

1 Corinthians 12:5

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord.

Analysis

And there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord—Diakoniai (διακονίαι, "ministries" or "services") emphasizes that gifts exist for servant-functions, not self-display. The term relates to diakonos (deacon/servant), stressing humble service over honor-seeking. While gifts differ (diaireseis, distributions), they share one Master: **the same Lord** (ho autos Kyrios).

This Trinitarian structure (Spirit-verse 4, Lord/Son-verse 5, God/Father-verse 6) reveals all three persons active in gifting the church. The title "Lord" for Jesus asserts His divine sovereignty over gift-distribution and use. Gifts are not personal possessions to deploy as we wish but assigned roles in Christ's service. The "difference" lies in the sphere and mode of service (teaching vs. healing vs. leading), yet all serve the same Lord's purposes.

Historical Context

Roman society operated through patronage networks where benefactors gave gifts expecting public honor and reciprocal obligation. Paul redefines spiritual gifts as service (diakonia) to Christ rather than tools for gaining social capital, directly challenging Corinthian honor-culture.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Psalm 19:1 — Heavens declare God's glory

Study Questions

1. How does viewing your spiritual gift as 'ministry' (service) change how you exercise it?
2. In what ways might Christians today use gifts for self-promotion rather than serving Christ?
3. What does it mean practically that Christ is 'Lord' over your spiritual gifting?

Interlinear Text

καὶ διαιρέσεις διακονιῶν εἰσιν καὶ ὁ αὐτὸς
And differences of administrations there are And G3588 the same
G2532 G1243 G1248 G1526 G2532 G846

κύριος·

Lord

G2962

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