

1 Corinthians 12:11

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit,
dividing to every man severally as he will.

Analysis

But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit—Panta de tauta energei to hen kai to auto Pneuma (πάντα δὲ ταῦτα ἐνεργεῖ τὸ ἓν καὶ τὸ αὐτὸ Πνεῦμα)—Paul concludes the gift-list with emphatic reiteration: **one** (hen) and **the selfsame** (to auto) Spirit operates all gifts. No room exists for gift-boasting or gift-envy—all are the Spirit's sovereign distributions. Energei (present active indicative) stresses ongoing, continuous divine activity.

Dividing to every man severally as he will—diairoun idiā hekastō kathōs bouletai (διαίρουν ἰδίᾳ ἑκάστῳ καθὼς βούλεται, "distributing individually to each just as He wills"). The Spirit's sovereign will (bouletai, deliberate purpose, not arbitrary whim) determines gift-distribution. Believers cannot choose or manufacture their gifts; we receive what the Spirit assigns. This demolishes human pride (gifts are not achievements) and prevents gift-competition (we cannot earn preferred gifts). The Spirit's wisdom in distribution far exceeds our preferences—He knows what the body needs.

Historical Context

Greek culture valued autonomy and self-determination. Paul's emphasis on the Spirit's sovereign gifting counters individualism, reminding believers they are part of an organism whose head determines each member's function for the whole's benefit.

Related Passages

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Romans 10:9 — Confession and belief for salvation

Study Questions

1. How does the Spirit's sovereign distribution of gifts ('as He wills') affect your contentment with your gifting?
2. What dangers arise when believers try to manufacture or choose spiritual gifts rather than receive them?
3. How should churches balance encouraging gift-discovery with trusting the Spirit's sovereign distribution?

Interlinear Text

πάντα	δὲ	ταῦτα	ἐνεργεῖ	τὸ	ἐν	καὶ	τὸ	αὐτὸ
all	But	these	worketh	G3588	that one	and	G3588	the selfsame
G3956	G1161	G5023	G1754		G1520	G2532		G846
πνεῦμα	διαιροῦν	ἰδίᾳ	ἐκάστῳ	καθὼς	βούλεται			
Spirit	dividing	severally	to every man	as	he will			
G4151	G1244	G2398	G1538	G2531	G1014			

Additional Cross-References

1 Corinthians 12:4 (Spirit): Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

Hebrews 2:4 (Spirit): God also bearing them witness, both with signs and wonders, and with divers miracles, and gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will?

2 Corinthians 10:13 (Parallel theme): But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you.

Ephesians 4:7 (Parallel theme): But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:6 (Parallel theme): And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

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