

Summit Woods Baptist Church  
First Corinthians Sermon Study Equipping Class

1 Corinthians 12:27-31

❖ Day 1

Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-31.

For these lessons, the sermon text is provided in a format that visually helps display the structure of the paragraph or section of text. The main verbs are underlined. Generally, the main indicative clauses remain to the left, and the supporting clauses are either directly underneath when they have equal priority to what comes before, or are tabbed to the right when the clause supports, develops, or draws a conclusion from a neighboring clause.

<sup>27</sup>Now you are the body of Christ  
and individually members of it.

<sup>28</sup>And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers,  
then miracles, then gifts of healing, helping, administrating, and various kinds of tongues.

<sup>29</sup>Are all apostles?

Are all prophets?

Are all teachers?

Do all work miracles?

<sup>30</sup>Do all possess gifts of healing?

Do all speak with tongues?

Do all interpret?

<sup>31</sup>But earnestly desire the higher gifts.

And I will show you a still more excellent way.

1. The 'now' at the beginning of verse 27 indicates that Paul is picking back up from a previous statement. What statement from the last few paragraphs is Paul connecting back to?
2. Who is the 'you' in verse 27?
3. Is that 'you' corporate or individual, and what in the text informs your answer?
4. Summarize what we learned about "the body" from verses 12-26.

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5. Though our human nature can be tempted to focus on the gifts listed, what is the most important part of verse 28 and why?

❖ Day 2

Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 again.

6. What is the expected answer to Paul's rhetorical questions in verses 29 and 30?
  
7. Compare the list of gifts mentioned in verse 28 to those mentioned in 29 and 30. Which gifts are mentioned in one but not the other?
  - a. By not asking a similar rhetorical question about helping and administrating, is Paul then implying that everyone has those gifts?
  
  - b. What should we remember concerning the various lists of gifts in this letter and other letters?
  
8. Are some gifts superior to others? What in this text informs your answer?
  
9. What would make some gifts "higher" than others? (Hint: Look at 12:7 and 14:12.)
  
10. In verse 28, Paul sets apart three gifts with ordinal rankings. How might your answer to question 9 help you understand why he specially designates these three?

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❖ Day 3

Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-31 again.

11. What is the “way” Paul initially commends in verse 31a?
  
12. What does Paul imply about this “way” in verse 31b?
  
13. What “way” had the Corinthians been practicing?
  
14. What one key word summarizes the “more excellent way” that Paul will present in the next chapter?
  
15. The Greek word translated ‘earnestly desire’ in verse 31 speaks of having a deep commitment to and concern for something. What might it look like in a believer’s life to so “earnestly desire the higher gifts”?
  - a. Given that both the ‘you’ in verse 27 and the ‘desire’ in verse 31 are plural, how does this impact your understanding of Paul’s instructions?
  
  - b. Should one person’s “desire [for] the higher gifts” be fulfilled if *another* person in the body manifests the “higher gift”? Why or why not?

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16. How do you think Paul intends for the Corinthians to respond to this week's passage?

17. How should we respond?

In preparation for Sunday, pray that we would have a right understanding of the spiritual gifts and a full manifestation of them within our body so that we will all together be equipped for ministry.