

Tools To Do The Job

April 22, 2018

OPEN

What is your favorite tool? What is it about this particular tool that you find so helpful or effective?

Do you ever feel overwhelmed by a world so full of need? As a follower of Jesus, do you ever feel that sharing Jesus with our world is too enormous a task and that you just don't have the tools you need to do the job?

Paul prayed for Christians in Corinth who were confused about the tools God had given them to serve Him. They were confusing and misusing the spiritual gifting that had been given them.

Corinth was a center of ancient culture, commerce, politics, and paganism. So when Paul prayed for the Corinthian church he knew they had many challenges to overcome...here are the things they were struggling with...

- **Morality** - there was unchecked promiscuity and even incest
- **Celebrity** - there was division over leadership and worship
- **Legality** - there were lawsuits rather than restorative relationships
- **Gluttony** - there was selfish behaviour at the communion table

DIG

Read through I Corinthians 1...

Verses 1-3	Paul's greeting to the Christians in Corinth
Verses 4-9	The content of his prayer for them
Verses 10-17	The challenge within the Corinthian church – division
Verses 18-31	The challenge from outside their church – paganism

In what way had the Corinthians been called by God into relationship? (see verse 2 and also Acts 18:1-11)

How does I Corinthians 6:11 express the calling of God upon the Corinthian Christians?

Why do you think it was so common for Paul to use “grace and peace” as an opening blessing to his letters? (see also II Corinthians 13:14)

For what specifically, was Paul thankful? (verse 4)

What point does Paul make in I Corinthians 12:12-14 about the context in which spiritual gifts (our “tools” if you will) must operate?

Paul prayed based on the presumption that the Corinthian Church – just like any Jesus focused church today – has been enriched in Christ with spiritual gifts to serve God.

Consider the three ingredients to embracing this God given enrichment. What do the following verses say about...

1. Activating the gifting we have received? (verse 5)
2. Confirming the testimony of the Gospel? (verse 6)
3. Expecting the second coming of Christ? (verse 7)

What is God powerful to do,, according to verse 8? (see also Jude 24-25)

What is God is faithful to do in our lives, according to verse 9?

REFLECT

Do you know what your spiritual gifting is?

If not, would you like to? You can speak with Pastor Brent about this.

If yes, where does your spiritual gifting fit into the Body of Christ called Cornerstone Church?

If you are not using your gift, why? What is hindering you?

Each person who knows Jesus as Lord and Savior is **enfolded, enriched,** and **established** in Christ. We may not be running at peak performance as a Body of Christ, but let's take heart. God has given to us, *collectively*, the tools to do the job!

You can read the other prayers of Paul in the following passages:

- ➔ Romans 1:8-12; 15:5-6,13,33
- ➔ Ephesians 3:14-21
- ➔ II Thess 1:11-12; 2:16-17; 3:5
- ➔ Colossians 1:3-12
- ➔ I Corinthians 1:4-7
- ➔ I Thess 3:11-13; 5:23-24
- ➔ Philippians 1:3-11
- ➔ I Timothy 1:17; 6:15-16



Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the one who hears it and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference. ~ Max Lucado