

Paul's First Letter to the Church at Corinth

1 Corinthians

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Spiritual Gifts (Chapters 12-14)

- Spiritual gifts...another topic in the list of corrections Paul is addressing in the Corinthian church
- 12:1... "I don't want you to be *ignorant*" meaning (positively) I want you to know and understand, Greek for 'gift' is *charisma* meaning a gift given without merit (grace gift)...(Charismatic)
- 12:2...before following Christ, you followed idol gods who could not speak
- 12:3...the confession of Jesus Christ as Lord was much more significant in the early church because the Romans required loyalty to "Lord" Caesar, and the Jews required loyalty to Lord Jehovah
- 12:4-6...One God gives believers:
 - Specific gift(s) (v.4)
 - Unique service abilities (v.5)
 - Individual operational ability (V.6)
- 12:7, 11...key points regarding spiritual gifts
 - The Holy Spirit has given at least one gift to every believer, and He alone determines which gift(s) are given
 - There is only one Spirit of God and He "manifests" Himself (reveal) through gifts He gives individually to believers
 - Given for the "common good" (KJV is "to profit withal") of the church (not necessarily society)
 - These are NOT natural gifts, although sometimes they may appear to be
- 12:8-11...nine major spiritual "manifestation" gifts listed (see other gifts in Rom 12:4-8, 1 Cor. 12:28, Eph 4:11)
 - Word of Wisdom: A message, concept, or bit of wisdom that God reveals supernaturally to the recipient. It may or may not be shared with others (wisdom is the skillful application of knowledge)
 - Word of Knowledge: A message, concept, or bit of knowledge that God reveals supernaturally to the recipient. It may or may not be shared with others.
 - Faith: Extra measure of faith which allows a believer to have the superior confidence regarding a certain matter
- 12:8-11...nine major spiritual "manifestation" gifts listed (see other gifts in Rom 12:4-8, 1 Cor. 12:28, Eph 4:11)
 - Healing: Supernatural ability to bring or release healing to a person in their body or soul
 - Miracles: The ability to perform supernatural acts by the Spirit of God
 - Prophecy: Supernatural ability to receive a message from God to edify, exhort and comfort the body of Christ or a believer. To speak as moved by the Holy Spirit. (Not all prophecies contain predictions about the future).
- Forth-telling versus fore-telling.
- 12:8-11...nine major spiritual "manifestation" gifts listed (see other gifts in Rom 12:4-8, 1 Cor. 12:28, Eph 4:11)
 - Discernment of spirits: Supernatural ability to know what is from God and what is not from God. Divine ability to reveal a demonic spirit bring God's power in its place
 - Speaking in tongues: First use is a supernatural ability to speak another language not known by the believer speaking it. Second use is a supernatural ability to speak

another language not known by the believer speaking it; to build up the body of Christ when the message is interpreted. It is the language of the Holy Spirit.

- Interpretation of tongues: Supernatural ability to make tongues a clear message to all that are present to edify, exhort and comfort the body of Christ
- Speaking in tongues: scripture references:
 - John 7:37...Why did Jesus make this point?
 - The verse speaks of an experience – a river flowing out, produced by the Spirit of God
 - These disciples were followers of Christ, but had not received the Holy Spirit
 - Acts 1:8...disciples waited for the Holy Spirit
 - Acts 2:1-21...disciples speak in other man-made known languages, appear to some to be drunk
 - Acts 8:14-17
 - extra filling of the Holy Spirit after repentance and believing
 - Acts 10:44-48
 - extra filling of the Holy Spirit after repentance and believing
 - which language were the Gentiles of Cornelius' house speaking?
 - Acts 19:1-7 – filled with Holy Spirit and spoke w/tongues
 - extra filling of the Holy Spirit after repentance and believing
 - 1 Cor 14:1-2,4-5 – describes speaking in an “unknown” tongue
- Gifts listed in Rom 12:4-8 (all given by the Holy Spirit)
 - Prophecy: Ability to proclaim God's truth publicly and to apply it practically, with a view to correction and edification
 - Service: Ability to do for others whatever needs to be done, and/or to carry another burden or task without notice or earthly reward.
 - Teaching: Ability to effectively explain God's word and apply it
 - Exhortation: Ability to challenge, strengthen, encourage, and comfort believers
 - Giving: Ability to recognize God's blessings and to respond to those blessings by generously and sacrificially giving of one's resources (time, talent, and treasure).
 - Leadership: Ability to step forward, give direction and provide motivation to fulfill a dream or complete a task.
 - Mercy: A heart to care for and encourage those who are not able to care for themselves and whom no one else would care for. Knowing who to help and when to help
- Gifts listed in 1 Cor. 12:28 (all given by the Holy Spirit)
 - Apostle: One who is sent forth to new frontiers with the gospel, providing leadership over church bodies and maintaining authority over spiritual matters pertaining to the church
 - Prophets: "to speak forth," to proclaim the mind and counsel of God, i.e., the gift of preaching
 - Teachers: One who is able to understand the more difficult things of God and explain them in a way that is easy to understand and live by in daily life.
 - Miracle-workers: The ability to present signs that authenticate the power of God in certain situations
 - Helps/Service: "to lay hold of (and support)", especially the weak and needy
 - Administration: To pilot, guide, or steer as one steers a ship. To preside over the assembly and guide the proceedings
 - Tongues/Interpretation (see slide 76)
- Gifts listed in Eph. 4:11 (all given by the Holy Spirit)
 - Apostle: to be sent forth to new frontiers with the gospel, providing leadership over church bodies and maintaining authority over spiritual matters pertaining to the church

- Prophet: "to speak forth," to proclaim the mind and counsel of God, i.e., the gift of preaching
- Evangelists: from eu = well, plus angelos = messenger. The gift of bringing the good news of God to unbelievers individually and in groups. Evangelists are also to teach other believers how to lead people to the Lord Jesus
- Pastor: A word that means 'shepherd.' Pastors are gifted to lead, guide, and set an example for other Christians.
- Teacher: Someone able to understand the more difficult things of God and explain them in a way that is easy to understand and live by in daily life.
- NOTE: Paul groups 'Pastor' and 'Teacher' together in the same office
- 12:12-20...each Christian is an important part of the Body of Christ
- 12:12
 - Each believer has a unique function/gift in the Body; we are not supposed to be "cookie-cutters"
 - Each believer is to be connected to the Body...this is the role of the church
- 12:13...all believers are part of the Body of Christ regardless of our race, gender, or culture. We all have drank from the same Spirit (John 7:37-39). Note the mingling of communion and baptism.
- 12:14...note the uniqueness of the parts
- 12:15...just because someone says they aren't part of the body, that doesn't mean their statement is correct. *Discussion: Why would a "foot" want to be a "hand"?*
- 12:16...same point as v.15. *Discussion: Why would an "ear" want to be an "eye"?*
- 12:17...the body could not function if there was only one part
- 12:18...God is the arranger of the parts. It will be frustrating to constantly want to be something God didn't intend you to be
- 12:19-20...summary statement: many members, but one body
- 12:21-26...each part is needed by another part
 - It's likely that Paul borrowed this example from a popular fable taught 500 years earlier by Menenius Agrippa and other Greek and Roman philosophers Menenius told some dissident soldiers a fable about the parts of the human body and how each has its own purpose in the greater function of the body. The rest of the body thought the stomach was getting a free ride so the body decided to stop nourishing the stomach. Soon, the other parts became fatigued and unable to function so they realized that the stomach did serve a purpose and they were nothing without it.
 - V.21...the "superior" organs need the "inferior" organs
 - V.22...the "weaker" parts of the body are the most critical. Which is more important to take care of? Hand or kidney? Hair or liver?
- 12:21-26...each part is needed by another part
 - V.23..."we bestow more abundant honor on the parts that are less attractive"; Greek for 'bestow' is *per-ee-tith'-ay-mee* meaning to put a garment on something. We put fine clothes on our 'private' parts to 'give them honor'.
 - V.24...our "presentable" parts like the face and hair don't need to be covered
 - V.25...each part of the body should be cared for in manner that is right for that specific part
 - V.26...if one part of the body hurts, then the whole body feels the pain. 'Suffer' in Greek is *pas'-kho*, a medical term for feeling pain. Ex: hitting a finger with a hammer will cause the whole body to "feel" the pain, not just the finger . The same is true for us when good things happen.
- V.27 ...collectively we all make up the Body of Christ, but each one of us has a specific part (portion, destiny)
- V.28..."God hath set some in the church"
 - Not man's invention. Greek for 'set' is *tith'-ay-mee* meaning to set into place.

- Literal Greek translation: “*And some, indeed, did God set in the assembly, first apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, afterwards powers, afterwards gifts of healings, helpings, governings, divers kinds of tongues.*”
- Paul also speaks of other roles/gifts God placed in the church including pastors, evangelists, elders, and deacons (Eph 4:11, 1 Tim 3, 1 Tim 5:17-21)
- V.29, 30...the obvious answer to each gift/position is ‘no’.
- V.31.a....”eagerly desire the better gifts” because those are the gifts that are most profitable to all
 - Greek for ‘best ‘ is *krite'-tohn* meaning “more useful”
 - Good gifts: faith, miracles, discernment, administration, tongues/interpretation
 - Better gifts: word of wisdom, word of knowledge, apostles, prophets, teachers (see 1 Cor. 14:1, 3)
- V.31.b...”I show you a more excellent way” (chapter 13)
 - Excellent in Greek is *hoop-er-bol-ay'*, meaning supreme
 - Best gift: the way of love
- Are the spiritual gifts listed in 1 Cor. 12 still for the church today?
 - Some say ‘no’. Those gifts were only needed in the early church to get it established so the “manifestation” gifts ‘ceased’ after the 1st century. 1 Cor. 13:8-10 is interpreted by some to imply that when the ‘canon’ (Bible) was finalized, then the “charismatic signs” died away.
 - Some say ‘yes’. There is no teaching in scripture that the gifts were only for the early church. If the gifts were only for the early church, then there is no healing, discernment, words of wisdom or knowledge, and the apostolic ministry would have been voided. Of course, ALL the gifts will eventually be useless when “that which is perfect is come”, meaning eternity in heaven. (1 Cor. 13:12)