

1 Koinonia

- Focusing on what is really important!

2 1 Corinthians 12

- Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant. You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit. (1 Cor 12:1–3 NIV)

3 1 Corinthians 12

- There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men. (1 Cor 12:4–6 NIV)
- Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. (1 Cor 12:7 NIV)

4 1 Corinthians 12

- To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, 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. (1 Cor 12:8–10 NIV)

5 1 Corinthians 12

- All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines. (1 Cor 12:11 NIV)
- The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. (1 Cor 12:12 NIV)

6 Introduction

- What do the following have in common?
 - Pumping our own gas.
 - Assembling our own furniture.
 - Booking our own travel.
- In years past, other people used to do this work for pay.
- But now we do it ourselves, and it can take a lot of time and energy of our own.
- Craig Lambert has written a fascinating book called *Shadow Work: The Unpaid, Unseen Jobs That Fill Your Day*.

7 Introduction

- According to Craig Lambert,
 - Shadow works also include new duties at our offices, which are constantly being downsized.
 - At home, we go to the Internet for guidance on our medical problems, and we spend countless hours coordinating our kids' extracurricular activities.
 - Over the past two decades, as technology has taken off, new tasks have been crammed into our already full to-do lists.

8 Introduction

- Sure, some might say that this DIY (Do-it-yourself) approach is empowering.
- But Lambert urges us to look at the consequences of all this “shadow work” or self-service.
- "Shadow work makes us not just busier, but exhausted and isolated," writes Ann Hulbert in a review of Lambert's book.

9 Introduction

- According to Ms. Hulbert, . . .
 - We are interacting more with our screens than with other humans, and we are doing it at unreasonable hours.
- So then, how are we actually spending our time?
- If the truth be known, a lot of it is devoted to shadow work.

10 Introduction

- Elizabeth Grace Saunders has written an article in the Harvard Business Review with the title: “Are you proud of how you're spending your time?”
- She urges us to stop doing what seems to be most urgent, and “start intentionally investing in what's most important.”

11 Introduction

- According to Saunders, there's a difference between what is most urgent and what is most important.
- Saunders encourages us to prioritize family and friends, take vacations, stay healthy and finally know ourselves.

- “In my experience,” she writes, “it’s so easy to lose track of who you are, what you enjoy, where you are in life and where you’re going, unless you purposely and intentionally take time to reflect.”

12 Spirit Work

- The apostle Paul has the very same concern, which is why he writes the Christians in Corinth about the gifts of the Spirit.
- He wants them to be proud of how they are spending their time, and to make sure that they’re focusing on the “Spirit work” that they can accomplish as members of the body of Christ.
- One of the dangers of shadow work is that it distracts us from Spirit work.

13 Spirit Work

- In fact, according to 1 Cor. 12:2, we have in the past been accustomed to distractions—even those of demonic origins.
- No doubt, we are still “enticed and led astray”—maybe not by Greco-Roman idols, but by
 - emails,
 - text messages,
 - phone apps,
 - social media,
 - websites, and
 - other seemingly important task.

14 Spirit Work

- So then what is Spirit Work?
 - It is using whatever gifts, talents, and resources the Lord has given us to strengthen and buildup the body of Christ—the Church.
 - However, if we are led astray and become distracted, the church underachieves because it needs all the parts to work not just a few.
 - No one has all the gifts, but the Lord has arranged them in a way to help produce interdependency and unity.
 - So for a church to thrive all of the parts of the Body will need to be faithful and participate in the koinonia of the fellowship.

15 Koinonia

- Koinonia (coy NO nyah) is a Greek word, which means communion, joint participation—the voluntary sharing of what one has for the good of the community.
- It identifies the idealized state of fellowship and unity that should exist within the Christian church, the Body of Christ.
- The first use of this word appears in Acts 2:42-47,
 - They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship (koinonia), to the breaking of bread and to prayer. (Acts 2:42 NIV)
 - All the believers were together and had everything in common. Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. (Acts 2:44–45 NIV)

16 Koinonia

- Most of the time in the New Testament, koinonia is translated as fellowship.
- But it can also be translated as . . .
 - contribution (Rom 15:26)
 - participation (1 Cor. 10:16, and Phil 1:5)
 - sharing (2 Cor. 8:4, 2 Cor 9:13, Philemon 6, and Heb 13:16)

17 Koinonia

- If we want to know what koinonia looks like? (We can look at the “one another” phrases found in the Bible.)
 - We are to be devoted to one another (Romans 12:10).
 - Honor one another (Romans 12:10).
 - Live in harmony with one another (Romans 12:16; 1 Peter 3:8).
 - Accept one another (Romans 15:7).
 - Serve one another in love (Galatians 5:13).

18

- Be kind and compassionate to one another (Ephesians 4:32).
- Admonish one another (Colossians 3:16).
- Encourage one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13).
- Spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24).

- Offer hospitality (1 Peter 4:9).
- Love one another (1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:11; 3:23; 4:7; 4:11-12)

19 **Koinonia**

- Christian fellowship is a key aspect of the Christian life.
- Believers in Christ are to come together in love, faith, and encouragement.
- If you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any fellowship (koinonia) with the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and purpose. (Phil 2:1–2 NIV)

20 **Koinonia**

- Koinonia is being in agreement with one another, being united in purpose, and serving alongside each other.
- Our koinonia with each other is based on our common koinonia with Jesus Christ.
- If we claim to have fellowship (koinonia) with him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship (koinonia) with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. (1 John 1:6–7 NIV)

21 **The Epistle to Philemon**

- The epistle that the Apostle Paul wrote to Philemon is the shortest book in the New Testament and only contains 25 verses.
- It is essentially a personal letter written by Paul asking Philemon to take back his runaway slave (Onesimus) and do so without malice towards him because now he is a brother in the faith.
- But before Paul says this, he gives Philemon the following exhortation.
- I pray that you may be active in sharing (koinonia) your faith, so that you will have a full understanding (epignosis) of every good thing we have in Christ. (Philem 1:6 NIV)

22 **Koinonia**

- I pray that you may be active in fellowshiping—the living out your faith with fellow believers, so that you will have a deep understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. (Philem 1:6 SBT)
- This relationship between koinonia and epignosis is very important.
- How we interact in the body of Christ directly affects our ability to know the deep things of God.
- In other words, if we faithfully use our gifts, talents, and resources building up the common good of the household of faith, we will gain a greater understanding to the will of God.

23 **Koinonia & Epignosis**

- So then, let us not become distracted by life's busyness or the chasing after of worldly vanities.
- Let us keep ourselves in fellowship and build up the body of Christ—using our gifts, talents, resources, and faith.
- For when we do this, it is not only to people in the church we are blessing, but we are expressing love to Christ directly.
- This is why we grow in our understanding of God because we are fellowshiping with Him.

24 **Koinonia & Epignosis**

- Love for Jesus is to obey His commands and His commandment is to love one another.
- To those who do, Jesus promises to that person something very special.
- He says, "I too will love him and show myself to him." (John 14:21 NIV)
- Jesus also says, "My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him." (John 14:23 NIV)
- So what do both Jesus and the Father promise to those who love them? Is it not koinonia—communion, fellowship, and the sharing of love?

25 **Conclusion**

- So then, on this Valentine's Day weekend, let us recognize and know that love from heaven will overflow in our lives as we koinonia not with the world, but with God's holy people of faith.
- As we do, our koinonia with the Lord will grow and our knowledge and intimacy with the Him will know no bounds.
- If fact the Apostle Paul made this his prayer,
 - And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless until the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ — to the glory and praise of God. (Phil 1:9–11 NIV)