

Series: Some Assembly Required

Scripture and Background Information for January 18-24.

To prepare for your group discussion each week, group members should use the **Community Group Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scripture below.

This week we'll be looking at **1Corinthians 12:4-7**. Paul wrote the Epistle to the Church in Corinth since the church had some inner-life problems. With his Epistle, Paul addresses these problems. Reading through the Epistle shows that Corinth's major problem was that they did not live out what they said they believed. Paul responds to each issue that accompanied the major problem with a reminder to the gospel. He calls out: "See each area of your life (family, friends, work...) through the lens of the gospel!"

Background for 1Cor 12:4-7:

Our text centers on Paul's discussion about the church's problems concerning their relationship to each other in the church. The church believed in a new creation by Christ, spoke about a unified body in Christ, and a community lead by Christ. Contrary to their beliefs, the church was divided through selfishness and ignorant behavior toward other members.

In Chapter 12, Paul addresses the problem by showing them that people in the church have different gifts. Earlier in the Epistle, Paul addresses the partiality which had taken place in the church. People were grouping up under different preachers. The different gifts seemed to cause similar divisions in the church. Paul shows that these differences are good and necessary and that all are connected and needed by one Spirit, by one Lord, and by one God. The gospel unites the church and does not divide the church. The different gifts are required to supplement each other in the church.

Paul also shows that the Spirit gives every believer received a gift. The Spirit gives gifts, but not only gifts, but he also gives purpose. He gives gifts for the common good. Paul shows that all that believers received from God is a gift for them, to benefit others. Thus, the gospel does not only unite believers, but it gives them a purpose to serve other people. The gospel makes believers participants of God's story. The Spirit divides the gifts so that believers can work and participate in God's story.

Remember, although our immediate action always goes to our neighbor, God distributed the gifts to become participants of his larger story. Sometimes, believers lack purpose in their life, because they do not live life for others and the church but only for themselves.

Scriptures for upcoming weeks:

January 25-31

Genesis 1-3

February 1-7

Revelation 21-22