

Unity, Diversity and Charity

1 Corinthians 12-13

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Life Hack Series

Reflect

Outline: Recap

Realize

Points to Ponder

Respond

Questions to draw out understanding.

REFLECT

When Jesus adopts us into his family, we all come from totally different family and cultural backgrounds, with different values and priorities — and then add in the fact that God calls and gifts us all uniquely too, and you've got one diverse family! In the midst of our intense differences, sometimes unity in our relationships feels out of reach...but God has a plan to unify us in the midst of diversity and unlock the deep potential in each one of us individually too.

[LINK to SMALL GROUP VIDEO MATERIALS](#)

REALIZE

1. Spiritual gifts are diverse.

- **1 Corinthians 12:1-11**
- **Leader Notes**
 - It's obvious from this passage that the gifts the Spirit gives his people are diverse. We can't force him to give us certain gifts — God operates in unsearchable wisdom to bless us. God gives gifts to the church that are needed to build up the church, but he decides how to do that best. If God is using you differently from someone else, we should say, "Good!" Diversity benefits us all.
 - It's not just something to "put up with" that we have different roles and functions — God himself celebrates the diversity of the ways he gifts us! If we feel like we don't belong because we are different, we actually deeply belong...God makes us all different, and he has a reason for everything he does. God's purpose within the body of Christ is not uniformity but diversity.
 - No matter what gifts of the Spirit are used through whomever, it happens because the Spirit of God designed and ordained it to happen. But not all acts of spiritual power are from the Lord, so we need discernment to know the difference. We know it's godly spiritual power when Jesus is at the center of it.
- **Describe a time you felt like you didn't have a place of belonging within the church because of being different. What is your perspective on your sense of belonging today? What spiritual gifts has the Lord entrusted to you? How are you growing in your ability to walk in the gifts God has entrusted to you?**

2. Unity and diversity exist in one body.

- **1 Corinthians 12:12-31**
- **Leader Notes**

- God's version of unity is not uniformity. God loves the diversity he creates his children with. In fact, it's a reflection of his character! God himself is three Persons in One, a diversity of roles within the oneness of the Godhead. It's a beautiful, mysterious reality that sets God apart from any other false god.
- In the same way, God's children are diverse but equal and unified. Our unity comes from the Holy Spirit who indwells each of us equally.
- Within the body, we each have a different role that contributes to how we function as a part of a unified whole. The autonomous self — an ideal held by our individualistic Western culture — is actually non-existent. None of us are truly autonomous, but we have grown up trying to function that way. In the body of Christ, individualism is done away with.
- Disunity within the church happens because of pride. God wants us to make room in our hearts for people who have diverse giftings and passions.
- **Reflect on your life and your Christian relationships right now. What is one relationship where your different giftings complement and benefit each other? What is one relationship where your different giftings make it more challenging to work together? How is the Holy Spirit giving you wisdom to navigate both relational dynamics?**

3. The goal is love, love and more love.

- **1 Corinthians 13**
- **Leader Notes**
 - The more excellent way of the gifts of the Spirit is the fact God gives us the gifts to build up his body, the church. All the gifts God gives us to walk in are to be tempered by love.
 - Just as our performance is not the prerequisite for God's love because he gives it as a free gift to us, we also are to love others freely, apart from their performance.
 - Everyday we should pray, "Lord, enlarge my capacity to experience your love and to let your love flow through me to others." As we know that we are beloved by God, we grow in our ability and capacity to love others too.
- **1 Corinthians 13 is the definition of a Jesus-centered love, which is the mission in the midst of both unity and diversity. Are you building your relationships on a Christlike love, or a different kind of love? What is one challenging situation or relationship where you can demonstrate the love of Jesus? What would that look like? How are you walking in love within the gifts God has entrusted to you?**

Optional Follow-up Questions:

- What makes you say that?
- How do you feel about that?
- How would you explain your answer to a non-Christian friend or neighbor?
- Why did God design it to work that way? Why not just do (whatever else) instead?
- What would you say to someone who disagrees with that?
- Why do we really have to do it like that? Why can't we just go (some other route) instead?