

## First Corinthians 12:4-11

### 12:4

**There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit.**

διαίρεσεις δε            χαρισμάτων            εἰσιν            το            δε            αὐτο            πνεῦμα  
Now differences            of gifts            there are            but            the            same            spirit

**“Different kinds”** – διαίρεσεις - Means “distribution, difference, variety, distinctions, apportioning, dealing outs”. The focus of this word is on the distribution or apportioning variety. It is used nowhere else in the NT. In verse 11 διαίρουσιν (from the same root) is used and refers to the gifts being distributed among different people rather than referring to the different gifts. So again, the focus is on the distribution of variety to different people not so much on the difference itself.

**“of gifts”** - χαρισμάτων - from “**χαρισμα**” or “**charisma**”. This word is unique with Paul (16 of 17 NT uses are Paul’s) and is used only in Greek in the NT. It is only used by one other person and that is Peter in 1 Peter 4:10. We can assume Peter got the term from Paul. Paul uses the word often in 1 Corinthians and Romans and once in each 1 Timothy and 2 Timothy.

- In 1 Corinthians 7:7 and the word “χαρισμα” “charisma” or “gift” is translated “spiritual gift.”
- In Romans 1:11 the word “spiritual” or “πνευματικον” is added as an adjective to make it “spiritual gift”.
- In 1 Cor. 7:7 the word “χαρισμα” or “charisma” refers to an ability or a given capacity to live life single.
- In Romans 6:23 it refers to the gift of salvation.
- “χαρισμα” or “charisma” has at its root the word “χαρις” “charis” or “grace” which communicates the idea of something free, not earned, unmerited. It is something you could never have paid for or deserved. It is favor given by the one doing the giving.
- “χαρισμα” then is the favor or gift one receives without having shown any merit.
- “χαρισμα” is better translated “favors” or “graces”

So 12:1 says “spirituals” or “spiritual things” or “spiritual people”. There is no word for “gifts” in 12:1. And 12:4 says “favors” or “graces”. The verse 12:4 would read:

***“the diverse dealing out of favors there are but the same spirit”***

There is a different word for “gift” in the Greek:

1. doma (1x) – present or gift
2. dosis (1x)– gift
3. dorea (11x) – gratuity, gift
4. dorema (1x)– bestowment, gift
5. doron (10x) – sacrificial present

None of these are used in 1 Cor. 12-14. The singular of these words often refers to salvation, righteousness, eternal life or Jesus Christ. (Rom. 5:15-17; 2 Cor. 9:15; Eph. 2:8; 3:7; 4:7; Heb. 6:4; James 1:17)

### 12:5

**There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.**

και διαίρεσεις            διακονιών            εἰσιν            και            ο            αὐτος            κυριος:  
and differences            of ministries            there are            and            the            same            Lord

“different kinds” or διαίρεσεις is the same word as above

“of service” is “διακονιων” which is the genitive (“of . . .”) plural of the word διακονια or “diakonia” which means “administration, minister, office or service”. This comes from the word “διακονος” where we get our word “deacon”. The emphasis here is service, aid, and ministry. It describes the servant in relationship to his work or service not in his relationship to people. It is interesting that Jesus is the servant and this phase of these three parts is associated with the Lord Jesus. This is the same word used to describe Jesus ministry and the ministry of his followers.

## 12:6

**There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.**

και	διαίρεσεις	ενεργημάτων	εισιν	ο	δε	αυτος	θεος
and	differences	of operations	there are	but	the	same	God

ο ενεργων	τα παντα	εν	πασιν
operating	all things	in	all

“different kinds” or διαίρεσεις is the same word as above

“of working” is “ενεργημάτων” which is a noun and is a rare use of this word as a noun. The verb use of this word means effective working. It means that something is accomplished by the effort of the work done. The English word “energy” can be seen in this Greek word “ενεργημάτων” or “energmaton”. (The Greek word for work is “ergon”)

“the same God works” uses the Greek word “ενεργων” or “energon” which is present (see box below) active and means “to perform, to be at work, to be effective, to produce”.

Realize that pagan gods were worshipped by serving the gods with sacrificial offerings and dedication to their sanctuary. The contrast is striking when we realize that Paul is telling these converted pagans that the Christian God serves and works gifts in his people in order to serve his people.

### INTERESTING NOTE:

The present tense means . . .conveys continuous or habitual action.

1. Continuous or uninterrupted action – John 15:4  
“ . . .unless it [continuously] abides. . .unless you [continuously] abide. . .”
2. Action that happens over and over again – Matthew 10:1  
“ . . .to [repeatedly] cast them out, and to [over and over again] heal every kind of disease.”
3. Customary or habitual action – Matthew 7:12  
“ . . . you [customarily] want people to [customarily] treat you.”

**Helping Words:** *continuously, repeatedly, over and over again, uninterruptedly, constantly, keep on, customarily, habitually.*

12:7

**Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.**

εκαστω δε διδοται η φανερωσις του πνευματος προς το συμφερον.  
but to each one is given the manifestation of the spirit to the profiting

***This is Paul's thesis statement.***

Verses 8-10 is an illustration of this thesis statement.

Verse 11 is this same thesis statement restated.

The Greek sentence begins with “each one” in the emphatic position which means this is the emphasis of the thesis statement.

“Each one” has something from the Holy Spirit. The emphasis here is not on the fact (1 Peter 4:10) that each person has a gift or a manifestation but on the fact that the Holy Spirit gives each person a gift which is stated to continue proving the wide diversity of the manifestations.

Important to notice that the word “χαρισμα” or “charisma” translated usually as “gifts” or “spiritual gifts” is not in this sentence. Paul is not saying “each one is given a gift” but instead says “each one is given the “φανερωσις του πνευματος” or “manifestation of the Spirit”.

“**manifestation**” or “φανερωσις” “phanerosis” means a “making clear, or a manifestation, setting forth plainly.” The genitive is probably objective (*The International Critical Commentary*, Driver, Plummer and Briggs editors, *First Corinthians* by Robertson and Plummer, T & T Clark LTD, Edinburgh, Scotland, 1999, p.264) which means it would say:

- “the operation which manifests the Spirit” (objective) and not:
- “the manifestation which the Spirit produces” (subjective)

The point remains though the emphasis is on the Holy Spirit manifesting among people and not on the gifts or favors (χαρισμα). Thus the reason for using “manifestations” instead of “gifts”. “Manifestations” focuses on the Holy Spirit while concern for the “gift” focuses on the one who has or receives the gift.

“**for the common good**” translates “προς το συμφερον” “to the profiting” or “for the profiting”. The manifestation of the Spirit is through the diverse individuals but it is not for the individuals. The diverse manifestations of the Spirit are for the group, the union, the cause.

This verse has said:

- The Spirit manifests
- Each one manifests the Spirit (emphasis here is still on diversity of the Spirit and not on everyone having a gift from God.)
- Now it says the reason the Spirit manifests diversely among each one: for the profiting or benefit of the whole or the group that is in union.
- Once again the point is unity with diversity. Why is there diversity among a unified group? To strengthen the group and to cause it to succeed.

## The List of Nine Manifestations of the Spirit

### How to Categorize or Classify these Nine Gifts

All of these have been suggested as ways of organizing the gifts in this list:

1. The list is written in descending order of value (Bruce)
2. Four Groups (Jones)
  - a. Intelligible Utterance – wisdom, knowledge, prophecy
  - b. Power – faith, healings, miracles
  - c. Spiritual Discernment – discerning of spirits
  - d. Ecstatic utterance – tongues, interpretation
3. Three Divisions (Brewster)
  - a. Illumination – wisdom, knowledge, discernment
  - b. Action – faith, miracles, healings
  - c. Communication – prophecy, tongues, interpretation
4. Three Groups
  - a. Gifts of Instruction – wisdom, knowledge
  - b. Gifts of Supernatural Power – faith, healings, miracles
  - c. Gifts of Inspired Utterance – prophecy, discerning prophecies, tongues, interpretation of tongues
5. Charismatic List
  - a. Gifts of Revelation – wisdom, knowledge, discerning of spirits
  - b. Gifts of Power – faith, miracles, healings
  - c. Gifts of Inspiration – prophecy, tongues, interpretation of tongues
6. Pairs of Gifts
  - a. Tongues and interpretation
  - b. Prophecy and discernment of spirits (spirits of the prophets)
  - c. Wisdom and knowledge
  - d. Healing and miracles
7. Peter's Classification from 1 Peter 4:11 "If anyone speaks., let it be as words coming from God; if anyone ministers, let it be out of the strength God provides"
  - a. Speaking Gifts – wisdom, knowledge, prophecy, discerning, tongues, interpretation
  - b. Action – faith, healing, miracles,
8. The list is random – a couple of special named gifts for Corinth: wisdom and knowledge; a couple of typical manifestations like faith, healing, miracles; a couple of gifts that are causing the Corinthians problems: prophecy, tongues, interpretation
9. The list is not systematic, it is simply a sampling
10. The list is not exhaustive; the list could have been much longer, possibly endless.
11. Paul is grabbing at a list that is truly diverse to prove his point
12. Paul's List taken from Paul's clues in his writing
  - a. The third (faith) and eighth (tongues) gifts start with a different word for "another".
  - b. The first two – wisdom and knowledge are important to Corinthian thinking.
  - c. Numbers three – seven (five gifts) all have a supernatural element
  - d. The last two – are the problem and the cause of these chapters

### 12:8

**To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit**

ω μεν γαρ δια του πνευματος διδοται λογος σοφιας  
for to one through the spirit is given a word of wisdom

αλλω δε λογος γνωσεως κατα το αυτο πνευμα,  
and to another a word of knowledge according to the same spirit

1. **Word of wisdom** “λογος σοφιας”

“logos” – The basic translation of “logos” is “word.” The meaning of “logos” was “rational expression” and “reasoned thought.” John uses “logos” to express the eternal Word of God that manifested as the man Jesus Christ. The text of the systematic writings of the Greeks concerning science, mathematics, history, geography were called “logos” (meaning a reasoned account. In fact, Aristotle spoke of “logos” as the speech or message itself and said the speech (“logos”) was made up of three important parts when he said:

*“There are three kinds of persuasive means furnished by the logos: those in the character of the speaker, those in how the hearer is disposed, and those in the logos itself, through its demonstrating or seeming to demonstrate.” - Aristotle*

“Sophia”

2. **Word of knowledge** “λογος γνωσεως”

“logos”

“gnosis”

**12:9**

**to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit**

ετερω πιστις εν τω αυτω πνευματι αλλω δε χαρισματα  
to another faith by the same spirit and to another gifts

ιαματων εν τω ενι πνευματι,  
of cures by the one spirit

3. **faith** “πιστις”

“pistis”

4. **gifts of healing** “χαρισματα ιαματων”

“charismata”

“iamaton”

**12:10**

**to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues.**

αλλω δε ενεργηματα δυναμεων αλλω [δε] προφητεια  
and to another operations of powers to another and prophecy

αλλω [δε] διακρισεις πνευματων, ετερω γενη γλωσσων  
and to another discernings of spirits to another kinds of tongues

αλλω δε ερμηνεια γλωσσων  
and to another interpretation of tongues

5. **miraculous powers** “ενεργηματα δυναμεων”  
 “energamata” – means “workings”  
 “dunameon” – “miracles”
6. **prophecy** “προφητεια”  
 “propheteia” – According to 1 Cor. 14:3 this gift is used to build up, encourage and comfort believers. This gift is mentioned in the NT several times: 1 Cor. 11:2-5; 12:28-29; 13:2; 13:8-9; 14:1-40; Acts 2:17-18; Acts 11:27-28; Acts 19:6; Acts 21:9-11; Romans 12:6; 1 Thes. 5:19-21; 1 Tim. 1:18; 1 Tim. 4:14; 1 John 4:1 There are three views as to what this gift is referring to:  
**a.** Words, thoughts or revelation that God supernaturally reveals to a person’s spirit/soul/mind. These thoughts from God are then spoken publicly in an understandable language to the body of Christ. This is the declaration of that which cannot be known by natural means. It comes from God and is the forth telling of the will of God concerning the past, present or the future.  
**b.** Some consider this to be the same or equal to the OT gift of the prophets. This is difficult to accept because that would mean people in the Corinthian church were speaking words that were divine and without error equivalent to the OT Scripture and Paul’s teaching. 1 Corinthians 14:29 says that other prophets “should weigh carefully what is said” in the prophetic message. So, for this reason, and other reasons, this does not seem to be the correct understanding of this gift.  
**c.** A third view equates “prophecy” with today’s “preaching” and “teaching” of the written word of God. This does not seem to be an acceptable interpretation of this gift since it not even the same thing. For example, in Corinth the people were receiving the words with their gift of prophecy, but in today’s church we read the text of Scripture, study and present the message. Indeed, a modern speaker could move into the use of the gift of prophecy during the message they are teaching or preaching, but a sermon or Bible teaching is not prophecy.
7. **discernings of spirits** “διακρισεις πνευματων”  
 “diakriseis” – means “judging between things, distinguish, discerning”  
 “pneuma” – means “current of air, breath, breeze. Used to refer to spirit of men or man’s soul, man’s disposition. Also refers to angels, demons or God’s Spirit.  
 This gift appears to be the ability to distinguish a spiritual manifestation as being from the Holy Spirit or demonic. It is possible that some people may think they are manifesting the Holy Spirit or think they are following the Holy Spirit when in reality they are being led astray by deceiving spirits. Examples of this can be seen in these references:
- Acts 16:16-18 – “*She kept this up for many days. Finally Paul became so annoyed that he turned around and said to the spirit, “In the name of Jesus Christ I command you to come out of her!” At that moment the spirit left her.*”
  - 1 Cor. 14:29 – “*Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said.*”
  - 1 Thess. 5:20-21 – “*Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good.*”
  - 1 John 4:1 – “*Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world.*”
8. **kinds of tongues** “γενη γλωσσων”  
 “yenos” – means “a generation, kind, stock”. Translated as “kind, kindred, offspring, nation, stock, born, diversity, country, countryman, generation.”  
 “glossa” it means tongue as in the organ and by implication it means language
9. **interpretation of tongues** “ερμηνεια γλωσσων”  
 “hermeneia” – “interpretation, translation. It means to interpret what has been spoken obscurely by others.  
 “glossa” it means tongue as in the organ and by implication it means language

## 12:11

**All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines**

παντα δε ταυτα ενεργει το εν και το αυτο πνευμα  
and all these things operates the one and the same spirit

διαιρουν ιδια εκαστω καθως βουλεται  
distributing separately to each one as he purposes

**“One and the same Spirit”** – pagan deities had a variety of gods that each possessed their own gift or special supernatural power. In Christianity the same God has all the gifts/powers. These gifts/powers have been distributed not among the gods, but among the people.