



FIRING ON ALL CYLINDERS

I Corinthians

With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility

Spider-Man's famous catchphrase, taken from his Uncle Ben, is "With great power comes great responsibility." This phrase has motivated the character since the very beginning of his story in the comics from the 1960s.

Peter Parker is just a teenager who gets bitten by a spider and gains incredible powers. Through hard lessons, he learns the weight of responsibility that comes with them. In the movie *Captain America: Civil War*, Peter Parker is introduced, and while he doesn't say the exact phrase, he expresses the same idea in a different way: "When you can do the things that I can, but you don't, and then the bad things happen? They happen because of you." The whole idea behind his character is that if you have the power and ability to do something, it's your moral obligation to use that power for good.

Christians are the same way. If you have put your hope and faith in Jesus, trusted in His death, burial, and resurrection for the salvation of your sins, and truly repented—turning from sin and toward Him—you are a born-again believer. And with that, you have the Holy Spirit living inside you.

The Holy Spirit is our Helper and Guide, but as we'll explore today, He also gives gifts. Every Christian has unique gifts that God has given them, and today, we'll take time to explore what those are. But more importantly, we need to recognize that we are called to **use these gifts**.

With great power (the gifts) comes the great responsibility to use them to glorify God.

Ice Breaker

If you could be given one thing for free, what would it be and why?

Day 1— Get It

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1–11.

1. What kind of objects did the Corinthians worship (v. 2)?
2. Who can never say “Jesus is accursed” (v. 3)?
3. What three essentially synonymous categories within the church demonstrate variety (v. 4-6)?
4. Why does God give manifestations of the Spirit (v. 7)?
5. Which nine gifts are given by the Spirit (vv. 8-10)?
6. Who decides which Christians get which gifts (v. 11)?

Day 2 — Today's Theme: Not Me, But Him

Read 1 Corinthians 12:1–3.

There was division in the Corinthian church between the wealthy and poor believers in Jesus. Before they would gather together for a time of communion, the wealthy Christians would gather together to stuff themselves with food and “drown” themselves in drinks while the poor would remain hungry. The wealthy were being selfish when they should have shared their food and drink with the poor. I have often visited lunches at our local schools where I would sit at a table and see a student without any food. I would ask them where their lunch was, and they would say that they were “not hungry” when the reality is that they were hungry, and they didn't have food or money to buy lunch. As students who love and follow Jesus, you need to look at those around you and see how you can share with those in need.

- 7. Why do you think it's easy to take pride in our talents and achievements?**

- 8. How can we shift our mindset to recognize that everything we have comes from God?**

- 9. Paul says that no one can truly declare “Jesus is Lord” except through the Holy Spirit. What do you think this means? How does the Holy Spirit help us recognize and truly follow Jesus?**

- 10. Before knowing Christ, the Corinthians were misled by false beliefs and idols. What are some “modern-day idols” or false beliefs that can distract us from trusting in God? How can we stay focused on the truth through the Holy Spirit?**

Day 3 — Today's Theme: I Am Iron Man

Read 1 Corinthians 21:4–6.

For anyone who knows me well, you've probably heard me talk about Tony Stark. Tony has had quite a crazy journey, and I won't be able to dive into all of it right now, but he is a billionaire who invents a high-tech suit and becomes the hero known as Iron Man.

The cool thing is—yes, the suit is awesome—but on its own, it's just a hunk of metal. A very impressive hunk of metal, sure, but what really makes it special is what powers it. Tony was able to create a miniature arc reactor (like an infinite battery) that not only powers the suit but also keeps shrapnel from reaching his heart—a story for another day.

The point is, without the arc reactor, the suit is just a lifeless hunk of metal. It's the arc reactor that makes it special and gives it power.

The Holy Spirit works the same way in us. On our own, we're just ordinary people. But with God, through His Holy Spirit, we are made new and given abilities we could never have on our own. Each spiritual gift looks different, but they are all given by God.

God has designed each of us uniquely, giving to us in different ways, yet all gifts come from Him. Whether your gift is teaching, serving, encouraging, or something else, it's important to remember that all abilities come from the same Spirit, working together for God's purpose. Just as a body has different parts that serve different functions, we each play a vital role in God's kingdom.

11. Have you ever thought about spiritual gifts before? Do you know yours?

12. How have you been blessed by the spiritual gifts of others?

13. Paul reminds us that different gifts all come from the same Spirit and work together for God's purpose. How can we encourage and appreciate the gifts in others instead of comparing ourselves or feeling inadequate?

Day 4 — Today's Theme: What about Today?

Read 1 Corinthians 12:7–11.

God gives every Christian special gifts, not to make anyone seem more important, but to help others and strengthen the church. These gifts have been seen in the Bible and are still seen today.

Paul teaches that all Christians are spiritual for two key reasons:

1. The Holy Spirit helps us believe and say, “Jesus is Lord.”
2. God gives every believer unique gifts through the Holy Spirit.

Before talking about the different kinds of gifts, Paul makes it clear: Spiritual gifts aren't about status—they are about serving others and bringing glory to God.

In the Bible we see spiritual gifts presented in three ways:

1. **Serving** — Helping and caring for others in practical ways.
2. **Speaking** — Teaching, preaching, or sharing God's truth with others.
3. **Sign** — Miraculous gifts like healing or speaking in different languages.

What About Sign Gifts?

We believe that miraculous gifts (like tongues, healing, and prophecy) were very important in Bible times to show that God was at work. Today, these “sign gifts” can still happen—we never limit God's power—but we believe they are seen less often and should be approached with caution.

Even though God still does amazing things, the Bible is our final authority. That means we should always check what people say and do against God's Word to know if it's true.

Our Focus at VBC

At VBC, we care about unity, biblical teaching, and wisdom. We respect different views, but we stay focused on what the Bible teaches. Our goal is to grow in faith, serve others, and build up God's church together and we believe spiritual gifts do the same! ¹

14. What spiritual gifts do you have that God has given you? (Here are the examples given in scripture: Prophecy, Serving, Teaching, Encouraging, Giving, Leadership, Mercy, Word of Wisdom, Word of Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miraculous Powers, Discerning Spirits, Speaking in Tongues, Interpreting Tongues, Helps)

15. Is there a form of service you sense God is calling you towards? What would be your next step in that direction?

16. Paul lists more gifts than just the ones the Corinthians thought were impressive. What does this say about serving in low-visibility roles?

17. The power to succeed in serving God always comes from God in the first place. How can we remember to serve in God's power rather than our own?

¹ <https://villagebible.church/sign-gifts-distinctive/>

This study was written by Ethan Wentzlaff, adapted from the adult lesson by Pastor David Wood. www.villagebible.church/students.