

TENSIONS

WEEK 4

DAY 1: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 11:17-34

As Christ-followers, we cannot allow our behavior to contradict the example of Jesus. How did the Corinthians' behavior between each other during Holy Communion contradict the example of Jesus? Why is that significant and important for us to recognize? Just as we remember Christ's broken body and shed blood for us during Holy Communion, let's not forget the fullness of Christ's promise and standards for us as we interact with others, particularly during this strange season of tension and unknowns.

DAY 2: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:1-3, JAMES 1:13-27

Everything that is good, perfect, holy and righteous comes from the Father. In this, we can be confident, especially as we walk the tense tightropes of situations we face in our personal, spiritual and public lives. Let's remember the source of righteousness and, when we witness the broken, crooked or perplexing things around us, remember all creation's universal need for reconciliation with God in Jesus. As we begin to focus on the tensions surrounding spiritual gifts in the body of Christ, let's make sure we remember that spiritual gifts come from the Holy Spirit and are neither human talents, skills nor personalities. Everything pure and holy comes from the Father and not the machinations of man.

DAY 3: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:4-11

The gifts of the Holy Spirit are distinct and different in their specific functions and manifestations, yet they come from the same Lord to serve His greater purpose. What of these gifts do you see the Holy Spirit demonstrating through you and in others around you? Do you see these gifts being used for a common, greater purpose? How so? If you do not see any demonstration or understand how God is using these gifts with/around you, pray and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal His purpose, clarify why you're not seeing these things and express a commitment to using the gifts He gives you.

DAY 4: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 12:12-31

Paul's beautiful illustration of the complimentary nature of the Holy Spirit's gifts reminds us of our need to work together as God designed and created us to be. As Christ-followers, we are all fed by the same Holy Spirit and languish, wither and die without Him. How do you see these spiritual gifts complimenting each other right now in your life, the world around you and Mt. Horeb? Do you sense any tension between the different "parts" of the body of Christ? How so? Why is this important?

DAY 5: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 14

Whether the teeth, arms, lungs, eyes, ears or even the gallbladder in the body of Christ, we all are integral and mutually benefit the whole health of the body. What does this chapter tell us about the importance of each gift cohesively working to affirm and edify the other parts of the body of Christ? Look at verses 13-17 for help.

DAY 6: READ 1 CORINTHIANS 13

No spiritual gift exists without the Spirit. Without the love of Christ saturating every part of our words, actions and interior life, everything else is some shoddy apparition, empty and entirely inconsistent with God's character, love and purpose. As we, the different parts of the body of Christ in various stages of growth, sanctification and maturation, strive to use the Spirit's gifts to accomplish His purposes, let's regard each other with the Father's love first demonstrated to us. No matter the growing pains, tension and frustration that stems from sin, let's give it to God and regard each other with love.

DAY 7: READ 2 TIMOTHY 2

As workers approved by God, let's seek to be viable, effective vessels for God's glory. While we are each uniquely made in the image of the God who loves us enough to give us Jesus, let's not submit and provoke more suffering, bitterness and enmity between the family of God or the world that has yet to know the blood of Jesus. Let's check our hearts, throw off fruitless talk, laziness and every sin the Spirit reveals in our lives so we can posture ourselves, ready and eager to do whatever God asks, wherever He sends us, for however long He call us, no matter the cost.