

“There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.” 1 Corinthians 12:4-7 NLT

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I was just setting up a gift assessment online last night, so this is so fresh in my mind. It's extraordinary how many times Paul uses the words same and different. Think there's a point? Yeah, unity is blending and cooperation (same) NOT everyone needs to be like me (different). The issue with personality and character traits that are unique to each one of us, is that we tend to ONLY see through our set of circumstances, and we think we want everyone to see and be like us! We don't really want that, but we act like it in a crisis or an opportunity. In group think there is a tremendous amount of pressure to align with the strongest personality or authority in the room. What a waste of this idea that Paul describes. If God gives each person a different gift (charis, grace) why in the world would we want to force that into one perspective? How would different but same work in a gathering of strongly opinionated people? One way, the ones with the most outspoken, naturally verbal, quick thinking and generally right have to YIELD the space to allow the other gifts to function. Many of the gifts are quiet and submissive in nature - yet they are extremely important! God often shows up in fire, clouds and thunder, but also shows up in a whisper, a faint breeze that gently cools and calls out. It's important to keep this in mind, Paul says, "It is the one and only Spirit who distributes all these gifts. He alone decides which gift each person should have." Emphasis on ONE!

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Dad,
You know how tired I get trying to equalize a room or a meeting. I get so frustrated following the command and conquer, go go go, rah rah rah types. Then they are followed by lists and details and complicated questions of frivolous methods such as "but what if someone does this?" It's exhausting and unending! But I know the Spirit has gifted them in that way and I have to let them bring those details to the party. I am positive that my interjections of life, fun and non-boring details annoy them as well. But we are still supposed to be one, right? How do the powerful yield and the quiet speak up? Unity seems so primary, so vital, but also so difficult in practice - help us, help me keep focused on what the Spirit is doing and wants to do through ALL our gifts to accomplish the Kingdom of God here on Earth.

contemplatio

rest in the presence of God, allowing the words revealed to take root