

Week of November 19, 2023

Series: The Story, Ch. 9, Pt. 6

Sermon: God's Ongoing Strategy for the Church

Text: 1 Corinthians 12-14; Ephesians 4

Sermon Outline:

Biblical Truth: Everyone on God's team has a position to play.

1. God has given everyone on His team a gift. (1 Cor. 12)
2. God has given you a gift to love your teammates. (1 Cor. 13)
3. God has given you a gift to build up His team. (1 Cor. 14)
4. The aim of God's team is the fullness of Christ. (Eph. 4:11-13)

Discussion Questions:

1. Have you ever played a team sport or been on a work-related team?
 - What was your position?
 - What made your team either successful or not successful?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 28 and Romans 12:4-8. God has given everyone on His team a gift (1 Cor 12) to use in a loving way (1 Cor 13) to build up the church (1 Cor 14) to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4).
 - Do you have a spiritual gift? (If you are a Christian, the answer is YES!)
 - Do you know what it is? Or what it might be? Is it listed in the texts above?
Three ways you might realize your spiritual gift:
 - 1-What comes naturally?
 - 2-What gives you joy?
 - 3-What do others say? (i.e., do others affirm this gift in you?)
 - What does you having a spiritual gift communicate about how unique and valuable you are?
3. Read Romans 1:11 and 1 Thessalonians 3:2. (*If you are reading from the ESV, the word "establish" in 1 Thess. 3:2 is the same Greek word as "strengthen" in Romans 1:11. It's translated "strengthen" in both the NIV and NASB.*) We are to "strive to excel in building up the church" (1 Cor 14:12) and a good place to start is with individual members.
 - How does God typically use you to strengthen the faith of others?
(How you answer that question may indicate what your spiritual gift(s) might be.)
4. Read Ephesians 4:4-16. According to 1 Corinthians 12:27, King's Cross Church is the body of Christ.
 - Discuss how crucial it is for your personal relationship with God and the overall aim of our church, which is "the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ", for every single KCC member to be engaged in "the work of ministry".
 - How do we encourage full engagement from our entire church body?

Sermon Application:

Consider praying this prayer each day this week: *"Lord, please point me to someone today who, according to Your power working through how You have gifted me, I can lovingly strengthen their faith and thus build up the church in order to display the fullness of Christ to a world that doesn't know You."*

*Bonus Question on the Back

Bonus Question:

One of the gifts of the Spirit is speaking in tongues (1 Cor 14:10). People have various beliefs regarding speaking in tongues, such as:

- Speaking in tongues in Acts 2 was speaking in a foreign language. Therefore, that is the type of tongues referred to in 1 Corinthians 12-14. And the 'tongues of angels' in 1 Corinthians 13:1 is hyperbole.
- Speaking in tongues is not always an earthly foreign language (as in Acts 2) and can be between the person and God. See 1 Cor 14:2. And when in public, someone with the gift of interpretation should be present in order to edify the church. 1 Cor 14:5, 13, 27-28.
- That gift of speaking in tongues has ceased to exist. See below for one explanation. *

1. What is your belief regarding the gift of speaking in tongues?
2. What has been your experience?
3. Watch this 7 minute from Pastor John Piper. Do you agree or disagree with his position?
<https://youtu.be/jzipsG3-S6A?si=wAcry8kAECIAa7TQ>

* "Is the gift of tongues for today? [First Corinthians 13:8](#) mentions the gift of tongues ceasing, although it connects the ceasing with the arrival of the "perfect" in [1 Corinthians 13:10](#). Some point to a difference in the tense of the Greek verbs referring to prophecy and knowledge "ceasing" and that of tongues "being ceased" as evidence for tongues ceasing before the arrival of the "perfect." While a possible interpretation, this is not explicitly clear from the text. Some also point to passages such as [Isaiah 28:11](#) and [Joel 2:28-29](#) as evidence that speaking in tongues was a sign of God's oncoming judgment. [First Corinthians 14:22](#) describes tongues as a "sign to unbelievers." Using this verse, [cessationists](#) argue that the gift of tongues was a warning to the Jews that God was going to judge Israel for rejecting Jesus Christ as Messiah. Therefore, when God did in fact judge Israel (with the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in AD 70), the gift of tongues no longer served its intended purpose." (<https://www.gotquestions.org/gift-of-tongues.html>)