

1st Corinthians 12

The Spiritual Gifts: Individual And As A Body

1st Corinthians 12:1-31, “Now concerning spiritual *gifts*, brethren, I would not have you ignorant. 2 Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. 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 Lord, but by the Holy Ghost. 4 Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. 5 And there are differences of administrations [margin: Or ministries], but the same Lord. 6 And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. 7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal. 8 For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; 9 to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 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: 11 but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will. 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. 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. 14 For the body is not one member, but many. 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? 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* hearing, where *were* smelling? 18 But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. 19 And if they were all one member, where *were* the body? 20 But now *are they* many members, yet but one body. 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: 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. 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: 25 that there should be no schism [margin: division] in the body; but *that* the members should have the same care one for another. 26 And whether one member suffer, all the members suffer with it; or one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. 27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular. 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. 29 *Are all apostles? are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles?* 30 *Have all the gifts of healing? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?* 31 **But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."**

Introduction

As you look around today, the world is getting darker and darker. I wonder what the future holds for America? In Hawaii the normal definition of the heterosexual family is being turned upside down. The legal rights of the family and Judeo-Christian ethic may soon be a thing of the past. What lies ahead for the Christian Churches of America? Today born-again Christians, as well as any Christians who believe the Bible is the inspired Word of God, and those who believe in an actual 2nd coming of Jesus Christ, are all labelled as *religious fanatics* by the media and society in general. i.e. To be a valid Christian is to be labelled as a fanatic! The closer relationship you have with God, the more you're looked down upon in this society. Don't take the label of *religious fanatic* lightly today, especially after Waco and the Branch Dividian fiasco, or Jim Jones and his cool-aid mass suicide. To have sincere believers in God and Jesus Christ thrown in with those genuine religious fanatics could have serious implications for us all, especially where the media and current government policies and attitudes are concerned. Paul gave a warning about the end times, which he believed were coming in his day. But Jesus inspired the warning through Paul, and it is for our day now, found in II Thessalonians 2:1-12. The condition of the Christian Church in America (collective) is pretty bad right now. Sixty percent of Christian fellowships don't even believe Jesus is God, God the Son! [for Biblical proof of who Jesus is, see <https://unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>]

Darkness is increasing in our country, and the blame is on the

Church. The gifts of the Holy Spirit operating in the Christian Church are intended to restrain evil in our country. These are very special and important gifts, and we will be going into them in detail, showing exactly what the Bible has to say about them. Jesus says in **Matthew 5:13**, **“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled by men.”** Salt is a purifying element. It used to be used to preserve meat and fish. It prevented decay and decomposition of these foods. God says through Zechariah in **Zechariah 4:6**, **“Not by might nor by power, but by My Spirit,” says the Lord of hosts.”** The Christian Church in America has forgotten about the Spirit and the spiritual gifts, and thus the restraining power it gives to stop evil in America has left us. Paul admonishes us in **2nd Timothy 1:6-7**, **“For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a Spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord...”** 1st Corinthians chapters 12-14 go through the spiritual gifts. In verse 1 of 1st Corinthians 12 the word "gifts" doesn't exist in the original Greek manuscripts. The Greek word is actually "spirituals." The word "gifts" was put in there by the translators to clarify what the Greek meant by "spirituals". God wants us to have a good handle on what his Word says so as to not be led astray and in order that we properly experience the Christian experience. There is a lot of emphasis on the spiritual gifts in the writings of Paul and Peter. God wants us to have a good working knowledge of the "spirituals" or spiritual gifts. There are three things we can do with the spiritual gifts God does give us. We can *USE*, *ABUSE*, or *REFUSE* them. There are some who use God's spiritual gifts, some who abuse them, and some who refuse them. First of all, God does not want Christians to be ignorant about what the spiritual gifts are that he divides amongst us, **verse 1, "Now about spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be ignorant.”** This is the very point and theme of the whole chapter.

There's No Need To Be Afraid Of Receiving God's Spiritual Gifts Which The Holy Spirit Bestows And Divides Among Us

verses 2-3, “Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led. 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.” In verses 2-3 Paul is telling them that they've previously been led to worship dumb idols, led by the flesh and demonic influences. The word *cursed* in verse 3 is the Greek word 'anathema'. He is saying that the Holy Spirit, or one led by the Holy Spirit, is never going to say *Jesus be cursed*, or *Jesus is anathema*. Why does Paul bring this up? There were those who must have thought that when you open yourself up to the Spirit and the workings of the Spirit, you also open yourself up to demonic influence. In Luke 11:9-12 Jesus makes it very clear that if you ask for the Holy Spirit, God is going to give it to you--and not something weird or demonic. There is an exhortation to seek after the Spirit, by Jesus himself. **Luke 11:9-12, “So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened. Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? Or if he asked for an egg, will give him a scorpion? If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”** People in Paul's day were saying, just as some do today, that if you're seeking the Spirit, you're going to come under all kinds of demonic influence. Jesus didn't say that, as you just read. There is a difference between seeking after the Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God, and seeking after emotionalism and an emotional experience. Some people may be seeking the emotional experience and they may not be receiving the Holy Spirit. We must be careful for what we ask for, and what we really are seeking for. In 1 John it says that we are to test the spirits that be to see if they are of Christ. Use all the Scriptures to test the spirits. Certain groups are going to get weirder and weirder as we get close to the end of the age. [An excellent companion study to this section on the theme of Christian groups getting weirder is Hank Hanegraaf's book "Counterfeit REVIVAL", available on <http://www.amazon.com>] There is a difference between seeking the Holy Spirit of God and seeking an emotional experience. When you ask for the Holy Spirit, God knows in your heart what you are really asking for, so be careful. In 1st Corinthians 2:9-12 Paul shows that the Holy Spirit grants us a spiritual understanding of the things of God--a spirit-plane level of understanding. Think of it this way. A cow doesn't understand the things of a man, like astronomy, algebra, languages, etc., because a cow does not possess what the Bible calls *the spirit of man*, or *man's spirit*, which grants the human

brain a far superior mental capability than the animals possess. In the same manner, Paul brings out, the Holy Spirit grants those he dwells in a God-level understanding and wisdom far superior to that of ordinary man. Ordinary man possess the same lack of spiritual God-plane intelligence that a cow lacks of human intelligence. [That is why unconverted people, people who do not have God's Holy Spirit dwelling inside them cannot really understand the Bible when they read it.] **1st Corinthians 2:9-12, "However, as it is written: 'No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him [Isaiah 64:4]' but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him. In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us."** **1st Corinthians 12:2-3, "You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, 'Jesus be cursed,' and no one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit."** [cf. 1 John 4:2-3.]

The Bible Differentiates The Various Spiritual Gifts In Four Different Epistles

In the New Testament, the spiritual gifts appear in these Scriptures: 1 Peter 4, Ephesians 4, Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12-14. In 1 Peter 4:10-11 "gifts" comes from the Greek word *charisma*, a gift of grace. Thus in 1 Peter 4 the word 'Gift' is actually in the Greek. Peter says, "know your gift, use your gift." In Romans 12:3-8 Paul uses the word "gift," *charisma*, here. Some call these the "motivational gifts." Paul and Peter says we should use them to serve others in love. Teaching is an analytical gift. Taking something apart and explaining it to others so they can better understand it. You may not realize you have a gift until you start using it. Gifts are given to edify the body of Christ. Here in Ephesians 4 Paul seems to be talking about ministries. i.e. Our gift may be that of a teacher, and God may give you a ministry of being a preacher, or a religious writer or teacher. A person's overall ministry may incorporate several gifts that a person has. Let's read Ephesians 4. **Ephesians 4:7-16, "But to each one of us grace has**

been given as Christ apportioned it. This is why it says: 'When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men. [Ps. 68:18]' (What does 'he ascended' mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions? He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up [vs 13] until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ." [Jesus appears to desire two kinds of unity in his body, which I have underlined. Unity *in the faith*, faith being "a faith" a set of doctrinal beliefs, as taken in context with verse 14; and unity *in the knowledge of the son of God*, i.e. the gospel of Christ, the primary knowledge of Salvation, which leads one to Salvation. This verse 13 is an interesting one which may indicate that Jesus eventually wants two kinds of unity in his body, doctrinal and spiritual unity. These are my own thoughts on the subject.] **(Vs. 14) "Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching [k.Js.: doctrine] and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming. Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work."** That is what appears to be the ministerial gifts, which we are supposed to apply our spiritual gifts to. Although the gift of being a teacher crosses over into both areas, it being an analytical spiritual gift of being able to dissect and properly divide the Word of truth, and also it can be a ministry Christ assigns to us as well.

*First, The Importance Of Knowing Your Gifts Given To You
By God Through His Holy Spirit -- What Are Those Gifts?*

Verses 4-11, "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of administrations [margin: ministries], but the same Lord. And there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit

withal. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; 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: but all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will.” Now back to 1 Corinthians 12:4-11, where Paul lists the *manifestation* gifts of the Spirit (although Paul doesn't actually use the word "gift" here in the Greek, but "spirituals"). These gifts are not necessarily continual. God gives them to accomplish a certain thing. The Old Testament lists powerful men of faith--but these men didn't always have faith. When they did have powerful faith--it was God manifesting His faith within them. Faith is a manifestation gift of the Spirit. ***‘Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues [margin: Or languages, cf. Acts 2], and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.’*** In verse 7 Paul says these gifts are gifts given for the benefit of serving the Church and community--for the common good of all--a corporate setting. The world desperately needs us to understand, properly covet, and use these gifts. As brought out in verses 1-3 don't be afraid of the workings of the Spirit. These things of the Holy Spirit are not weird things. ***The important thing is to know your gifts, and then use them to the benefit of all around you***--both within your Christian fellowship, in the Church collectively, the body of Christ, and within your community. That is a pretty tall order, but God can enable you through these gifts! It is time for true Christians to come alive and do the Work Jesus has set before us! Let us look at each gift God gives, as listed here by Paul in 1st Corinthians chapter 12.

The Gift of Wisdom

“For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom” (verse 8a)

In verse 8 Paul lists the first gift, wisdom. Wisdom is not intelligence, nor is it knowledge. Knowledge in the pure physical sense, is the accumulation of facts. Wisdom is the ability to properly use those facts. [My father once knew a man at his company who had a photographic memory. He had a vast physical knowledge or accumulation of facts. He had whole parts catalogues of the company committed to memory by just reading through them once. But he never went far into management. He didn't possess the *wisdom* or ability to use those facts he had stored in his head.] In the Old Testament we see all kinds of manifestations of the Spirit of God. In **1 Kings 3:5-28** we see the manifestation of the spiritual gift of wisdom bestowed on Solomon by God. It is quite an account.

“At Gibeon the Lord appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, ‘Ask! What shall I give you?’ And Solomon said: ‘You have shown great mercy to your servant David my father, because he walked before you in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart with you; you have continued this great kindness for him, and you have given him a son to sit on his throne as it is this day. Now, O Lord my God, you have made your servant king instead of my father David, but I am a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of your people whom you have chosen, a great people, too numerous to be numbered or counted. Therefore give to your servant an understanding heart to judge your people, that I may discern between good and evil. For who is able to judge this great people of yours?’ And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. Then God said to him: ‘Because you have asked this thing, and have not asked long life for yourself, nor have asked riches for yourself, nor have asked the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern justice, behold, I have done according to your words; see, I have given you a wise and understanding heart, so that there has not been anyone like you before you, nor shall any like you arise after you. And I have also given you what you have not asked: both riches and honor, so that there shall not be anyone like you among the kings all your days. So if you walk in my ways, to keep my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your days.’ Then Solomon awoke; and indeed it had been a dream. And he came to Jerusalem and stood before the ark of the covenant of the Lord, offered up burnt offerings, offered peace offerings, and made a feast for all his servants. Then two women who were harlots came to the king, and stood before him. And one woman said, ‘O my lord, this woman and I dwell in the same house; and I gave birth while she was in the

house. Then it happened, the third day after I had given birth. And we were together; there was no one with us in the house, except the two of us in the house. And this woman's son died in the night, because she lay on him. So she arose in the middle of the night and took my son from my side, while your maidservant slept, and laid him in her bosom. And when I rose in the morning to nurse my son, there he was, dead. But when I had examined him in the morning, indeed, he was not my son whom I had borne. Then the other woman said, 'No! But the living one is my son, and the dead one is your son.' And the first woman said, 'No! But the dead one is your son, and the living one is my son.' Thus they spoke before the king. And the king said, 'The one says 'This is my son, who lives, and your son is the dead one'; and the other says, 'No! But your son is the dead one, and my son is the living one.' Then the king said, 'Bring me a sword.' So they brought a sword before the king. And the king said, 'Divide the living child in two, and give half to one, and half to the other.' Then the woman whose son was living spoke to the king, for she yearned with compassion for her son; and she said, 'O my lord, give her the living child, and by no means kill him!' But the other said, 'Let him be neither mine nor yours, but divide him.' So the king answered and said, 'Give the first woman the living child, and by no means kill him; she is his mother.' And all Israel heard of the judgment which the king had rendered; and they feared the king, for they saw that the wisdom of God was in him to administer justice." In Matthew 22 we see that Jesus had perfect wisdom. Three times in the same day he used this Godly wisdom to defeat the verbal traps set for him by two groups, the Pharisees and the Sadducees. ***As Christian fellowships we need the manifestation of wisdom. The word of wisdom would stop disputes in their tracks. Satan wants to divide Christian fellowships--he is the enemy of unity. The word of wisdom will stop Satan's divisive attacks.*** Remember what God said in ***Zechariah***, 'Not by power, nor by might, but by my Spirit saith the Lord.' Let's look at the word of wisdom in action in Jesus. **Matthew 22:15-22,23-33,41-46**, "Then the Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words. They sent their disciples to him along with the Herodians. 'Teacher,' they said, 'we know you are a man of integrity and that you teach the way of God in accordance with the truth. You aren't swayed by men, because you pay no attention to who they are. Tell us then, what is your opinion? Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?' But Jesus, knowing their evil intent, said, 'You hypocrites, why are you trying to trap me? Show me the coin used for paying the tax.' They brought him a denarius, and he

asked them, 'Whose portrait is this? And whose inscription?' 'Caesar's,' they replied. 'Then he said to them, 'Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's.' When they heard this, they were amazed. So they left him and went away. That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. 'Teacher,' they said, 'Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and have children for him. Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. The same things happened to the second and the third brother, right on down to the seventh. Finally, the woman died. Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?' Jesus replied, 'You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. But about the resurrection of the dead--have you not read what God said to you, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not the God of the dead but of the living.' When the crowds heard this, they were astonished at his teaching...While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, 'What do you think about the Christ [margin: Messiah]? Whose son is he?' 'The son of David,' they replied. He said to them, 'How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit, calls him 'Lord'? For he says, 'The Lord said to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet [Psalm 110:1].' If then David calls him 'Lord,' how can he be his son?' No one could say a word in reply, and from that day on no one dared to ask him any more questions."

The Gift of Knowledge

Verse 8, "To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit..." The word or message (as the NIV has it) of knowledge is information given to us supernaturally--suddenly knowing something about a person, place or situation that we couldn't otherwise discern or know about. **Acts 5:1-10, "Now a man named Ananias, together with his wife Sapphira, also sold a piece of property. With his wife's full knowledge he kept back part of the money for himself [while obviously saying that he was donating the full amount to the Church], but brought the rest and put it at the apostles' feet. Then Peter said, 'Ananias, how is it that Satan has so filled your heart that you have lied**

to the Holy Spirit and have kept for yourself some of the money you received for the land? Didn't it belong to you before it was sold? And after it was sold, wasn't the money at your disposal? What made you think of doing such a thing? You have not lied to men but to God.' When Ananias heard this, he fell down and died. And great fear seized all who heard what had happened. Then the young men came forward, wrapped up his body, and carried him out and buried him. About three hours later his wife came in, not knowing what had happened. Peter asked her, 'Tell me, is this the price you and Ananias got for the land?' 'Yes,' she said, 'that is the price.' Peter said to her, 'How could you agree to test the Spirit of the Lord? Look! The feet of the men who buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out also.' At that moment she fell down at his feet and died. Then the young men came in and, finding her dead, carried her out and buried her beside her husband. Great fear seized the whole church and all who heard about these events."

Jesus was also given the word of knowledge supernaturally about the Samaritan woman at the well. How could he have known this about her otherwise? **John 4:4-26,28-29,39-41**, "Now he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well. It was about the sixth hour. When a Samaritan woman came to draw water, Jesus said to her, 'Will you give me a drink?' (His disciples had gone into the town to buy food.) The Samaritan woman said to him, 'You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink? (For Jews do not associate with Samaritans [Margin: Or do not use dishes Samaritans use].) Jesus answered her, 'If you knew the gift of God and who it is that asks you for a drink, you would have asked him and he would have given you living water.' 'Sir,' the woman said, 'you have nothing to draw with and the well is deep. Where can you get this living water? Are you greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well and drank from it himself, as did also his sons and his flocks and herds?' Jesus answered, 'Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.' The woman said to him, 'Sir, give me this water so that I won't get thirsty and have to keep coming here to draw water.' He told her, 'Go tell your husband and come back.' 'I have no husband,' she replied. Jesus said to her, 'You are right when you say you have no husband. The fact is, you have had five husbands, and the man you now have is not your husband. What you have just said is quite true.'

[Talk about blowing someone's mind! Meeting a total stranger and reciting her life story to her.] 'Sir,' the woman said, 'I can see that you are a prophet. Our fathers worshipped on this mountain, but you Jews claim that the place where we must worship is in Jerusalem.' Jesus declared, 'Believe me, woman, a time is coming when you will worship the Father neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem. You Samaritans worship what you do not know; we worship what we do know, for salvation is from the Jews. Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for they are the kind of worshippers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshippers must worship in spirit and truth.' The woman said, 'I know that Messiah' (called Christ) is coming. When he comes, he will explain everything to us.' Then Jesus declared, 'I who speak to you am he.'...Then leaving her water jar, the woman went back to the town and said to the people [NKJV, "said to the men" i.e. she wasn't very popular with the women of the town!], 'Come, see a man who told me everything I ever did. Could this be the Christ [Margin: Messiah]? They came out of the town and made their way toward him...Many of the Samaritans from that town believed in him because of the woman's testimony, 'He told me everything I ever did.' So when the Samaritans came to him, they urged him to stay with them, and he stayed two days. And because of his words many more became believers."

The Gift of Faith

Verse 9a, "to another faith by the same Spirit,..." The third gift of the Spirit is FAITH. Faith is something you or I cannot conjure up or manifest. There are three kinds of faith:

1. Saving faith. It comes from Jesus--applied to salvation.
2. The faith that trusts God and his promises. This is a maturing kind of faith that comes from time and experience with God, experiencing God working in our lives--as well as a faith that comes by hearing and reading the Word of God.
3. A healing faith: This third type can be there some of the time in our lives and not be there at other times, and it often comes from God, not worked up on our own.

4. There were times in Abraham's life, Peter's life and Elijah's life when they had great faith and at other times they totally lacked faith. Elijah manifested this kind of faith in front of Israel and the 400 prophets of Baal, when he called down fire from heaven on his burnt offering soaked down with water. But he totally lacked faith a very short time later when Jezebel threatened his life in the very next chapter. He ran all the way to mount Sinai, with no one chasing him!

The Church goes forward on faith. It is of God. We don't work it up on our own. It is a neat gift. **Mark 11:20-25, "In the morning, as they went along, they saw the fig tree withered from the roots [Jesus had cursed the fig tree that very same day because it had no fruit, verses 12-14.]. Peter remembered and said to Jesus, 'Rabbi, look! The fig tree you cursed has withered!' 'Have faith in God,' Jesus answered. 'I tell you the truth, if anyone says to this mountain, 'Go throw yourself into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart but believes that what he says will happen, it will be done for him. There I tell you, whatever you ask for in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And when you stand praying, if you hold anything against anyone, forgive him, so that your Father in heaven may forgive your sins."** You can't use this kind of faith to accomplish or gain things you want for selfish purposes. Jesus is speaking to his disciples who became apostles. When Jesus called his disciples he said to them "If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow me." Those that teach this theology that you can **get** anything you want just by asking in **Jesus' name** in faith is not asking according to scripture. This gift of faith, as well as the others mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12, are given to accomplish things for the corporate good--unselfish things for the good of others--things that will benefit the Church or the community we live in. (Jesus used *the gift of knowledge* to convert almost a whole town in Samaria!)

The Power Gifts

The Church in America has basically written off Jesus. Beware of "the Jesus Seminar" who say that Jesus never said the things he

said, and that the miracles in the Bible never occurred. God is supernatural, and amazingly enough, he desires to manifest himself through us. The gifts of the Spirit are the signature of God. ***The gift of faith seems to open up these gifts of power which come next.*** We find mentioned after faith in 1 Corinthians 12--and forget what common sense tells you--that God can heal. And the most important disease God can heal is sin. Yes, spiritual healing, as well as physical healing. God created matter and the universe, but God can't heal? Ridiculous! In verse nine it mentions "gifts of healing." Beware of someone who says he has the "gift" of healing, accompanied by all kinds of weird doctrines and money making schemes. [cf. "Counterfeit REVIVAL", by Hank Hanegraaf.] God gives gifts of healing to the body of Christ. God will give you the faith for healing if he wants to heal you--but God may also choose not to heal you. People can't just conjure up healing faith at will and be healed by God. God does **not** guarantee Christians a physically perfect life. We need to live for eternity. **Verses 9b-11, "to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines."** Some people say these gifts do not exist for today--this day and age. People say, 'Now that we have the written Word of God, these gifts are passed away' based on Hebrews 2:1-4, which states, "We must pay more careful attention, therefore, to what we have heard, so that we do not drift away. For if the message spoken by angels was binding, and every violation and disobedience received its just punishment, how shall we escape if we ignore such a great salvation? This salvation, which was first announced by the Lord, was confirmed to us by those who heard him. God also testified to it by signs, wonders, and various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed according to his will." This is a weak argument. Those who apply Hebrews 2:1-4 like this are putting God in a box. They need to hang out with some missionaries in the 3rd world countries for awhile. God backs up his Word with miracles. [read "I Just Saw JESUS" by Paul Eshleman, at:

https://unityinchrist.com/evangelism/excerpts_isawjesus.htm] Don't believe me, read the facts.

The Gift of Prophecy

The gift of prophecy is not just prophesying about something that will happen in the future, but is speaking the Word of God in the Spirit. That has often been called Prophesying, it means teaching God's Word, often the Bible, in the power of the Holy Spirit. The following was taken off the Internet. This is old, going back to 1997, three short years after this website was started. The email addresses are probably defunct now, but the story is true.

**"A powerful testimony in the world today
The Imprisonment of Queno**

From: BHMIN@aol.com

Date: Fri, 18 Apr 1997 16:47:12 -0400 (EDT)

Dear Friends:

Lori (Pinney) Nij and her husband Eugene Nij serve as missionaries in San Raymundo, Guatemala. They have been there for over a decade. With the help of the New Iberian Mission Association they have built an orphanage, a Free School and a number of churches to teach and preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Last week, two women tried to kidnap a baby in the town square (kidnapping is very common and out of control). When they grabbed the baby, some of the merchants heard the mother screaming and went to her aid. They caught the two women and got the baby back, but not before the square was filled with women who had seen what had happened. They formed a mob and were just going to kill these women (out of frustration for the many babies who were still missing). When Eugene heard the news he frantically hurried to stop this. When he got there the town's women were out of control. The police were trying to figure out what they were going to do with this mob. Eugene asked that he be allowed to speak to them. He calmed them down, but he warned the police that they needed to take these women (the kidnapers) to another town to be jailed for their own protection. Eugene then went back across town to the Free School to finish his day. That afternoon, the women were placed in the jail there in San Raymundo, in spite of Eugene's advice, and when the husbands came in from the fields, the women of the town incited

them to tear down the jail and kill the women. By the time the police got there one woman was killed and the other seriously injured. Today, Eugene has been arrested and charged with murder 1. The government has always sought a way to close the Free School and the orphanage as well as the churches and this is how they plan to do it. There are over 300 witnesses, including the police officers that can testify that Eugene wasn't even present, but these voices are not being heard. My friends, this is where you come in...I believe with all my heart that Satan and his forces are waging war on Christians world-wide. He wants to isolate and destroy. Lori said that the worst part was the loneliness with Eugene in jail and her family clear across the world. I am pleading that you begin, the minute you receive this, praying. The kind of prayers that ascended when Peter was imprisoned. The kind of prayers you have received when you were in a trial. The kind of prayer that in love can change the world. I pray that you send this to every person, church and Christian organization that you can and together we will not only see Eugene released, but we will form a chain of prayer that will blanket the globe and no longer will we be alone in our struggles...But united, with almighty God as our King. And when the trumpet shall sound, the time shall be no more, we shall meet face to face and I shall be honored to gaze at the sea of Brothers and Sisters who prayed with me and loved me as their own. God Bless You.

Tim

Worstell

Email: timlw@juno.com

Update

Please forgive the delay, but as you might imagine, we are going around the clock. I will give you a summation, and if you are interested--I will mail you a copy of the New Iberian Mission Association Newsletter--It will go into even more detail. As for the latest news, When Eugene (Queno) got to prison, he found that he would be put in general population. That means that he would be put in the same holding place with murderers, rapists, terrorists, anyone who would be put in a federal prison for a crime worthy of a death sentence. He began to pray, within a few minutes, the inmates asked him to pray for them. He began to preach, much like Paul and Silas did. These men began to cry out, "What must we do to be saved?" He continued, hours passed. He affected even the guards. They have been sneaking him up to the head office late every night to call Lori and pray with her and to update her on his conversions, even though inmates are not allowed to make phone calls. On the first day, as he began to preach, a man came to him. He introduced himself as the devil himself. He obviously ran things inside the

prison, and had now pulled Queno off to the side to stop him from preaching. Queno told him that the power he was looking for, that he thought he had found in the Mafia, that he thought he had found here, was only available in one place...Jesus Christ. He prayed with and taught him all night long. The next day, this man, whose shadow eclipsed Queno, made an announcement to the whole prison. "Anyone who messes with the preacher messes with me!" That day, Lori was held up bringing his food to him (they are allowed to eat once a day and the family has to bring it or they don't eat at all) and as it became obvious that he would not get to eat today, one by one the inmates began to tear off bread from their plates. One said to him, "You've fed us all day from the plate of God, now let us feed you from our plate." [What did Jesus say to Peter in **John 21:15-17? "Feed my lambs...Take care of my sheep...Feed my sheep."** This is the number one job and responsibility of every minister of Jesus Christ. Queno is living up to the high calling of Jesus Christ, as a true minister of Jesus Christ!] My friends, what Satan meant for evil, God has used for good. Please continue to pray for Queno, the life expectancy in this prison is very short. My prayer has been that, as Queno has made the front page of the national newspaper for two weeks in a row now, he will be able to draw great crowds anywhere he preaches. This will enable him to have much more profound effect on this country. Back in San Raymundo, there have been lines as far as the eye can see for 5 days. One by one the people who knew Queno and were touched by him are lining up at the Lawyer's office to give their deposition. They have over a THOUSAND SO FAR! And the line doesn't look like it has moved. These people whose annual income is equivalent to a hundred dollars or so, are coming to Lori's house with money they had stored to feed their families and are offering it to her to pay the legal bills, and to help feed her family as Queno is in prison. Guatemala is largely a Catholic Country, and this has been a struggle for the past decade for Queno and Lori. On the day he was arrested every Catholic church in the state announced that there were going to fast and pray until Queno was released. They have been very faithful to that promise. The country will never be the same. My friends, I cannot express to you in words what your dedication to this prayer vigil means to me. I may never know the significance of brothers around the world uniting in prayer in one voice, with one heart. However, I can attest that when I am asked how I can know that there is a God, I can only respond, "Because I have his signature." May God Bless Each Of You in your faithfulness.

Sincerely,
Dean Pinney

UPDATE

Today the U.S. Ambassador called Lori and insisted that they meet right away. He told her that his phone is ringing off the hook. He can't get anything done on his computer for the e-mail stacking up. He was contacted by 2 U.S. Senators this morning that told him that they expected an explanation by tomorrow regarding the imprisonment of Queno. In addition, he has received E-Mail from "every continent, from Governments around the world." He asked Lori, "Who are you?!!! I have received messages from every continent around the globe over the weekend and now I have the U.S. Senate breathing down my neck." Lori told him that they were merely Christians whose family around the world was concerned. He told her to rest assured that the U.S. was now involved and they would bring things to an end. He told her that he has never met anyone in his entire career that had such influential ties. She said that Queno's imprisonment was used by God to UNITE THE CHRISTIAN WORLD and that there is a new day dawning for those persecuted for the sake of righteousness. Because there are millions across the world on their knees seeking counsel with the Most High God--and He is obviously giving them His attention. The President of the Evangelical Association in Guatemala interviewed Lori for two hours yesterday and was astonished at her reassuring response. He told her that they must be the "Most protected people in the world." He said that he sent 2 detectives last week to locate her and tell her that he wanted to meet with her. When they got to San Raymundo they began asking where they could find her. No one would tell them where she lived. They offered money, threatened, and nothing persuaded the people to tell where she lived. Finally, they resorted to driving the many miles of road that is made up of the Alto Plano and searching for her truck. Finally, the President of the Evangelical Association decided he would find her himself. He found a Catholic Priest (thinking that surely this man, a religious enemy, would tell him where to find them) when he asked him if he knew Queno. (He told Lori that he had never seen anything like this before.) "Do I know him? My son, he has changed our lives! Come, let me tell you about my brother...for thirty some minutes he went on about how Queno has given life to these people. Then he ended with, "May God forgive me, but I cannot tell you where she lives." Sunday the church where Queno preaches normally, was packed out into the streets. There were faces there that had sworn they wanted nothing to do with religion. "We want to know, What kind of God turns sadness into singing?" they cried.

Friday, Queno called Lori. "When you come next week, bring extra food." Lori, worried about why he wasn't getting enough, asked,

“Aren't you getting yours?” “Oh yes, but there are many here who have no family and they don't have food at all. I try to share mine, but I run out before we get to everyone.” Lori assured him that she would find the money to buy more. She took her last bit of money and went to the market, she began to fill bags with food. The grocer, a lady that has known Queno for a long time, asked Lori if she was leaving town. Lori then told her that Queno had talked about the men in prison who weren't getting food and that they were going to feed them. The grocer stood there dumbfounded. “Back your truck up to the door” she told Lori. “If your husband is in prison and he is more concerned about the other prisoners than himself, or his own expense--then I don't want to be left out of what your God is about to do there.” She FILLED Lori's truck with food and told her to come back if that wasn't enough. It only takes a spark...A song that I remember learning 25 years ago now takes on a whole new meaning. “It only takes a spark to get a fire going, and soon all those around can warm up to its glowing. That's how it is with God's love, once you've experienced it--you spread his love to everyone, you want to pass it on.” In a small village in Central America that most of you have never heard of, there was a man who grew up without a father. Raised by his mother, very poor, he learned to be a carpenter. When he was of age, he was converted by his uncle to Christ. His life was never the same. He vowed to go to bible college and learn how to bring others to Christ and come back and preach to this lost village made up primarily of Mayan Indians. At Colegio Biblico, in Eagle Pass Texas he met and married his missions professor. To the amazement of his people, he returned as he had said. (Everyone who got the chance to leave never came back.) His biggest concern were the thousands of children orphaned by a century of civil war [which by the way was being kept going and exploited by the CIA, see <https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans4.htm> also see http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Blum/KillingHope_page.html and look up Guatemala 1962-1980s]. As he began building a church, he also envisioned an orphanage. As he began to work with the children, he realized that they were not getting a very good education. So his next challenge was to build a school to educate them. It would have to be free, because the poverty was overwhelming. A decade later, the orphanage is mother and father to many children, the free-school is giving a future to the next generation of Guatemalans. The church has outgrown its building, meeting every day of the week to overcrowded audiences starving for a peace that passes understanding. And this small Mayan preacher, in love with his people, is lying tonight on a concrete floor, giving praise to his God that he was chosen for this ministry. Praying that

he can reach "one more" before his time is up. Tonight, he fed the multitudes--with so much food from a grocer that normally would put her out of business. But up in Heaven God is smiling...another demon on the unemployment line. I am reminded of the jar that never emptied as the prophet asked the widow to make him a cake. Don't close your Bible yet, God is still keeping jars from going empty. He's still holding the water back so his servants can cross on dry land. He still asks, "Whom shall I send, Who will go for us?" It only took a spark, that small ember of faith shielded from the wind, that grows into a raging fire that the wind cannot put out--in fact, the stronger the wind--the stronger the fire. And somewhere tonight, from a desolate prison cell there is one who is calling to God for the first time as he awaits death for his crime, saying, "Remember me in paradise." And beside him is a five-foot tall preacher with a ten-foot tall spirit fueled by the prayers of Christians from every land. Get in, sit down, hang on.

-----This message comes in the middle of Larry's--after the part of Queno's entry into the prison, and before the call from the US Ambassador to Guatemala.

I apologize that it has taken me so long to give you an update on the condition of our brother Queno in Guatemala. He is still imprisoned in the Federal Prison in Guatemala City, Charged with Murder. He is still being held with no evidence or witnesses. He is still being kept from his ministry that he has been devoted to for over a decade. He is still being kept from praising God for the opportunity to preach to the lost. He is still changing lives forever. Yesterday, was the day set aside for visitors to come to the prison. This is a rare event, they do not allow visitors often due to the nature of the crimes of these inmates. Lori stood in line for hours with Tabitha, and Herbert--waiting to see daddy. They were patiently waiting to tell Queno, husband...daddy, that they loved him. They were anxious to tell him of the phone calls that they have received from around the world. They were anxious to tell him that the people in the village who had never been interested in their ministry were asking what they could do to help. About how these people, impoverished beyond our imagination, were taking grain, the corn that was their meager store of food to feed their family--and they made food for Lori and the children. About how these strangers to religion, saw an opportunity to show their love for a family that had brought hope to the hopelessness of the forgotten village of San Raymundo. They were anxious to tell Queno that the government threatened every member of the press to stay away from this situation or they would be held in contempt by the Federal

Government. How that a member of the press told Lori that he was risking his life to report the story in his small independent paper. They wanted to tell Queno about the Baptist, Pentecostal, Disciple and Catholic Churches around the Alto Plano that are STILL fasting and praying for his safety and release. Tabitha wanted to tell daddy that today in school she was approached by a reporter that wanted to tell her that he was trying to find a way to tell their story so that even the government couldn't stop it. Herbert wanted to tell his daddy that his friends had told him that their mommies and daddies are selling their possessions to raise money to get his daddy out of jail. Lori wanted to tell her beloved husband that she has been faithful to his ministry...that she has been organizing around the clock prayer and fasting for the conversion of the inmates in the prison that Queno was witnessing to. But there they were, standing in a line that seemed to string for miles. Soon, Lori asked a guard why it was taking so long to get in. The guard told her that it was because the inmates were taking their families to meet the "preacher". Each one telling his wife and children, "You have to meet this man who has changed my life! He knows God, and he told His God about ME! And he said his God will forgive me!" One after another, each one giving up his time with his family to take them to meet the "preacher." Lori's head dropped in prayer, "God, I can wait." They didn't get to see Queno until late that evening, and then for only a few minutes because it was so late. He glowed with excitement as he tried to tell Lori of each one of these men whose lives had been changed forever. As they were taken out of the prison, they looked back to say their last "good-byes," and he was already kneeling down with another inmate and they were praying. The walls came tumbling down in this place. Walls that separated men from God, walls that divided families, walls that held men hostage to sin, walls that divided churches, walls that kept love out and hate in...fell. There were no trumpet blasts, there was no earthquake, just the people of God on their knees in prayer. Friends, I need to tell you that today they had another hearing, the Judge is even more angry that no evidence has been found. Even with the enormous reward offered for a "witness"--no one will say they saw him do it. The guard told Lori that he is amazed that they are having so much trouble "buying" a witness because these people are so poor. But they are not persuaded by the dull riches of man, for they have seen the treasures of God. Thank you for your faithfulness, thank you for your prayers, and may God change the world through men and women like you. And, as for Dean, I have seen a glimpse of Heaven in the love of Christians around the Globe. God Bless you." Eugene or Queno sounds like he is right out of the Book of Acts doesn't he? No, the time of miracles is not over by a long-shot. As a matter of fact, as times get more perilous, God will work more, not less,

miracles--but so will the enemy. Verse 10, the gift of prophecy is speaking the Word of God in the Spirit (speaking or writing). We just read an amazing 20th Century example of a man, Eugene Nij, exercising the gift of prophecy--speaking the Word of God in the Spirit. And so much so, that many prisoners considered incorrigibly dangerous and beyond redemption have been changed and converted, and are showing the fruits of the Spirit of God in them! Is the time of miracles gone? Nonsense!

The gift of prophecy can also be a foretelling of something to come. In Luke 19:41-44 both aspects appear here, foretelling and forthtelling. **Luke 19:41-44, "As he approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace--but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment against you and encircle you and hem you in on every side. They will dash you to the ground, you and the children within your walls. They will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you."** The body of Christ needs all the proclaiming gifts. The world is trying to discredit the Word of God. The gift of prophecy, in both forms, helps the Church stay on course. [Queno Nij is now out of the Federal Prison in Guatemala, I couldn't find out how or the rest of the story, but I assume the pressures brought to bear from the US Ambassador to Guatemala had something to do with it, in answer of course to everyone's prayers. He is still working with his wife Lori in his churches and free school in San Raymundo, Guatemala. Email for Lori & Queno Nij: amglory@yahoo.com and Amglory@missionoffaith.org]

Gift of Distinguishing of Spirits

"to another discerning of spirits;" (verse 10b) Distinguishing of spirits (vs. 10) is the working of the Spirit to see that something is not right about an individual. **Matthew 7:21-22, "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name drive out demons and perform miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'"** Plainly Jesus tells us that

others can prophecy and cast out demons, but they are false Christians. History has shown us that Rasputin, the mad monk of Russia, could work miracles and healing, but these were by the power of Satan.

The Gift of Tongues

“to another *divers* kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues;” (verse 10c) Prophecy, Bible prophecy--foretelling the future--is for the believer. It shows us that God is in control, no matter how things may look in the present evil world. But the gift of tongues was and is a sign to the nonbeliever. Acts 2:1-11 is an example where tongues was used to call 3000 into the body of Christ the very day the Church was born, on the Day of Pentecost. On this day of Pentecost all nations and tongues were brought together to the Lord. At the tower of Babel the tongues were given to divide man. A modern day example of tongues which occurred in a service where the minister and his wife were attending, one lady got up in services and started speaking a message from the Lord in French. She didn't understand French. The minister's wife didn't understand French, but she got up and interpreted the message, just like in Acts 2. Others that knew French could tell that the giving and interpretation were correct.

One Body Of Believers, Composed Of Many Believers

Verse 12, "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ." i.e. None of us are the body of Christ by ourselves, we're only a part of the body of Christ. None of us can effectively live alone outside the body. We need to be part of the body. **Verse 13, “For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink.”** John the Baptist said in **Matthew 3:11, “I baptize you in water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not**

fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.” By the Spirit, the Holy Spirit, we're baptized into the body. Physical baptism in water is only a physical outward sign symbolizing what the Holy Spirit has and is doing in a person. You can be baptized by the Holy Spirit without ever being baptized in water. Comment: The minister (also the station manager for the local Christian radio station here) got a phone call from a young man who was all excited about the radio. When asked what Church he belonged to he said that the radio was his Church. How would Paul look at this? 1st Corinthians 12 shows us what Paul feels about the people who think that listening to a good Christian radio station fulfills their need for belonging to a Church. Those that think this are overlooking the Church/community-wide responsibility we Christians have to use the spiritual gifts and talents God gives us through His Holy Spirit *for the common good (I Cor. 12:7)*. Is that what Queno did with his talents? Jesus in the parable of the talents shows us how he will look upon *side-line, bench-warming* Christians. **Matthew 25:24-30, “Then he who had received the one talent came and said, ‘Lord, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you have not sown, and gathering where you have not scattered seed. And I was afraid, and went and hid your talent in the ground [all our talents come from God, for it is God who designed and made us]. Look, there you have what is yours.’ But his lord answered and said to him, ‘You wicked and lazy servant, you know that I reap where I have not sown, and gather where I have not scattered seed. Therefore you ought to have deposited my money with the bankers, and at my coming I would have received back my own with interest.’ ‘Therefore take the talent from him, and give it to him who has ten talents. For to everyone who has, more will be given, and he will have abundance; but from him who does not have, even what he has will be taken away. And cast the unprofitable servant into the outer darkness. There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’”** Naturally, Christian radio is beautiful for shut-ins and the elderly who can't get out and around to use their talents in such a way. Christian radio serves and nurtures these wonderful people, bolstering their walk with Jesus often times just before they pass on to him. And Christian radio can be a wonderful supplement to our normal spiritual diet. But the greatest growth and Christian character development for the rest of us comes when we serve others with the spiritual gifts and talents that God has bestowed on each of us. The gifts outlined in 1 Corinthians 12 are meant to be used collectively for the corporate good. The Body has many different members, each to fulfill a function within the body. These parts are not designed to survive on their own. When we're alone on our own we don't, we can't experience all the spiritual gifts. i.e. The gift of

discernment in one can warn other members in the body that a person or group isn't what they appear to be. All these gifts are given for the corporate good of the body of Christ, and the local congregations of the fellowships that make up that body. **Verses 12-26, "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free--and we were all given the one Spirit to drink."** Now the body is not made up of one part but of many [back in Paul's day there was only one Church, the apostolic Church of God. Now there are many Christian fellowships which have the Holy Spirit. So this set of verses can apply to Christian fellowships as representing the various parts of the body of Christ, or it can apply to individual members of a congregation within a Christian fellowship, as it was originally written.]. **"If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,' it would not for that reason cease to be part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has arranged the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I don't need you! [but some fellowships say this toward other fellowships, now don't they?] And the head cannot say to the feet, 'I don't need you!' On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has combined the members of the body and has given greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it."**

Corporate Structure Of The Church

Now Paul goes on to give the corporate structure of the Church showing how the gifts and ministries fit together to form one body [and in Paul's day this *one body* was composed of one church]. **Verses 27-30, "Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And in the church God has appointed first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then workers of miracles, also those having gifts of healing, those able to help others, those with gifts of administration, and those speaking in different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues [margin: other languages]? Do all interpret?"** Do all possess the same gifts? No, some have teaching, some don't etc. That is what Paul is saying. Right in the middle of Paul's description of the spiritual gifts--the "spirituals"--Paul gives us 1st Corinthians 13, the best gift, which we all can have acting within us. **Verse 31, "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way."** What greater gifts? That last statement leads us into 1st Corinthians 13 where Paul describes the "*greater gifts.*"

1st Corinthians 13

True greatness, what is true greatness? Billy Graham, Charles Finney, D.L. Moody, George Mueller--they all did great things for the Lord. What about all the martyrs? Paul said previously that all the Corinthians had many spiritual gifts, but were very carnal. They all wanted the more dramatic gifts, almost like little kids, they wanted to show them off. But they didn't want these gifts for the right reasons. They liked to be noticed. They liked to appear spiritual and manifest these gifts (in front of others). What did Jesus say about the Pharisees liking to make public display of their praying and almsgiving, all for show, while their motives were evil inside. Paul didn't go so far as to say this to them, but the shoe certainly fit. Instead he went on to show them in a positive way what their motive ought to be, and how they could achieve the best gifts at the same time. **Verses 1-3, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become as sounding brass or a clanging cymbal. And though I have the gift of prophecy and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my goods**

to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.” What is the Greek word for love used here? It is Agape, [Strong's #26: Agape; love, i.e. affection or benevolence; from #25; agapao; to love (in a social or moral sense)...]. The other word used for love in the New Testament is Phileo, or brotherly love [Strong's 5368; to be a friend (fond of)[an individual or an object]i.e. to have affection for (denoting personal attachment, a matter of sentiment or feeling; while 25 [Agape] is wider, embracing espec. the judgment and the deliberate assent of will as a matter of principle, duty and propriety...the former [phileo] being chiefly of the heart and the latter [agapeo] of the head...]. A third word for love in the Greek is Eros, which is sexual love between husband and wife. It is not used or found once in the Bible. God didn't have to worry about telling people to have this kind of love. It was in abundance. But Godly love, Agape, only comes from one source. It is a spiritual gift from above, just as the other gifts mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12. Paul goes on to break this love down into its constituent spiritual components or colors. **Verse 4, “Love suffers long [Strong's #3114: makrothumeo; to be long-spirited, i.e. forbearing, patient:-bear (suffer) long, be longsuffering, have (long) patience, be patient, patiently endure.] and is kind [Strong's #5541: chresteuomai, from 5543, to show oneself useful, i.e. act benevolently:- be kind. #5543; chrestos; useful...good(ness), kindness.]** Jesus said ***“Father forgive them for they know not what they do”*** when they crucified him. Is that the reaction we would have had? I don't think so. But Jesus had agape love without measure. He set the example that we are to follow (1 Peter 2:20-21). When people get “righteous and Holy” they tend to get judgmental, not kind. How would you look upon a homeless person who walked in the door right now, in his dirty clothes, unwashed, smelly, and hungry? Most of us would have a judgmental reaction. **“Love does not envy”** [Strong's #2206: zeloo; to have warmth of feeling for or against:-affect, covet (earnestly), (have) desire, (move with) envy, be jealous over...]; Envy is a selfish thing. It is not agape love. **“Love does not parade itself, is not puffed up”** [Strong #5448: phusioo, from 5449 in the prim. sense of *blowing*; **to inflate, i.e. make proud:-puff up.**]... Knowledge without agape love puffs up.

Verse 5, “[love] does not behave rudely, does not seek its own [is not selfish], is not provoked [Strong's #3947: paroxuno, to sharpen alongside, i.e. (fig.) to exasperate:-easily provoke, stir.], thinks no evil;” God's agape love is not provoked, it can't be provoked. It is never rude to another individual, no matter what the circumstances. Are you ever rude? When the salesperson calls up on the phone at dinnertime are you kind to him or her? When in

the check-out line or in traffic are you seeking your own advantage? Do you think evil of other's (who may deserve it)? Or do you think good things toward that person? What about the guy who cut you off in traffic? Ever think evil of him? Rudeness has no place in the kingdom of God. Apply this one in your daily life. Agape love is not self-seeking. Here's a good formula: Jesus first, others second, self third. Agape love is not selfish, not easily provoked. In the Greek, "easily" is not there. Love is **not** provoked, angered, ever. Love thinks no evil of other people, no matter how much we think they may deserve it. It does not rejoice in evil (that happens to others that may deserve it). **Verse 6, "[love] does not rejoice in iniquity, but rejoices in truth;"** Ever like hearing the juicy tid-bits about what someone else did, or how they got in trouble? Especially your enemy? God's agape love doesn't do that. A proverb warns us not to laugh when your enemy stumbles. God's love doesn't. **Verse 7, "[love] bears all things, believes all things [i.e. the best about people], hopes all things, endures all things."** Can we do this?

*When All's Said And Done In God's Plan Of Salvation,
What Will Be Left?*

God's Agape love always gives and never expects anything in return. Paul says that no matter how great a work we may work, it is nothing without agape love. Speaking in tongues is nothing without agape love--just making a noise, that's all. So when all is said and done in God's plan for mankind, what will be left? **Verse 8, "Love never fails. But whether there are prophecies, they will fail, whether there are tongues, they will cease; whether there is knowledge, it will vanish away..."** That's Paul's answer. **Verses 9-12, "For we know in part and we prophesy in part. But when that which is perfect has come, then that which is in part will be done away. When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things. For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I am known."** Love is permanent but all else will fail. There will be a time when there will be no need for prophecy, tongues, or any of the other gifts--but love will abide. Verse 13 shows that love itself includes faith and hope, that is why these three never fail. Hope is for the future, love is for today. **Verse 13, "And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love."** So Paul says speaking in tongues is nothing without agape love--it's just making

a noise. The Church today needs to read 1st Corinthians chapters 12, 13 and 14 together. He's saying, you and I, both men and women, like to look spiritual, but without the agape love it's nothing at all. We want to clang our symbols and make a show but it's nothing without agape love, it's just making a noise--it's nothing at all. Sometimes a church can come together with a lot of fanfare and excitement but it's hollow without God's agape love. **“Woe to you when all men speak well of you”** Jesus said. Knowledge without love merely puffs up, but love edifies. Having great Biblical knowledge puffs, and turns into a spiritual danger. People need to learn to have true compassion. You can love the ministry and hate people. I've seen this before. Paul says you may be used to move mountains, to teach all kinds of Bible knowledge--but without agape love it's nothing. We run the race for Eternal glory, but the secret in doing that is agape love, more than any manifestation gifts. That's what Paul is saying in verse 3. What's the main difference between other religions and Christianity? Agape love is the difference. Even our financial sacrifices without agape love profits us nothing. God is going to use us if we abide in his love. What people around you need to see is your compassion. **John 15:1-14, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch in me that bears no fruit, while every branch that does bear fruit he prunes [margin: cleans] so that it will be even more fruitful. You are already clean because of the word I have spoken to you. Remain in me, and I will remain in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in me, he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned. If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you. This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. If you obey my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father's commands and remain in his love. I have told you this so that my joy may be complete. My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.”** [For a very thorough study on God's Agape love found in 1st Corinthians 13, see <https://unityinchrist.com/Agape/Agape%20I.htm>]

1st Corinthians 14

Everything Must Be Done Decently And In Order

On December 7, 1941 353 Japanese enemy aircraft appeared in the sky over Pearl Harbor. Eight battleships were lost, 6 airfields were put out of action and 2400 men and women were killed. The lieutenant in charge of the two radar operators working our first radar looking out over the Pacific in Hawaii said to the operators when they saw the massive flight of unidentified aircraft coming, *"Don't worry about it."* Many of our overseers in the Christian Church (collectively) are misreading the signs of the times and saying *"Don't worry about it."* The leaders in the Church, the body of Christ, need to be looking at that radar scope and see the enemy that's on the screen. [The proper understanding of prophecy has a lot to do with looking at that radar scope, of discerning the urgency of the times.] No matter how great the spiritual gift, the ministry you're in, without agape love it means absolutely nothing (1 Corinthians 13:4-8). Someday the gifts will disappear. Chapter 13 wasn't a side thought put in there. The mission of the gifts is to edify all. Love edifies all. Knowledge [without love] puffs up. Chapter 14 goes on to show that everything is to be done decently and in order. The emphasis is on prophecy and not on tongues. First let's just read through what Paul said. **Verses 1-25, "Follow the way of love and eagerly desire the spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit [margin: or by the Spirit]. But everyone who prophesies speaks to men for their strengthening, encouragement and comfort. He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. I would like every one of you to speak in tongues [margin: "other languages," also in verses 6,18,22,23 and 39], but I would rather have you prophesy. He who prophesies is greater than one who speaks in tongues [other languages], unless he interprets, so that the church may be edified. [Remember Queno. His prophesying was converting the population of a Federal Prison in Guatemala!] Now brothers, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction? Even in the case of lifeless things that**

make sounds, such as the flute or harp, how will anyone know what tune is being played unless there is a distinction in the notes? Again, if a trumpet does not sound a clear call, who will get ready for battle? So it is with you. Unless you speak intelligible words with your tongue, how will anyone know what you are saying? You will just be speaking into the air. Undoubtedly there are all sorts of languages in the world, yet none of them is without meaning. If then I do not grasp the meaning of what someone is saying, I am a foreigner to the speaker, and he is a foreigner to me. So it is with you. Since you are eager to have spiritual gifts, try to excel in gifts that build up the church. For this reason anyone who speaks in a tongue should pray that he may interpret what he says. For if I pray in a tongue, my spirit prays, but my mind is unfruitful. So what shall I do? I will pray with my spirit, but I will also pray with my mind; I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my mind. If you are praising God with your spirit, how can one who finds himself among those who do not understand say "Amen" to your thanksgiving, since he does not know what you are saying? You may be giving thanks well enough, but the other man is not edified. I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue. Brothers, stop thinking like children. In regard to evil be infants, but in your thinking be adults. In the Law it is written: 'Through men of strange tongues and through the lips of foreigners I will speak to this people, but even then they will not listen to me,' says the Lord [Isaiah 28:11-12]. Tongues then are a sign, not for believers but for unbelievers; prophecy, however, is for believers, not for unbelievers. So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand [margin: "or some inquirers"] or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that you are out of your mind? But if an unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everyone is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming 'God is really among you!'"

There are four major themes about these two gifts that Paul addresses here:

1. The gift of prophecy (or prophesying) is very desirable in a corporate setting (i.e. teaching the Word of God in the Spirit).

2. The gift of tongues without interpretation in a corporate setting is not desirable. (if some nonbeliever walks in the door, he'll think you're nuts)
3. The gift of tongues with interpretation in a corporate setting is desirable. (if that unbeliever walks in the door, you'll be a least a little bit less nuts)
4. Tongues is to be desired in our private time with God.

Prophesying, Teaching The Word Of God, Verses Speaking In Tongues

The gift of foretelling and forthtelling the Word of God--teaching and preaching. Paul brings out in verses 7-8 that even musical instruments need to be played correctly to be of any value. The gift of prophecy is desirable because it is clear and understandable. [And in today's setting you find more of the *teaching and preaching* form of prophecy than of foretelling a future event. In the last chapter we saw the powerful example of prophesying by Eugene Nij, down in the Federal Prison in Guatemala.] **Joshua 6:1-5,16, "Now Jericho was tightly shut up because of the Israelites. No one went out and no one came in. Then the Lord said to Joshua, 'See I have delivered Jericho into your hands, along with its king and its fighting men. March around the city once with all the armed men. Do this for six days. Have seven priests carry trumpets of rams' horns in front of the ark. On the seventh day, march around the city seven times, with the priests blowing the trumpets. When you hear them sound a long blast on the trumpets, have all the people give a loud shout; then the wall of the city will collapse and the people will go up, every man straight in...The seventh time around, when the priests sounded the trumpet blast, Joshua commanded the people, 'Shout! For the Lord has given you the city!...'"** When the trumpet makes an uncertain sound who's going to know to be warned by it, Paul says. When the worship service is not simple, clear and distinct, with clear and distinct teaching, this is not a clear gift of prophesying. The gift of prophesying is a very clear and understandable trumpet call that calls us to spiritual battle. Prophesying equips, exhorts, warns and comforts. A famous preacher once taught younger ministers, "Always preach to a broken heart and you won't lack an audience." Prophecy has the gift of comfort in it. **Verses 6,18-19** show us this is teaching and

instruction in the Word of God, **“Now, brothers, if I come to you and speak in tongues, what good will I be to you, unless I bring you some revelation or knowledge or prophecy or word of instruction?...I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you. But in the church I would rather speak five intelligible words to instruct others than ten thousand words in a tongue.”**

The gift of prophecy is greater than the gift of tongues. It comforts and edifies the whole church. Tongues basically edifies one person. Tongues is basically for the non-believer. It got the people's attention on the first day of Pentecost, but it was Peter's prophesying--teaching the Word of God in power--which brought 3,000 non-believers to repentance. **Acts 2:1-41, “When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place. Suddenly a sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. They saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest on each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues [margin: "languages"] as the Spirit enabled them. Now there were staying in Jerusalem God-fearing Jews from every nation under heaven. When they heard this sound, a crowd came together in bewilderment, because each one heard them speaking in his own language. Utterly amazed, they asked: ‘Are not all these men who are speaking Galileans? Then how is it that each of us hears them in his own native language? Parthians, Medes and Elamites; residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya near Cyrene; visitors from Rome (both Jews and converts to Judaism); Cretans and Arabs--we all hear them declaring the wonders of God in our own tongues [languages]!’ Amazed and perplexed, they asked one another, ‘What does this mean?’ Some, however, made fun of them and said, ‘They have had too much wine.’ Then Peter stood up with the Eleven, raised his voice and addressed the crowd: ‘Fellow Jews and all of you who live in Jerusalem, let me explain this to you; listen carefully to what I say. These men are not drunk, as you suppose. It's only nine in the morning! No, this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel: ‘In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy. I will show wonders in the heaven above and signs on the earth below, blood and fire and billows of smoke. The sun will be turned to darkness and the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the Lord. And everyone who calls on the name of the Lord**

will be saved [Joel 2:28-32].’ [Peter used this quote to apply to what they just witnessed, but Joel 2 also really applies to a time just prior and leading up to the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ. So this great outpouring of God's spirit, dreams and visions is yet for the future. Exciting isn't it?!? For a future coming Revival is prophesied to come just before the Great Tribulation, World War III, as we just read in Joel 2:28-32. For more about that Revival, see <https://unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/REVIVAL.htm>

1] ‘Men of Israel, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. David said about him: ‘I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, because you will not leave me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence’ [Psalm 16:8-11]. ‘Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ [Messiah], that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. Exalted to the right hand of God, he has received from the Father the promised Holy Spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear. For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, ‘The Lord said to my Lord: ‘Sit at my right hand until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet [Psalm 110:1].’ Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off--for all whom the Lord our God will call.’ With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, ‘Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.’ Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.”

You can see that the gift of tongues (or the gift of interpretation of tongues, in reality here) drew the people to the apostles and Peter. Then it was Peter's prophesying--teaching--which brought 3,000 non-believers to repentance.

Do's & Don'ts Of Speaking In Tongues

The gift of tongues is not desirable without interpretation. For one thing, it is vertical to God, **verse 2, "For anyone who speaks in a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit [or 'by the Spirit]."** Tongues without interpretation only edifies one person, **verses 4,17, "He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church...You may be giving thanks well enough [in a tongue], but the other man is not edified."** Tongues is a foreign language, either another language on earth, or a heavenly language. Another important point, tongues without interpretation will cause non-believers to think you're whacked out, crazy, **verse 23, "So if the whole church comes together and everyone speaks in tongues, and some who do not understand or some unbelievers come in, will they not say that your are out of your mind?"** **Verses 27-28, "If anyone speaks in a tongue, let there be two or at the most three, each in turn, and let one interpret. But if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in church, and let him speak to himself and to God."**

When The Gift of Tongues Is Desirable In A Corporate Setting

Prophesying is basically for the believer, but it can also convict the non-believer. It helps you not blow the trumpet with an uncertain sound. Faith comes by hearing the Word of God. **Verses 24-25, "But if the unbeliever or someone who does not understand comes in while everybody is prophesying, he will be convinced by all that he is a sinner and will be judged by all, and the secrets of his heart will be laid bare. So he will fall down and worship God, exclaiming, 'God is really among you!'"** I recall the story of

John Corson and a group of ministers in this rented convention hall that had a bar attached to it. They didn't need the bar, but these places were set up for business and social events and so the bar. The bartender had nothing to do, so he simply wiped glasses while the ministers talked. Then one of them started to speak in tongues, but since no one could interpret, he stopped. After they were done, the bartender approached, and asked who it was that was speaking a rare dialect of Arabic from his village in Iraq. As it turned out he understood the tongues because it was his language. He was led to the Lord by this event and is a believer now. The tongues wasn't for those ministers who were present but was a call to this man from God. After the event they preached (prophesied) the Word to him, and he became a believer. So if there is an interpretation of tongues, then tongues has an edifying role. In this instance it was a sign to the non-believer, **verse 22, "Tongues, then, are a sign not for believers but for unbelievers..."** As Paul brings out in the last part of this verse, prophesying or preaching would have meant nothing to this unbelieving bartender until the sign of hearing an American speaking perfectly in his native Arabic dialect. Then after that prophesying meant something to him.

Tongues Is To Be Desired In Our Private Time With God

Tongues is to be desired in our private time with God. **1st Corinthians 14:2,4-5, 15,18, "For anyone who speaks a tongue does not speak to men but to God. Indeed, no one understands him; he utters mysteries with his spirit [margin: Or *by the Spirit*]...He who speaks in a tongue edifies himself, but he who prophesies edifies the church. I would like every one of you to speak in tongues, but I would rather you prophesy...I thank God that I speak in tongues more than all of you."** Romans 8:26-27, **"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. And he who searches our hearts knows the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints in accordance with God's will."** That's an interesting couple of verses. This certainly edifies your spirit, but you may have no way to influence it so your mind can't really interfere. **Mark 16:15-18. "And he said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does**

not believe will be condemned. And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.” All these signs are to the unbelieving world, to back up the preaching of the gospel. Again, they are given for the corporate good of the world, to edify, not to show others *how spiritual we are* (cf. Joel 2:28-32). **1st Corinthians 14:39-40. “Therefore, brethren, desire earnestly to prophesy, and do not forbid to speak with tongues. Let all things be done decently and in order.”**

Order in the Church Meetings

The mission or purpose of the spiritual gifts is for them to be used in the corporate setting to edify the church and others in the world. Paul was writing to a church, the Church of God at Corinth, that was very blessed with the spiritual gifts, but they, just like some fellowships now, were way out of balance in the use of those gifts. They were not refusing the gifts by denying they existed, so God chose to manifest the gifts through them. The Pentecostals are in a similar boat. They have the Holy Spirit in abundance, and don't deny or refuse the spiritual gifts, so God blesses them abundantly with them. But they, just as the early Corinthians, are not using them in proper balance. Paul is now laying down the rules of balance here in the fourteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. As the thirteenth chapter shows, the first and primary purpose we have as Christians is to love others, and manifest God's agape love on others. To use the spiritual gifts for any other purpose is a misuse of them. Prideful use is not using them in love. **Verse 26, “What then shall we say, brothers? When you come together, everyone has a hymn, or a word of instruction, a revelation, a tongue or an interpretation. All of these must be done for the strengthening of the church.”** In *Matthew 22* Jesus was answering the Sadducees and said to them, **“You are mistaken, not knowing the Scriptures nor the power of God.”** There is a definite correlation between knowing and applying the Scriptures properly and the power of God. In **2nd Timothy 3:16-17** it states, **“All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.”** The power of God is

in the Word of God. When we ignore the Word of God on any particular subject we miss or diminish the power of God in our lives and walk with Christ. So with that in mind, here are some rules the apostle Paul laid down for tongues and prophesying. In verses 27-28 Paul adds some further parameters for speaking in tongues. He says that at most, two or three in the congregation are to be allowed to speak in tongues and two or three at most interpreting. Also, when someone speaks in tongues--one at a time, the interpretation should come in turn, or follow the speaking in tongues, and not be done simultaneously, which would only cause confusion. **Verses 27-28, "If anyone speaks in a tongue, two--or three at the most should speak, one at a time, and someone must interpret. If there is no interpreter, the speaker should keep quiet in the Church and speak to himself and God."** Does it get any more clear than that? Yet in some fellowships and congregations these simple rules are not adhered to, just as in the Corinthian church. It didn't mean they didn't have the Holy Spirit, or weren't really a Christian Church, they were just unbalanced in the use of God's gifts, like little children. Finally in verse 28, Paul shows again that tongues is a vertical thing, between the speaker and God.

Rules For Giving A Prophecy

In verses 29-33, Paul lays out similar rules for prophesying [i.e. giving a prophecy, because the guy prophesying, teaching, is going to be the pastor, not an ordinary member, in most cases]. Two or three prophets are to speak, one at a time. The emphasis is to maintain order. One should speak at a time, and all should judge. God is not the author of confusion. Verse 30 states that they are to take turns, one shouldn't go on and on and on forever. Paul says there's to be order, i.e. don't hog the mike. And others in the congregation should judge what they hear. Here is some criteria for judging:

1. If what is said doesn't line up with the Word of God it's not of God and God's Word.
2. If what is said doesn't line up with the true facts, it's not of God.
3. Prophecy honors Jesus as the Son of God. If there's not a spirit of humility watch out. There will be more and more

kooks and wierdo's as we get closer to the end times as Jesus indicated in Matthew 24. Also Satan's "ministers" can masquerade as "angels of light." The spirit of discernment in Christian fellowships is important here. Some who prophesy may be meeting all the above parameters, but they themselves may be false. The spirit of discernment will reveal this. Just like it did between Peter and Ananias and Saphira. Finally in verse 33, Paul brings out that God is not a God of disorder but of peace. I like this translation in the NIV, for there is a movement extant today of "Godly disorder." There is no such thing as Godly disorder--God is a God of order. Be aware of the "Godly Disorder" theology that is extant today. **Verses 29-33, "Two or three prophets should speak, and the others should weigh carefully what is said. And if a revelation comes to someone who is sitting down, the first speaker should stop. For you can all prophesy in turn so that everyone may be instructed and encouraged [i.e. all two or three of those that are prophesying can prophesy in turn--not all the congregation. Verse 31 must be taken in context with verse 29]. The spirits of the prophets are subject to the control of prophets. For God is not a God of disorder but of peace."** [Pretty clear here, isn't it? So why all the confusion and disorder? One of the reasons some of the other parts of the body of Christ want nothing to do with tongues and some of the other power gifts is because of the abuse they see in the congregations of the Christian churches who do exercise them, but with disorder and in confusion--barking like dogs and howling. This is totally out of control. So were the Corinthians. You do a disservice to other Christian fellowships and the world in what you do. Instead of properly seeing the power of God and desiring it, they spurn it because of your poor example. Is this acting as Jesus would have us act? I think not, and neither did the apostle Paul.]

Paul Says Something Controversial, Was It In Context To A Specific Social/Historic Setting, Or Was It Universal?

Here in verses 33 last part, through verse 35, Paul gets into an area which in today's world flies in the face of feminism. And we cannot be totally sure whether this is being said in a historic context for the local area or to be applied today in all churches, but in **verse 34** the statement of Paul "**As the Law says**" indicates it goes deeper than

just a cultural setting. But we do see this theme repeated in 1 Timothy 2, Ephesians 5, 1 Peter 2 and Titus 2:3, as well as Genesis 3. So let's read verses 33-35 and those other Scriptures, and then you judge for yourself, between you and God. There is an issue of protection here. We in this fellowship have come to believe that having married women follow this advice protects the minister from unnecessary temptation and can actually cause growth and sometimes the actual conversion of unconverted husbands by having their wives go to them with their spiritual questions. **Verses 34-35, "...As in all the congregations of the saints, women should remain silent in the churches. They are not allowed to speak, but must be in submission, as the Law says. If they want to inquire about something, they should ask their own husbands at home; for it is disgraceful for a woman to speak in the church."** We see in 1 Corinthians 11 that women can prophesy and speak in tongues. This isn't forbidding them from being an active part of the worship service. There's something else to this command, which appears to be pointing the women towards their husbands for spiritual advice and intimate spiritual communication--building these bonds in the right direction, building spiritual unity and cohesiveness between husband and wife, instead of between wife and the minister or pastor. The intent of this command doesn't appear to be sexist at all. Let's look at some of the other Scriptures that back this principle up. **1st Timothy 2:8-15, "I want men everywhere to lift up holy hands in prayer, without anger or disputing. I also want women to dress modestly, with decency and propriety, not with braided hair or gold or pearls or expensive clothes, but with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God. A woman should learn in quietness and full submission. I do not permit a woman to teach or to have authority over a man; she must be silent. For Adam was formed first, then Eve. And Adam was not the deceived; it was the woman who was deceived and became a sinner. But women will be saved through childbearing--if they continue in faith, love and holiness with propriety."** Next let's look at **Ephesians 5:22-32, "Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her [or: having cleansed her] by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves**

himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds it, just as Christ does the church--for we are members of his body. For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh [Genesis 2:4]. This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church. However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband." Paul goes on to say this to all: "Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free." i.e. We are all called to submit to someone, both men and women--slaves to masters, people to government authorities (Romans 13), women to their husbands. The apostle Peter doesn't differ from Paul one bit in his advice. 1st Peter 3:1-6, "Wives, in the same way be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives. Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master. You are her daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear. Husbands, in the same way be considerate as you live with your wives, and treat them with respect as the weaker partner and as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life, so that nothing will hinder your prayers." In Titus 2:1-5 Paul is instructing Titus what to teach his congregation. "You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine. Teach the older men to be temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and endurance. [You notice he says "older men", perhaps knowing that rash, exuberant youth has not reached the ability to do or have such traits of character.] Likewise, teach the older women to be reverent in the way they live, not to be slanderers or addicted to much wine, but to teach what is good. Then they can train the younger women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled and pure, to be busy at home, to be kind, and to be subject to their husbands, so that no one will

malign the word of God. Similarly, encourage young men to be self-controlled. In everything set them an example by doing what is good. In your teaching show integrity, seriousness and soundness of speech that cannot be condemned, so that those who oppose you may be ashamed because they have nothing bad to say about us [Paul again instructing Titus]. Teach slaves to be subject to their masters in everything, to try to please them, not to talk back to them, and not to steal from them, but to show that they can be fully trusted, so that in every way they will make the teaching about God our Savior attractive.” [God our Savior, i.e. Jesus is God also, not just a good person and wise teacher as some would have you believe. He was God in the flesh, the Word as John 1:1-4 brings out, the YHVH of the Old Testament-together with God the Father and the Holy Spirit making up the Elohim of Genesis 1.] So what Paul was teaching the Corinthians here in 1 Corinthians 14:33-35 is consistent with what he and Peter taught elsewhere in letters to other congregations and in the Church as a whole. The important thing is to take it in context. You notice that they bring out that everyone is in submission to someone. No one escapes this command in reality.

Final Thoughts From Paul

Finally Paul adds this thought to what he said about order. He told them they were interpreting the Word of God for themselves, and doing it wrongly by the way Paul was saying this in verse 36. **Verses 36-38, “Did the word of God originate with you? Or are you the only people it has reached? If anybody thinks he is a prophet or spiritually gifted, let him acknowledge that what I am writing to you is the Lord's command. If he ignores this, he will be ignored [Some manuscripts read: *If he is ignorant of this, let him* *be*].”**

Paul then finishes up the chapter by saying that no one should forbid the gift of tongues, and to be eager to prophesy. Then again he calls for everything to be done in an orderly way. **Verse 39-40, “Therefore, my brothers, be eager to prophesy, and do not forbid speaking in tongues. But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”** [I highly recommend reading Hank Hanegraaf's excellent book *Counterfeit REVIVAL* as a supplementary reading with this section of 1 Corinthians 12-14. It is available online at: <http://www.amazon.com> . It shows in accurate detail how some

counterfeit ministries have sprung up utilizing slight of hand and definitely a counterfeit "spirit" which brings discredit to the very real manifestations of God's Holy Spirit.] [These expository studies on 1st Corinthians chapters 12-14 were put together from my notes taken from sermons given in a local Calvary Chapel somewhere in New England.]

related links:

Jesus is God, God the Son, see

<https://unityinchrist.com/prophecies/1stcoming.htm>

Miracles are still happening in the church and with God's people, but the evidence is usually seen in the 3rd world nations amongst our missionaries. See

https://unityinchrist.com/evangelism/excerpts_isawjesus.htm

How has America treated Guatemala and other 3rd world nations?

See <https://unityinchrist.com/topical%20studies/America-ModernRomans4.htm> and

http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Blum/KillingHope_page.html

and scroll to the hypertext title Guatemala 1962-1980s.

For a thorough study on God's Agape-love found in 1st Corinthians 13, see <https://unityinchrist.com/Agape/Agape%20I.htm>

For more about the prophesied coming Revival Joel 2:28-32 prophecies, that mirrors the revival that took place in Acts chapter 2, see

<https://unityinchrist.com/prophets/Zephaniah/REVIVAL.html>

