

GOD'S GIFTED PEOPLE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

YEAR: UNITE / FOCUS: I AM CALLED
SERIES: GOD IS THE GIFT GIVER - I AM GIFTED

BIG TRUTH: GOD'S GIFTED PEOPLE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:27-31; 1 Peter 4:8; Hebrews 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 5:11

BIBLE VERSE: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-13

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit."

BIG IDEAS

- God's gifted people are one body.
- God's gifted people need one another.
- God's gifted people suffer and rejoice together.

BIBLE PASSAGE: 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-26

UNITE - I AM CALLED

The Unite Year is an exploration of what it means to be united in Christ as the family of God (Romans 12:5). When we are saved, we are given a spirit of adoption as sons (Romans 8:15-16), are made a child of God, and we are also saved into a family- the Church. The Unite Year explores how we are to live as a part of a family, and to live in light of our calling as servants and disciples of Christ. We use our gifts to build up the church as we pursue unity, humility, and gentleness with our brothers and sisters in Christ (Ephesians 4:1-2).

SERIES AIMS



Every student should know that...

- Every good gift comes from the Father.
- They have been specifically and uniquely gifted to bring God glory.
- Spiritual gifts are given for the edification of the body of Christ.



Every student should feel...

- Thankful for the various gifts God has given their church family.
- Convicted of the ways they bear the fruit of the flesh.
- Secure in their standing as God's children through the Holy Spirit



Every student should strive to...

- Pursue unity with other members of their church family.
- Use their gifts for the good of God's people.
- Practice regular repentance and obedience.



Every student should want...

- To be known for loving others like Jesus loves.
- To learn more about their spiritual gifts and the gifts of others.
- To both suffer and rejoice with God's people

GUIDES AND WORKOUTS

The Guide provides a commentary page on each week's Bible verse and on each Big Idea that unpacks the Big Truth. Each week also includes a Student Workout as a resource to help the student pursue spiritual disciplines on their own. Additionally, each week has a Family Workout that helps equip parents and guardians to have spiritual conversations with their student.



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God's people are one united body.

"For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ."

- God's people are joined together into His body. Every believer is a part of this body. God joins His people into one body and using them for His purposes.
- God's people are united as one and have one purpose and one goal. They work together as His body to bring Him glory by making Him known in the world. They share His truth collectively and live out His commands.

All believers are united by one Spirit.

"For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body---Jews or Greeks, slaves or free---and all were made to drink of one Spirit."

- There is one God who manifests Himself in three persons—the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Because there is one God, there is one Spirit of God. This one Spirit of God is present in every believer.
- There are not multiple Spirits or different spirits in different people. God does not make distinctions in his people. They are joined and united together by the same Spirit. This makes them one people no matter their ethnicity or background.

All believers live in the power of the same Spirit.

"...and all were made to drink of one Spirit."

- The Holy Spirit lives inside of every believer. The same Spirit at work in one believer is at work in all believers. The Spirit helps God's people live for Him and bring Him glory on the earth. This Spirit acts as a Helper to every person who confesses Jesus is Lord.
- The Spirit gives power to every person who follows Jesus and empowers them to live for Christ. The Spirit gifts His people and then guides them to use those gifts for God's glory and their good. This unites believers together as one.

GOD'S GIFTED PEOPLE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

BIG IDEA #1: GOD'S GIFTED PEOPLE ARE ONE BODY.¹

[THIS]

1 Corinthians 12:12 shows us that there is one body of Christ. This body is made up of every single believer in every part of the world. Every person who repents and believes that Jesus is the Savior is part of this body. Because individual believers gather in smaller groups known as local churches, it's easy to mistake a local church for an individual body, but it is not. Local churches are smaller groups of members of the one body of Christ. These local churches all over the world vary in their size, but they are all part of the body of Christ. Every person in these local churches is joined to the body of Christ the same way, through faith in Jesus. Without this faith in Jesus, a person does not become a member of Christ's body.

[THEREFORE]

Why is it significant that all of God's people are joined together into one body rather than into smaller, individual bodies?

1 Corinthians 12:13-14 shows us that God has ordained that His people are part of one body. One body of Christ reflects the oneness of God. God is one, yet He manifests Himself in three persons. God's people are one body, yet they gather in smaller groups and fulfill God's purposes for His body.

[THIS]

The body of Christ is made up of individual believers. Each believer is gifted in order to function as a part of the whole body of Christ. The believer in one part of the world who serves in his or her church is connected to other believers in other parts of the world serving in their local church. Each individual believer is gifted in order to function as part of the whole body of Christ. We are joined together as the body of Christ and every member is important and necessary to the proper functioning of God's body. As we work with other believers all over the world, we must use the spiritual gifts that God has given us. We use these to make God famous in the world. We work to share the gospel with those who have not heard it. We use our gifting to encourage and uplift one another.

[THEREFORE]

What are some attitudes or thoughts that prevent us from working with other believers in other parts of the world?

Sometimes our focus on self and the things of the world can keep us from really using our gifts to work with other believers. Our focus on our own lives here keeps us from even thinking about other believers all over the world. Colossians 3:14-16 and Philippians 2:3-4 helps us understand some attitudes that prevent us from working with other believers.

Read 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27. Why is it important for you to use your gifts in your local church and globally?

Paul writes extensively in his letters to the churches about spiritual gifts and the one body of Christ. It's important that we understand our gifts are not just for us or our local body, but they are for the whole body of Christ everywhere in the world. Our gifts are necessary for the proper functioning of the body all over the world and we should not neglect to use them.

1. 1 Corinthians 12:12: *God's people are joined together into one body by the same Spirit.*

GOD'S GIFTED PEOPLE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

BIG IDEA #2: GOD'S GIFTED PEOPLE NEED ONE ANOTHER.²

[THIS]

In 1 Corinthians 12:14-20, we see that every part of the body of Christ matters. Because every member of the body is gifted, every gift matters. We would miss out on being a cohesive body of Christ if we allowed ourselves to consider some gifts as more valuable and important than other gifts. God created His people to need one another. It is His plan that every believer need other believers. Every person God redeems is of great importance to the body of Christ. Believers are needed to help the body fulfill God's purpose for it! We cannot believe the lie that our gifting doesn't matter or that we aren't needed. Because God does the supernatural and gives us His Spirit and His Spirit equips us with special gifts to be used for God's glory, we have a responsibility to use them and to value them the way that God values them. God doesn't need us. He can accomplish His purposes in His own power, yet He chooses to equip His people with gifts to accomplish His purposes.

[THEREFORE]

How are you tempted to believe you are not needed in the body of Christ?

In Ephesians 4:16, Paul teaches about the importance of every believer to the body. This importance is more than just showing up to a worship service. It's important that we show up and use the gifts God has given us for the body. Often, we can think our particular gifts aren't needed, but every gift matters.

[THIS]

1 Corinthians 12:21-24 shows us that we must reject the idea that we can serve God independently of His body. First, God has structured and ordained that His people live as a connected, interdependent body of believers; therefore, we do not get to redesign God's plan for His church. Second, we need other believers in order to effectively use our gifts and fulfill God's purpose and mission for us. Because this is true, we must resist the idea that participating in and with the body of Christ is optional. This means that church attendance matters, but more than that, church participation matters. Because every gift matters and we are not created to live independent of the body, how we spend our time and how we serve and work in our church is important. Participating in our local church is how we best participate in the whole body of Christ. As we use these gifts, we grow in our own faith and we help others live for Christ.

[THEREFORE]

When have you been most tempted to think of church as optional?

It's tempting to think that our attendance and participation in our local church isn't needed. We may even think that we can wait until we're older or we have a certain knowledge of spiritual things before we really participate in our church, but this is not true. Hebrews 10:24-25 and 1 Thessalonians 5:11 both help us understand that every believer is important and necessary to the body of Christ.

What is the difference between attending church and participating with the body of Christ?

Attending church requires our presence in a place or gathering. Participating with the body requires us to actively use our spiritual gifts to build one another up and to serve Christ. Ephesians 4:11-16 is a perfect picture of what it looks like to use our gifts to participate in the body of Christ. No matter our age or circumstance, every gift of every believer matters to the body of Christ.

2. 1 Corinthians 12:14-24: Every part of the body is necessary to the whole body.

GOD'S GIFTED PEOPLE ARE BETTER TOGETHER

BIG IDEA #3: GOD'S GIFTED PEOPLE SUFFER AND REJOICE TOGETHER.³

[THIS]

Suffering is part of human life because of the fall of mankind. No person escapes suffering on this earth. For the believer, suffering doesn't have to happen in isolation. Every believer is connected to God and His family. This means that suffering is shared in the body of Christ. When one member of God's family suffers, every member suffers. The trials and struggles of one believer affect the entire body. For example, if one member becomes very ill, that person isn't able to use his or her spiritual gifts within the body. Also, the body feels sorrow over the suffering of other believers. When members of the body are absent, their absence is felt by the other members. God has so wonderfully orchestrated His body to be so connected by His Spirit that we are necessary to one another. This connectedness allows for a shared suffering which helps produce endurance and encourages believers to remain faithful even in the worst of times.

[THEREFORE]

What are some reasons people might not share their suffering with the others in the body of Christ?

Galatians 6:2 teaches us that we are to bear one another's burdens within the body of Christ. Pride keeps us from admitting that we struggle or have a difficult time. Our sin natures make us want to isolate ourselves or keep our problems hidden. Within the body of Christ, it is necessary that we share one another's suffering and burdens.

What are some ways you can share in the suffering of fellow believers?

Using our spiritual gifts to help others is one of the prime ways we can share in the suffering of other believers. 1 Thessalonians 5:11 and 1 Peter 4:8-10 give us ideas of how to help others within the body. As we see someone suffering, we can join them by encouraging them, loving them, and mourning with them. We can use our gifts and talents to build them up.

[THIS]

Not only do people suffer in this life, but we rejoice also. God's people rejoice together because they share in the joy of knowing their sins are forgiven and they are reconciled to God. The same Spirit lives inside of every believer and this Spirit joins people together in rejoicing. Believers do not begrudge the happiness or success of other believers. Instead, they rejoice because they are all working toward the same goal. As believers, we should want other believers to excel at using their gifts. If a person is gifted in evangelism, we should rejoice when many people come to know the Lord because of their gift. Within the body of Christ, there is no room for competition or jealousy. Instead, believers rejoice when another experiences some good thing.

[THEREFORE]

What are some reasons you can think of to rejoice with other believers?

In Acts 16:33-34, we see believers rejoice together because sinners become believers. One of the main ways that the body of Christ rejoices together is over the salvation of someone. We also rejoice when others experience successes and receive good things in life. We also rejoice with other believers because of our own salvation and that God has saved us from an eternity of separation from Him.

3. 1 Corinthians 12:25-26: *The body suffers and rejoices together because it is connected by one Spirit.*