
3. *Why do you think Paul feels the need to emphasize our “sameness”?*
4. *Why do you think Paul feels the need to emphasize our “difference”?*

Read **1 Corinthians 12:1-3**.

Paul reminds this early church that they were *pagans*. It is the word *ethne*, which is translated as “nations” just about everywhere else, including in Jesus’ “Great Commission” (Matthew 28:19-20). Here is Paul reminding them that they used to live by the way of nations, which protect their borders, differentiate between “us” and “them”, and only seek the good of the “us”. Paul says that this is an idol. Instead, we are given the spiritual gift of Good News to share, which is “Jesus is Lord”: Lord of the whole world and every person.

Questions:

1. *What could be damaging to our proclamation of the Good News if we attached our faith to our national flag?*
2. *Based on the passage we’ve just considered, what do you imagine these early Christians were uninformed about regarding the gifts of the Spirit?*
3. *In what ways do you feel Christians today are “uninformed” about the gifts of the Spirit?*

Sending Out

While 1 Corinthians 12 clearly lays out knowledge, healing, speaking other languages, etc. as gifts of the Spirit, it is in the context of Good News, Good Work, and Good Community being the primary gifts of the Spirit.

Questions:

1. *In what ways have you experienced sharing the Good News as a gift?*
2. *In what ways have you experienced good work as a gift?*
3. *In what ways have you experienced the community of faith as a gift?*
4. *Which of these three gifts of the Spirit—Good News, Good Work, Good Community—would you like to grow in more?*

Closing

Take a moment in silence to come before God and ask the question, “*What word or phrase or idea or moment does God want me to remember from this morning and carry with me this week?*”

Close with prayer.