

I Corinthians

Chapter 12

Let's open with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

Thank you for another time that you have given to us that we might spend in your word. We pray that your Spirit would take these texts that are so important and that many people don't understand. Help us to understand. Help us to see how systematic and how lined up it all is for us, that we can understand the truth of what Paul is teaching.

We confess our dependence upon your Spirit and we confess our need of your Spirit to bless us with the understanding of these things about the ministry of the Holy Spirit. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen!

Okay, just very quickly, the outline of 1 Corinthians that we've taken so far.

We've taken the introduction in 1 Corinthians 1:1-9. But beginning in Verse 10 of Chapter 1, Paul began to minister about his correction. By correction, we mean that the house of Chloe came to him and mentioned to him some problems that were within the church.

So in Chapter 1 Verse 10 through Chapter 6 Verse 20, he addressed those issues about the message of the gospel, the method of the gospel, the ministry of the gospel, the messenger of the gospel, the mandate of the gospel, and the morality of the gospel.

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

1/16/2018
Page 2 of 31

And as we began with Chapter 7 Verse 1, in fact, 1 Corinthians 7:1 opens up with the statement "Now concerning the things of which you asked, or wrote to me."

So from Chapter 7 Verse 1 through Chapter 16 Verse 9 will be dealing with Paul's answers to their questions.

We have studied three of them so far, marriage instructions for Gentiles, meat offered to idols, and then in Chapter 11, the meal of the Lord, where they would gather together to celebrate Passover and communion. And they were corrupting it because they were getting drunk and they were not using it to remember the Lord.

Now we are in the fourth section. And this section is like the second one, the meat offered to idols, in that it takes three chapters to deal with this subject, the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

And that is understandably one of the biggest questions and has the most confusion in the body of Christ. Chapters 12 and 13 will be all about instruction.

But when we get to Chapter 14, it will be the correction about the misuse of what Paul terms the "Gifts of the Spirit."

So we now begin with Chapter 12.

C.O.

1 Corinthians 12-14 The Ministry of the Holy Spirit
--

Verses 1 through 3 is the confession of the Holy Spirit. It is titled this way because it is not our confession. It is the confession that someone makes under the influence of the Holy Spirit. Without the Holy Spirit, you cannot make this confession according to Paul.

1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I would not have you ignorant.

First of all, the category that we are taking, he opens this up by saying "now concerning."

So he's making mention back to their questions back in Chapter 7 Verse 1. He's showing that a new category, a new topic is now being discussed.

Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, and again, mentioning brethren as an affectionate expression of family members. But I want you to notice the word "gifts."

The word "gifts" is in italics which means that in the Greek text, the word gifts is not even there. So it is not talking about spiritual gifts. That's what the translators put on there.

The literal translation is "Now concerning the things of the Spirit." The things of the Spirit! Now you might say what's the difference between spiritual gifts and the things of the Spirit?

Paul is introducing to us the focal point of the teaching of ministry are the abilities and the capacities of the Holy Spirit. That is what we are dealing with. Paul is saying that there is one Spirit and He has all the abilities and capacities for all of the ministry things of God.

And that's his presentation!

Now concerning the things of the Spirit, brethren, I would not have you to be ignorant.

Whenever he says that in his letters, and 6 times in his letters he mentioned about addressing people's ignorance. So you know that it's important information.

Of course we are dealing with the Holy Spirit here, and this subject probably more than any, divides up the body of Christ as far as the understanding of what Paul wants us to understand. And again, it's because we're ignorant. So Paul says I don't want you to be ignorant!

So he mentions first of all in Verse 2, the characteristics of the former life:

2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led.

You know that you were Gentiles. Now usually that means opposite of Jew. But in this instance it has to do with non-believer. Most of them are still Gentiles. But he's making reference to their unbelief.

You know that you were Gentiles, or unbelievers, carried away unto these dumb idols. The word dumb means voiceless, voiceless idols, even as you were being led.

So he's emphasizing that they are being led around by the worship of an idol that has no life to it. It doesn't speak. It doesn't do anything. And as pagans, they were following after these voiceless idols.

I encouraged you before and I will mention it again about the mystic religions. If you can do a study on the mystic religions, it tells us that the pagan Gentiles were involved in idolatry to the point that they would sing and chant until they reached a point of psychological and emotional euphoria.

It almost sounds like church somewhere doesn't it?

They would sing and chant until they reached a point of psychological and emotional euphoria. And they would leave feeling good and they would say that the worship of the idol did it, whoever the idol is, and he's the one that made them feel this way!

So he's pointing out to them that they were led by voiceless, lifeless idols in their worship.

M.V.

1 Corinthians 12:3

But now the confirmation of the new life in Verse 3:

3 Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed:

The word accursed is the word Anathema. Anathema means to devote someone to the Lord for destruction. A sacrifice on the altar would be an anathema.

So he says nobody under the influence of the Holy Spirit can say that Jesus is cursed. On the other hand, and that no man can say that Jesus is Lord, except by the Holy Spirit, or the Holy Ghost.

Now literally, it does not say Jesus is Lord in any Greek text. It says Lord Jesus. That's all it says in the Greek text! There's no word "is," and it's literally Lord Jesus.

Paul did not mean for these words to be a systematic sentence that you can recite and that proves that you're saved.

Anybody can say "Jesus is Lord." Anybody! Even the unsaved, and even demons have said that in the gospels and confessed who Jesus was.

But what Paul is saying is that no one can call upon Jesus as their Lord. No one can say personally "Lord Jesus." That's a personal between me and Him, and no one can call upon Him as their personal Lord without the Holy Spirit!

So he says you once followed along with a voiceless and lifeless religion and you worked yourself up into a psychological and emotional euphoria.

But now you have a relationship with the living God. It's not a religion anymore. And if you, under the influence of the Holy Spirit call upon Jesus as your Lord, then you know Him. That's confirmation!

Now this kind of sets the stage for us because Paul is going to say that the Holy Spirit is responsible for everything in the believer's life. He saves us. He confesses through us.

We cannot have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and call upon Him as our Lord and interact with Him as our Lord without the Holy Spirit. It can't be done!

So the Holy Spirit gives us those capacities and those abilities. And he starts off by telling us that he doesn't want them to be ignorant about the things of the Spirit, and that the Holy Spirit in a person is what causes them to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It is not human!

So then in Verses 4 through 6, he provides the explanation of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Please note that there are three categories. This is all very systematic. It might not look that way when we read our English bibles, but this is how it looks in the original languages.

But there are three categories that he wants to explain about the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

First of all in Verse 4:

4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

Now there are diversities of gifts.

The word diversity means different. And this is the first place in the chapter where the word "gift," or "gifts" is used.

There are several words, and actually there's one verb, Didomi in the Greek language that means to give. And there at least three nouns that have to do with the gift that is given.

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

1/16/2018
Page 6 of 31

None of those words are used here.

This is the word Charisma. It doesn't mean a gift that is given to somebody. In fact, it, in and of itself doesn't mean gift.

It comes from the Greek word Charis which means grace. Charisma means expression of grace. That's what it means. There are different, or varieties of expressions of grace.

The translators translated it "gift" because it is not of man. That is their explanation. But it makes it very confusing because all of the other words that have to do with gift is translated gift.

This one is translated gift and that got a whole bunch of people off on a totally different road seeking after these "gifts."

A gift is something that is given to you. And so they say "God gives you these things."

He doesn't give it to you! As a matter of fact, there's only one thing in the New Testament that the word give is used for, and that's the Holy Spirit.

We are given the Holy Spirit. He Himself has the abilities and the capacities to do all of the things of God. We don't, and that's the emphasis here. There are varieties of expressions of grace.

So it's not something that is given to us. It is something that is done to us and through us. To us personally, and through us to others. And that's what makes it a gift because it's not of us!

There are diversities of expressions of grace, but the same Spirit.

So there are various ways in which the Holy Spirit expresses God's grace and His ministry to people. But it's still just one Spirit.

Number two in Verse 5:

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

And there are differences, same word as diversities, of administrations.

The word administrations has to do with the steersmen, or the helmsmen of a ship, somebody who is steering the ship.

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

Thirdly, in Verse 6:

6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

And there are diversities, or differences of operations, and that's the word energy.

In fact, it means expressions of energy, power! But it is the same God who works, same word, energizes, all things in all people.

So there are three areas, and notice before we take the actual ministries themselves, notice you have the trinity here. You've got the Spirit mentioned in Verse 4, the Lord mentioned in Verse 5, and God the father in Verse 6.

Paul planned it that way to say that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all involved. And taking it at Verse 6 and working our way backwards, the one who's responsible for all of the workings and operations of the Spirit of God is God the Father. He's in charge!

The person who is steering the ship, the person who is the administrator of all of these ministries is the Lord. And the one who carries out all of these ministries, these expressions of grace, is the Holy Spirit.

So he makes it a nice neat little package, but you can see that the emphasis is not on people. The emphasis is on the one Spirit, one Lord, one God, and He does it all. That's the emphasis!

Verses 7 to 11, the manifestations of the ministry of the Holy Spirit:

There are nine manifestations that are called communications, because these are all expressions of God's Spirit. So he's now presenting the manifestations.

The word manifestation means to appear. So it is when God's Spirit appears, expresses Himself to and through a believer. He says there nine manifestations that take place.

And we'll find out in Verse 11 that these take place whenever God wants them to, according to His will. It doesn't have anything to do with us.

7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to everyone.

Every believer, and you have to have the Holy Spirit to be a believer, but every believer has the expression of God's Spirit through them for the profit or benefit of everybody.

As we go through these nine things, Verse 8 is the first thing:

8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

For to one is given by the Spirit, and there's your emphasis, the word of wisdom;

The word "word" indicates to us that this is a speaking manifestation or a speaking expression.

And the word wisdom is the expression of God's truth applied to life.

In 2 Corinthians Chapter 1, Paul says that the reason why believers go through certain trials is so that they can experience Christ, and that according to James gives them wisdom, so that when others go through the same problems you do, you can share with them how Christ ministered to you and encourage them to trust Him as well.

That's wisdom. Wisdom is truth applied to life. It is truth that is real in the believer's life.

You see, we can understand truth with our mind, we can believe truth with our mind, but actually have the reality of that truth with us all day long during the day, and it seems to escape us.

And that's what wisdom is. Wisdom is the application, it's the living the reality of the life of Christ, having the awareness that He's there, seeing life the way God sees life and looking at life through the eyes of God. That's wisdom, the experience of Christ taken into life.

Secondly, to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit;

Don't get caught up in the mysticism of titles, but see the emphasis. It's again by the same Spirit. The same Spirit that gave a person the word of wisdom, gives somebody else a word of knowledge.

Today there are different presentations about what the word of knowledge is. And it is wrongly presented as somebody who has special knowledge about the people that are in the room.

There are places of fellowship where someone would stand up front, and people would get in line to come up, and that person would put his hand on them and tell them knowledge about them.

That is divination. That is fortune telling. It has nothing to do with the Spirit of God.

This word knowledge is the same word that Peter used in 2 Peter 3:18 where he says to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We are to grow in the grace and knowledge of Him.

But what makes it interesting is that the bible, especially 1 Corinthians Chapter 2 Verses 9 through 12 tell us that only the Spirit of God knows the things of God, and only the Spirit of God can reveal the knowledge of God to somebody.

It is not a human ability. God's Spirit has to reveal the knowledge of God. And the person who teaches the knowledge of God must do so under the influence and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

M.V.

I Corinthians 12:9

Verse 9 is the third manifestation:

9 To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit;

To another faith by the same Spirit;

Again he's emphasizing the one Spirit does all of these things, and notice that faith is given to people by the Holy Spirit.

Now I want to draw your attention to something. It says to another faith, and another gifts of healing.

These things, word of wisdom, word of knowledge, faith, and gifts of healing, those things are not given to people. The manifestation of the Spirit is given to people.

The appearance and the expression of the Holy Spirit is in my life, and He does all of these things. But He doesn't deposit them in my life and then tell me to just go live life with it or something!

He doesn't give me these things. He is these things!

To another faith by the same Spirit. Faith comes from God's Spirit, not from man. There is a religious human faith. But the faith that the bible talks about is Spiritual and it comes from the Spirit of God.

The word faith, without going into too much technical information, the word faith means persuasion in Greek. And it is the word that describes the interaction between the Lord and one of His people.

That's faith! You see, I can't see Him, nor can I feel Him. That would be something that would appeal to my human senses. I can't feel the Spirit of God. Nobody can! If you're into mystical religious experiences you can, but it won't be the Spirit of God.

I can't see Him. I can't feel Him. But I have an invisible relationship, that is, invisible to everyone else. But I have a spiritual relationship with Christ. And there is interaction between myself and the Lord through His Holy Spirit that lives in me. And that interaction is called faith.

In the book of Acts, those that received Christ were said to be "of the faith" because they all followed an influence that you couldn't see. They were under a persuasion that you couldn't see.

And so they called it Pistis. They called it faith. So please take note that this is just one area.

Galatians 5:22 is another one. It tells us that faith is produced by the Holy Spirit, just like Paul is saying here. It's not by man.

Fourthly, and here's an interesting one: To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; And again, the emphasis is the one Spirit does all of these things. He has the abilities and capacities.

Notice it is plural. Literally it says to another, healings, expressions of grace that heal. There are three kinds of healings that take place in the bible.

Number one is Messianic.

When Jesus came, He came as the promised Messiah to the Jews. Therefore He performed miracles and healings as signs that He is the Messiah.

For instance, when He was preaching in the temple and He would tell people, or read from Isaiah about the coming of the Lord, and coming of Messiah, He would close the scroll and say this day has this scripture been fulfilled in your ears.

When He was out by the sea, and people came, and disciples came from John who was then in prison, and John's disciples came up and said "John wants to know if you are the Messiah, or do we look for somebody else?"

And Jesus made reference to Isaiah Chapter 35 Verses 5 and 6. He said go tell him, lepers are cleansed, the blind have their sight, the lame are healed, the dead are being raised.

Why would He answer them like that? Basically, go back and tell him as the scripture says what the Messiah would do is what I do! Those are the healings and the miracles of the Messiah.

And then there were apostolic healings. What I mean by that is that there were special signs and ministries assigned to the apostles in order to confirm that what they were saying was the word of God.

Hebrews 2:4 tells us that signs followed the apostles in order to confirm the word in which they were preaching.

Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:12, in comparing himself to these "super apostles" that came into town, he says I worked the signs and miracles of the apostle.

So the apostles had certain signs and miracles and healings that would take place through them in order to confirm that what they were preaching was the word of God.

So we have Messianic healings and apostolic healings. And then there were healings for service.

In Matthew Chapter 8 Verses 14 and 15, when Jesus and the disciples came to Peter's home, it says that Peter's mother-in-law was sick.

And Jesus went in and she had the fever and He healed her and raised her up to she could serve Him and the other disciples that were there.

There's a purpose for everything that Jesus did. Every miracle that He performed and every healing had a purpose.

In the gospel of John Chapter 9 Verse 1, as Jesus and the disciples were coming out of the temple area, there was a man that was sitting outside that was blind.

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

1/16/2018
Page 12 of 31

And they asked "Who did sin, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" and He says "Neither, he was born blind for the glory of God." And Jesus healed him. And that healing set up a confrontation between Himself and the leaders.

We see the same thing in John Chapter 5 in the healing at the pool of Bethesda. Out of all those people sitting around at the pool waiting for the stirring of the water so they could be the first one in to be healed.

Jesus only healed one out of the whole crowd. He healed that one, and he took up his bed and went home. And again, the Jewish leaders were upset about it because it was on the Sabbath.

So again, that particular miracle, that particular healing had a purpose to it. Jesus just didn't go around holding "healing meetings." Everything had a purpose!

As a matter of fact, there were times when people were not healed.

Paul, in 2 Corinthians Chapter 12 Verse 7, where he had a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan was there to buffet his body, and he prayed three times for the Lord to remove this thorn in the flesh.

And God said "My grace is sufficient for you." He didn't heal him!

We know in 1 Timothy that Paul told Timothy "Take a little wine for your stomachs sake, because of your often infirmities."

Wine at that time was used for medicinal purposes. The water was bad. And so he's telling him to take a little wine for your stomachs sake.

And then of course we know in 2 Timothy, Paul's last letter, he says that he left Trophimus on the island of Miletus sick. No healing!

So the question is "Does God heal today?" And the answer is yes! But you have to understand that everything that God does has a purpose.

Can God not heal? The answer is yes!

He also has purposes for not healing. But whenever a person is healed by the Spirit of God, it comes as an expression of God's grace from God's Spirit. That's what he's listing there, the fourth manifestation of the Spirit.

The fifth thing in Verse 10:

10 To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues:

To another, they are not given the gift of the working of miracles;

Again, they are given the manifestation. And the manifestation of God's Spirit works miracles.

And the word miracle is *Dunamis*, and it's where we get our word dynamite from. The working of a miracle by God is when God's Spirit intervenes in the natural laws of life. It's called a miracle when God's Spirit intervenes in the natural laws of life. It is *Dunamis*, power!

Sixthly: To another prophecy;

The word prophecy and the word prophet, and we'll take the word prophet first.

The word prophet comes from two Greek words that mean to speak for another or to be a spokesperson. A prophet in the Old Testament would be somebody who received revelation from God and then spoke it to the people.

In the New Testament, especially after all the New Testament was written, the word prophet had the same meaning but the emphasis was different.

The word of God, the scriptures, were now God's word, and the prophet takes God's word and ministers it to the people.

We know in the book of Revelation in Chapter 1 that the book of Revelation was called prophecies.

And in Revelation Chapter 22, Jesus mentions that if anybody adds to or takes away from the prophecies of this book, it will be added to them the plagues, or their name is removed from the book of life.

The book of Revelation, which is why it's the last book in the bible, is God's final prophecy. We're not supposed to add to it, and we're not supposed to take from it.

So a prophet is somebody who still takes God's word, which would be the scriptures, and ministers it to God's people. He is a spokesperson for God.

Seventhly: To another discernment of spirits; the discerning of spirits.

There are two things that this ministry does. Number one, it discerns substance. We'll see it in Chapter 14 Verse 9, where he talked about those who are prophesying in the church, he said let three speak, and the others judge.

The word judge is the word discernment. We're supposed to take the message and judge it as to whether it's from God or not.

The second thing about discernment of spirits is the spirit itself.

In 1 John Chapter 4 Verse 1, we're told to test the spirits, whether it be of God or not. Substance and spirit!

In Acts Chapter 17, we know that Paul came into Berea, and the Christians there welcomed what Paul had to say, but they searched the scriptures daily to see if it was true. Discerning of spirits!

Eighthly: To another kinds of tongues;

The word kinds means families. And the word tongue is literally the Greek word that talks about the physical tongue in your mouth.

They did not have in Koine Greek back then a word for languages. And so they used the word tongue because you spoke languages. So they used the word tongue or tongues to represent speaking languages.

The unfortunate thing is that when it's used today, it's used mystically. "Oh, can you speak in tongues?" It's like it's this mystic language that floats around, and God supposedly gives you this babbling speech that is very mystical. But it's families of languages!

Ninthly: To another the interpretation of tongues:

The word interpretation as we know it today is different than what they meant in this translation. It's literally explanation.

The Greek word is the word Hermeneuo. We get the English word Hermeneutics from this word. It doesn't mean to translate from one language into another, or to interpret from one language into another.

It means to explain the purpose for what this language was speaking. Let me give you an example.

The only example that we have in the whole bible is in one place which is Acts Chapter 2 Verses 1 through 13.

Remember when the Holy Spirit came down upon the church and they all were speaking in the known languages of the people that were there in Jerusalem.

Everybody was there because it was the Feast of Pentecost, and the disciples, not knowing all the various languages that the people spoke, they had the ability, or more literally, God's Spirit spoke through them and spoke the various languages of the people.

Now the people who heard them speak, they said "What is this? How is it that we hear them speak, and every one of them speaking the mighty works of God in our own language?"

So they understood it. They didn't need anybody to interpret for them. But they needed explanation. So they were going "What does this mean?"

"Well, they must be drunk, yeah that's it. That's the only explanation we can make!"

So Peter stands up and says "Well, it's nine o'clock in the morning, so I don't think they're drunk. But let me tell you what it is!" He says this is the fulfillment of Joel Chapter 2 Verses 28 and 29 that God would pour out His Spirit in the last days.

And Peter went on to explain it. So that's what tongues and interpretation is in the bible. It's the only instance that we have in the whole bible that gives us an example of what it is.

God's Spirit, who knows the languages of all people all over the world, spoke through them, and they had no idea what they were saying or talking about.

But the people who were listening, they could hear. In fact, it even uses the word Dialektos. Not only were they hearing their own language, but it was in their own dialect, the various places that they were from.

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

1/16/2018
Page 16 of 31

And so Peter gets up and he explains to them what this meant. It was a sign that God said He would do.

Now the only teaching about tongues in the scripture is in 1 Corinthians Chapter 14 Verse 19 to 22, and remember Chapters 12 and 13 have to do with the instruction about the ministry of God's Spirit, but Chapter 14 is the correction about the misuse in the church.

In Verse 18 of 1 Corinthians Chapter 14, he says "I thank my God that I speak with tongues more than you all." So he says God's Spirit through me speaks various languages more than any of you do.

Obviously this is the problem in the church. They thought they were super spiritual, and he says I'm not putting you down for this because I speak in tongues more than all of you put together.

Yet in the church, I'd had rather speak five words with my understanding and with my voice, that I might teach others, than 10,000 words in a tongue or language.

Brethren, be not children in your understanding, howbeit in malice be children, but in understanding be mature. In the law it is written, with men of other tongues and other lips will I speak unto this people.

And yet for all that will they not hear me saith the Lord. He's quoting from Isaiah Chapter 28 Verses 11 and 12, where God prophesied that this will happen.

Verse 22 is the big one. It says "Wherefore tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to those that believe not. But prophesying is not for them that believe not, but for them that believe."

So speaking the word of God is to God's people. But notice that tongues is called a sign. It is a miracle and it's especially for the Jews. It's in their prophecy that God would do this, and that when it happened, they would know that it's a sign from God that He is speaking to His people!

Now this is the only place in scripture where there's actually a teaching about what we call "tongues." And then 1 Corinthians Chapter 14 Verses 19 to 22 is the only instruction, and Acts 2:1-13 is the only incident in which we have as to what it does and what happens. And it happens exactly the way scriptures say.

But what about what we call tongues today?

There is a book out there by David Hawking called the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. He did a tremendous research on this and shared how that what people are calling tongues today is nothing new.

The occult practiced it. Even the Mormons today, they practice it, the same thing as what we have going on in some churches in the body of Christ.

It is not a language. It's just a babbling noise that comes under the heading of Mystic Religions, working yourself up into a psychological emotional euphoria.

What Paul is saying in that text in 1 Corinthians 14, is that when you're teaching the word of God, you don't want any distractions.

The question is, if we're gathered together, and we all know English, why does God have to go through another language?

It's a distraction. That's all it is. And many people today use those babbling noises as a message from God. And people literally put away their bibles and get together and let people what they call "speak in tongues," and somebody "interprets" it, because it's the message of God for us today!

When you ask them what about the scriptures, or what about if it violates the scriptures, and why would we even need it if God has revealed everything to us that He wants us to know?

Some of them will hold up the bible and tell you that the bible is the biggest problem amongst Christians! They say that the bible divides Christians because nobody can agree on what it says, but you can get one message from God, and it unites the people!

My answer to them is that it doesn't unite anyone outside of their group. It doesn't unite me with them. It's not uniting anybody. It's just a distraction and it's not in the bible!

The unfortunate thing today is that we have a lot of people that use biblical terms for certain activities that are in religious services but it's not even the same thing.

What did Paul say when we started out this chapter? He said "I would not have you to be ignorant."

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

1/16/2018
Page 18 of 31

People get into a service and they get into some mystical experiences that happen in that religious service, and they hear names called, like "speaking in tongues" and they say "Oh, that must be what it is."

No it's not! You won't find it anywhere in the bible.

M.V.

I Corinthians 12:11

We've studied the nine manifestations of God's Spirit. The word manifestation means to appear. It is the expression of Him through us and to us.

11 But all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.

But all these work that one and the selfsame Spirit, and you can see what the emphasis is. It is one Spirit of God that does everything, dividing to every man severally, or individually, as he wills. You have no choice!

There are services that encourage people to come up to the altar and pray to God and you tell Him what "gift" you want. It kind of sounds like Christmas up in Santa Claus' lap or something!

The bible says that it's sovereign. It's the sovereignty of God, according to His will as He plans. That is how His Spirit works!

Again, these are not things that are given to us. These are capacities and abilities of the Holy Spirit. These are His expressions to us from the Lord and through us to other people. It has nothing to do with human ability!

Next, we have the function of the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

So far we have seen that the Holy Spirit is responsible for our confession, for our interaction in our relationship with the Lord in Verses 1 through 3.

The explanation in Verses 4 through 6 is that God the Father is operating all of His ministry through the administration of the Lord, and by the expression of the Holy Spirit.

And then the nine manifestations of the Spirit, the nine ways in which God's Spirit manifests Himself. And again, emphasizing that it is the manifestation of the Spirit that we have.

These are not things that are given to us. These are things that are expressed through us. All emphasis is on the Holy Spirit, not on people.

So now we have the function and Paul's instruction to help us understand the function of the ministry of the Holy Spirit. He correlates it with the physical body.

12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

For as the body is one, the physical body, and has many members or parts, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

Paul's customary way of explaining ministry in his letters is using the human body, the physical body, as an example of the ministry through the body of Christ.

Christ is the Kephale, the head, and we are the parts of the body, the body of Christ, just like we have various physical parts of our physical body.

So just as there are many parts in one body, so also is Christ.

M.V.

I Corinthians 12:13

He starts out with the circumstances of salvation in Verse 13:

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free;

And again, the word baptize is the name of what God's Spirit does in a person's life when they are saved. It is a Spiritual baptism which water baptism symbolizes.

But when God's Spirit comes into your life, it's a cleansing, and it's an identification.

When we baptize people in water, it is because of their confession that they have experienced the baptism of the Holy Spirit, and have identified in the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

1/16/2018
Page 20 of 31

That is why we baptize the way we do in water. Water baptism can't save anybody. It's just water. It's the baptism of the Spirit that saves, whether it's Jew or Gentile, bond or free.

Every person must experience the same baptism. And notice again that the emphasis is by one Spirit. And notice the second part: And have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

So we're baptized, and that's when we're saved, and our fellowship with Him is that we drink. We drink of the living water. That's our walk in life with God. It says drink "into" one Spirit.

It's like saying everybody is drinking out of the same cup. Everybody is drinking from the same Spirit that satisfies the inner soul with living water.

Now the consideration of the human body: He goes into detail and he touches on some points that we all have questions about and some that we even have problems with.

14 For the body is not one member, but many.

For the body is not one member, but the body is many members.

15 If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

So the foot looks at the hand and says "I'm not like that, so I must not be of the body." Well, that's not true!

Secondly in Verse 16:

16 And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?

17 If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?

If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be?

What he's talking about is everybody in the body of Christ comparing themselves to others around them and saying "I'm not like that. I don't have God ministering through me like that. Look at the eye, he can see. Look at the ears, they can hear."

If the whole body were hearing, where would the smelling be? You don't have a nose. You don't have a way to smell.

M.V.

I Corinthians 12:18

18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him.

This is the second verse. The first one was Verse 11, that God manifests to us and through us according to His will and His time.

And now he's saying that in the body of Christ, He places us as the part in the body of Christ according to His choice. And just because we're not like everybody else, it doesn't mean that we're not of the body.

19 And if they were all one member, where were the body?

And if they were all one member, where would the body be? There wouldn't be a body. It would be a part!

Not everybody can have the same function. If you're saved, if you belong to Christ, you have a functional part in the body of Christ.

Nobody else has your function. There might be other people if you are a finger, but there are different fingers. Nobody has your ministry in the body of Christ. It has never been, nor ever will be.

There might be other teachers, but they're not the same. Some add to what others say. Some are for different levels or different topics. But God chooses who He wants to use and where in the body He places them.

Now he talks about the components in the body of Christ:

20 But now *are they* many members, yet but one body.

You see, he started out by saying there's one but there's many. Now he's going backwards and saying there's many but there's really only one body!

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

1/16/2018
Page 22 of 31

21 And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you.

22 Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, are necessary:

Nay, much more those members of the body, which seem to be more feeble, they are necessary:

And again, he started out by introducing us to the human body. He wants us to keep that in mind while he's talking about spiritual things.

There are some people in the body of Christ who are weak members. Some need more care than others. Think about those things about the eyes, and the ears, and those body parts that are susceptible to harm.

But there are other body parts that are not. And they don't require much maintenance or attention. Some body parts are very strong. Others are weak.

But according to Paul, just like God created the physical human body with its strengths and weaknesses, so in the body of Christ, even the feeble are necessary.

23 And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour; and our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

And those *members* of the body, which we think to be less honorable, upon these we bestow more abundant honor;

He's basically saying that it's because we make emphasis on the main thing, the mouth, the hands, the doing, and the speaking. And so those are the parts that get honored.

What about the feet? The mouth couldn't get anywhere without the feet taking it there. What about the hands? What about the eyes for study?

All the physical body parts God uses. And if you happen to be a mouth, it's not just the honor of what comes out of the mouth, it's what all the body parts put into that.

First of all he's saying you're comparing yourself to somebody else, but you shouldn't do that because your function in the body of Christ is just as important as what we consider to be the honorable ones.

And the honorable ones couldn't have honor if it wasn't for the other parts of the body. And our uncomely *parts* have more abundant comeliness.

He's talking about those parts that need to be covered. They're not shown but they still have a function.

24 For our comely *parts* have no need; but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that *part* which lacked:

That is lacked in importance.

25 That there should be no schism in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

That there should be no schism, no separation, no tear in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another.

M.V.

I Corinthians 12:26

Verse 26, the two examples of the oneness in the body of Christ:

26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it.

And whether one member suffers, all the members suffer with it;

When you get a migraine, it's not just the head that hurts and it's not just the head that's affected by it. The whole body is affected.

So it is in the body of Christ. We're called to bear one another's burdens. If one hurts, they all hurt.

Or one member be honored, all the members rejoice with it.

The mouth gets honored for what it says, but there's no honor to the rest of the body parts that help the mouth say it. And that's what he is trying to say, is that it's all one, but yet it's many. And it's many individuals, but it's all one, just like the physical body.

We as believers don't understand our importance in fellowship, the function that we play in the ministry of God's Spirit. Just because someone is up front talking because he's the mouth, it doesn't mean that there isn't ministry coming from other parts of the body that make ministry happen.

It's not just some guy showing up that has his bible and says "Okay, I'm going to give a study," and then people figure "Well, I don't have to go." So now you have a mouth with no arms and no legs trying to get through!

There is a spiritual function that comes through you and to you every time you participate with the body of Christ, a function that nobody else has.

I don't think we take that serious enough. I must follow the lead of the Lord because if I decide to skip out, I'm taking my part with me. If we could understand that, it's not a matter of religious duty. It's a matter of function, ministry!

You might think that when you go to church or a bible study, that one person is doing the ministry and you're receiving the ministry, but it goes both ways.

There's a ministry of God's Spirit that is coming out from you to the person doing the ministering. We all minister!

Now the application of the ministry of the Holy Spirit:

This is very important. There is a lot of confusion, and in fact, contradiction by many bible scholars. Unless you take the whole chapter systematically, it is very difficult to really understand what he is saying here. But it fits right into the system.

First of all, he talks about the character of the body that we just talked about.

27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Now you are the body of Christ, and members specifically, particularly, together.

We're all individuals and we all make up the body of Christ.

M.V.

I Corinthians 12:28

Now the comparison of the gifts:

This is also very important. There are two kinds, and I'm calling them "gifts" because I don't have another word. But there are two kinds of gifts.

And notice this in Verse 28:

28 And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

And God hath set some in the church, and notice these three:

First apostles, secondly prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

So he's presenting two groups. One is for growth, and the other group is called "sign" gifts.

Now he is putting it in priority in the church, the importance of these ministries. He didn't mention apostles before.

A person might be a teacher because they teach, but that's not what makes them a teacher. It's because they are constantly studying, and constantly teaching. That's who the person is.

In Ephesians Chapter 4, it's listed as pastor teacher. They just don't pastor from 8 to 5. It's who they are!

First of all, the top priority in the body of Christ are apostles, secondly prophets, and thirdly teachers.

It says in Acts Chapter 2 Verse 42 that after the first group of people were saved at the preaching of Peter that they all fellowshiped in the apostles doctrine.

In Ephesians Chapter 2, in the last verse, Paul says that the church is based on the foundation of the apostles and the prophets.

You have the Old Testament prophets that prophesied the things of God. You have the apostles whom God hand chose walking with the Lord for three years, being taught by Him and seeing everything He did.

And then once the Lord ascended up into heaven after His resurrection, the apostles were left behind to establish the church in teaching.

So we have the apostles. We have the prophets. And then we have the teachers. Teachers are those who take the teachings of the apostles and prophets and teach them to the body of Christ.

As far as new revelation and new teaching goes, teachers don't get new revelation and new teaching. They are drawn to the teachings of the apostles and the prophets, drawn to those who were used to inspire God's word. And the teacher teaches the word of God. He doesn't come up with new stuff!

So we have apostles, prophets, and teachers, one, two, three. After that, we have another list: miracles, and again, as I explained to you earlier, miracles are acts of power by God where He intervenes in the natural laws of nature.

Then gifts of healings, and again that's plural. There were many signs, both Messianic and apostolic, signs that were given to confirm the teaching that's being given.

And then in Verse 28, we have helps. This is an interesting one. It's when you come alongside of somebody that is weakened and broken down, and you help them with whatever they're struggling with.

And then we have governments. And again, we're talking about the various leadership roles.

And then diversities of tongues, and again, that's various languages. And notice that the top group is for growth, and the second group is supportive. They're called sign gifts.

They are supportive. They point to the teaching. It's a manifestation of God's Spirit in the physical to draw people to the truth of the gospel. It, in and of itself, is not to be chased.

But let's take this last part. And this is what's really important.

Chapter 12 Verses 29 through 30, the capacities, or abilities in the body:

Now there are several questions, seven of them in Verses 29 and 30.

In the Greek text, there is a word with each one of these questions. It is the word Ma, pronounced May. And it is a negative particle. It's not translated.

But actually in the Greek text of scripture, it tells you what answer the person is looking for in the text. That's very interesting!

If you have a question and you have the word *Ou*, that means that they are expecting a yes answer. If it's *Ma*, they're expecting a no answer.

So even in scripture, it doesn't leave the question open for debate. It tells you right in there what the answer is supposed to be!

Every one of these questions has the word *Ma* in it. And it's expecting the negative answer no. In fact, some translations will actually include that.

The King James says are all apostles? You see, they ask the question. Some of the newer translations will say "all are not apostles are they," in order to express that expectancy of the negative answer.

29 Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?

He says are all apostles? The answer is no. Not everybody is an apostle. Are all prophets? No, not all are prophets. Are all teachers? Not everybody's a teacher. Are all workers of miracles? No!

Please notice that because some people actually out pressure on other people and say "Look how God works through me, and all these miracles are happening. What's wrong with you? You need to get with it!"

The answer is no!

30 Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?

Have all the gifts of healing? What's the answer? No!

Listen to this one. Do all speak with tongues? The answer is no!

There are groups today that teach that speaking in tongues is confirmation that you're saved. And so when you relate to them that it says here that not everybody speaks in tongues, so how does that work?

They have no idea that the answer is included right in the actual question itself! Their answer is yes. But no, they are wrong because the text says no!

<http://john14-6.webs.com/biblestudies.htm>
Bible Studies - The Way, The Truth, and The Life

1/16/2018
Page 28 of 31

Do all interpret, that is, explain languages? Nope! Not everybody has everything. We are all various parts.

But here's the conclusion, and this is very important, and is what we have been leading up to:

31 But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way.

It says, But covet earnestly the best gifts:

Do you understand where the confusion can come in?

You will find various commentaries that either try and skirt around the issue, or contradict what the bible says. Some will say that you need to keep asking God to give you the best gifts.

If God sovereignly gives according to His will, it doesn't make any difference what you ask for, right? He does what He wants. And that's the emphasis!

First of all, the term covet earnestly in the Greek text is the word "to boil." Be in hot pursuit of the best gifts. That even makes it more confusing!

Unless you realize, and we just got through reading the list, but in the church, first apostles, then prophets, and thirdly teachers. And then after that, he doesn't list numerically anymore. He lists the supportive and sign gifts.

And what he's saying is "Earnestly seek after the apostles, the prophets, and the teachers."

Those are the ministries where you grow. It has nothing to do with seeking a "spiritual gift" for yourself. He spent the whole chapter explaining to us what God's Spirit does, how He works, and how he functions.

Okay, so if somebody comes up to me and says that down at the fairgrounds, they have a tent pitched, and they're having a "healing meeting." Well, I guess I can use one of those! There's always something "out of whack," so I can go down there to see what they can do for me.

But then someone tells me that there's somebody else over here that's going to start teaching in the book of Romans. Oh! You see, there's where my growth is.

I'm not going to grow by going down there and getting all worked up over healings and seeing somebody get healed. What if somebody gets healed? I get all excited and then I say "Wow! That was entertaining. Now what do I do?"

You grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ. The supportive gifts are important in that they have a function to support and promote the teachings.

So this last verse where it says "But covet earnestly the best gifts," is not telling you that even though the scripture says God distributes sovereignly, that you can still go to Him and ask Him for the best gift for yourself. "Hey, I want the best one!"

That's not what it says. God does distribute sovereignly. And whatever role God wants us to play in the body of Christ, whatever part and function, His Spirit will do that through us.

That's what we're chosen for. You can't change that. But I can get in a "side trip" and start chasing all different kinds of experiences and healings and miracle workers.

But you don't grow with that. There's no spiritual growth. Those are for the unbelievers, if indeed they are legitimate. Seek out in the body of Christ first apostles, prophets, and teachers. That's the only way you're going to grow.

I might also add that the church today is getting away from teaching. And I think we're getting duped! We're getting more into entertainment and socializing than growing.

The last phrase, "And yet I shew I unto you a more excellent way."

So he's talked about the ministry of the one Spirit of God who He Himself has all the abilities and capacities. And God sovereignly ministers to me and through me, by His one Spirit, through various expressions of grace according to His will.

It's very simple, until we start getting into the teachings that twist things like that last verse. People will say that God wants you to come and ask for the "best gifts" for you. But that's not what it's making reference to!

Next, we will get into Chapter 13. And it is the chapter on love. He says that if you don't have love, it doesn't make any difference what you do or what you know.

If it's not proper motivation, which is the spiritual benefit and concern for other people, it doesn't make any difference what you do.

So this is the focus on the one Spirit that has all of these ministries and capacities, but then we're going to study the motivation behind it in Chapter 13.

And then in Chapter 14, he's going to backtrack after laying all the foundation about the gifts of the Spirit. In Chapter 14, he's going to correct the Christians in Corinth because they put the emphasis on the "sign" gifts.

And they thought that they were spiritual because they thought they were practicing "speaking in tongues," and performing of "miracles."

And Paul's going to correct them and say "First of all, you're carnal, you're fleshy, just like the mystic religions. You get yourself all worked up into some kind of euphoric condition and you think it's the Spirit of God.

Just like he said in Chapter 14, "I would rather speak five words in the church that people could understand, than ten thousand words in a tongue that nobody can understand!"

And all it does it make someone look good. "Wow, he's spiritual. He spoke a language that nobody understands, and it's from the Spirit of God. I wish I could do that!"

You see where the emphasis is there? It's not on God. It's not for the building up and development of the body of Christ.

You see, today we have gotten into teachings that separate people and put spotlights on them, and give people examples to work towards. That's separating the body of Christ. It's highlighting a part of the whole body.

And Paul is trying to say yes, there are various parts, but there is only one body, and there is only one Spirit. And He's going to be working through all of the parts for the exact same reason, though all of the parts function differently.

And this body happens to be the body of Christ and He is the head. He is the one that is the administrator. He is the one who gets the spotlight. We are the ones on the supportive role.

Let's close with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

We're so thankful that your word teaches us so plainly, so systematically, where everything is in context and it all fits together, just like parts of the body. It really ministers one thing, but in various ways.

Help us to realize that we could not even be saved without God's Spirit saving us. We could not even call upon Jesus as our Lord without the Holy Spirit.

We could not even have a place and function in the body of Christ without your Spirit ministering through us. It's all of you. Help us to understand our responsibility. Help us to accept our function, and to accept our part in the body of Christ and all of the responsibility that that entails.

The body cannot function separately, but needs all. We pray that by your Spirit you would help us to understand these things, the understanding of the emphasis and the teaching of the ministry of the Holy Spirit would be plain and clear to us. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen!