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The Unity and Diversity of Spiritual Gifts 12: 1-31a



Just when you think that **Paul** has run out of things which unite the Church, **he** reaches back into **his** seemingly limitless resources and brings out yet another - **the gifts** that **the Ruach Ha'Kodesh** gives to every believer. This particular chapter can be of great help to believers today in their effort to build unity within their fellowship - unity through diversity. We go to an athletic event where there are several players on one team. And while they have different positions to play and different skills, that very fact is the source of their unity and the thing that makes it possible for them to play the game. The same is true when we go to the symphony. There is a great variety in the instruments played and the skills required of the musicians, but all those instruments and all those different musicians create a musical unity as they play their songs and perform their concert.

But often in the Church we have a tendency to seek unity in conformity. Rather than encouraging each person's uniqueness we often discourage it. In the congregations of **God**, far too often this quest for uniformity is not satisfied with loyalty to the pastor and staff and faithfulness to all the ministries, but often there is an effort to get all the members to think alike on all issues. Where there is a certain short-term efficiency in any authoritarian approach to leadership, in the long run, it is self-defeating because it does not recognize the **giftedness** of each member of the congregation. The kind of unity **God** wants comes from the exercising of those **gifts**. As **Paul** writes to **the Corinthians** about **their gifts**, we can learn from **his** letter valuable lessons for ourselves and for the place where we worship.³⁴⁸