

November 29 Answers

- 1) Paul now addressed the issue of spiritual **gifts** in the church. Paul explained spiritual gifts in terms of four key concepts: (1) **Unity**: although there are many believers in the church, we are all united into one spiritual body by virtue of being in Christ. (2) **Interdependence**: each believer in the church belongs to the other believers. (3) **Diversity**: believers in the church do not all have the same spiritual gift, for if they did, where would the body of Christ be? (4) **Purpose**: the Spirit gives gifts to each believer so that the body of Christ might be fully equipped for the work of the ministry. Above all, Paul wanted the Corinthians to use their gifts in a spirit of **love**. If we love others: (1) We will be **patient** and kind, not **envying** what they have or boasting about what we have. (2) We won't be condescending or **rude**, and if things don't go our way, we won't be **resentful** or angry. (3) We will never condone wrongdoing, but rather affirm and rejoice in the **truth**. (4) We will bear, believe, hope and endure **all** things, and when we feel like we've gone the extra mile, we will **keep** going. Paul concluded his discussion of spiritual gifts by emphasizing the importance of **edification**—building others up in the faith. He did this by contrasting the gift of **tongues** (various languages) with the gift of **prophecy** (telling forth the truth). Although every gift is useful, the “greater” gifts are those which **edify** the whole body (1 Cor 14:5). When we use our gift, our focus should be on helping others, not pleasing or glorifying ourselves.