

# Paul's First Letter to the Church at Corinth

## 1 Corinthians

Victory Christian Center    Elder Tim Herman    July 26<sup>th</sup>, 2009

### Spiritual Gifts (Chapters 12-14)

- 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
  - What does speaking in tongues sound like? Listen to the section from 0:00 – 7:22:
    - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NZbQBajYnEc>
  - 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
- Speaking in tongues...summary:
  - Baptism of the Holy Spirit...Day of Pentecost (Acts 2)
    - A fulfillment of prophecies of Jesus Christ in John 7:37-39 and Acts 1:5
    - Used to validate the coming of the Holy Spirit
    - A known language to the hearers (but not the speakers)
    - Accompanied with other outward demonstrations
    - Other references in Acts (Chapters 10 and 19). No mention of the language used or whether it was understood by the speakers or hearers. “Baptism of the Holy Spirit” came after salvation
  - Gift of tongues for the church...1 Corinthians chapters 12-14...Paul's main teaching is that tongues are a spiritual gift and should be accompanied by the gift of interpretation
  - Private prayer language for worship and intercession
    - Mentioned by Apostle Paul as a private prayer language (1 Cor. 14:2, 14-17)
    - A tool to build up our faith...Jude 1:20
    - Intense prayer that does not use human words...Romans 8:26, 27
- 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)