

1 Corinthians 12:4

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

Analysis

Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit—Paul begins a threefold repetition (verses 4-6) emphasizing unity in diversity. Diaireseis charismaton (διαίρεσεις χαρισμάτων) means "distributions of grace-gifts"—charisma derives from charis (grace), underscoring that gifts are unmerited, freely given. The Corinthians ranked gifts hierarchically (especially prizing tongues), creating competitive spirituality. Paul counters: diversity itself glorifies the **same Spirit** (to auto Pneuma).

The gifts differ in kind, manifestation, and function, yet share one divine source. This theological foundation demolishes pride ("my gift is superior") and envy ("why don't I have that gift?"). The Spirit distributes as He wills (verse 11), not according to human merit or preference. Unity is not uniformity—the body's strength lies in its members' complementary differences, all animated by one Spirit.

Historical Context

The Corinthian church was fractured by status-consciousness reflecting their broader culture's obsession with honor, class, and public recognition (1 Cor 1:26-29). Wealthy patrons competed for prestige; Corinthian Christians imported this rivalry into worship, treating spectacular gifts as status symbols rather than servant tools.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does viewing spiritual gifts as 'grace-gifts' prevent pride in those who possess them?
2. Where do you see gift-comparison and spiritual competition in the modern church?
3. How can diversity of gifts become a source of unity rather than division?

Interlinear Text

Διαιρέσεις	δὲ	χαρισμάτων	εἰσίν	τὸ	δὲ	αὐτὸ
diversities	Now	of gifts	there are	G3588	Now	the same
G1243	G1161	G5486	G1526		G1161	G846

πνεῦμα.

Spirit

G4151

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 4:10 (Parallel theme): As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

1 Corinthians 12:28 (Parallel theme): And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

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?

