

“Concerning Spiritual Gifts”

1 Corinthians Chapter 12

Chapters 12, 13, and 14 are important chapters concerning spiritual things.

Through the next 3 chapters, the study will take us through the issues that concern us with regard to Spiritual Gifts. (*i.e.*: Abuse, Neglect, Definitions, Purpose, Usefulness Today, Tongues) But we need to approach these as the scripture approaches these issues. Patience and trust in the Word of God to tackle all of these issues are needed.

1Cr 12:1 1) The Need of Spiritual Gifts vs 1-3

Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware.

- Paul begins addressing spirituals.
- Paul is addressing another issue that has been brought up to him by the Corinthians. (either by letter or delegation)
- A common problem in Corinth was the believers functioning in division. (Who their Teacher is, The Mature vs. Immature, Wealthy vs Poor during the Love Feasts) It is no different with Spiritual Gifts.
- Paul does something very cool with the language here that is seen in the original language. With this he is leading us into the lesson concerning Spiritual Gifts.
 - This word in verse 1 “spiritual gifts” is the Greek word ‘*pneumatikos*’ This is referring to a part of man with in a man that relates to God.
 - In the rest of the chapter Paul uses for “spiritual gifts” the Greek word ‘*charisma*’ referring to a favor bestowed not relating to any merit of the recipient.

Romans 6:23 is the same word ‘charisma’ - “For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.”
 - The transition points to the division the Corinthians had that people with certain gifts are more spiritual than other people and their gifts. Paul is correcting this in his shift of the terms by ceasing to use ‘*pneumatikos*’ showing the possessor of the gift being the man to using ‘*charisma*’ showing that spiritual gifts are grace given by the Holy Spirit.
- Scripture tells us to not be unaware or ignorant.
 - We are ignorant because of the extremes concerning the use of spiritual gifts today.
 1. One group says these things were only for a past generation to establish the church and are not needed any more. This leaves the believer with doubts as to what parts of the Bible are relevant for him today and what is not. **CESSATIONIST**
 2. Another group elevates gifts to improper levels and perverts there use to justify foolishness rendering the church ineffective in reaching the lost. **CHARISMANIA**
 3. Then the majority of believers tired and embarrassed by the controversy retreats to ignorance not wanting to deal with this issue of spiritual gifts. **AVOIDISTS**

1Cr 12:2 You know that when you were pagans, you were led astray to the mute idols, however you were led.

- Paul reminds these Corinthian believers that they were unbelievers who where idol worshippers. Our background is not a good preparatory for understanding the grace gifts of the Holy Spirit.

1Cr 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

- It is wrong to jump ahead of Paul thinking that he is referring here to utterance made in an ecstatic tongue or auditory spiritual gift. It is our sensitivity to our current controversy that causes us to jump ahead in the argument.
- Paul is building foundations for understanding spiritual gifts and has not yet launched into the meat of issues.
- This passage is also not an absolute statement with regard to what is physically possible to utter by a believer and an unbeliever. Paul is referring to what the Holy Spirit speaks to the believer.
 - The Holy Spirit will never ever say “Jesus is accursed” nor instruct a believer to say so.
 - The Holy Spirit is the only one who allows a man to say “Jesus is Lord” This again is not just uttering words as an actor does but heartfelt truth. This has its origin from the Holy Spirit.
 - **John 15:26** “When the Helper comes, whom I will send to you from the Father, that is the Spirit of truth who proceeds from the Father, He will testify about Me”

Paul is establishing three base line things:

- 1) All believers have the Holy Spirit. Even those other Christians (which ever camp; Cessationist or Charismatic)
- 2) The Believer and the Unbeliever think, speak and are lead by different Spirits. (Holy Spirit vs. mute idols)
- 3) The Holy Spirit isn’t to be feared nor are His Gifts. He will not lead you to blaspheme.

1Cr 12:4

2) The Source of Spiritual Gifts vs 4-7

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

- Varieties = different kinds of
- Gifts 'charisma' - We will be looking at a number of gifts listed in scripture when we are in verses 8-11
- The emphasis is the sameness of the source. Different gifts but the Same Spirit.

1Cr 12:5

And there are varieties of ministries, and the same Lord.

- There are different ministries 'diakonia' or administrations or offices, pastor, deacon, teacher
- The emphasis is the sameness of source. Different ministries but the Same Lord.

1Cr 12:6

There are varieties of effects, but the same God who works all things in all persons.

- There are different effects 'energema' or operations or power. Jesus opens blind eyes just by speaking. Then another time by making mug by spit and dirt. And another time had to touch a guys eyes 2 times. Why? I don't know but it is the same Lord, Same Gift, Same God who allows different energies.
- The emphasis is the sameness of source. Different effects but the Same God.
- Clearly one can see the Trinity in this section, but that is not the lesson to be learned here, although it is good to note that the entire Godhead is approving and implementing Spiritual Gifts.
- "Who works all things in all persons" - that includes Me, You and all believers. He is not leaving out any believer.
- Paul again is laying a foundation stone. The first stone being all believers have the Holy Spirit. This foundation stone is that ALL BELIEVERS HAVE SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

1Cr 12:7

But to each one is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.

- We come to the thesis statement for the chapter. The rest of the chapter is detailing the 2 points found in this verse. To each one (each of us)
 - 1) The Manifestations of the Spirit - Particular gifts
 - 2) The Common Good - To benefit everyone.
- It is important that these gifts are manifestation of the Spirit not an indicator of his coming and going.
- John 14:16 "I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever" the Holy Spirit is with us always. But it is manifestation through a particular gift that comes and goes. But His Spirit is with you forever.

1Cr 12:8

3) The List of Spiritual Gifts (1 of 5) vs 8-11

For to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, and to another the word of knowledge according to the same Spirit;

1Cr 12:9

to another faith by the same Spirit, and to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit,

1Cr 12:10

and to another the effecting of miracles, and to another prophecy, and to another the distinguishing of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues.

<u>1 Cor 12:8-10</u>	<u>1 Cor 12:28</u>	<u>Romans 12:6-8</u>	<u>Ephesians 4:11</u>	<u>1 Peter 4:10-11</u>
Word of Wisdom Word of Knowledge Faith Healing Miracles Prophecy Distinguishing of Spirits Tongues Interpretation of Tongues	Apostles Prophets Teachers Miracles Healings Helps Administrations Tongues	Prophecy Service Teaching Exhortation Giving Leadership Showing Mercy	Apostles Prophets Evangelist Pastors Teachers	Speaking Service (ministering)

- There are more than 9 gifts. There are over 20 mentioned in these lists. There is overlapping of gifts. (i.e.: A Pastor may have the gift of Pastor, Teaching, Administration, Leadership, on & on.)
- These gifts are given. Not earned or deserved. They are given as the Spirit sees they will benefit the church

- **Word of Wisdom** - The ability to Speak Wisdom in important situations. (Stephen - Acts 7)
- **Word of Knowledge** - The ability to have information that will produce a beneficial result when one shouldn't normally have that information. (Paul - not sailing from Fair Havens Acts 27:10)
- **Faith** - This is not saving faith. This is faith to trust God in specific situations. (Peter stepping out of the boat Matthew 14:22-33)
- **Healing** - to cure sickness or deliver someone from disease. (throughout scripture and history)
- **Miracles** - this gifts is given when the Holy Spirit sees it is beneficial to over-ride laws of nature. (Peter raising Tabitha from the dead Acts 9:36-42)
- **Prophecy** - the telling forth of God's Word in a particular situation. This can also involve future events. (Agabus before Paul in Acts 21:10-11)
- **Distinguishing of Spirits** - Not a gift of identifying demons. This is a gift to identify motives of ministries. (Paul - Acts 16) (1 John 4:1 "Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.")
- **Tongues** - This is a language given to a believer for prayer to communicate to God beyond the limits of man's knowledge and understanding.
 - 1 Corinthians 14:18-23 clearly teach that tongues are important in private devotion but have little importance in public meetings. And if in public meetings they is always an interpretation for the benefit of the church.
 - Tongues are NOT given to every believer. 1 Corinthians 12:28.
 - Tongues are NOT the initial evidence of the Holy Spirit.
 - a) Acts 2:4,11 all 120 we filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance Tongues (the wonderful works of God)
 - b) Acts 4:31 The congregation in Jerusalem received the Holy Spirit and began to speak the Word of God with Boldness.
 - c) Acts 9:17-20 Paul received the Holy Spirit and was healed and went forth Preaching.
 - d) Acts 10:45-46 Gentiles received did two manifestations, some spoke in tongues and some exulted God.
- **Interpretation of Tongues** - This is given so in a corporate setting all can receive the benefit of the tongue speaker.

1Cr 12:11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills.

- 5 times Paul repeats the words "the Same Spirit."
- So we do not get lost in focusing on the gifts Paul reiterates the important point to focus on: that it is the one and same Spirit who works these things. He distributes these to each of us. As He Wills.
- This is to keep the proper perspective. No doubt we have seen those who have prided themselves in a gift. Sure, but the reality is that it is the Spirit who gives gifts not man achieving gifts.
- One can understand the Corinthian problem. They have in the past chapters divided themselves and competed among themselves as to who was better (better teachers, more mature) So even here Paul is trying to address the disunity created by misunderstanding about spiritual gifts.
 - One gift isn't better than the other.
 - They are given as the Spirit sees the Need
 - Used together with other gifts given to other people we are blessed all the more. Used to divide the body of Christ is to the Church's detriment.

4) The Purpose of Spiritual Gifts vs 12-31

Paul is now going to compare the different gifts to the differing parts of a human body. One body different parts doing different things. One church with different gifts doing different things.

1Cr 12:12 For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ.

1Cr 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

1Cr 12:14 For the body is not one member, but many.

- The singular body is made up of many members.
- The church needs to take a step back and refocus on who we are. So many times a church gets busy about their programs and their pastor or their people. They forget that we are part of a bigger church that is beautiful.
- Notice the number of "one" in verses 12 + 13.
 - One Body & One Spirit
 - In verses 8 + 9 we saw the repeated word "same" for "same Spirit"
- "We are one body so also is Christ" - verse 27 says we are the Body of Christ. We ALL are one even with our differences.
- Current Contention because of verse 13:
 - By the Spirit we were all baptized into one body.
 - First of all we argue about something that isn't even the point. But following is the problem.
 - Some would say "The baptism here is John's baptism and that there is a subsequent baptism of the Holy Spirit."
 - Some would say that "At conversion, when we are made part of the body of Christ we have all the Spirit there is."
 - Both are right and both are wrong.
 - a) John 20:22 after the resurrection he reveals himself as the resurrected Christ "He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit."
 - 1) This is after Calvary, after the resurrection but before Pentecost. If Jesus said Receive they received.
 - 2) The context of John 20 is the disciples believing in the resurrected Christ. Conversion. He didn't say receive part of the Holy Spirit.
 - 3) So those who say they received the Holy Spirit at conversion are correct.
 - 4) Besides Paul said it was the Spirit that baptized them into the body.
 - b) But Acts 1:4-5 he says to these same disciples, "wait for what the Father had promised, "Which," He said, "you heard of from Me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."
 - 1) This is after they received the Holy Spirit at conversion but there is something more. A BAPTISM of the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) Just like water baptism is an "outward sign of an inward work", the BAPTISM of the Holy Spirit is an "outward sign of an inward work"
 - 3) The context is the disciples moving from gathering in the safety inside four walls to moving "outward" among the people.
 - 4) Something does happen after the conversion work.
 - c) Ephesians 5:18 "And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit,"
 - 1) The language here is to Christians and it is an instruction to be filled, and be filled again and to keep being filled.
 - 2) A Continual process of filling and being filled again and again
 - d) Peter in Acts
 - 1) John 20 - Received the Holy Spirit
 - 2) Acts 2 - Day of Pentecost - Baptized
 - 3) Acts 4:8 - Filled to preach to High Priest and the counsel
 - 4) Acts 4:31 Filled now 4th time when he was with the church praising God and asking for Boldness.
- Most people are so focused on the gifts and the real question "Which gift is mine?" that they fail to see why Paul is even writing this section. FOR UNITY SAKE.
 - Remember, the Corinthians have a division problem. They seem to always group themselves into smaller like minded groups. But in doing that they compete with the other group as to who is more spiritual or who is better.

What if we EXCLUDE ourselves? (not liking the gift you have)

1Cr 12:15 If the foot says, "Because I am not a hand, I am not *a part of the body*," it is not for this reason any the less *a part of the body*.

1Cr 12:16 And if the ear says, "Because I am not an eye, I am not *a part of the body*," it is not for this reason any the less *a part of the body*.

1Cr 12:17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole were hearing, where would the sense of smell be?

- Because our gift isn't like a more spectacular gift we cannot quit the Body of Christ.
- The body needs every single part. The Eye cannot do anything except see. It could not hear it could not hold, walk, speak.
- But without the eye the foot cannot see where it is going, the nose cannot see the color of the flower it enjoys.

1Cr 12:18 But now God has placed the members, each one of them, in the body, just as He desired.

1Cr 12:19 If they were all one member, where would the body be?

1Cr 12:20 But now there are many members, but **one** body.

- Verse 18 settles the insecurity or the superiority issues with these gifts.
- God placed the parts of the body where He desired. Not where the body desired. The gifts in the body are pleasing to Him. They edify the church but they are pleasing to God.
- It pleases Him that there is helps, administration, teaching, healing, tongues, miracles, prophecy, evangelism. Because it builds, edifies the church. For the Church's COMMOM GOOD!

What if we SEPARATE ourselves? (not liking the gifts of others)

1Cr 12:21 And the eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you"; or again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you."

1Cr 12:22 On the contrary, it is much truer that the members of the body which seem to be weaker are necessary;

- To use the analogy of the body, there are parts of the body that are very weak. Very vulnerable but are a matter of the life and death.
- Heart, Lungs, Liver, Kidneys, - not seen, but are vital for existence. Same is true in the church. If you being the heart, lungs we cannot exist without you.
- A church can exist with stuttering lips, without eyes, without feet. Sure the church is better with those things in proper operation but without them the church can exist. But not without those seemingly weaker, necessary members.

1Cr 12:23 and those *members* of the body which we deem less honorable, on these we bestow more abundant honor, and our less presentable members become much more presentable,

- Our ear lobe we honor it with rings. Our middle finger near our pinky we adorn with diamonds and gold. Our toe nails we paint.

1Cr 12:24 whereas our more presentable members have no need *of it*. But God has *so* composed the body, giving more abundant honor to that *member* which lacked,

1Cr 12:25 so that there may be no division in the body, but *that* the members may have the same care for one another.

- Just as we honor what we think as less honorable or presentable we in the church are to honor adorn those in the church who have need.
- Why? SO THERE IS NO DIVISION IN THE BODY. SO THERE IS THE SAME CARE FOR ONE ANOTHER.

1Cr 12:26 And if one member suffers, all the members suffer with it; if *one* member is honored, all the members rejoice with it.

- What a wonderful attitude. When one is honored or hurting ALL THE MEMBERS are honored or are hurting. What a wonderful unity.

1Cr 12:27 Now you are Christ's body, and individually members of it.

1Cr 12:28 And God has appointed in the church, first apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, administrations, *various* kinds of tongues.

1Cr 12:29 All are not apostles, are they? All are not prophets, are they? All are not teachers, are they? All are not *workers of* miracles, are they?

- The answer No! No! No! No!
- Some are, Some are not.

1Cr 12:30 All do not have gifts of healings, do they? All do not speak with tongues, do they? All do not interpret, do they?

- The answer No! No! No!
- Not All speak with tongues. Some do. Some Don't. This cannot be any clearer than this.
- More will be discussed in Chapter 14.

1Cr 12:31 But earnestly desire the greater gifts. And I show you a still more excellent way.

- There is nothing wrong with wanting greater gifts.
- But desiring greater gifts is not fulfilled because of OUR want, but as the Spirit sees fit; as it pleases Him.
- Then Paul finishes here with a transition to the way of the Gifts of the Spirit. He is not talking about a more excellent gift but a more excellent WAY of the gifts are demonstrated.

Luke 11:11-13 "Now suppose one of you fathers is asked by his son for a fish; he will not give him a snake instead of a fish, will he? Or if he is asked for an egg, he will not give him a scorpion, will he? If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him?"

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