

## Use Your Gifts For One Another

**Opener:** How would you describe the difference between a spiritual gift and a natural ability?

**Scripture:** The end of all things is near. Therefore be alert and of sober mind so that you may pray. <sup>8</sup> Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup> Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. <sup>10</sup> Each should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. <sup>11</sup> If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. I Peter 4:7-11

Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. <sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it's the same God at work. <sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one there is given a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge, <sup>9</sup> to another faith, to another gifts of healing, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines. I Cor. 12:1, 4-11 (*condensed*)

### Discussion Questions

1. What did Peter mean when he wrote that the end of all things is near? How could the end have been near 2,000 years ago? Could he have meant that Jesus' ministry, death, and resurrection inaugurated the last days? How can understanding that time is running out change the way we live now? I Peter 4:7
2. What does Peter say we should do now that we know that the end is near? What does being alert and sober minded have to do with praying? I Peter 4:7-11
3. Why would Peter elevate loving one another over everything else and how would doing that cover a multitude of sins? Is covering sin the same as condoning sin? What's an example of love covering sin without improperly excusing it? I Peter 4:8
4. "Hospitality" means "an active love for others." Why do you think Peter added "without grumbling"? In what ways can we show hospitality without grumbling? I Peter 4:9
5. Peter then tells us that we should use whatever gifts God has given us to serve others. How many Christians have gifts? What percentage use those gifts? What are some reasons we don't use the gifts we've been given? I Peter 4:10-11; I Corinthians 12:1, 4-11
6. How can we identify and use our spiritual gifts to serve? What spiritual gifts and abilities has God given you and how has identifying them helped you decide where and how to serve? How does using our gifts to serve tie into praying and loving others?
7. How can we use our gifts to serve so that God receives the glory and not us? I Peter 4:11

**Wrap Up:** This last "one another" is about using the gifts God has given us to serve one another. The Holy Spirit gives each believer gifts. These gifts act to spiritually program us for more effective ministry. In this way, the Holy Spirit chooses a "major" for us, similar to the way a college student chooses a major to focus their study and career. But He wants those gifts to be used in a way that glorifies Him. That only happens when our gifts and the character of Christ merge. And that's when the real work of the kingdom is accomplished and God is truly glorified.